

WEEKLY REFLECTION

We heard last Sunday three sharings on the three ways that Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, and the relevance that it has for us today. (Luk. 4:1-13) It was interesting to note as well how Jesus did not begin His ministry work immediately after His baptism, where the Holy Spirit descended upon Him and the voice of the Father affirmed Him from heaven. Instead, Jesus was led *by the Holy Spirit* into the wilderness, showing us that faith cannot be trusted unless it's been tested.

With the first temptation, we see Satan attacking Jesus by questioning His identity (v:3). He asks Jesus to prove Himself using His own powers, to take matters into His own hands instead of trusting in the Father's provision (v.4). But Jesus' reply to Satan is telling (v.4b), and He reminds us that we may only overcome such temptations by relying on God's Word (Deut. 8:3) and the support of our community.

With the second temptation, Satan offers Jesus something that we all want—power, control, and authority. It is infinitely silly to offer Jesus something that already belongs to Him, but what Satan is offering here is not just the kingdoms of the world and their glory (v.5-6). Satan offers Jesus an easy way out of the trials that await Him as He sets out to prove His kingship, *if only He would serve and worship him*. Yet Jesus reminds us that we *must* serve and worship God alone. (Deut. 6:13)

Satan once again asks Jesus to prove His identity (v.9) with the third temptation. But what Satan is really questioning isn't Jesus' identity as God's chosen one—he's questioning God's faithfulness towards Him, as He tempts Jesus to doubt His Father. Yet Jesus withstands, because He knew who He was. If only we all know that, like Jesus, we are loved by God, and we do not need to prove our identity to anyone.

QUESTIONS

QUESTION ONE:

Was there a time in your life where you desperately sought the Lord's guidance and direction? What did that look like for you?

Why do you think the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness for forty days, and what did He do while He was there? How does Jesus' time in the wilderness compare with your dedicated time of seeking God's guidance?

QUESTION TWO:

Take the time now to study each of Jesus' three temptations in depth. With each one, try to identify...

- (a.) what Satan was tempting Jesus with;
- (b.) his strategy in doing so;
- (c.) Jesus' response and how He withstood the temptations;
- (d.) and finally, the relevance of each temptation for our lives today.

QUESTION THREE:

Which one of the three temptations do you struggle with the most? Or do you think all three of them have relevance to your life?

How would you follow Jesus' example in withstanding against the enemy, and what is your strategy for doing so? What obstacles can you foresee as you continue to follow Jesus, and what can you and the rest of your group do to prepare for those moments of weaknesses?