

GOD MOVES – INTO THE WILDERNESS

Luke 4:1-13

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

³ The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”

⁴ Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’”

⁵ The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. ⁷ If you worship me, it will all be yours.”

⁸ Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’”

⁹ The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here. ¹⁰ For it is written:

“‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully;¹¹ they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”

¹² Jesus answered, “It is said: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

¹³ When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.”

INTRODUCTION:

We are in the season of Lent; started on Ash Wednesday, 5 March 2025. Lent is a sacred season of reflection and preparation, leading up to the celebration of Easter. Spanning 40 days, it mirrors Jesus' time of fasting and temptation in the wilderness, inviting us to journey deeper into **repentance, self-examination, and a closer walk with God**. It's a time to pause, acknowledge our dependence on Him, and renew our commitment to live as His followers.

During Lent, we are encouraged to focus on three spiritual practices: **prayer**, strengthening our connection with God; **fasting**, letting go of distractions to make room for His presence; and **serving**, extending love and care to those in need. These disciplines help us realign our hearts with God's purposes and grow in **humility, gratitude, and faith**.

DISCUSS:

Immediately after His baptism in the Jordan River, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. For forty days, He faced intense trials designed to test His faithfulness to God's mission. Throughout this time, Jesus resisted every challenge by **relying on Scripture, demonstrating His unwavering obedience to God**. His victory in the wilderness reveals the power of faith, obedience, and God's Word, providing a powerful example for believers to follow in our own spiritual battles.

1. First Temptation – Turning Stones into Bread (Provision):

In the first temptation, Jesus was tempted to turn stones into bread to satisfy His hunger, his immediate physical needs, challenging His reliance on God's provision.

How can we learn to trust God to meet our needs rather than relying solely on our own solutions?

2. Second Temptation – Worshiping the Devil for Earthly Power (Loyalty):

In the second temptation, the devil offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for worshipping the devil, testing Jesus' loyalty to God alone.

In what ways can we focus on worshiping God alone, even when tempted by worldly rewards or success?

3. Third Temptation – Testing God's Protection (Trust):

In the third temptation, the devil tempted Jesus to throw Himself from the temple pinnacle, asking Him to test God's protection and faithfulness.

How can we cultivate trust in God's plan without feeling the need to test His protection and faithfulness?

Pray For:

1. Trust in God's Provision:

Pray for a heart that relies fully on God's provision and timing, especially in moments of need or scarcity. Ask for the wisdom to seek His will above our own desires and to trust Him to meet both our physical and spiritual needs.

Scripture: **Matthew 24:35** reminds us why we must remain rooted to Scripture, as, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."

2. Loyalty to God Alone:

Pray for unwavering loyalty to God, resisting the temptations of worldly power, recognition, or success that may lead us away from His path. Ask for strength to worship and serve Him wholeheartedly in every area of our lives.

Scripture: **Proverbs 3:5-6** urges us to, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

3. Faith and Obedience in Trials:

Pray for faith and obedience when facing trials or uncertainties, trusting in God's faithfulness and not to test God. Ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the power of God's Word to stand firm against all temptations.

Scripture: **Psalms 119:105**, we are reminded of God's Word being, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

