

# “The Strange Inauguration of the King of the World” // Luke 3:21–22; 4:1–13 // Kingdom Come

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For the next few weeks you’re going to be hearing about the Believe project, which is how we expand our facilities and ministries in the Triangle.

**Now, I know, I know, some of you hate it when churches talk about money.** Honestly, I do too. I definitely don’t want to be “that church” that’s always talking about money.

It’s just that there are 3 major ways and avenues through which people give here at the Summit Church, and we talk about them at 3 different times of the year.

**The 1<sup>st</sup> way that people give is to the general offering of the church.** That goes to support all the different ministries of the Summit Church: that just goes to support all that we do... Our general offering is the lifeblood of everything we do from kids’ ministry to community outreach.

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> way people give is through a special missions offering that we give away entirely to different mission projects around the world.** We usually do that around Christmas time.

**Our 3<sup>rd</sup> offering is what we call our Believe Project.** Believe is money that goes exclusively to help us expand our facilities here in the Triangle. **Now, you know we’re definitely not a big-beautiful building church,** but we want to be able to accommodate people

hearing the Gospel.--**this is a very strategic place to live.** There are 1.8 million people who live in the Triangle; it’s been consistently ranked as one of the fastest-growing places in the country. There are a lot of people here who need Jesus.

**I know that we’re not the only church that can reach people.** We want everybody to grow, and we pray and try to do things for others to grow. But we’ve also got to do our part. Our part means reaching as many people as God enables us to reach.

- We have new campuses we need to open, we have improvements at the various campuses that need to happen; we got a parking lot we need to build, b/c some of you are sick of walking a half-mile to church; we have the Cary/Apex campus launch that is looming; there has been some chatter about Chapel Hill.

**Put simply, BELIEVE enables us to get the Gospel to more people in our own community by helping us build the facilities to accommodate them.**

- You say, “I don’t think churches should spend a lot on buildings.” We don’t spend a lot on buildings, relatively speaking.
- You say, “Shouldn’t you give that money to the poor?” Yes we should. The money we put into our expansion has multiplied. Look at it this way. 7 years ago, about 800 of you put up 3 million dollars to get us here. Today, we have over 5000 people on a given weekend and last year alone we gave away a million dollars, in 1 year. Plus, untold #’s of lives that have been changed. So money you give to this multiplies in its impact.

**Listen... I don’t want to be burdensome to you. If you’re not excited about this, don’t give.** Seriously. If this doesn’t excite you and get you going, then give to something else. There are enough people here who believe in the mission of this church... Honestly. We’re glad

you're here. Stick around. Maybe one day you'll be excited about all this and then you can give. Until then, don't.

That's it. Over the next few weeks I invite you to help us take the next step in reaching our community.

I told you last week that the Gospel of Luke is, in many ways, the Gospel for skeptics. A friend wrote me after the sermon this past weekend... and said, *"I get it, now. It's not that the Gospel of Jesus is illogical, it's just that it's surprising. That's why a lot of people reject it."*

- Last year I was on the campus of UNC listening to a debate with Bart Ehrman... Dr. Ehrman, as many of you know, has become famous for claiming that the Bible contradicts itself... But he's often said that the reason he doesn't believe is not problems he has with the Bible; it's the problem of suffering in the world. At this debate I was at a student asked him: *"Dr. Ehrman, What would make you believe?" "If Jesus had done what he said; if he had brought peace on earth and ended injustice, I'd believe."*
- What he is saying is that his central problem with Jesus is that Jesus did not do what he, Bart Ehrman, thought he should do.

**That's fair, and he's certainly entitled to his position... but I at least want you to recognize that that is EXACTLY what made most of the people in Jesus' day reject him, too.** That's not new. Jesus crucifixion was a joint project of the secular and religious establishments because they were surprised and disappointed by Him.

**In many ways the Jewish world of Jesus' day was primed for a world leader.** Caesar claimed to be the world ruler who would bring peace on earth. He would end injustice and stop suffering and make everyone act right.

**On the other side of the fence, the Jewish people were waiting for a Messiah.** This guy would be a religious leader, but he would do essentially the same thing as the Romans claimed Caesar would do: restore justice and end suffering and make everyone act good. They had different definitions, of course, about what good was and who would be the King's co-rulers, but they were all looking for a world ruler who would bring justice end suffering.

