



First Sunday of Lent  
Light of Christ Anglican Church  
The Rev. Mike Moffitt  
March 6, 2022

*Jesus Knew Who He Was and So Can You*

Text: [Luke 4:1-13](#)

Recently I watched a 9-part video series entitled, “The New Apologetics” by author Emilio Ramos pastor of Sovereign Joy Community Church in Keller, Texas. Ramos writes that,

the new apologetics exist to confront the challenges facing the church in the 21st century by responding to the emergence of globalism, futurism, transhumanism, pagan spirituality, and sexuality with a robust theology that is rooted in the eschatological superstructure of Scripture and the theology of the image of God in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ while the earth remains.

I heartily recommend the series which is a part of the [American Gospel TV](#) website.

One of the series is entitled, “Will there be eternal life in the Cloud?” and opens with this statement,

The world promises a paradise that can be programmed - a heaven we can realize through a digital evolution leading to an eternal life in the cloud. In this episode of The New Apologetics, we discuss technological singularity and the rise of trans-humanism.

This series deals with something that some scientists are working on and claim to have made serious headway. Unfortunately this subject has enjoyed a growth of interest among many children and young adults: the possibility of being part human-part machine. Think about how many fictional movies there are where superheroes like Captain America, Spider-Man, Wolverine, Iron Man, the Hulk, and Ant-Man were given birth by the work of fictional scientists. Marvel Comics created a whole new genre directing the minds of children and adults to the possibility that science can do anything. Children are growing up with their attention more and more in the cyber world instead of the real world and sadly many seem to have lost interest in the real world.

The series pointed out that religion has a new competitor—Dataism. Those who are involved in this claim that even life itself is nothing more than data. The idea is that our minds can be transferred to computers and therefore we can achieve immortality. The goal is to achieve paradise, happiness, beauty, and life eternal. One scientist was quoted as saying that “intelligence levels are growing, so it’s only a matter of time before we evolve beyond humans.”

As farfetched as it sounds it has become a topic among scientists who are seeing the possibility of extending life indefinitely through the use of the digital world, and they don’t feel it will be a long time coming. In their plan each essential body part could be replaced as needed by the digital/mechanical equivalent, even the brain. They are actually speaking of this as a resurrection of humans.

The reason that this should not be ignored by the Christian community is because what we are seeing is one of the by-products of our culture's attempt to do away with the belief in God as Creator and Sustainer of all things in the heavens and the earth. The Scriptures reveal to us that every

human life from the womb to the grave has value because each individual is made in the image of God. When the biblical teaching on the value of human life is dismissed then man will come up with his own standard and values, his own version of reality.

Some scientists believe that before long reality can be replaced by an alternate reality of your choice. We have already seen how the minds and morals of our children are being groomed for an alternate way of thinking about truth. We have experienced where this can lead by the abortion industry, as well as the rise in the belief that the gender of a child cannot be determined through checking out their gender at birth. Daily we read about changes in our society that seem better suited to a very poor-quality B-rated movie story line. Essentially the problem is that once again man is trying to find new ways to replace the God scripture with a celebration of man as the god of his own domain.

We really do live in a fascinating time. The technology and availability of information at our fingertips are much greater than any age before now and it just keeps growing. On the positive side, this has enabled Christians to reach a much greater number of people for Christ and made available to everyone a seemingly unlimited amount of teaching materials via the World Wide Web. There have been wonderful, amazing gains in many areas of our lives today but since the beginning of life here on earth men and women have found a way to take the blessings given to them by God and turn them around for terribly evil purposes. As I watched this series it made me wonder if before long God will respond in much the same way as He did at the Tower of Babel in [Genesis 11:1-9](#). How much more of this will He tolerate. Remember what God said in Genesis 11:5-8,

*And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one*

*people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.*

This is the first Sunday in our Lenten journey where we should invite our Lord Jesus to walk with us in a greater awareness of and intimacy with Him than ever before. My hope is that we will come to a deeper encounter with the Lord as we focus on the reality of the cross on Good Friday and the joy of the resurrection on Easter morning. The seasons of the church should not be rote but intentional times of focusing on God's word and Spirit anew.

Our goal today is that we begin this walk focusing on the importance of not just knowing who we are but whose we are. We want to be the living witnesses that our reality is that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, and He rules and reigns in righteousness. He wants to be known by those who come to Him by faith. He reveals to us the world as He intended it to be and one day will be when He returns. This is the reality that the Creator of all things has promised us if we embrace Him. Today we'll look at our gospel passage from [Luke 4:1-13](#).

