

Temptation and Triumph

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[0 : 0 0] We're in Matthew chapter 3, verse 13, going all the way to chapter 4, verse 11. Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's word. Heavenly Father, I praise you that your word is not bound.

I praise you that your word does not depend, and the proclamation of your word ultimately does not depend on my authority or credibility, because it rests on your authority.

So please, Father, may the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing in your sight. Lord, my rock and my redeemer. And give all of us here in this room ears to hear, to believe, and to obey your word.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please stand, and if you are able, for the reading of God's word, just to honor God who has spoken to us in his scriptures.

Let's read. Starting in Matthew chapter 3, verse 13. Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him.

[1 : 3 9] John would have prevented him, saying, I need to be baptized by you. And do you come to me? But Jesus answered him, Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.

Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water. And behold, the heavens were opened to him. And he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him.

And behold, a voice from heaven said, This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

And after fasting 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.

But he answered, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, He will command his angels concerning you.

[3 : 1 1] And on their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against the stone. Jesus said to him, Again, it is written, You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.

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.

Then Jesus said to him, Be gone, Satan. For it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.

Then the devil left him. And behold, angels came and were ministering to him. It's God's holy and authoritative word. You may be seated. One of the marks of adulthood, in contrast with childhood, is that we carry regrets.

Healthy Christians, of course, learn to deal with regret by receiving God's forgiveness and mercy and grace and also learning to trust in God's sovereignty in and through all of it, even through our mistakes and faults and sins.

[4 : 3 8] But if there isn't anything that we wish we had done that we didn't do, or anything that we wish we hadn't done that we did do, we probably just haven't lived for very long.

We've all messed up. We have all done things that we should not have done and failed to do things that we should have done. Maybe you didn't take a career opportunity that you should have taken.

Maybe you took a career opportunity that you should not have taken, and now your health and your family are suffering as a result. Maybe you were too fearful to ask that person out on a date.

Maybe by your stubborn refusal to humble yourself and apologize, you lost a dear friend. Maybe you said something that is deeply hurtful to someone that cut them down.

Maybe you didn't intervene in the life of your friend or family member when you should have, and now that person is dead. No matter how deep our regrets, time only flows one way, and there are no do-overs in life.

[5 : 56] The Bible tells us that we have all failed in a profound and permanent way. We were created to love and to obey and to worship God, but instead we have loved ourselves more than we've loved God.

We have sinned against Him, and we have made not God, but other people and other things the center of our allegiance and our affection and our adoration. In other words, we have made idols and have worshipped them instead of God.

And this is what the Bible calls sin, has created this impassable rift between God and us, but unfortunately for us, there is no do-over in life.

How then can we be forgiven of our sins and reconcile to God? How then can we fulfill the righteous requirements of the law which we have already broken?

How can we be saved? That question, and not what's on the news this week, and not the anxieties that you walked into church with this morning, is the most pressing and important question that faces every single one of us.

[7 : 23] And Matthew 3, 13 to 4, 11 gives us a wonderful answer that Jesus is the Son of God who fulfills all righteousness as our substitute.

First, we're going to talk about the testimony of the Son of God. Secondly, we'll talk about the temptation of the Son of God. And finally, we'll talk about the triumph of the Son of God.

The first thing to note in this passage is the testimony of the Son of God, more specifically, the testimony of God the Father regarding the Son, His Son, Jesus Christ. The baptism of Jesus doesn't get as much attention as the birth narratives, especially during the Christmas season that we just went through.

But while the two of the gospel writers, Mark and John, entirely omit the birth narratives of Jesus, all four gospels include some variation of the baptism of Jesus and the testimony that the God the Father bears about who His Son is.

And that shows, that fact that all the gospels highlight this event shows what a defining moment it was for first century believers. It was a pivotal moment that confirmed for Christians who Jesus' true identity was, who He really is.

[8 : 39] It says in chapter 3, verse 13, then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by Him. What's wrong with this picture? We learned last week from the preceding passage that John's water baptism is a baptism of repentance.

