

# The temptation of Christ

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Prof E.Donnelly

[ 0 : 0 0 ] and professor boyd began his devotional address this morning from this passage my heart sank and then as he continued i consoled myself with the reflection that although i would start this paper one mill down i would finish it three one up but then as i listened further i thought that there was a remarkable providence of god in a way because uh aspects were stressed in the talk this morning which i hadn't thought of and emphases were made which i'm not going to stress in the paper the statement in hebrews chapter 4 verse 15 that 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 is encouraging and comforting for the christian we call this passage the temptation of christ and yet it's important to remember that for the previous thirty years christ had been constantly assailed and had just as constantly resisted and overcome temptation such as the part of the significance of his baptism the opened heavens the descending dove and the divine voice and the divine voice are all evidence of the perfection of the previous thirty years and yet there is something unique and unusual about this incident which perhaps justifies its common title the temptation of jesus for here is temptation which is unparalleled different different from all other there is an epic quality about the incident we can imagine it visually you have the bleak barren wilderness and the two protagonists the son of god face to face in mortal combat with satan the son of the morning the leader of the host of darkness the embodiment of evil in all its strength and horror and these two in a sense do battle the story of the temptation is recorded for us not just to demonstrate the sinlessness of the savior the temptation is not just to provide help for believers against the attacks of the enemy but to show a decisive stage in the history of our redemption we're going to look first at some underlying and basic themes which illuminate the narrative then look at each of the three temptations the truth of the demons in turn say something about their present application and close with the aftermath of the incident the first one i would mention is the last adam the last adam as he's described consistently in the new testament we're familiar with the comparison which paul draws between adam and christ and we find the same comparison vacant appearance which will not be terrible

in the new testament of prophecy the fact that we understand and what we do understand the history's history of 99.435 to the city of uncle and christ the present freezing to the eye and desirable for gaining wisdom most strikingly of all is Luke's arrangement of his material he places the genealogy of Christ not at the beginning of his gospel but in chapter 3 he takes it in the reverse order to that of Matthew and he goes farther back he ends at the end of chapter 3 verse 38 the son of Seth the son of Adam the son of God

Jesus full of the Holy Spirit was led by the Spirit in the desert this tempted figure is another Adam another son of God the second theme is that of the true Israel Israel was tempted for 40 years Jesus for 40 days Israel was in the wilderness Jesus was in the wilderness one of the key passages in Deuteronomy chapters 6 to 8 refers to the wilderness experiences of Israel reflecting on them and applying them theologically beginning with the Shema the great call of God upon his people's worship and loyalty and it's significant that all of Christ's answers are taken from this section of scripture which refers to the Israelite wilderness wanderings incidentally

C.H. Spurgeon makes a typical and pertinent comment in his day as you know the inspiration of Deuteronomy was under severe attack and Spurgeon writes the past few years have proved that the devil does not like Deuteronomy he would then avenge himself for the wounds that caused him on this most memorable occasion so Satan had been waiting ever since that day and his efforts were shown in the liberal critics at the end of the 19th century so we see here clear parallels drawn in the Gospels between Adam and Christ and between Israel and Christ there are possible other parallels with Moses and Elijah it's hard to know how far to take them the third underlying theme that I would like to stress is the divine initiative the divine initiative one of the first features which strikes us in this incident is the place given to the Holy Spirit then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert or as Mark more forcibly puts it the Spirit sent him out ek balai into the desert

Hendrickson says the Spirit impelled him filled him with an inner urge he has just come from the Jordan he has been baptised by John he has been anointed with the Spirit and the Father has proclaimed him as the beloved son his public career as Messiah is about to begin filled with the Spirit officially ordained and equipped he undertakes his first messianic act which is a single combat with Satan we're accustomed you see to think of Satan as only offensive he is the one who comes and attacks and tempts but here it is quite clear that it is God who takes the offensive not Satan the Son is sent by the Spirit into the wilderness and it's of key importance that we remember throughout the whole incident that the initiative is God's this is part of