First let's go back to Luke 3:21-22,

*Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."*

After Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, and the Father declared His approval of the Son. Unlike Matthew's account Luke interrupts the flow of the story with the genealogy of Jesus before he writes of His temptation in the wilderness. Darrel Bock in his Commentary on Luke's gospel writes,

the genealogy immediately preceding this account has named Jesus as Son of Adam and Son of God. The echo of Genesis 3 cannot be missed. What Adam failed to do as representative of all humanity, Jesus succeeds in doing. Jesus' success is the first of many TKOs (ed. technical knockouts) Jesus will deliver against Satan; the victory serves to reverse a string of defeats humanity has suffered at the hands of this deceptive, elusive enemy. Jesus shows that spirituality does not always take the easiest road; it trusts God's word and remains faithful to his way.

Now let's turn to Luke 4:1-2,

*And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry.*

Like Matthew's account, Luke writes that immediately after Jesus' baptism the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. I think it important to note here that Jesus was fully human and fully God. If He was to be our representative then He would need to face everything that humans do. Most everyone has those moments of truth where we have to show what we're made of. In those times what we have said and believe about ourselves must line up with how we react to situations. Many times

those options have to do with ethics and show what we stand for. Jesus was there at the request of the Father and the way that He would reveal His love for the Father would be through His loving obedience. The choices that He would make would not only clarify His commitment but would point to the road of faithful dependence that the disciples would need to travel.

Jesus made this abundantly clear in Matthew 10:33, *“whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.”*

Jesus’ ministry was inaugurated by the loving affirmation of His heavenly Father and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Then he was led into the wilderness, possibly the Sinai, where he was alone, and in danger from wild animals for 40 days and nights. Jesus went to prepare himself for the calling that the Father had given him, like a champion going into the field to face and conquer the enemy. The story of David and Goliath comes to mind as the young lone warrior faces a previously unbeaten enemy and conquers him completely. Jesus would deny himself food and companionship and exist only on prayer and fasting.

In doing so he was giving Satan all the advantages that he would want. After 40 days and nights Jesus was hungry and likely very weak as well. He was indeed the Son of God, but he came to earth fully human, consequently he would experience the same pain and weakness that we would after having gone so long without nourishment. He placed himself in a position where only God, His Father could see him through. It was at the point of his greatest weakness that Satan came to tempt him.

It’s here that the fight is fully engaged with the tempter, aptly named because he was the same one who came to our first parents to tempt them. He comes to Jesus with the identical reasoning that he brought to Adam

and Eve. He begins by suggesting that God, the Father was not as good and loving as he appeared to be. Satan had no doubt as to the identity of Jesus but wanted him to consider that he was in such a weakened condition, how could a loving heavenly Father want him to starve in this miserable, dangerous, and lonely place? “Are you really the “beloved Son” that the voice from Heaven suggested? Does the evidence of your situation make this seem likely to you?” This was the same ruse that the serpent suggested to Eve in the Garden of Eden, *“Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”*

Satan knew that God had given them all the trees in the garden for food except one, but he is setting the stage to question God’s goodness. “Did he really place you in the midst of this lush and beautiful place only to tempt you and make you miserable? Could it be that he is trying to deny you the very best? Does that seem fair?”

To Jesus he suggests that it would be proper if he commanded the stones to become bread because after all, “You are the Son of God, right? You don’t need to wait on your Father to provide for you. Look at you, you’re starving!” Jesus well knew this deceiver and knew the antagonistic hatred that he had for God. Jesus could have rebuked Satan sending him to Mars if he had wanted to but instead he chose to use the power of God’s holy scripture, just like we need to. He shined the light of God’s word as a weapon against Satan and temptation.

In quoting Deuteronomy 8:3 Jesus gave the very same response that Moses gave to Israel in the wilderness and for the very same reason, they were questioning God’s faithfulness and ability to provide. Moses said,

*“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.”*

Jesus applies his circumstances to that of Israel in the wilderness. Israel was God’s son, and he was called out of Egypt into the wilderness where he would learn to trust in God’s favor and provision. Israel failed to trust their loving Father; Jesus would not make the same mistake. God would provide when he was ready.