Remember how John the Baptist rebuked the Pharisees and the Sadducees who were coming to observe His baptism saying, bear fruit in keeping with repentance. True repentance entails renouncing sin, repenting of sin, turning away from sin.

That's the fruit of repentance. That's the fruit of obedience that repentance is supposed to bear.

This is why if a so-called Christian lives in unrepentant sin, presuming upon the grace of God and indulging in sin without confession, the Bible commands us to take steps as a local church to declare them an unbeliever and to discontinue Christian fellowship with that person.

By their lack of repentance, they have reneged on their baptismal covenant, which is the promise to repent and to believe in Jesus. And that's precisely what is wrong with this picture.

Why is Jesus being baptized? What sin did Jesus commit? What sin does Jesus have to confess?

[10 : 08] What sin does Jesus have to be washed of? Nothing. There is none. Moreover, why is Jesus coming to be baptized by John?

Remember what John said in chapter 3, verse 11, in reference to Jesus, He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

I mentioned last week that Jews taught that disciples should be submissive and subservient to their teachers. They taught that disciples should do for their teachers everything that a slave does for his master except carrying their sandals because that's beneath the dignity even of a disciple.

That's fitting only for a slave. And John said, I am not worthy to be your disciple.

No, not only that, I am not worthy to be your slave. I am not worthy to carry your sandals because that's the surpassing greatness and worth and glory of Jesus Christ.

[11:28] That's why it says in chapter 3, verse 14, John would have prevented him saying, I need to be baptized by you and do you come to me?

Jesus, I'm a sinner. You're not. Jesus, you're the king. I'm the servant.

I need your spirit and fire baptism. Not you, my water baptism of repentance. There's something profoundly wrong with this picture.

But Jesus tells John that it is appropriate for now for him to get baptized by John in verse 15, let it be so now for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.

The word fulfill and its variation is used 15 times to speak of Jesus fulfilling something in the gospel of Matthew. Of those 15 instances, only this verse doesn't refer specifically to the fact that Jesus is fulfilling the scriptures.

[12:38] So it's a significant verse. What is it that Jesus is fulfilling? He's fulfilling all righteousness. Righteousness is right living in accordance with God's righteous standards.

Righteousness is being in right relationship with God and in and through that relationship with God being in right relationship with everything and everyone else around you. So how does Jesus' baptism fulfill all righteousness?

We find the answer to that question in the way Jesus describes his own purpose and mission throughout the gospels. He says in Matthew 8, 17 to 18 that Jesus came to bear our illnesses and diseases.

Quoting from Isaiah 53 which we read from earlier from the assurance of pardon, it said that Jesus came to be pierced for our transgressions. That he came to be crushed for our iniquities so that by his wounds we are healed and it says a few verses later in that same chapter in Isaiah that the righteous one Jesus will make many to be accounted righteous and he shall bear their iniquities. That's how Jesus fulfills all righteousness. He bears our iniquities and makes us accounted as righteous even though we are sinners.

[14:00] Again, Jesus says in Matthew 20 verse 28 the son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. Jesus came to die in the stead of sinners.

He came to pour out his blood for the forgiveness of our sins. He came to make the many accounted righteous. So what is Jesus doing by getting baptized by John here?

Jesus is identifying with sinners. Walking in solidarity with sinners. Jesus already at the very beginning of his ministry starting to bear our burdens.

Setting an example for what sinners ought to do in repenting. So John's question I need to be baptized by you and you come to me is profound.

I should be in your place. You should be in my place. That's precisely the point.

[15:12] Jesus is our substitute. We should be hanged on that cross for our sins. But instead Jesus dies on that cross in our place.

that's my place. What are you doing there? Come down from there. No, but Jesus says it is right to fulfill all righteousness.

So at Jesus' insistence John relents and baptizes Jesus and it says in verses 16 and 17 immediately he went up from the water and behold the heavens were opened to him and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him and behold a voice from heaven said this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.

