

Theme: **Our Lenten Journey**

Text: Luke 4:1 – 13

Date: March 10, 2019

Occasion: 1st Sunday in Lent

Place: Shepherd of the Rockies LCM, Bailey, CO

Grace and peace to you as you let God lead you on your journey in life, from God, our Father, our Suffering Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

How is your journey in life been going lately? Have you had days of frustration or days of joy? Have the trials been heavy or have your burdens been light? Has the devil, the world and your old sinful self been your focus or has the journey with the Lord as your guide along the brought you closer to your heavenly home? This week as we started the Lenten season we began our Lenten journey with Jesus to the cross where He brings us to the love, peace and joy of our redemption. This Lenten journey is a reminder of all that God has done for us so that we can have the love, peace and joy that God created us for. So, let's look at the journey that Jesus is goes through in this world for us so that we can learn how God is with us at all times along our journey in this life that leads us to the perfect love, peace and joy of God's heavenly home prepared for us forever.

The evangelist Luke tells us, '**And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness ² for forty days, being tempted by the devil.**' (Lk. 4:1-2a) Our journey begins in this world at the moment that we are born. Jesus journey in life in our world began from the moment that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb, but Luke in this statement is telling us about how Jesus started His ministry and His journey to the cross with all our sins. He had to be tested by the Devil with all his best temptations. Jesus at his baptism was not washed of all His sins but was prepared for the journey that He was sent into this world to accomplish for us and that was to take all our sin to the cross of Calvary and make the full and final payment for them all.

I want you to notice that Jesus has the same help that each of us have on our journey in this world after we have been baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit is with us. Yes, if we let the Holy Spirit be our guide He will lead us through this wilderness of life that we have in this world. Why is this world a wilderness? Well it's not because of the beast of this world, this world is a wilderness because sin, death and the devil have taken control over this world that was created by God's perfect love for us. We live in a wilderness

that has lost the love, peace and joy that God created us for and it is the Holy Spirit who has been sent by God the Father and the Son to lead and guide us through this wilderness to the promised land that Jesus Christ has purchased and won for us.

Just recently we have heard about the miracle in the woods of California, where two sisters, 8 and 5 years old, were lost for 44 hours after disobeying their mom and going off on a journey that got them lost in the woods about 6 miles from their home. When asked how they survived in the wilderness for two days with little or no harm to them the oldest sister explained that she remembered what she had learned in the wilderness class she had taken last summer. When she realized, they didn't know the way back home it was starting to rain so she searched for a shelter and founded a huckleberry tree with branches that reached down close to the ground. This was their dry shelter and by using her younger sister's rain coat over their heads they keep the rain off them. She said that her younger sister cried all night long as she held her and told her that Daddy would come and find them to bring them home. She said that she had learned from the wilderness class that when you are lost you need to find shelter and stay there till they come and find you so they did. They survived by drinking the water that formed on the leaves of the Huckleberry tree, eating their granola bars and few Huckleberries that were left on the trees. They saw the helicopters flying over the trees the next day and knew that daddy was searching for them and would find them and bring them home so they stayed right where they were and they spent the second night under that same Huckleberry tree. The searchers found them after discovering foot prints in the mud and granola bar wrappings which lead them right to where they were staying.

Where do you learn how to survive in the wilderness that we are living in today? From the wilderness training you are given at God's church through God's Word. God set up this wilderness training for all of us from the time that we were born, so that our parents could bring us to God's Word and the Holy Spirit by our Baptism and then continue to train us on how to survey in the wilderness of this world through the Holy Spirit working in our lives in His church as we learn more from God's Word, the manual for life given to us by God through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the writes of each of the books of the Bible.

Listen to how the evangelist Luke explains how Jesus survived living in this world, being tempted by the devil. **'And Jesus ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, He**

was hungry. ³ The devil said to Him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” ⁴ And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” (Lk. 4:2-4)

What enables us to survive in this wilderness of a world that we live in? Did you hear what Jesus said? The evangelist Matthew gives us the complete quote of Jesus’ Words as he records, ‘Jesus said to the devil, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of God.”’ (Mt. 4:4) The two sisters from California survived their journey in the wilderness by remembering and listening to the instructions they were taught through the words of a wilderness class instructor. The Words of God are the words of the creator of this world and His instructions will bring us to salvation instead of damnation as we remember and listen to them along our journey in this world and we have someone to help as we let the Holy Spirit go to work in our lives.

The devil in this temptation tempted Jesus in the same way that he is tempting us daily. Rely on your own abilities, that’s what the devil wants you to do with all that God has given to you and not on the truth of God’s Word. When the devil gets you to rely on your own abilities he’s got you going in the wrong direction and even further from the home that you want to be in at the end of your life in this world.

Listen to the second way that the devil and the world is going to try to tempt you away from the love, peace and joy of your heavenly Father. ‘**And the devil took Jesus up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, ⁶ and said to Him, “To You I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. ⁷ If You, then, will worship me, it will all be Yours.” ⁸ And Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.”’** (Lk. 4:5-8)

As we listen to all the news and comments of the world we could quite easily be tempted just as Jesus was to strive for power and glory in this world instead of giving all our praise and trust to God and all that He has done for us. The devil, the world and our old sinful self are constantly encouraging us to strive for the power and glory of this world instead of serving the creator and the one who is in control of all that is happening in this world. We serve God by serving and helping others to come to know the love, peace and joy that God has given to us. The perfect love, peace and joy that everyone is looking for in this world doesn’t come from this world, but from the creator of all that is in this world, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. As we strive to do God’s will in our lives we help others to know and do God’s will with us in love, peace and joy that is NOT based in this world but in the perfect life that only God can give to us. Most people in this

world journey through life looking for that perfect love, peace and joy that they know is out there somewhere. God gives us that perfect love, peace and joy in this world and for eternity as we journey with Jesus as our Lord and Savior in this world now so that we can live in that perfect love, peace and joy of God for all eternity.

So, what is the devil's third trick for get us away from the life that God wants to give to us now and for all eternity. The Evangelist Luke tells us, **'And he took Jesus to Jerusalem and 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 will command His angels concerning You, to guard You," ¹¹ and "On their hands they will bear You up, lest you strike Your foot against a stone." ¹² And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ¹³ And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.'** (Lk 4:9-13)

How do we put the Lord our God to the test? By not trusting in God's love for us, but looking for His limits. As all parent know, every child wants to know what the limits are for the people in their lives. Will Daddy allow be to do this? What if I don't do what Mommy and Daddy told me to do, will there be any consequences? We don't have to test God to see where His limits are. He tells us where His limits are and what we need to be doing to find the perfect love, peace and joy that we are looking for along our journey through life. They are given to us in His Ten Commandments. Do we want the perfect love, peace and joy of God to be in our lives? If so, then **'Jesus says to us, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."** (Mt. 22:37-40)

How did Jesus make it through all the trials and temptations of this world? By loving God first, loving his neighbor, us, second and His own life third. This is God's example given to us so that we can live life to the fullest and God is ready to help each of us to accomplish that as we listen to His Word and let the Holy Spirit go to work in our lives to help us live in the love, peace and joy that God wants us to have always. So, learn from God and teach others His ways for life eternal. Amen.