**Aren't these still what people want today? Isn't that what Dr. Ehrman was saying he wanted? Someone to restore justice; end suffering; make people act right.** Isn't this what government, science, and education promise? From Caesar to Mohammad to many politicians today, we want someone to do those 3 things for us.

Jesus, as you'll see today, promised all those same things... but would choose a very different path to get there than chosen by every other world leader.

Don't want to get too far ahead of myself, but the bottom line was this:

- Jesus taught that our salvation was such that it required much more than behavior modification—it required a deep soul change—not only did we do wrong things, we *loved* wrong things, and to simply show up and command us to do right or offer us rewards for doing right was not enough; God wants people who obey Him from the heart—who do right because they love the right;
- Jesus taught that He could not just “restore justice” in the world unless He destroyed all of us in the process. If God purged the world of all evil tonight at 12:05, who'd be here at 12:06?
- Furthermore, Jesus could not end suffering without ending sin... that would be like taking the pain of cancer away from cancer patient without taking the cancer. You've still got the disease, and the disease is spreading.

Jesus' Kingdom was unexpected because He saw the problems of mankind differently. **Make no mistake about it:** Jesus aspired to be the King and Savior of the whole world.

Luke describes Jesus as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and as the Son of God. Luke said Jesus would bring peace on earth. Early Roman inscriptions called Caesar the "K of K" and the "L of L" and the son of God. This was a direct confrontation to Caesar.

He offered "hope you could believe in" and a "new world order." But the path He chose was different than EVERY other aspiring world, governmental or religious leader because He saw the problems of mankind differently.

You'll see this all come to a head in the baptism and temptation of Jesus. (Ever hear someone say "All religions are the same? If you're paying attention today you'll see how wrong that is...")

**Luke 3–4...** *This is 1 of the deepest sermons I've preached in a while... I hope you have your big boy theological pants on. If you blink, you're going to get Left Behind. Not Kirk Cameron left behind, but you need to stay up...*

Every single Gospel writer records the baptism of Jesus. Not all of them record the birth of Jesus, but they all include the baptism; the baptism captures the heart of Jesus' work.

**Luke 3:21–22**<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened,<sup>22</sup> 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."

- What is curious about this is that Luke calls this earlier in chapter 3 a "baptism of repentance." Repentance is when you admit you've done something wrong and say you're sorry. What had Jesus done wrong? John the Baptist even stopped

Jesus and said, "Uhhh... why are you being baptized? I don't feel like you need to repent. You repenting of being too perfect?"

- That's a great question. We'll come back to it.

**Luke 4:1–13**<sup>1</sup> And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, (that's a curious little phrase, too... wasn't Jesus God? So wasn't He always full of the Holy Spirit, since He was God and the Holy Spirit was God so wouldn't He have been, by definition, always full of the HS? Another great question. You guys are on your game today.) returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil.. Just so you don't get any romanticized ideas about this; this was not a camping trip Jesus took with some of his buddies out in the Yukon.

- Heard a guy once compare a trip he took with some buddies out to hike in Wyoming to Jesus' time in the wilderness here. Not at all.
- First, this is in an area called Jeshimon, which literally means, "the devastation." It's really a terrifying place; difficult to traverse; harsh climate and conditions... this was a horrible place to spend 40 days—6 weeks—alone with the devil—not even some JV demon but *El Diablo* himself, and without food.
- I can't imagine a worse situation. *I hate being alone for long periods of time; I hate not eating; I hate being in the desert; I hate camping out; and I hate being alone with Satan.*

And he ate nothing during those days. (he fasted) And when they were ended, he was hungry. (Another one of those places where I say, "Did that really need to be clarified?")

<sup>3</sup> The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." (If? Do you remember what God the Father had said in a loud voice at Jesus' baptism? "YOU ARE MY BELOVED SON"? And now Satan is like... If... you are the Son of God. Listen, you can write this down as Satan's go-to tactic: he puts question marks in your life where God has put periods.)

<sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” (Now, what’s he tempting him here with? Is there anything sinful with eating a yeast roll after you’ve been starving for 40 days?)

### **Temptation #1: To love the gifts of God more than God Himself**

To take a good thing, like bread, and make it an ultimate thing. Jesus said, “Physical bread is good, but it’s not as important as God. My soul finds its completeness in God, not in having all my needs met.”

That’s what Satan will do with you—He’ll take a good thing like bread or a good job or marriage or children and make it an ultimate thing—something you think you have to have for your soul to be alive. Good thing becomes a God thing and so turns into a bad thing.