I'm going to digress for a couple minutes because it says in verse 16 that Jesus went up from the water which I think is a clear example of immersion baptism.

right you guys can laugh that's okay we are baptistic so I do need to point that out. It's funny but in one of the children's Bibles that I read for the kids it's called the big picture story Bible that's the one that we recommend to a lot of our kids in the preschool age in the scene of Jesus' baptism the illustrator decided that he's not going to take a position on it so Jesus is in the water but John the Baptist is sprinkling water on but that's just not the way it happened originally to baptize baptizo in Greek means to immerse it's to dunk in water.

[16:57] The reason why people started sprinkling in the early church as you can see in the didache which is the teachings of the apostles kind of handed down kind of a how-to practical manual it says your first choice in baptism is to use running water or living water out in the ocean or in the river or something.

If you don't have that option then use still water in a tank like we do here because we don't have that option and then it said if you don't have that then just sprinkle them three times in the name of

the Father and Son and Holy Spirit.

That was the manual and so that's kind of how that descended down. So I'm sorry if you're Presbyterian and you're here but that's the digression. Way more important than how Jesus was baptized was what happened afterward.

Three times in this passage we see the word behold and each time heaven comes down to earth. Look at those situations where it says behold.

Verse 16 behold the heavens were open to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. This doesn't mean that Jesus didn't have the Holy Spirit prior to this point.

[18:04] Remember in Matthew 1:18 to 20 Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit already. But when God was creating the world in Genesis 1:2 it says that the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters like a bird.

And similarly when God was in a way recreating the world after the flood judgment in Noah's day in Genesis 8:8 to 12 Noah sends out what bird? A dove to hover over the waters.

Likewise the Spirit of God hovers over the water and rests on Jesus during his baptism because Jesus is the one who ushers in the new creation of God.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold the new has come. There's another word.

There is another instance of behold in verse 17 and behold a voice from heaven said this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased. And again in chapter 4:11 then the devil left him and behold angels came and were ministering to him.

[19:17] And where do angels come from? They come from heaven. Three times we are told behold and that means we ought to pay attention and each time the very heavens testify to who Jesus is.

All of the heavens testify to who Jesus is. God the father testifies. God the spirit testifies and all their ministering angels, their servants testify to what God the father says out loud.

Beloved son with whom he is well, with whom I am well pleased. And in the rest of the gospel of Matthew we see people gradually coming to realize and to believe the full meaning of the father's declaration that Jesus is God's son.

We see that later with his disciples and after Jesus calms the storm, Matthew 14:33, we see that in Peter's declaration that you are the Christ, the son of the living God in Matthew 16:16, and finally with the centurion's declaration after Jesus' death, Matthew 27:54.

Truly this was the son of God. This is meant to show us that Jesus is the one mediator between God and man, between heaven and earth. He is the one who brings God's kingdom of heaven and does God's will on earth as it is in heaven.

[20:34] He is the coming one, the promised one, Emmanuel, the only beloved son of God, who shares the father's nature.

That is the testimony of the son of God. Now let's turn to the temptation of the son of God in chapter four. Jesus goes right here from the high of his baptism to the low of his temptation.

salvation. He goes from the high of the waters of the Jordan River to the low of the desert wilderness.

Jesus goes from the high of hearing the voice of God from heaven to the low of hearing the voice of Satan who roams the earth. Jesus goes from hearing this is my beloved son to the low of hearing if you are the son of God.

The striking contrasts are intentionally laid side by side to make a point. We see here in the life of Christ that the Christian life does not always go from one spiritual high to the next.

[21:49] Christ. But that we often go from the water to the wilderness and from affirmations to temptations.

We sometimes mistakenly think that when trials and temptations and tribulations come our way that we must be doing something wrong. God must be punishing me.

God must not be happy with me. I must have done something wrong. But look at Jesus. God the Father just said to him, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.

And yet Jesus faces the temptations of the devil himself not once, not twice, but three times. And note what it says in verse one.

Then Jesus was led up by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. The very spirit that just descended upon Jesus in the likeness of a dove is the same spirit that now leads Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

[23 : 05] It's not because Jesus is unfaithful or unloved, but precisely because he is faithful and because he is loved. He is now led into that period of testing.

