**The Crown Without the Cross!**

**Luke 4:1-13**

Tonight, I want to talk about temptation.

1. What is it?
2. How can we overcome it?
3. **What is temptation?**

* Temptation is an enticement to commit **acts** that are contrary to God’s laws and commandments.
* To be tempted is to be **enticed to do wrong** by promise of pleasure or gain.

God is the One who has established what is right and wrong and He has given us His Word so that we might know His will.

* Thus, temptation is any seducement to go against God’s Word.

**Philippians 2:5-8**: Paul describes **the submission of the Son to the Father**:

“Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross.”

**Question: Could Jesus have given in to temptation and sinned?**

* Scripture is clear that Jesus never sinned.

**1 Peter 2:22** “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

**2 Corinthians 5:21** “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

* According to most theologians, Jesus, even as a man, still possessed his divine nature; thus, he could not sin. To believe that Jesus could sin is to believe that God could sin. And God can’t sin.

**Colossians 2:9** “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.”

* Jesus, the God-man, sympathizes with our predicament because He fully understands why we give in to temptation.

**Hebrews 4:14-16** “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but **we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin**. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

* Not only was Jesus tempted, but he faced the **full force** of temptation like no one who has ever lived.

**How was Jesus tempted?**

* Jesus was tempted three ways: **physically**, **psychologically**, and **spiritually**.

**1s**t, Satan appealed to Jesus’ **physica**l desire of hunger.

**2nd**, Satan appealed to his **psychological desire** to get the Crown by avoiding the Cross.

**3rd**, Satan appealed to his **spiritual desire** to know and feel the love of his heavenly Father—a love the Son had experienced from eternity past.

1. **How do we overcome temptation?**

**James 1:13-15**: When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his **own evil desire**, he is **dragged away and enticed**. Then, after **desire** has **conceived**, it gives **birth to sin**; and sin, when it is **full-grown**, **gives birth to death**.

A few truths about temptation:

1. Temptation, in and of itself, is not sin.
2. Temptation becomes sin when you give in to it. Giving in to temptation begins in the mind. Then, it is carried out by our outward actions.
3. Temptation comes from Satan who is the chief **Tempte**r.
4. Satan knows that we have evil desires in our hearts. Thus, he comes along beside us and lures us into his trap by offering pleasure or gain. And once he has us in his trap, he gradually kills us.

Here are the **four stages** of temptation:

* 1st, **DESIRE:** when we entertain the allure of pleasure in our minds, **desire** is born.
* 2nd, **DECEPTION:** Satan tempts our evil desire with a **deceptive** opportunity for pleasure or gain.
* 3rd, **DISOBEDIENCE:** As we give into the deceptive bait, we become entangled in disobedience and sin.
* Finally, **DEATH:** As we continue in our pursuit of sinful pleasures, our inner being slowly dies.

**How do we overcome temptation?**

**Ephesians 6:10-18: Put on the FULL ARMOR OF GOD!**