

First Sunday of Lent - March 6, 2022

Three Effective Tools

[Luke 4:1-13](#)

“Submit yourselves, then to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7 - NIV)

As we examine our hearts during this 2022 season of Lent, we humbly, with contrite hearts, identify our sins, which might include: a loose tongue of gossip and dishonoring God; a domineering attitude toward others, rather than love and compassion; lust; lying; cheating; gluttony; not honoring our parents, nor teaching our children of Jesus, the Savior and Lord. This list is far from comprehensive.

Are there “tools” available to strengthen us to the point of successful resistance to the devil, no matter how attractive the temptation appears to be?

Today’s Lenten Scripture details Jesus’s experience of being tempted by the devil and successful resistance, as does Matthew 4:1-11 and as briefly noted in Hebrews 4:15.

Our Lord Jesus was tempted to feed his physical body weakened by 40 days of fasting; to take a short cut to world dominion by dodging God’s will and avoiding the cross and death; and to test God’s faithfulness. As noted above, we seek what the devil presents as pleasurable satisfaction for our physical and emotional being; avoiding suffering; feeling superior to others; and our desire to be on an equal (or higher than) footing with God.

So, what are these “tools” Jesus used...and are these “tools” available to us*?

- (1) We note the Holy Spirit had come to Jesus at his baptism. (Luke 3:21; Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:9)
The Holy Spirit comes to us. (John 14:16-17; Acts 1:4) The question for us is whether we listen to the Spirit and obey.
- (2) We note Jesus speaking God’s word of truth recorded in Scripture to the devil, counteracting the three temptations:
“...man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.” (Deuteronomy 8:3 - NIV)
“Fear the Lord your God, serve him only...” (Deuteronomy 6:13a - NIV)
“Do not put the Lord your God to the test...” (Deuteronomy 6:16 - NIV)
Psalm 119:11 - NIV mentors us with “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” Ephesians 6:17 - NIV encourages us to “Take ...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”
The question for us is whether we are willing to commit time to learning God’s word.
- (3) “Jesus said to the devil, ‘Away from me, Satan! ...’ (Matthew 4:10 - NIV) The devil did leave Jesus.

When we are tempted, we can say, “Get away from me, Satan, in Jesus’s Name!” The questions for us are whether we want to resist the devil and whether we believe and trust Jesus, as Lord. There is ample evidence that these “tools” provided us are effective. During this season of Lent and beyond, may we commit anew to resisting temptations.

Prayer: *Awesome God, thank you for redeeming us and providing us your Spirit, your word, and connection to you through Jesus, that we may be successful in resisting whatever the devil offers. Shepherd us to resist evil and live to glorify you. In the matchless Name of Jesus, Amen.*

Mary Thomas
Temple, Beckley
mbmthomas@suddenlink.net
Certified Lay Servant