

## Tempted

Sermon 2018-02-18 - Year B - Lent 1 - The Rev. Christopher Klukas

Genesis 9:8–17; Psalm 25:3–9; 1 Peter 3:18–22; Mark 1:9–13

- Have you ever seen a red fire alarm and wondered what it would be like to push it?
- Or felt like saying (or thinking) some nasty things about a person who cuts you off while you are driving down Blanding Blvd.?
- Or committed to a new diet and then saw one of your favorite calorie laden foods on a menu?
- These are all examples of what we mean by “temptation”

### Temptation

- It seems odd to us that Jesus could be tempted, we tend to feel like he should not be susceptible to that.
- Temptation is a part of humanity, and Jesus took on human flesh.
- Temptation is not the same as sin. Sin is when we choose to act on the things that tempt us and we give in.
  - This line is very clear when the temptation has to do with our physical actions.
  - It is less clear when we are tempted to sin in our minds through anger, lust, judgment, etc.
- This is the difference between Jesus and us. He was tempted, as we read in the Gospel of Mark today, but he did not give into temptation. He didn't sin.
- The greek word for “temptation” can also mean “testing”
  - God doesn't tempt us to sin, those temptations come from the world, the flesh, and the devil.
  - God may, however, test us
    - *“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son,”* (Hebrews 11:17, ESV)
    - *“Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?” He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.”* (John 6:5–6, ESV)
  - “Lead us not into temptation” vs. “save us from the time of trial”
  - Here Jesus is tempted, and the temptation comes from Satan.

### Why was Jesus Tempted?

- Four reasons for Jesus' temptation
- “Sympathize with our weaknesses” (Heb 4:15)

- To “...face and conquer the peculiar temptations involved in his calling as Messiah before commencing his task.”<sup>1</sup>
- Typological connection with Israel in the wilderness (hence the 40 days)
- This account in Mark may reveal a third reason: typological connection with Adam.
  - Adam lives at peace with all of the animals in the garden until the temptation of Satan comes and he sins.
  - Jesus now lives in the wilderness with the wild animals and does not give in to the temptation of Satan.
  - 1 Cor 15:20-22
  - Jesus was only able to be a sacrifice for our sin because he lived without sin and didn’t give into temptation.
  - “Thus Jesus’ peaceful coexistence “with the wild animals” boldly declares the presence of the age of salvation when God’s deliverance would come in the wilderness and harmony would be established within creation according to the promise, especially of Isaiah”<sup>2</sup>
    - Isaiah 11:6–9

### Connection to Lent

- The forty days of Jesus’ temptation are the biblical template for Lent.
  - This story is always told on the first Sunday of Lent.
- Lent prepares us for Easter just as Jesus’ temptation prepared him for his ministry.
  - The preparation of catechumens for Baptism during this season is also reminiscent of the connection between Jesus’ baptism and his temptation in the wilderness.
- Lent is an opportunity to focus on rooting out a particular sinful pattern from your life.
  - Even if you are not sinning in a particular area, if you are frequently tempted by something it might be a good thing to focus on.
- Lent is an opportunity to take on extra spiritual disciplines, or to re-engage with ones from which we have fallen away.
  - Jesus combats temptation with scripture as we read in Matthew and Luke
  - Jesus often withdrew to a lonely place to be refreshed and to hear from his Father.
- The fasting of Lent helps us to be sustained by God.
  - *“And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”* (Deuteronomy 8:3, ESV)
- The austerity of fasting heightens the joy of feasting
- It is not too late to begin a Lenten discipline. Come on Wednesdays to hear more!

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<sup>1</sup> R. Alan Cole, *Mark: An Introduction and Commentary* (vol. 2; Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 110.

<sup>2</sup> Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26* (vol. 34A; Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 39.