[ 9 : 06 ] God's plan and purpose Matthew uses an aorist passive infinitive he was sent parastheni to be tempted Lensky says that expresses both purpose and completeness to be tested to the finish Satan approached the first Adam in paradise but the last Adam seeks out Satan in the wilderness the devil is forced to fight I believe that if he could have avoided this conflict he would have done so I'll say more about that in a moment it is the purpose and plan of God that the temptation should take place this Adam will overcome this Adam will restore what has been lost this marks the reversal of the fall it was a true and profound instinct which led

John Milton to take this passage as the theme of his paradise regained paradise regained is about the temptation of Christ in the desert here's how Milton begins the poem I through air while the happy garden sung by one man's disobedience lost now sing recovered paradise to all mankind by one man's firm obedience fully tried through all temptation and the tempter foiled in all his wilds defeated and repulsed and Eden raised in the west wilderness you see it is the temptation of Christ but it is also the testing of Christ Satan tempts and he tempts fiercely and maliciously and with all his power but as always

Satan is only an instrument and he is the instrument of a higher testing pyradzo can mean to entice to evil or to test aren't Gingrich say that pyradzo is used not only of enticement to sin but in a good sense of God who puts men to the test so that they may prove themselves true so in essentially two levels here the devil tempts Adam and the father tempts Israel in Deuteronomy 8-2 we have the theology of the wilderness wanderings remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these 40 years to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart whether or not you would keep his commands note those words of

Israel in the desert 40 years to test you they're true of Christ Israel's head and representative the Lord led you in the desert these 40 days to test you Israel had failed that test the test comes again and this time God's son will stand in the wilderness obedient and faithful I think it's wrong for us to interpret this passage purely pietistically to treat it as no more than a picture of how the believer can overcome temptation we're here on the stage of redemptive history and we're in the middle of the great events of our salvation let's look for a moment at the exegetical key to the passage in the commentaries

I believe insufficient attention is given to the answers of Jesus their context their original context their meaning and their application to his own situation yet reflect for a moment these are the right answers these are the correct answers the perfect answers and these answers illuminate for us the meaning of the attacks here hardest Ross puts it this way it is fortunate he says that in interpreting the individual temptations we have available the answer of our Lord to work our way from to the inner design of the temptation for we may safely assume that he meant to answer the tempter to the point the meaning of the answer supplies the meaning of the satanic suggestion that's a helpful insight from

[ 14 : 35 ] Ross the meaning of Christ's answer shows us the true meaning of the satanic suggestion the central issue here is a very simple one I believe that the key to all the temptations is to be found in Genesis 3 15 the prophecy of Satan's doom through the Messiah he will crush your head and you will strike his table that is not two pictures that is one picture there is a man and there is a serpent and there is enmity between them because of that enmity the serpent the man wants to crush the serpent because of the enmity the serpent wants to bite the man their enmity is driving them together and yet in both of them there is a tension or a conflict for the man knows that in order to crush the serpent he must feel pain and the serpent knows that in order to bite the man he must be destroyed so our savior is in a position of tension and satan himself and we don't always appreciate that is in a position of tension he longs to strike yet fears what that striking will mean for him and I believe that here we have satan urging christ not to stand on him to over leap the humiliation to avoid being bruised to seek the messiahship without a cross the key temptation is this save yourself save yourself and that is the temptation

I believe at the heart of all these temptations don't stand on me the serpent says why suffer the pain of my fangs but the servant of the lord insists on the bruising he insists on the bruising and despising the pain he drives down his foot so much then by way of introduction let's come then to the first temptation found in verses 2 4 as we heard this morning Luke's account makes it plain that Jesus was tempted throughout the whole period of 40 days uses a present participle being tempted for 40 days Luke 4 2 it seems here that we have the final supreme attack at the end of this period

