

Text: Luke 4:1-13

Topic: Jesus resists the temptations of Satan for a period of over 40 days by abiding in the word of God.

Title: "40 Days of Resistance"

Introduction

"Are you with the Resistance?" This question was asked a couple of times to FN2187, later known as "Fin" in Star Wars 7.

Just in case you're not a Star Wars geek, Finn was a Storm Trooper in the First Order. The First Order is the evil empire started by Supreme Leader Snoke, now led by Kylo Ren the once good Jedi who turned to the dark side. The mission of the First Order is to destroy the Resistance and rule the galaxy.

Finn because of his convictions left the First Order and escaped with the help of Resistance pilot Poe Dameron. After Finn's escape he became a vital part of the Resistance and enemy of Kylo Ren and the First Order.

That's Finn's story, how about your story? You might not know it, but you are with the Resistance. Let me take a moment and explain.

You and I were once Sin Troopers in the devil's evil dark empire. Paul in Ephesians 2:1-3 says,

1 Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins.

2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.

3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else. (NLT)

The unbeliever might not realize it, but they are not free, they are held captive by the devil to do his will. This was you and I before Christ.

Colossians 1:13-14 says but we were rescued from that evil empire by Jesus,

13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

Christ pulled off the greatest rescue mission ever. God became a man, came down into this evil and dark world and rescued us. The rescue was accomplished through the cross. Christ now through His grace has made it possible for all to believe and be saved. Those who have put their faith in Jesus are delivered from the kingdom of darkness and placed in the kingdom of Christ as children of God.

The believer is also a vital part of God's story of redemption. God wants to use you and I to rescue others from darkness. We do this by following the great commission, which is to go into the entire world and preach God's rescue plan, the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This brings us to our topic of spiritual warfare and resistance as seen in our text this morning.

While Jesus has defeated Satan and his demons at the cross and will ultimately defeat them at His second coming. Satan and his demons will continue to fight and oppose the work of God until the end.

Just as anyone who is associated with the Resistance becomes an enemy of the First Order in Star Wars, even so because of our allegiance to Christ and His mission we have spiritual enemies who will seek to oppose God's work in and through our lives.

What are we to do? We can't run or hide, Finn in Star Wars discovered that. Rather we're to follow the example of Jesus and the New Testament Christians and join the Resistance.

In Luke chapter 4, we'll see that Jesus at the start of His public ministry faces spiritual warfare and opposition from the devil for a period of over 40

days. Jesus remains on His mission and victorious by resisting the enemy and abiding in the word of God.

As we look at this account we will learn three things:

1. The Power Behind the Resistance
2. The First Order and Their Tactics
3. The Leader of the Resistance and His Example

First in verse 1 we see, The Power Behind the Resistance.

1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

The word “Then” links this verse back to Chapter 3. In chapter 3 Luke records Jesus’ baptism and genealogy. Both of these are significant as it relates to this passage.

The baptism of Jesus was the beginning of His public ministry as the Messiah or Christ. While Jesus was always filled with the Spirit, the Father nevertheless choose to give a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Him at His baptism. The Spirit came down upon Jesus in the form of a dove.

The coming upon of the Holy Spirit at Jesus’ baptism bore witness to all that He was the Messiah or Christ which means Anointed One.

The coming upon of the Holy Spirit at Jesus baptism also serves as a reminder that our lives and ministries are to be dependent on the Holy Spirit and His power.

This becomes even more clear because Luke follows that account with Jesus’ genealogy. Jesus’ genealogy in Luke traces His line through Mary back to Adam.

Luke makes it clear to His readers that while Jesus was fully God, He was also fully man. Jesus the God man set aside the independent use of His

attributes and was totally dependent on the Father for His power, leading and authority.

We see Jesus' dependency on God's power at the beginning of chapter 4. "Jesus was filled with the Spirit." Jesus is going to enter this period of temptation and testing, not on His own power, but empowered and filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus did this to demonstrate to all believers the power available to us as we face opposition and carry out our missions.

The same Holy Spirit that gave Jesus His power is the same one given to each believer by faith in Jesus (John 14:17). The same Holy Spirit that came upon Jesus at His baptism is the same Spirit that will come upon us and empower us to serve God (Acts 1:8).

Next we see that Jesus was dependent on the leading of the Father. "Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness."

The Holy Spirit is not a force or "The Force," the Holy Spirit is a person. There is one God in three persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).

Jesus was not alone in the wilderness, He had the abiding presence of the third person of the Trinity the Holy Spirit who led Him.

The same is true for us! Jesus before He went to the cross, told His disciples that He was leaving to go back to heaven, it was to their advantage. If Jesus left He would send another helper, the Holy Spirit to come along side them.