**(And so you start to treat God like a piñata, and faith is a whacking stick... the primary way that you relate to God is as a dispenser of stuff you need.)**

<sup>5</sup> And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, <sup>6</sup> and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. <sup>7</sup> If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.”

### **Temptation #2: To go around God in pursuit of the will of God**

The obedience of the nations was a good thing, and something Jesus was entitled to. But here He’s put in a place where He has to choose between that good thing and God.

Satan tempts you that way. What things are there that matter so much to you that you would prioritize them over God? Things that consume your life and passions more than God Himself? Cause you to compromise your integrity?

A lot of your lives are consumed with pursuing something good... it’s just that that thing has cost you God. It’s more weighty than God; it takes more time than God; you compromise your integrity, your soul.

<sup>8</sup> And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’ ”

- The whole point of life is loving and obeying God, and anything that makes me leave God or depart from Him has become a bad thing.

<sup>9</sup> And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, <sup>10</sup> for it is written, “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,’ <sup>11</sup> and “ ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

**Temptation #3: To interpret God through your circumstances rather than His word.** “If God loved you, then you wouldn’t get hurt. If there is a God and if He is good and caring, you wouldn’t be suffering.”

<sup>12</sup> And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

- Why would I need God to do something to prove He cares about Me? Didn’t He say I was His beloved Son?
- I won’t base my understanding of God on my present circumstances; I’ll base it on His eternal word.

<sup>13</sup> And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

I get the image here of Darth Vader tumbling away at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Star Wars...

But he’s coming back—to Jesus and to you. These 3 temptations are the core of his strategy.

- Temptations will almost always involve turning a good thing

into an ultimate thing; going around God to get at something good; to evaluate how God feels about you by your circumstances.

**2 very important things we learn from this passage. The first is something about Jesus and His work; the second is how we are to overcome temptation.**

### **I. The unique nature of Jesus and His work**

All 3 temptations are designed to divert Jesus from the cross—to get Jesus to establish His Kingdom like every other religious leader has established their kingdoms—by commanding obedience and rewarding it

- In tempting him to turn bread into stones: he was saying, “Prioritize food for the body over knowing God.” Satan is saying, “We can end suffering. We can supply bread for everyone.” Jesus says, “the most important bread is knowing and loving God.”
- In offering him the obedience of the nations if Jesus would just worship him, Satan was tempting him to get them to modify their behavior, but not from a heart that loves and worships God above all. They could bring the world into obedience... but not obedience that grows out of heart that loves and worships God above all. Obedience would be coerced through power; rewards if you obey and punishment if you don’t.
  - But is that what God wants? Coerced behavior?
  - If I get my kids to be honest because I give them a cookie if they do, then when they tell the truth it’s not because they love truth, **but because they love cookies.**
  - Does God want people who obey Him for any other reason than that they love Him? **NECK WARMER**
- In trying to get him to throw himself off of the tower to see if God would catch him: he was saying, “Get them to base their

understanding of God’s feelings about them by how well they are doing this life.”

This would be the message of every religious leader. Change people’s behavior; restore justice; remove all suffering.

Jesus’ rejected that type of religion.

- Why? We needed more than behavior modification, we needed heart change. Not only did we do wrong things, we *loved* wrong things;
- And, the problem with demanding that justice be restored was that none of us could really handle it if God gave it outright. If God gave absolute justice for sin, no one would be left standing.
- Jesus could not end suffering without ending sin... because again, that would take away the pain of the disease without curing the disease!

So, Jesus’ work would be different than that which is proscribed by every other governmental or religious leader. Jesus would not focus on behavior modification, he would focus on heart change.

And so his primary work would not be in a morality he taught or an example he gave us to follow, but in being a substitute for our sin who would die in our place. And in doing that He would pay the penalty for our sin and break it’s power over us by changing our heart.

**If I said, “Choose 1 word to describe Jesus’ work on earth,” that word should be “substitution.”** In fact, I can sum up the Gospel in 4 words: Jesus in my place: Can you say that?

That’s what’s been happening the whole time.

- Let’s start with the baptism:
  - Again... it calls it a “baptism of repentance”: Why did Jesus have to repent? He didn’t. He repented in your place.