Jesus has fasted for 40 days he is exhausted and hungry the tempter came to him and said if you are the son of God tell these stones to become bread again to recap briefly on this morning I agree with Professor Boyd that the devil is not here casting doubt on the sonship of Christ as is often alleged his approach is far more subtle than that the preposition is I E I with the indicative and this preposition can have this particle this particle can have this particle can have the meaning of symbols as well as if it is used often with a causal instead of a conditional effect I presume you're not interested enough to want to hear the references of the causal use of

I with the indicative so I'll not give them to you Donald Guthrie says the Greek makes it clear that there is no casting of doubt on the sonship of Jesus you see still ringing in his ears were the words of the father this is my beloved son this is just happening his whole heart is aflame with the joyful awareness of the status this is my beloved son and it is on this awareness that the devil seeks to capitalize of course you're the son of God of course you are I agree with you we are at one on that fact and since you are the son of God because you are the son of God why not behave like the son of God why not use the privileges and authority of your sonship why not act like the son of God what's the son of God doing exhausted and starving in the wilderness what a poor picture of the son of

God since you're the son of God command these stones to be made bread Christ has the power to change these small round stones into bread why not employ that power to satisfy his hunger now Jesus answer comes on several levels he first of all says it is written not an heiress but a perfect a perfect passive the perfect is the tense of abiding significance there's a great difference between saying I loved my wife and I have loved my wife the implication in the second is that I continue to do so to this very day and it's simplistic to say that Christ simply quotes scripture he does more than that he places himself under the scripture it has been written and it now stands it has been written and is abidingly significant a word says Lensky which once written stands forever it has been written it stands written and therefore

[ 21 : 19 ] I am bound though not the first word in the Greek of course the word man is significant it has been written man shall not live by bread alone here in a word is the whole answer to all the temptations if you're the son of God command that these stones be made bread man is Christ man he's in the wilderness as man he's man's head he's man's representative he will live as a man behave as a man suffer as a man for that is his mission Satan may urge him as he did the first avenue to be like God you shall be like God no says

Christ no he repudiates that self of I will not I will be man man man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God this answer is commonly understood to mean that Jesus was claiming to be able to live without food contrasting spiritual food with physical food to the detriment of the latter it has come a folk saying a proverb in our own language man shall not live by bread alone speech writer of every politician who's opening a theatre or a leisure centre is going to work that in somewhere in his speech man shall not live by bread alone man doesn't just need material things he needs spiritual blessings now Jesus did on occasion make such emphasis we think for example of John 434 my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work but in this passage there is no contrast whatever between spiritual and physical food his answer is a quotation from Deuteronomy 8 verse 3

Moses reminds Israel of the 40 years testing and continues thus he humbled you causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna which neither you nor your fathers had known to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son so the Lord your God disciplines you the contrast you see is between bread and manna both are physical food both have carbohydrates and calories both provide nourishment for the body but the Israelites can provide bread from their own resources and by their own endeavors while manna is supernaturally provided by the creative word that comes from the mouth of the

Lord the purpose of the hunger was fatherly discipline to teach them to depend on God to wait for his provision for their bodies Christ is saying I will not act autonomously I will not act in independent sovereignty I will not provide for myself for I am a man under God's testing God has sent me to the wilderness to suffer and Christ will not shortcut that purpose by taking his own initiative out of God's leading he stands before God as a servant God humbles him so be it God proves him so be it when God so wills he can provide manna bread from heaven for the hunger of his son which of you if his son asks for bread will give him a stone and until that time the man will wait in faith for his father's working he's saying to Satan you say that it's a contradiction of my mission to be hungry in the wilderness

I say to you that it's of the very essence of my mission to be hungry in the wilderness different understandings he insists on the bruising let's look at the second temptation in verses five to seven we note that at this point Matthew and Luke have a different order Luke mentions second the temptation on the high mountain now it's clear from the two accounts that it is Matthew who gives who claims to give the temptations in their chronological order he uses the word then at the beginning of verse five and in verse eleven after the third temptation he said then the devil left him so Matthew's account is confessively a chronological account Luke makes no such claim and uses no such time sequential words we don't really know why