The word "another," is another of the same kind. Jesus during His three and a half year ministry taught the disciples and helped them. The disciples were dependent on Jesus. In the same way the Holy Spirit would come along side of us and walk with us through life.

The place that Jesus was led from was the Jordan River, to the wilderness. The wilderness is believed to be the barren dessert area northwest of the Dead Sea. Jesus will begin His public ministry with a period of over 40 days of temptation in the wilderness.

Does this seem like a waste of time? Why did God allow this time testing? It was not to see if Jesus would sin, Jesus is sinless.

God wants to demonstrate to the world that Jesus is sinless. Just as a dealership allows you to test drive a car to show it off, even so God allows all mankind to see this through the devil's temptations. The devil is going to mean this for evil, but God allows them to reveal who Christ and His credentials.

Jesus is the promised, "Anointed One." Prophets, Priests and Kings were anointed in the Old Testament, Jesus shows He is qualified to fulfill the role of all three.

First Jesus is "The Prophet" as prophesied by Moses in Deuteronomy 18. Moses promised that God would raise up "the Prophet" who would lead Israel into Salvation and establish God's Kingdom. The way they would recognize "The Prophet," is that He would walk and teach in line with the revealed law of Moses. Jesus is tempted and three times quotes from the book of the law, Deuteronomy.

Second Jesus is "The Great High Priest". Hebrews 4:14-16 says,

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Jesus will be tempted in every area of sin and yet come out victorious. He is therefore qualified to minister and offer help to those in need.

Third Jesus is the King. Adam in the Garden was given dominion of this earth, but he forfeited it to Satan when he fell into sin by disobey God's word. Jesus the Last Adam will not make this mistake.

In contrast to Adam, Christ will not face this temptation on a full stomach in a beautiful garden, but in extreme hunger in the wilderness. Jesus' temptations will be greater, yet He will resist and remain in the will of God.

This morning if you're in a time of testing or you are facing opposition, look to Jesus. Just like Jesus God has given you the power and help through His Holy Spirit for you to remain faithful to your mission.

This morning if you're in a time of life that feels like an ineffective isolated wilderness look to Jesus. Just as God worked through His life, in His time and His way and did a good job, God will work through your life. God ways are beyond our understanding, He is able to work through our circumstances and reveal Jesus to all the world.

Now we come to our second point in verses 2, The First Order and Their Tactics.

2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.

Just as military personnel need to understand the character and tactics of their enemy so they can properly engage them, even so we need to know something about the character of our enemies and their tactics so we can resist.

- The Character of our Enemy:

The devil was the one behind the temptation of Jesus during these 40 days. The devil is a created being, he is not the opposite of God, he is a fallen angel.

Before the devil fell he was a cherub who went by the name Lucifer. Lucifer will filled with pride and wanted be like God and be worshipped as God. God therefore cast him out of heaven (Isaiah 14:12-15 & Ezekiel 28:14-19).

When Lucifer fell, he deceived one-third of the angels of heaven to follow in his rebellion (Revelation 12:4).

The devil and these other fallen angels are now sealed in their rebellion, they are without grace and a means to be saved. The focus of these beings until their destruction is to oppose the people of God and the work of God.

- The Tactics of the Enemy:

Here's a brief list of how the devil and his demons oppose the people of God and the work of God.

1. He has attacked believers physical health (Job 1-2).
2. He accuses believers before the throne of God (Revelation 12:10).
3. He is behind the false teachings of the cults and world religions (1 Timothy 4:1)
4. He has deceived people by masquerading himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).
5. He does lying signs and wonders (2 Thessalonians and Revelation).
6. He is a murderer, Satan uses the nonbelievers to persecute and even kill believers.
7. He blinds the minds of unbelievers to keep them in darkness (2 Corinthians 4:4).
8. He plucks the word from peoples hard hearts, as Jesus says in the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:19).
9. He seeks to hinder missionary endeavors (1 Thessalonians 2:18).
10. He tempts believers to sin (Genesis 3 and Luke 4).

Temptation is a tried and affective tactic of Satan, it worked in the Garden of Eden and it has worked throughout human history. Why give up now?

The two reasons why the tactic of temptation is so affective is revealed in the epistle of 1 John.

1John 5:19 says, We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.

1 John 2:16 says, For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

The unbelieving world is under the influence or sway of the wicked one. The innovative and new ideas that we see in the world to turn man from God and ensnare people in sin comes from Satan's influence. These innovative ideas often fall into the three categories; lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and pride of life.

It is important for us to be aware of this and the world in which we live. Living in the United States in the 21st Century, it is easy to think only scientifically or naturally. We must not forget that there is a spiritual realm that influences the unbelieving world in which we live.