- Then, he spends 40 days wandering in the wilderness.
  - What does that remind you of? If you know your Bible, that was where Israel had really first fallen into sin. Jesus is retracing their steps, but succeeding where they failed and obeying where they rebelled.
- He's tempted directly by Satan who tries to get him to doubt God's word and offers him something good to eat.
  - What is that supposed to remind you of? If you know your Bible, that's how Satan had tempted Adam. Satan said to Adam, "Adam, has God really said this?"
- Except, everywhere that Israel and Adam had sinned, Jesus succeeded... and under much worse conditions:
  - Adam was in a perfect garden with all of his needs met. Jesus had been starving in the wilderness for 40 days.
  - Adam was in a plush garden with everything to enjoy; he needed nothing; Jesus was in a desert and had nothing.
  - Adam had no need to test God to see if God really cared—the proof of it was all around him in the lavishness of Eden. Jesus was deprived of everything and had every reason to doubt God.
  - Jesus was alone. Adam had a companion. Adam had a beautiful, Spirit filled, wife by his side and God Himself walked with him in the cool of the evening of every night. Jesus was single, all alone, in the wilderness.
  - Yet, Adam fell; and Jesus didn't.
- Jesus was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, succeeding where Adam fell. That's what we mean when we say He lived the life we were supposed to live, as our substitute, and because of that, when he died, his death could substitute for ours. He did everything for us...
  - He repented for us;
    - Do you ever think, "Have I repented enough?" I did.
    - **C. S. Lewis** described the dilemma quite well: *"It needs to be a good man to repent. And here comes the catch. Only a bad person needs to repent: only a good person can repent perfectly. The worse you*

*are the more you need it and the less you can do it. The only person who could do it perfectly would be a perfect person – and he would not need it."*<sup>1</sup>

- He repented for me.
  - He lived the life I should have lived, he said no where we should have said no, but didn't; and yes where we should have said yes, but didn't.
    - Do you ever wonder, "Have I really been good enough to get to heaven?"
    - The scales? They used to say about people who got really nice in their old age... trying to tip the scales.
    - *Jesus was good enough.* He was good in your place.
  - Jesus in my place. Because Jesus lived the life we were supposed to have lived, when he died the death we were condemned to die, he could be our substitute.
- There is so much going on here in this temptation! The devil knows he must destroy Jesus, because this is how Jesus is going to break his power. Jesus is going to rescue us from hell and destroy Satan's work and send him to the lake of fire so he throws everything he has at Jesus here.
  - But Jesus wins. For us. And He wins not by claiming his rightful throne or by simply restoring justice or by giving us an example to emulate, but by substituting for us.
  - And that not only does that take away the penalty for our sin... it breaks the power of sin in us.
    - Jesus' work recreates in us a desire to know and obey God. God is not just after getting us to do the right things, but to desire right things.
    - A stage version of *Les Mis* was on PBS the other night... Here's a guy that an act of grace so profoundly changes him that he starts to love kindness and mercy and justice and goodness.

<sup>1</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 57.

- **Commands and rewards and punishments might change the behavior, but only grace can change the heart. Jesus did for us what religion never could.**
- **Every religion that tries to correct you by giving you an example to emulate or urges to do better is from Satan.** And when you hear that charge that all religions teach the same, you should remember that this story shows you that is completely untrue. Jesus here rejects every other religious approach in history.
- And gave a message exactly the opposite. Every other religion teaches, “Do good and be rewarded.” Jesus taught: “I’ll be good in your place, and die in your place, and give you my reward as a gift. And in response to that, not only will you behavior change, YOU’LL CHANGE.

## II. This passage shows us **how we are to overcome temptation**

- Jesus had 4 weapons, all of which you have access to

### 1<sup>st</sup> weapon: Word of God

- Satan tries to get Jesus to doubt God’s word; Jesus quotes God’s word back in Satan’s face.
  - Growing up this was always explained like this was some kind of incantation you chant at Satan to make him go away, like a Harry Potter duel... where Satan “Bam!” Throws a temptation. And you ward it off by going, ‘Oh no, 1 Peter 3:8.” Bam! And it counters Satan’s power. And you do battle back and forth with Satan and the one who knows the most Scripture texts wins.
  - Satan always knows more verses than you, and you can’t outsmart him by going to AWANA.
  - That’s basically what it was. That’s a dumb idea.
- Something specific about the Word of God that Jesus recalls, and that is God’s declaration of how He feels about Him.
- Satan says, “If you are the Son of God.” He tries to get him to doubt His identity.
- Satan’s 1<sup>st</sup> tactic is to make you doubt God’s declaration of you.