And this reveals the good and sovereign purposes of God which transcend all of the evil purposes of the devil. The word translated tempt here can also be translated test depending on the context. Sometimes when translated tempt, it means to tempt someone in order to make them fail so you can disapprove of them. Or when it translated test, sometimes it means to test someone to show their true worth and approve of them.

As God tested Abraham and as he tested the Israelites in the wilderness. Both nuances are relevant here. God cannot be tempted with evil and he tempts no one.

That is true. James 1.13. So here it is the devil who does the tempting, not God. God, the devil is trying to make Jesus fall and fail and to discredit him.

[24 : 19] But over and above all of what the devil is doing and intending, it is God himself who is testing Jesus in order to accredit him before his ministry begins in earnest.

So don't be discouraged if you're in a wilderness season. what the enemy means for evil, God means it for our good and for his glory. In the world, you will have tribulation, Jesus said, but take heart, I have overcome the world.

Because Jesus himself in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin, he is able to sympathize with our weaknesses. The antagonist of the scene, we all know him, is the devil, who is called by three different names in this passage.

He is called the devil four times, Satan once in verse 10, and he is called the tempter in verse 3.

This is not referring to ordinary demons and evil spirits that you see throughout the gospels.

It's referring to Satan who is the ruler and prince among them all. The head honcho himself comes and attempts to go toe-to-toe with Jesus, but he is about to be roundly defeated and sent home packing.

[25 : 41] The devil is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word Satan, and it means accuser or slanderer, because that is what he does. He accuses and slanders God's people day and night.

He shouts condemnation over us day and night. If you have a clear conscience, that doesn't mean that you haven't sinned.

It means that there is no sin you haven't confessed and haven't brought to God. You've done that. You've confessed your sins. You've brought those things to God.

But you still hear the voice of the devil condemning you. That's not the voice of the Lord. It's the voice of the accuser and the slanderer.

He's also called a tempter and a liar. He whispers lies to us about God's character, and he tempts us to disobey God. The devil is not a literary personification of all the evil in the world.

[26 : 51] He is a real and personal being. And we can see that clearly here. As much as we would like to, we cannot explain away all the hatred and the evil that is in this world simply by the sinfulness of man.

Though that sinfulness is very grave. There is a real personal evil, a spiritual evil, that is at work in our world.

And that's why Ephesians 6, 12 reminds us that our spiritual battle is not against flesh and blood.

It's not against other people, but it is against the spiritual rulers and the authorities and the powers. And against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. It's so easy for us, isn't it, to antagonize people who disagree with us or go against our interests, act against our interests in the world and in the church.

But we must remember that our battle is ultimately against a different enemy. It's not against flesh and blood. Let's look at the temptations in detail.

[28 : 02] The first is found in verses 2 and 3. After fasting 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, if you are the son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.

The number 40 is symbolically significant and it comes up frequently throughout scripture. But the most relevant connections here is that Moses fasts for 40 days and 40 nights before receiving the covenant requirements for God's people from God.

And even more relevant than that, Israel, God's people, wander in the wilderness for 40 years prior to entering the promised land.

And since Jesus uses scriptures from Deuteronomy from the period of the wilderness wandering of God's people, Jesus is here being portrayed as the representative of God's people, the new Israel, who is not facing the same temptations that his people faced in the wilderness.

The first temptation is pretty straightforward. I think we can all relate. Verse 2 tells us that Jesus was hungry. And though Jesus is fully God, he's also fully man, which means that he needed to eat and when he didn't, he got hungry.

[29 : 26] Of course, many of us, including me, we exaggerate and say that we're starving when dinner is one or two hours late. But Jesus is actually starving. Forty days and forty nights.

Imagine that. Jesus' body has long depleted the reserves of glucose and the fat. Now his body is breaking down his own protein, his own muscles, consuming itself for energy.

So imagine how hungry Jesus would have been and how tempting Satan's temptation would have been. If you are the son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.