Also don't forget the fallen nature of mankind and the fact that you have a flesh. The born again believer's sin nature has been crucified with Christ, we power over sin, but we still have a flesh. The flesh are those evil desires and propensities that remain in our physical bodies.

So who are our enemies? It's the devil and his fallen network of demons who control the fallen world system. Must resist their influences and their appeals to our flesh. The way that we do this by following the example of the leader of the Resistance Jesus Christ.

Third in verses 3-13 we see, The Leader of the Resistance and His Example.

While the born again believer still has a flesh, Jesus did not have a flesh, He is the perfect God man. That being the case when Jesus was tempted, He had no sinful pull from within. Rather his temptations were similar to Adam and Eve who were tempted from without to use their free will to disobey God's word and will.

3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

The first temptation focused on what Jesus felt. Verse 2 makes it clear that Jesus had been fasting for 40 days, at the end of this 40 day fast He began to experience extreme hunger pains. Some say that Jesus was at the point of starving. The enemy seeks to take advantage of this apparent weakness in Jesus.

The enemy said, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."



This is not a question, the “if,” is better rendered “since”. The temptation is, since Jesus is the all powerful Son of God, He was to use His divine power to command a stone to become bread to satisfy His hunger.

There was nothing sinful in and of its self with Jesus doing a miracle to turn a stone into bread. Jesus would later multiply five loaves and two fish and feed the multitudes.

What made this sin would be for Jesus to operate in His own way and in His own will. Jesus was to remain in God’s will, it was the Father who led Jesus out into the wilderness and called Him to fast. To do a miracle as a result of the temptation of Satan would be sin.

4 But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD OF GOD.' "

Jesus applies the tactic of resistance. Jesus resists this temptation on the authority of the Word of God. It is written! Regardless if He was the Son of God, or if He had all power, He was to remain in the will and word of God.

The passage that Jesus quoted is Deuteronomy 8:3. In Deuteronomy 8:1-3 God spoke through Moses to the children of Israel who just came through the 40 year wilderness wandering.

Before Israel went into the promised land and experienced blessing, God reminded them of their 40 years in the wilderness, it was to humble, test and teach them.

God taught Israel to trust God and His word for their provision during this period. God was faithful, verse 3 says for 40 years their garments didn’t even wear out, nor did their feet swell.

Jesus applied this to His 40 days in the wilderness. God was allowing Jesus to be tested to teach us.

I am pretty sure like me, you have never been tempted by Satan to turn a stone into bread. The enemies not dumb, that is not an area of weakness that he can attack.

The areas of weakness in the believers flesh are different, but the temptation is usually the same, which is to compromise holiness for the physical feeling of happiness and satisfaction.

Just like Jesus we must resist that temptation from the enemy and understand that true happiness and satisfaction comes from obedience to God's word and will. Israel would continue to experience joy and blessing in the land if they remained obedience to God, if they forgot God they would not.

Jesus said, "Blessed" over and over in beatitudes of Matthew 5. God promises happiness and eternal satisfaction for obedience to God's word and will. Don't forget that when faced with the temporary satisfaction through temptation.

5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."

The second temptation focused on what Jesus could see. The devil took Jesus up on a high mountain and in a moment of time flashed before Him the luxury, authority and glory of the greatest world empires.

Satan was like Robin Leach from, "Life Styles of The Rich and Famous." Satan said, "All this could be yours right now if you worship me."

Could Satan really give Jesus all this? The devil is a liar, so its hard to say for sure. Notice Jesus did not debate the enemy on this point.

In Revelation 12-13 were told that the future antichrist will rule the world in power, glory and authority from the devil himself.

Just as with the first temptation, there is nothing sinful about Jesus ruling over all mankind in glory and authority. Revelation 20 says Jesus will rule as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

What makes this sin if Jesus gave in is the means and the time in which Jesus would rule over all the world.

Jesus' right to rule was not come from his worship of Satan, but His obedience to His Father's will which would lead to the cross. The slain lamb is the only one who is worthy to open the scroll in Revelation 5.

The scroll is the Father's will and inheritance. Jesus is able to execute God's will and receive His inheritance because He prevailed by going to the cross and rising again from the dead defeated sin, Satan and death.

Time in which Jesus would rule would be decided by the Father as seen in Psalm 110:1.

8 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND HIM ONLY YOU SHALL SERVE.' "

Jesus will use the phrase "Get behind me Satan," again when He rebukes Peter for correcting Jesus when He told His disciples He was going to the cross (Matthew 16:23).

Satan's mission was to stop Jesus from going to the cross because he knew as predicted in Genesis 3:15 that the cross would be his defeat.