- **We think Satan’s main work is weird stuff...** making people foam at the mouth and levitate above their beds... or we think Satan’s temptation come in the form of sexual temptation... I suppose he does some of that, but his main temptation is getting you to doubt your identity in Christ.
- He’s not out in the wilderness showing Jesus pictures of nude women. He’s making him question God’s approval of Him.
- Satan tries to make you base your identity on how well or how poorly you’ve done.
  - When you’ve done well... He’ll make you say, “God really must approve of me. I have got a bright future.”
  - Satan loves that because it caters to your pride... and then, when you’ve done poorly...
  - God’s perfect approval and His promises to use your life for good are given to you as a gift because of what Christ purchased for you by substituting for your sin.
  - Satan uses what you’ve done to define who you are; Jesus uses how He has re-defined you to transform what you do.
  - Whenever you base your identity on how well you’ve done, you’ve listened to the voice of Satan.
    - **Kharis and Allie**

### 2<sup>nd</sup> weapon: Spirit of God

- 4:1, Jesus was “filled with the Spirit.” What does that mean? Wasn’t he God? So, at any point, wasn’t He filled with the Spirit, the Spirit is God, and He is God, and wasn’t He at every moment filled with Himself?
- Great question. Jesus did not at this point “lean into His divinity.” He was fully God, yes, but He was fully man. And as man He drew from the same resources you and I can draw from. The Word and the Spirit. He did not draw from His internal divinity; He drew from the same Spirit that you and I can draw from, which means we have access to the same strength He had access to.

Real quick: two mistakes I see with the Holy Spirit:

- A. There are some people who seem to live ignorant of the fact that they need the Holy Spirit or even that there is 1. They know in theory that He's there, but have no real felt sense of Him. We call these people Baptists. They ignore the fact that if the Son of God needed the Spirit of God to overcome Satan, so do you, Superman! They think they can master all the techniques for spiritual power from a seminary classroom.
- B. Then there are those who seek the fullness of the Spirit in the wrong ways.
- People say to me... why don't you fill people with the Holy Spirit?
  - Here in this passage, Jesus' fullness of the Spirit was tied to him believing the Father's declaration. He believed what the Father said at the baptism, and the result was the filling of the Spirit.
  - It's always that way:
    - Acts 10:44
    - Gal 3:1-3
  - People sometimes think it's a special ceremony... I have no problem with you wanting the fullness of the Spirit; I just think you should seek it biblically, and that is by renewed faith in the Gospel.
  - Gal 3:1-3: You will be filled with the Spirit has you re-believe the Gospel
- Christians fall off the cliff on both sides.
- The Baptist cliff is where you don't even recognize that there is a Spirit power and that you desperately need it in a time of temptation.
  - Then the Pentecostal cliff is where you seek a tingly experience where you have some moment of ecstasy. And you get more fixated with that experience than you do the Gospel itself.
- The Spirit of God and the Word of God always go together.
- You need them both: *"If you have the word without the spirit, you dry up. If you have the spirit without*

*the word, you blow up. If you have both the word and the spirit, you grow up."*

### 3<sup>rd</sup> weapon: The plan of God

- Jesus recognized that because God cared most about our souls coming to feast on him there were times when he'd let our bodies hunger from food so we could learn that our souls could be satisfied in Him.
- Jesus recognized that God wanted us really to learn to trust Him again, so sometimes He lets us suffer—he lets us fall off of cliffs and get hurt, so that we can say, I trust what God's word says about how He feels about me."
- Some of you are in a time when you feel like you need some bread—God, why am I single? Why don't I have more money? Why am I don't have the talents and skills?" and God wants you to do 2 things: **to learn to feast on Him**—that His presence and promises are better than physical food; better than being married; better than having money to spare; and **to learn to trust Him** (that He will take care of you even when you can't see where the next meal is coming from.)
- Because our depravity goes deeper than behavior change, God has to purify us sometimes through suffering, and deprivation... through the cross. To get down in the core of our motives to what we really love and trust and depend on.
  - And many of us don't get that. We think God should just reward us for doing right things, and when He doesn't, we get ticked. God, I'm doing right... why aren't you rewarding me?
  - But God often uses suffering to change our motives.
    - You ever seen the bumper stickers... "They can have my gun when they pry it from my cold, dead, fingers." Sometimes God has to pry our idols away from our cold, dead fingers.
  - Sometimes God will take things away from you that you want, and that you think you have a right to have, to test your heart and teach it to hope in God...