[ 27 : 31 ] Luke has changed the order some commentators suggest that he wants to close with the climax of the temptation in the temple the temple is very prominent in Luke's gospel as a place of revelation but we don't know again commentators differ as to whether or not Jesus was literally and physically transported to the temple and the mountain or if perhaps the devil caused these scenes to pass vividly before his mind's eye and some very respected commentators take both sides I don't think it's a very profitable avenue to pursue the arguments are there on both sides I don't myself see any compelling reason why the account shouldn't be taken literally at its face value Jesus is here standing on the highest point of the temple William

Barclay says probably the pinnacle where Solomon's porch and the royal porch met there was a sheer drop of 450 feet down into the Tadrone valley below the temple in the holy city it was a place of most sacred associations here he was in Jerusalem the very center of the nation's deepest life how profoundly he loved Jerusalem remember how he was to pronounce the doom of that city in a voice choked with pity oh Jerusalem Jerusalem here he is in Jerusalem the city compactly built together and at the heart of Jerusalem was the temple the very center of Israel's faith the location of God's revelation and God's protection all the surroundings evoked trust and praise and worship here if anywhere the presence of the father might be known and experienced in all its fullness if ever

God is to work miracles surely it will be in the holy city in the temple and it is in this charged environment that Satan comes with a suggestion of infinite subtlety if you are the son of God throw yourself down Christ has answered the first temptation by saying that he trusts the father and will trust the father amen says Satan amen he accepts that Jesus is God's son and that he trusts the father he appeals to that trust you've said you trust the father you've said that you're willing to face slow starvation because of your faith he comes and says I would urge you to exercise that faith even more steadfastly and even more spectacularly than you're suggesting don't be content with starving obscurely in the wilderness hurl yourself to certain and instant destruction in the faith that the father will save you see how he changes his tactics he first urges him to abandon faith but then he urges him as it were to overuse his faith to exploit his faith and of course since the servant is under the authority of

God's word the devil has a convenient scripture to hand for it is written he will command his angels concerning you and they will lift you up in their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone risky psalm to quote the next verse goes on upon the adder thou shalt tread and on the lion strong thy feet on dragons trample shall and on the lion young significant significant however however the citation obviously is from psalm 91 and we know from the midrash that this was associated by the rabbis with two things the temple and the wilderness wanderings so it's a very appropriate psalm for Satan to quote the servant of God dwells in the shelter of the most high the temple the holy city and there he can be absolutely confident of the almighty's protection fiction of new testament theology suggests that there may be a play on words

Matthew tells us that Jesus was standing on the wing of the temple terugion and of course the psalm speaks of finding refuge under the wings of god whether that's fanciful or not I leave with you in any case you see what satan is saying let the son obey what is written and in the adventure of faith find renewed assurance of his sonship now we could note that satan misquotes scripture he leaves out the words from the psalm to guard you in all your ways we shall give his angels charge over you to guard you in all your ways some suggest that this refers to the ways of duty and obedience the ways of the messiah the path ordained by god the psalm doesn't say to guard you no matter what foolish harebrained activity you involve yourself in but to guard the messiah in all his ways it's possible that that omission by satan is significant although christ doesn't correct the omission we note again to in passing the helpful statement of camberl morgan every false teacher who has divided the church has had and it is written on which to hang his doctrine if only against the isolated passage there had been recognition of the fact that again it was written how much the church would have been saved and that's how jesus answered it is also written again it's written do not put the lord your god to the test the quotation is from deuteronomy 6 16 and he called the place massa and merida because the israelites quarreled and because they tested the lord saying is the lord among us or not people you see were thirsty in the wilderness were despairing and in their discontent and in their need they began to doubt god's care and god's presence is the lord among us or is he not was he still with them if he was with them why were they suffering in a barren desert let god prove himself let him reassure them by a miracle of his continuing love they forgot that god had promised to be with they forgot that god had acted in power to redeem them from slavery what they wanted from god was a present experimental proof to convince them there and there that he still was with them and that he still cared for them but here is the heart of the temptation christ is being urged to prove god's love by experiment like israel he is suffering in the wilderness and he's being asked to repeat the sin of massa see what satan's saying god had said this is my son whom i love but that's not enough that's not enough we have to have a miracle we have to have something you see to confirm and validate the word of god otherwise we're entitled to ask is the lord among us or not here's your exam paper god now if you get a good mark