Jesus then applies the tactic of resistance. Jesus resists Satan's temptation to bypass the cross for the crown by applying the word of God to His situation.

Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 6:13. The context of this verse was to remind the children of Israel that when they came into the land and experienced God's blessings not to forget that it was God that brought them in and gave them this. Israel later forgot God and lost the blessings and received judgment.

Jesus knew that blessing could not be separated from obedience. Christ would rule and reign in glory as He saw at the end of Psalm 22. But before that time He obedience to the Father's will must go to the cross as predicted at the beginning of Psalm 22.

Satan still uses the attractions of the eye to tempt believers to bypass carrying our cross for the glory of the world system. Satan is a marketing genius, he knows human weakness and crafts the world system and even situations to appeal to the weakness of the flesh, specifically through the lust of the eye.

Whatever those things might be don't be deceived. Turning to sin and wordiness is to bow the knee to Satan. These things can't bring lasting satisfaction that our soul longs for. Sin only leads to dissatisfaction and destruction.

Rather than being drawn away from God by what we see in the world, we're to follow the example to those of the Resistance and keep our eyes on eternal things.

Think about Abraham. Lot saw the green pastures of Sodom, but they were detrimental to him and his family. Abraham walked by faith and was led by God looking for the eternal kingdom. Abraham was of those who Hebrews 11:13 says died in faith having seen the promises afar off.

Like Jesus and the godly saints of the past, we're to resist temptation, looking ahead to the blessings that come from obedience to God.

9 Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here.

10 For it is written: 'HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE OVER YOU, TO KEEP YOU,'

11 and, 'IN THEIR HANDS THEY SHALL BEAR YOU UP, LEST YOU DASH YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.' "

The third temptation surrounded Jesus' authority as the promised Messiah.

Satan brought Jesus up to the pinnacle of the temple which is the high area over looking the Kidron Valley. Satan then tempted Jesus to demonstrate His authority as the Messiah by throwing Himself down so God can rescued Him by His angels.

Jesus used scripture now the devil seeks to use scripture to accomplish his temptation. The devil quoted from Psalm 91:11-12. While this passage does refer to Messiah, the use of this passage is out of context.

When you read Psalm 91:11 you see that the devil left a part of that verse out which is, "To keep you in all your ways." The Psalmist and Jesus knew that divine protection was available as they walked in the will of God, it was unthinkable to sin that grace might abound.

12 And Jesus answered and said to him, "It has been said, 'YOU SHALL NOT TEMPT THE LORD YOUR GOD.' "

Jesus again applies the tactic of resistance. Jesus resists this attack by apply Deuteronomy 6:16 to His situation.

The context of Deuteronomy 6:16 is again God's reminder to Israel to remember God when they came into the land. Israel was not to tempt God to respond in discipline for their disobedience of going after the gods of the Canaanites.

While Jesus had the authority as the Messiah, He would not tempt God by sin, rather He would remain obedient His will and word.

The enemy still tempts the believer to walk in pride. One way is to sin by walking in our own will and expecting God to follow along with us and continue to bless us.

While God is gracious and faithful to forgive us when we confess. We must not put God in the situation to act because of our pride and disobedience. We need to follow Jesus' example of resisting temptation and abiding in the word of God.

13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

The devil offered to Jesus the types of temptations that mankind could face and He was victorious. Jesus therefore is the rightful leader and example for how to live the Christian life.

The Apostles and writers of the New Testament recognized this. When writing about the believers response to spiritual warfare they applied the principle of resistance they learned from the life of Jesus. Let me give you three examples:

Peter in 1 Peter 5:8-9 says,

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

The believer's to resist the enemy and his attacks by being steadfast in the faith as revealed in the scriptures.

James in James 4:7 says, Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

The believers's to submit to God's will and word and resist the devil and his attacks. If you resist him he will flee from you.

Paul in Ephesians 6:13 says, Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

The evil day refers to anytime the believer experiences spiritual warfare. The believer is to take up the armor of God which is to apply the principles of scripture to their life. Applying the scriptures will enable us to "withstand."

The Greek word Paul uses for "withstand" is the same word that was translated "resist," in the verses we read in epistle of Peter and James.

The Apostles and New Testament believers who have the same nature like us learned from Jesus that they could remain victorious in our mission resisting the enemy and abiding in God and His word. When we do the enemy will flee.

Luke 4:13 closes by saying, "The devil departed from Jesus until an opportune time."

The Star Wars movies are predictable there are always going to be battles between the enemy and the Rebels or Resistance. Even so until we go to be with Jesus or He comes for us, our battles will continue. What ever the time or the battle, we can remain victorious by resisting the enemy and abiding in His word.