- **You'll never know God is all you need until He's all you have.**

**4<sup>th</sup> weapon: and unfortunately I don't have much time for this one:  
Fasting**

- Jesus temptations come in the midst of a fast.
- Fasting is a time when you are deprived of something and you can see how important or how controlling it is.
  - Sometimes we have involuntary fasts (single; poor health). Voluntary fast is when you deprive your body of a good thing, like food, to help you see how important God is to you...
- When your body is without food, you can see "What am I controlled by? Is the presence of God the most controlling reality for me?"
- Here is why that is important...
  - It's really easy to use God. We pray for this and that... but do we really love God for God's sake?
  - **Example:** My adulterous prayer
- And it helps train you to desire God more than anything. In order really to do the will of God, you have to want to know God more than anything, and be willing to say no to anything.
  - When Jesus went to the cross, He would have to say 'no' to every impulse of the flesh. This is where Jesus would train Himself to love the will of God more than the comforts of the body.
- We are asking you to pray fast this month... I want you to use that time to focus on how much your heart really desires God... to use the time when your body hungers to show you how much, or how little, you desire God more than you desire food and the comforts of the body.

**Conclusion:** I don't want you to miss the central question running through all of this... Luke shows you that Jesus' coming was unexpected... not what you thought... but do you believe? You have Jesus' strange behavior... but who is this guy?

- Are you willing to follow?

# Bullpen:

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- This is so important:
  - “Now if you are going to win any battle, you have to do one thing. You have to make the mind run the body. Never let the body tell the mind what to do. The body will always give up. It is always tired in the morning, noon, and night. But the body is never tired if the mind is not tired.” –George S. Patton, U.S. Army General, 1912 Olympian
- If you could ever bring all the desires of your flesh under submission to the will of God, your missional power to do the will of God would be virtually unstoppable. Your prayers would be powerful. The Bible says the #1 reason our prayers are not answered is because when we pray we desire the answers to our prayer more than we desire God Himself.
  - My adulterous prayer

“The people of God are often called to go without the ordinary means of life... ‘Even we ourselves groan, waiting on the redemption of our bodies.’ Fasting is a brief, voluntary experience of this deprivation. When we experience this will forfeiture, the Lord reveals what is in our hearts.” (58)

“The eager waiting of the early church for her Bridegroom to come explains why she prayed the way she did. You can’t really long for something as intensely as she longed for Christ and not cry out to God. So she cried out and prayed, ‘Lord, thy kingdom come!’ ‘Maranatha!’ ‘Come Lord Jesus!’ Surely this hunger for Christ needs to be restored in the comfortable church of the prosperous West. The absence of fasting is indicative of our comfort with the way things are. No one fasts to express how content they are. People only fast out of dissatisfaction. ‘The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.’ (Matthew 15:9). The absence of fasting is the measure of our contentment with the absence of Christ.” (93)

Satan wants to make you define who you are by what you did; Jesus wants to help you rebuild what you’ve done by understanding who you are (in Him).

Behavior modification:

Fullness of bread

Safety and prosperity

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Baptism of Jesus: all the Gospels record this

(Jesus whole work was not about what he told us to do, but what he did for us: our salvation required something deeper than behavior-modification (we needed justification and heart change); none of us were prepared for justice; suffering could not end until sin ended).

- 40 days
- Why are you baptizing me?

Overcoming temptation:

- Understanding your identity and God’s control of the situation

- Expecting the Spirit's power in the middle of your struggle

The purpose of fasting

Jesus was man... these were real temptations. That's how he could be the greater David; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam

Learning something about Jesus

- He was man
- He was a substitute

What the temptations reveal about how Jesus would save the world

- Adam had never been tempted before; his resistance wasn't weakened at all; Jesus had been tempted for 30 years and then 40 days of temptation before the final 3 come.

This is a little deep, but what is happening here is Satan is tempting Jesus to prioritize the needs of the body over the soul. **Just like there is bread for the body, there is a bread for the soul.** The soul's bread is knowing God.

**And if you get food for the body without dealing with the food for the soul, you've given the body what it needs without really dealing at all with whether or not the soul loves God.** Jesus' salvation was not merely to turn God into a dispenser of bread and medicine and healing... as if God was the ultimate cosmic bellhop.

We were created to know and love God, and so the most important thing that must happen in salvation is that we would learn to know and love God again.