[ 36 : 46 ] i believe in you come out of your box and do your tricks and i believe in you see how jesus i shall not test the lord thy god i need no miracle to assure me of my sonship i need no sign to convince me of god's love he's told me he loved me it's not for him to test god god is testing him he's the one who's doing the testing he brought you into the desert to prove you and to test you god not have to put on a spectacular performance in order to satisfy the demands of faith satan presents this as an exercise of faith it is not an exercise of faith it is the negation of faith

For it's only when we doubt a person that we make experiments to discover how far they are to be trusted. What would you think of a man who said he was going out in the morning and then hid round the corner to see what his wife would do?

He would say there's something very wrong in that relationship. To make experiments with God is to reveal the fact that one is not quite sure of him.

The comment by Voss again is helpful. I'm quoting from his biblical theology. While a momentary abandon to faith, the venture would have been inspired by a shrinking from a protracted life of faith.

Our Lord would have been led on in his ministry, not by an ever renewed forth putting of the same act of trust that God would preserve him.

[ 38 : 51 ] But by the remembrance of this one supreme experiment which rendered further trust superfluous. give me a miracle Lord and to the end of my life I'll never have to worry about believing again.

For there's the evidence. we come then to the third temptation. Verses 8 to 10. Again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their splendor.

Just as Moses was taken by the Lord to the top of Mount Nebo and saw spread out before him the promised land. So Jesus sees his promised land.

Not Palestine only but the whole earth. What a prospect. And to our astonishment the devil seems to be working in harmony with God.

He's a believer in the kingship of Christ. He wants Jesus to be king. He professes that he desires the day when all on earth shall bow before the Son of God.

[ 40 : 11 ] All this I will give you. If you will bow down and worship me.

In the interest of time I pass over the point that it is not Satan's to give. We note however that his offer is very enlightening.

And in it we're permitted to gaze into the heart of Satan's unholy arrogance. What does he covet above all?

He wants to be like the Most High. To receive to himself what is exclusively God's. Namely worship. You remember in Revelation 22 when John offered to worship the angel.

That angel was appalled. Horrified. See thou do it not. Worship God. But that which appalls the angels. Is the very object of this fallen spirit's lust.

[ 41 : 45 ] And he will pay any price to satisfy it. His offer is not only blasphemous. It is futile.

For it comes too late. Christ has already been promised all the kingdoms of the world. He is the one like a son of man.

He is the one like a son of man. Seen in a vision by Daniel. To whom was given authority. Glory and sovereign power. All peoples, nations and men of every language worship him.

He will ask for the kingdom. He will be king of all the earth. But his kingship doesn't come from the hand of Satan. He receives it rather from the hand of him who said.

Ask of me. And for heritage the heathen I will make thine. Satan says ask of me. Father says ask of me.

[ 42 : 48 ] Satan is here attempting to concentrate the mind of Jesus. As he had concentrated the minds of many of the Jews. On the kingdom per se.

The kingdom as an end in and of itself. In another of his books Gerhardus Vos almost puts it like this.

That we should not speak of the kingdom of God. But of the kingdom of God. That's the important factor. The Jews were obsessed with the kingdom.

That was before their eyes. They forgot whose kingdom it was. Satan comes and says you've come to establish the kingdom. The kingdom is important above all.

Think of its magnificence and its glory. Does it matter very much in what particular way such a great good is achieved?