There's nothing wrong with the appetite for bread. God made us to get hungry and God made us to eat. There's nothing wrong with wanting to eat bread. But Jesus is here being tempted to doubt God's provision for him and to take things into own hands and provide for himself.

It brings into question the way God is leading Jesus because God's the one who led Jesus into the wilderness where there's no food. He's the one who has led Jesus to fasting for those forty days and forty nights.

[30 : 42] We can see how Jesus responds in verse four. It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Jesus is quoting Deuteronomy 8 verse 3 when Moses said to the Israelites, he humbled you and let your hunger 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.

God humbled the Israelites by letting them experience hunger and then instead of providing enough food for them to last the entire journey in the wilderness, God provided just enough to last one day so that each day they would have to depend on God's fresh provision so that they would be humbled, so that they would know that God the Father is their provider.

They were to learn humility and submission and dependence on God through that, but the Israelites failed that test. They grumbled against God and they doubted his provision.

And so in essence, the devil is asking Jesus here, aren't you the son of God? Didn't the father just say, you are my beloved son in whom I am well pleased?

[32 : 05] Aren't you the son of God? And aren't you starving? Where is your father? Doesn't he provide for you?

Doesn't he care about you? Here's some rocks. Take things into your own hands. Use the power that is within you. Turn it into stone. This is a representative temptation that can be applied generally to all kinds of different temptations of appetite and desire.

Where in your lives have your appetites grown inordinate? Inordinate? Maybe it's an inordinate appetite for food, for sex, for money, for companionship, for things.

The devil tempts us in very similar ways. Aren't you a child of God? Where is your father? Aren't you lonely?

Go. Sleep with that woman at that party. Marry that non-Christian man. He will love you. Provide for you.

[33 : 25] Your father is nowhere to be seen. Take things into your own hands. Don't wait on God or trust in his provision. Aren't you in need? Steal that money.

Cheat on the taxes. No one will notice. Aren't you the son of God? Aren't you the daughter of God? Where is your father? If you are in a season of wilderness hunger, don't demand food at your own convenience, but instead wait for God's good and perfect timing.

That's the first temptation. Yes, we need bread for life, but life is not for bread. The point, the purpose of our lives is to do the will of God, to live by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

That's why Jesus says in John 4, 34, my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. So Jesus passes the first test. The second temptation is in verses five and six.

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, 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.

[34 : 44] Lest you strike your foot against a stone. Having been rebuked by scripture, the devil ups his game and decides that he will try his own hand in using scripture against Jesus.

And he quotes Psalm 91 verses 11 to 12. It's all too easy to rip scripture out of context and misuse it to suit our own purposes.

I've quoted this before as many preacher and professors have said, the text without its context is a pretext. In its original context, Psalm 91 spoke about how we ought to walk with him and to trust in him and that if we take shelter under the shelter of God almighty, that we will be protected by him. The Psalm called for humble submission to God, but the devil is tempting Jesus to presumption, to put man and not God at the center.

Aren't you the son of God? May God prove his care and protection for you by jumping off this temple. Notice the devil takes Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple.

[35 : 59] This is the very house of God in those days. Surely God is in this place. Surely he'll not miss you here. You're right at the tip, the pinnacle of the temple.

Let's do a little trust fall. Jump. Jump. But Jesus once again rebuffed Satan with scripture in verse seven, quoting from Deuteronomy 6, 16, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test as you tested him at Massa.

This is an allusion to the time when the Israelites quarreled with Moses and tested God by angrily demanding water because they were thirsty in the wilderness. Exodus 17.

This incident is described this way in Exodus 17, verse seven. And he called the name of the place Massa and Meribah because of the quarreling of the people of Israel and because they tested the Lord by saying, is the Lord among us or not?

Now that gets to the rub of the temptation here. The nature of this temptation is God with you or not? Does your father care for you or not?

[37 : 08] Make him prove it. We so often put God to these kinds of tests. If you heal my disease, then I will believe in you, that you care for me.

