

'On the road'

Luke's account of the life and ministry of Jesus

Luke is up front about his intention in writing his gospel record: it was to help a man called Theophilus to have the confidence to trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. He wanted to bolster the embryonic faith of this man in the face of both the hostility he was likely to face and the adversity which almost certainly would be his experience.

The aim of this study of Luke's gospel, therefore, is to help us all "*fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith*", to the end that we "*run with perseverance the race marked out for us*" (see Heb.12.1-2)

You can find the background to this series [here](#).

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4. Luke 4.1-13 [w/b Sunday 11th February 2018]

“.. He was tempted by the devil..”

A new section in Luke's account of the life and ministry of Jesus begins at this point. The previous section (1.5-3.38) has been something of a 'foreword' showing us why, even before He began His ministry, there were clear indications that Jesus should not be ignored. In this next section (4.1-6.49) Luke sets out the heart of what Jesus' ministry will be about and how it is to be understood.

'Prepare the way for the Lord,' Isaiah had exhorted (Lk.3.4). And Luke here would have us see that the initiative lies clearly with the Lord! The temptation narrative sees the Lord on the front foot, taking the battle to the enemy.

[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! Key questions which you should certainly be covered are perhaps questions 1, 3 & 6. Do try as always to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. **Read Luke 4.1-13.** This new section of Luke's gospel begins with the account of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness. This was a sustained period of temptation to which He was exposed.

Is temptation a *constant* challenge in your life, or are you aware of there being *seasons* when you've faced a period of sustained temptation?

Read **1 Corinthians 10.13**: what encouragement does this verse give you in relation to your being tempted?

2. **Read Luke 4.1-2**. Having noted already that the Holy Spirit patently came upon Jesus (3.22), Luke here highlights the role which the Holy Spirit played in Jesus being tempted.

Why did the Holy Spirit lead Jesus into the wilderness?

How does this square with Jesus' teaching on prayer, when He exhorts us to pray, "*Lead us **not** into temptation..*"?

Jesus was without both company and food for 40 days: what circumstances can make you especially vulnerable to particular temptations?

3. **Read Genesis 3.1-13**. The genealogy of Jesus culminates in the statement that He is 'the son of Adam, the son of God' (3.38). His being tempted right of His ministry at the outset parallels the way in which, right at the start, Adam was tempted.

In what ways was the situation Jesus faced similar to that faced by Adam and Eve? And in what ways did it differ?

Why does temptation always involve our being 'deceived'?

4. **Read Luke 4.3-4.** Jesus was fresh from His experience at the Jordan where the voice from heaven had declared '*You are my Son..*' (3.22): this truth about Him is immediately questioned.

What is this temptation about? What might parallel this temptation in your life?

What lessons can you learn from the way Jesus resisted this temptation?

5. **Read Luke 4.5-8.** In temptation we are invariably offered something attractive: temptation exaggerates just how desirable it seems, and minimizes just how costly it will prove.

As Jesus is tempted here, where does the exaggeration lie and how is the 'cost' minimised?

Read **Hebrews 4.14-16**: how, in these verses, does the writer envisage our being helped in the face of temptation?

6. **Read Luke 4.9-12.** On each previous occasion Jesus has met the temptation with a quotation from Scripture: in this final

temptation the devil subtly (mis-)uses Scripture to entice Jesus into sin.

What is the essence of this temptation?

What might parallel this in our experience?

What steps can we take to reduce the danger of distorting the meaning or application of Scripture?

7. Read Luke 4.13. This was merely round one of a heavy-weight title fight! That Jesus had resisted the temptations which were thrown at Him didn't exempt Him from future challenges.

Read **1 Peter 5.5-11**: what practical bits of advice does Peter give here in combating the 'wiles' of the devil?

In what ways have you experienced the repeated (and varied) assaults of the evil one?