[ 43 : 49 ] The end justifies the means. Especially if it offers an escape from humiliation and suffering. Jesus answers from Deuteronomy 6.13.

It is written. The Lord your God and serve him only. The Lord your God and serve him only. These words refer to Israel after they've entered into the promised land.

The people are enjoying in prospect its fertility and its prosperity. The people are reminded in the past. The people are reminded in these words that Canaan is not an end in itself.

Canaan is not an end in itself. It is rather the environment for the service and the worship and the enjoyment of God.

It has meaning only as God's land. It has value and permanence only as God's land. And if Israel ever forgets God.

- [ 44 : 51 ] The land will become a curse instead of a blessing. A hell instead of a heaven. And they lose it. They lose it.
- That's what Moses is saying in Deuteronomy 6.12-14. When you eat and are satisfied. Be careful. That you do not forget the Lord. Fear the Lord your God.
- Serve him only. And take your oaths in his name. Do not follow other gods. The point of the reply is obvious. Christ wants no promised land without its Lord.
- He wants no kingdom apart from its God. Whom have I in the heavens high but Thee O Lord alone?
- Nothing could compensate for the absence of his Father. Worship the Lord your God. Nothing could compensate for the absence of his Father.
- [ 45 : 53 ] Worship the Lord your God. And serve him only. He will be king. But God's king in God's way.
- The path to Calvary. The rejection of this final temptation. Is marked also by the first words. Spoken by Jesus in this incident.
- Which are not from scripture. From the Old Testament. The only words. Away from me. Satan. Words of tremendous authority.
- And fierce rebuke. We should have a fanfare of trumpets. When we hear these words. They should arise. Joy and thanksgiving in our hearts.
- Here is a man. A man. Standing on this earth. And with total authority. He says away from me. See. And just like a beaten cur.
- [ 46 : 56 ] Whipped and silent. The devil crawls away. It's tremendous that you hear. Christ the God man. The first time in all history. A man says to the devil.
- Get away from me. See. He can't speak. He can't argue. Crawls away. He's going to attack again. But a not Judean desert. He has met his master. I don't want to move over time. But perhaps I could say something by way of. Present application.
- Christ's temptation. Was certainly unique. And I stress that again. He is here suffering. And connection to backOSS. He has made us a. On the back could load when he has his preswitch also. interns in esperatiable. Mt.
- was certainly unique. And I stress that again. He is here suffering in connection with his messianic work.
- He's a public representative figure. And yet there's a sense in which these same forms of temptation come to every believer. We find ourselves hungry in the desert, in a wilderness of testing, in a place of real, urgent need.
- [ 48 : 18 ] There may be a lust, or an appetite, or a desire that we feel we need to satisfy. There may be an opponent that we feel we need to break.
- There may be a difficulty we feel we need to leave and get away from. There may be a relationship which we want to begin or to continue.
- We feel we must have that relationship. We may feel the pressure of frustration or loneliness or appetite or fear. The question is this.
- Do we wait, starving for God's answer? Or do we do it ourselves? And the devil comes and he says, tell these stones to become bread.
- Year of resources. Year of initiative. Year of ability. Step out apart from God's commandment and meet the need which pains you. and how appetizing those loaves seem.



[ 49 : 24 ] How we need them. And how we want them. And why, oh why, does God not give them? Because there's almost irresistible temptation that it'd be so easy and nobody would know that I could have.

Faith refuses the bid. If God commands us to hunger, if God has caused us to hunger, he has a purpose in so doing.

Of that we're sure. And he will feed us. But he'll feed us in his own time and in his own way. And we will not reach outside the bounds of our duty.

Far better to be left with a God sent problem than with a man made solution. Command that these stones be made bread.

God will give me that bread. Again, the challenge comes to faith to leap down from the temple. It's often disguised as an exercise of greater faith.

[ 50 : 35 ] A claiming of God's promises. There's a whole industry of convention speakers and books and seminars been urging us to claim the miracles. To see God's power come down.