If you give me a job, then I will follow you and believe that you are for me. If you give this to me, if you do that for me, and if only then will I believe that you really are there and that you love me. But to do that is to put God to the test.

To do that is to make God serve us rather than us serving God. So Jesus refuses the second temptation as well.

Notice that both of these first two temptations are prefaced with the conditional clause, if you are the son of God. This is directly related to the fact that God just said concerning Jesus in chapter three, verse 17, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.

Satan calls into question Jesus' identity as the son of God, not because he doubts it, he knows it, but because he wants to cast a shadow over it, because he wants to drive a wedge between the father and the son.

[38 : 27] And not only the devil, but again and again, godless people in the gospel will taunt Jesus precisely on this point. In Matthew 27, 39 to 40, the passerbys, the passerby, they deride Jesus and they wag their heads saying, if you are the son of God, come down from the cross.

In Matthew 27, 43, the chief priest with the scribes and the elders, they mocked Jesus saying, he trusts in God, let God deliver him now, if he desires him, for he said, I am the son of God.

If you are the son of God, wouldn't your life be different right now? That's the thrust of all the temptations that the devil puts before the people of God.

That is why every temptation is serious and every sin is grave. Not only does our sin in and of itself displease God, it also impugns God's character.

It makes us question the goodness of our heavenly father. All Satan needs to do is to drive this narrow sliver of the tip of the wedge in. Then he can drive the rest of it in.

[39 : 55] In the third and final temptation, the devil drops all pretense. There is no, if you are the son of God, Satan is no longer trying to play on Jesus' relationship with the father and making it sound like, oh, since you are God's son, these things should be happening for you.

No, he drops the mask and outright tempts Jesus to renounce his allegiance to God the father. He says in verses eight and nine, 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 is described in several instances throughout the New Testament as the ruler of this world and he does in fact have this authority under God's sovereign ultimate rule to grant this.

This world is under the devil's influence until it is wrested from his control by our Lord Jesus when he returns to glory to consummate his kingdom. The main thrust of the temptation is authority and glory in the world.

Jesus already has been promised authority and glory. He is destined to rule according to the prophecies of the Old Testament. So it is not wrong for the son of God to have these things.

[41 : 17] The problem is in the way that the son of God claims that authority and glory. God the father had appointed that the son would attain glory through the humiliation of the cross.

God the father has ordained that the son would attain his rule and his kingship through service by giving his life as a ransom for many. But this temptation tempts Jesus to short circuit that process. aren't you the son of God? Isn't all this authority and glory and power supposed to be yours anyway? Well then here it is. Take it.

I offer it to you. Forget proclaiming the kingdom of heaven. Here. Here. I give you all the kingdoms of the world. All you have to do is renounce your allegiance to God and pledge allegiance to me.

Bow down and worship me. Jesus answers the devil by quoting scripture once again in verse 10.

Be gone Satan. For it is written you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.

[42 : 26] This is a quotation from Deuteronomy 6.13.14 and recalls Israel's idolatry in Exodus 32 when they made a golden calf in the place of the true God and worshiped and bowed before it.

In Moses' absence these people, the Israelites realized they need divine help in order to complete the conquest and to claim the promised land but they're like well Moses is gone and where is God? And so they pick quickly because their quest wasn't ultimately about the glory of God but about their own glory. Cut God out of the picture. In comes the golden calf.

Are you willing to forsake your allegiance to God for your own glory? Are you willing to compromise your principles in order to climb the ladder of success?

Yes, you want to do great things for God but is that great thing really for you or for God? There's only one person in the world who deserves worship.

[43 : 38] and that is the Lord our God. Does your life bear witness to this exclusive allegiance? In God's economy humility always comes before honor and pride always comes before fall because Jesus does not take things into his own hands but trusts in the Father's will after his death and resurrection Jesus says in Matthew 28, 18 all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

He didn't get that authority from the devil because the devil doesn't have that authority. He got it from God the Father because it's authority in heaven and on earth. it is unbecoming of us brothers and sisters to seek positions and glory power recognition we already have the greatest affirmation we can have in Jesus Christ God the Father says of all of us this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.