Satan misunderstood the reason that Jesus had been led into the wilderness. He didn’t need this temptation in order to prove his devotion to his Father, he did it so that he could identify with us. Hebrews 2:18; 4:15,

*For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

I think the second temptation was the brashest of all of them,

*Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”*

The devil offered Jesus the kingdom without the cross. All that he would need to do is give Satan what he had been longing for since he fell from being an exalted servant of God to his most profane enemy. This request shows the blackness of Lucifer’s heart. He was challenging Jesus, God in the flesh to violate the first commandment to worship God alone. [James 1:14–15](#) reveals what happens when our desires lure and ensnare us into sin,

*but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

Satan models this perfectly by showing that he would rather be worshipped than have title to all the kingdoms of the world. The time will come when God sends him to eternal judgment. Revelation 20:10,

*and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

From the beginning of the temptations Satan suggested that the Father was unkind and thoughtless, so now he plays his last card by inviting Jesus to disown any allegiance to God and call him father. Jesus' reward would be that he would inherit all the kingdoms of the world and it would only require that Jesus bow down and worship him, which anyone could see would be such a small thing with a great reward. Jesus already knew that He would receive all the kingdoms of the world, but it required that He lay down His life to procure them

The Psalmist quoting the Father in Psalm 2:6–8 wrote,

*As for me, I have set my King  
on Zion, my holy hill.*

*I will tell of the decree:*

*The Lord said to me, "You are my Son;  
today I have begotten you.*

*Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,  
and the ends of the earth your possession.*

We must see in this brazen suggestion that our enemy is cunning and was even willing to suggest such a blasphemous and unthinkable thing to the

very Son of God. What about us? Do you think that he will hesitate for even a moment to whisper in your ear? We must stay in God's word and in prayer in order to recognize his evil cunning and speak the truth of God's word to send him packing.

Then the devil takes and places Jesus on the pinnacle of the temple. The first-century Jewish historian Josephus wrote that to stand upon the pinnacle (which was a wing of the temple), "would make a man's head run giddy to look down from it." The pinnacle rose around 200 feet from the floor of the Kidron Valley. Some have suggested that this was possibly at a time of public worship. If Jesus threw himself down from such a high place and landed unharmed, then surely those who witnessed this would be amazed and would become his followers. Satan then employs the word of God himself,

*"If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'"*

On the face of it, this seems reasonable...what a powerful introduction to the people in Jerusalem and what an opportunity to set the stage for his entrance as their Messiah. Satan was quoting from [Psalm 91:11-12](#) but he applied it wrongly, as it was encouraging Jesus to neglect the mission that the Father had given him, just to prove to Satan who he was. Jesus knew exactly who he was and so he used Scripture correctly to rebuke his enemy, ***"You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."*** Certainly, Jesus could claim all of God's promises but never as a means of testing his Father's goodness and faithfulness.

It's interesting to note that every scripture that Jesus quoted came from the Book of Deuteronomy. In this story Jesus was teaching his disciples that to

effectively counter the attacks of our deceitful enemy, we must use God's word, not the wisdom of men. We should feed upon the word as our bread so that we will be strong enough to command this liar to flee, as Jesus did.

Critics have attacked the Book of Deuteronomy for many, many years as being historically untrustworthy, but it's important to remember that Jesus referred to it as the word of God and likely the fresh bread that he fed upon.

Finally, our passage ends with, verse 13,

*And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.*

The example that Jesus gave us in the wilderness temptations has never been more relevant than they are today. Satan is certainly going about as a roaring lion. 1 Peter 5:8 reminds us,

*Be sober-minded and alert. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

Many in our country and around the world would have Christianity eradicated and claim that it is responsible for the judgmental and archaic beliefs that hold people down. Circumstances all around us, whether it be the pandemic, moral failure being celebrated, abortion being accepted as good, or the war just beginning in Ukraine, doubt and fear seem to grip the hearts of many, even within the church. We have seen what happens when there is the tendency to compromise our love and dependence upon God's word for the sake of unity. Isaiah 5:20,

*Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for*

*bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!*

The season of Lent is a wonderful time to invite the Lord Jesus to help us remember and renew our calling as the people of God to bring the Gospel to a lost and dying world. Anything else is to fall for the lies and deception of Satan. Jesus gave us the perfect example as to how that should be done, through Word and Spirit in his wilderness temptations. This example of the temptations of Jesus points us to the reality that God, the King of the universe acted on behalf of those who would come to Him in repentance and faith in the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This is and always has been the only hope our world has for salvation. This is the true reality that always brings new life not the counterfeit offered by the enemy that always ends in eternal judgment.

Let's pray.

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