And people are curious of having little faith. If God is God, let him prove himself, we're told, by renewing that congregation. By healing that cancer.

By restoring joy to that troubled soul. Come on, God. Do your stuff. It is as blasphemous as that. I choose those words carefully.

We know he's a God of miracles. But he's God. Apart from miracles. He's a God of the word. He's God of the right miracles.

Perhaps there's a low, inadequate reach of faith which expects nothing from God. Maybe many of our people, maybe some of us have that faith. We just go on, home-drawn way from day to day.

[ 51 : 40 ] There's a higher faith. A higher faith that will expect miracles. That's a great thing. Expect miracles. Remember the three Hebrews.

If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it. No charismatic ever, the greater faithful man. He's able to keep us from the flames of the furnace.

That's fair. But my friends, there's a higher fear. But if not, but if not, be it known unto the old king, we will not serve our God.

Or worship the golden image which thou hast done. They said, we know, we know God can do that. Don't doubt about that. We know God can do it. God can do anything.

We live in the expectation of that. But, if those miracles do not come, we have a word. I believe that the highest reach of faith, you see, is to stand in the midst of a wilderness of disappointment.

[ 52 : 53 ] And to rejoice in an unseen love standing on the word alone. I honor the men whose congregations grow and expand in a blessing.

And if any of you are in that position, brothers, you'll forgive me if I say, I honor more the men who stand in the wilderness and go on and on and on and on.

We don't test God. He tests us. And finally, how often we're tempted to believe that the end justifies the means.

we see the kingdom spread out before us. What a glorious kingdom it can be. Whatever it is. I don't know what it is in your life or your ministry. What a blessing to be possessed.

How tempting to use unworthy means. But what would it be worth if we didn't have God's smile and God's blessing?

[ 53 : 59 ] What would it be worth? What would it be worth? We're here today of kingdom work. But what is kingdom work and kingdom reconstruction without kingdom goodness and kingdom grace and holiness and love?

Save yourself is at the heart of the satanic appeal. But it's yet another of his lies. For we know like our master that whoever wants to save his life will lose it.

Perhaps it's relevant to sit down and to think again of the Lord's prayer and to wonder what it meant to him our Father in heaven. Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

Then lastly and briefly the aftermath. Verse 11 Then the devil left him. It was not a permanent release from attack for Luke writes in 4.13 when the devil had finished all this tempting he left him until an opportune time Achre Kairou.

[ 55 : 24 ] He would return with the same temptation. We hear it again in the voice of Peter in Matthew 16.23 It's the same temptation exactly.

Save thyself. Peter and Christ in it hears the authentic voice of the devil. Get thee behind me. Save me. Do you remember in Matthew 27 how there was that last great threefold attack as he hung the cross.

If thou be the son of God save thyself. Nevertheless there was something final decisive about this victory.

Angels were told came and attended him. Satan offered him food angelic help and the kingdom.

Now he receives all three. The verb is diaconeio which is used in connection with food three times further in Matthew and once in Acts Acts 6.2 angels came and attended him.

[ 56 : 39 ] They fed him. They provided for his body. He refused to leap from the temple in the hope of angelic assistance. He's now served by the angels.

And the kingdom advances not through the worship of Satan but through the declaration of the gospel. from that time on Jesus began to preach repent for the kingdom of heaven is near.

Mark writes he was with the wild beasts and we're reminded of Milton's words and Eden raised in the waste wilderness.

It is paradise with the son of man ruler over the beasts of the field but it's paradise in the wilderness already present but not yet consummated for a headless Calvary.

Prayer helped me is that of David Brown in the close of his discussion of this chapter in the four gospels. Perhaps we could make it our own. Blessed Saviour look upon our tempted condition here below and what time the enemy cometh in upon us like a flood.

[ 58 : 00 ] By thy good spirit help us to tread in thy footsteps so shall we be more than conquerors through him that loved us. Amen.