Is there more glory out there somewhere than being the heir of the king of the universe? Is there more joy out there somewhere than being able to be well pleasing to God our Father?

So Jesus passes all three tests with flying colors which is why he's prepared to meet the fiery trials of the cross. Later in Matthew 26 when Jesus is being betrayed and arrested his disciples try to intervene but Jesus says do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?

But how then should the scriptures be fulfilled that it must be so? Once again there is a temptation at the end of his life on his way to the cross to call down legions of angels to protect him but again Jesus does not take that rock because he says the scriptures must be fulfilled and he must die and later in Matthew 16 Peter will declare to Jesus you are the Christ the son of the living God which is an amazing profession but shortly after that we see that Peter still doesn't get it all because when Jesus foretells his impending suffering and death Peter says oh wait a minute no no no you are the son of God far be it from you this shall never happen to you but Jesus hears the voice of the devil behind Peter if you are the son of God you would not have to suffer like this and so Jesus rebukes [46 : 42] Peter and rebukes Satan get behind me Satan you are a hindrance to me for you are not setting your mind on the things of God but on the things of man very similar to how Jesus now says be gone Satan in so doing Jesus passes all the tests where Israel God's people failed Israel if you

might recall from our series in Exodus is described as God's firstborn son in Exodus 4:22 and in Jeremiah 31:9 and in their experience in the wilderness of 40 years they failed all three of these tests but Jesus who is the new Israel who represents all of God's people including us succeeds where they failed during his 40 days of temptation and this is why all of Jesus' scriptural answers come from Deuteronomy because he is functioning as our substitute to fulfill all righteousness so think for a moment with me of all the sins that you have ever committed maybe some sins that no one no living human being knows but you think of all the evil and sordid places that you have gone with your feet with your eyes and in your mind and in your heart

Jesus the holy one the son of God has been there he has been there he has been there and he succeeded exactly exactly where you failed all the places where I've ever failed Jesus has succeeded there in all the places where you have failed Jesus has succeeded there in your place so that we say as John says I should be there you should be here but Jesus says it is right so that I might fulfill all righteousness and that's why the tender affection and approval of God the father in chapter 3 verse 17 is now pronounced over us don't ever lose sight of the wonder of that brothers and sisters family of God do you know where that comes from beloved son this is my beloved son with whom

I am well please first part of it comes from Isaiah 42:1 which we read as our call to worship speaking of Jesus the servant of the Lord the Messiah who is to come it also comes from Genesis 22:2 when God commands Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac and do you remember what God calls Isaac there when he tells Abraham to sacrifice him your son your only son your beloved son and if you know the rest of the story God interrupts Abraham doesn't let him sacrifice Isaac and instead of in Isaac's place provides a ram a male sheep to take Isaac's place so that that sheep can be offered in the place of his son Isaac and you know why

God provides that substitute because it's pointing forward to what God knows he's going to do when his only son his beloved son comes down and climbs up a mountain and dies on behalf of sinners like you and me it's because Jesus has been offered as the lamb of God for the sins of his people and because he has died there and because he was raised from the dead that we his wayward people are forgiven the wayward son is forgiven because the righteous son is condemned the wayward son is reconciled the wayward son lives because the obedient son dies there are no do overs for us in life but there was one great ultimate do over and that was in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus

Christ our substitute let's pray oh Jesus that was our place that was our place that you took thank you thank you Jesus it's because of you we have forgiveness because of you we have life because of you we have the promise of the resurrection and eternity with God our father because of you we have the Holy Spirit who is poured into our hearts the spirit of adoption that spurs us to cry [52:59] Abba father oh Lord help every single one of my brothers and sisters here in this room right now to know the father's love to be assured without a shadow of doubt that over them is pronounced the same words that you pronounced over Jesus because they have believed in you and they are in Christ this is my beloved son and this is my beloved daughter with whom I am well pleased thank you God in Jesus name we pray amen Man one you note to be man way man can yet