

Romans 5:12-19

Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

HEBREWS 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

I went to Koorong last Monday - couldn't find a park anywhere.

I thought that seeing I'm a pastor, and that I was buying a bible, that God would look after me. So, I decided to park in a no parking spot.

I wrote a note and put it under the wiper.

It said, *"Dear parking Inspector, I'm a pastor, I'm in a hurry, and I won't be long - Forgive us our trespasses."*

I went in - got my new bible – and got back to the car as quick as I could.

There was note under my wiper: *"Dear Pastor, if I don't give you a parking ticket I will lose my job, Lead us not into temptation"*.

Can you resist temptation?

The lure of temptation mostly comes from the inside - in here (the heart).

As they say: *"The fox may be caged but his thoughts are always in the chicken shed"*.

The lure of Temptation also comes from the outside.

Nigela Lawson says: "When women go wrong, men go **right** after them."

Or as God puts it in Proverbs: *A temptuous woman is like a deep pit ...like a bandit she lies in wait. (23:27)*

Today Jesus is tempted by the devil himself. It's a contest.

The very first "contest" was between Adam and Eve and the Devil – and as we know Adam and Eve failed miserably.

Now it's between Jesus, a man, fully human, Son of God, and the devil.

And it's God who creates this "contest".

“The Spirit of God lead Jesus out into the wilderness”.

There’s stuff going on here.

The devil confronted Adam in a garden where there is plenty of food and he wasn’t hungry.

The devil confronts Jesus in the desert, after 40 days of fasting, when he’s really, really hungry.

The devil confronted Adam and Eve as a couple – with mutual support.

The devil confronts Jesus alone.

The devil had a three way plot to tempt Adam and Eve.

1. **Doubt:** *“Did God really say that you can’t eat that apple?”*
2. **Question God’s authority.** *“Surely, you won’t die, that can’t be true, surely...!”*
3. **lie:** *“You will be like God if you eat this apple....”*

Now the devil tries this plot against Jesus. (Stupid)

1. **Doubt:** *“If God is your Father, it seems like he’s not looking after you, you’re starving, why don’t you just turn these stones into bread?”*

Jesus resists: “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

2. Question God’s authority

He leads Jesus to the highest point of the temple.

He says: *“If you’re the Son of God, throw yourself down. If God is your Father, surely he will take care of you”.*

“Surely, he’ll float you down to the ground.”

“That’s, of course, if he’s really God and you really are his son”

Jesus resists and says: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’

3. So lies.

The devil shows Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. *“I’ll give it all to you – I’ll give you all authority - if you worship me”.*

Jesus resists: “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”¹

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended to Jesus.

Adam and Eve fell like flies, Jesus rose in triumph, the devil ran and hid.

3 men have been captured – it's a bit too real at the moment isn't it.

One by one they are brought into the torture rooms.

The first one knows that he must not give them any information, but he also knows that this enemy is cruel, and that they will eventually break him.

He thinks why go through all that? So, he tells them all that he knows.

The second prisoner is determined not to tell them anything, so the torture begins. Eventually they break him, and he tells them what they want to know.

Then the third prisoner say "You will not break me, you'll have to kill me before I talk".

And so, they begin their gruesome torture. It goes on and on, but he doesn't break. They ramp it up, but he still doesn't break.

Finally, they realise it's no use, they'll never break him.

All three were tempted by the enemy – but which one of them faced the full force of the enemy?

Don't ever think that Jesus temptations were less than we experience.

Only Jesus has looked the devil in the eye and stood up to his full force.

The devil will think twice before taking on Jesus again.

Adam crumbled at the site of Eve holding an apple – poor thing.

Hebrews tells us very clearly that Jesus was "*tempted in every way, just as we are—yet sinned not*". (Hebrews 4:15).

Hebrews also tells us that "*Because Jesus suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help others who are being tempted*" (Hebrews 2:18).

I'm guessing you think we're all pretty pathetic in the face of temptation – but the text says: "there is help."

Here it is: ***He doesn't condemn us for our sin he sympathises with us – he's sorry for us because he knows our very temptation – he knows our sin.***

He took our shame on the cross.

Every time we fall into temptation we should be rejected – we should be humiliated – the father should turn his face away – but he doesn't.

Jesus suffers and takes our shame to the cross.

Here is the proof "*My God My God why have you abandoned me?*"

God is pure love – his nature doesn't allow him to have anything to do with sin – he had to abandon his son.

I pray you have the hope of knowing Jesus has triumphed over the power of temptation and the devil.

I pray you know what John promises in baptism we are in him and he is in us. Despite our lives and what we get up to we are untied to the one who beat the devil – the one who lives with the Father forever.

I know that you and I will never beat temptation.

But I also know that we have the Holy Spirit – we can actually make the right choice if we actually try.

And, it's true, saying "no" to little things helps you say "no" to bigger things.

But Let's also remember Ephesians: *We are saved by grace through faith, and this is a gift in case we boast and brag about our efforts.*

At the end of the day let's know he stood the test, he suffered the torture and won for me – it's a gift.

These 40 days of Lent have taught us that the number 40 is connected to trial and testing.

We have seen the people of God fail over and over – we have seen them punished and even killed.

Tonight, we see Jesus taking on the number 40 and winning triumphantly for us.

We have 2 take home promises from our readings tonight:

For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous – that's us.

And Jesus invites us to use his words often: *Get behind me Satan.*

Amen.

Father today we give your thanks for our intimate union with Jesus who has won every battle for us.

Help us resist, help us live a life of thanks. Amen.