

February 14, 2016 "How to Resist Temptation" based on Luke 4:1-13

Temptation is a common theme in the life of Jesus

- At the outset of his ministry in Luke, he is led by the Spirit and is tempted by Satan
- Bible has given him guidance which is found in Isaiah 53 about the 'suffering servant'

Satan offers a series of options

- Materialist option: turn stone to bread. Everyone needs necessities of life, give them what they want and all will be right with the world
- Power option: kingdoms of the world if you kneel down before me. Lead a happy government, rule over your people, compromise your idealism to accommodate the masses.
- Spiritual option: jump off the top of the Temple. Give them a display, dazzle them with your magic, mesmerize them with a performance – they'll give you their attention and loyalty.

Jesus decide to place his trust in God (love, mercy, justice) instead of going with the way of the world (power, wealth, deceit)

- Reconsider our expectations of Christ; does he expect an easy way, a means out of the world? Does he gain success without suffering, peace without struggle?
- God is not a 'quick fix'. Jesus showed us a way that included a painful cross instead of painlessness and ease. Faithfulness involves conflict with what opposes the truth.
- Story of Karl Marx in Germany. His Jewish Father gave up values for acceptance in church, and son gave up on religion to convince people that the godless way was the right way. Found an 'easy fix', but gave up what was basic to life itself.

We are called to be faithful to what we believe, to be steadfast in our desire to be the people of God!

- Temptations will always be there, resistance will never be easy, but the presence of Christ is the saving grace in the battle with evil.
- As it said in our opening hymn (A Mighty Fortress) "the old satanic foe, has sworn to work us woe, ... but now a champion comes to fight, whom God himself elected. You ask who this may be? The Lord of hosts is he, Christ Jesus mighty Lord, God's only Son adored, He holds the field victorious!