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March 10, 2024

Luke 4:1-13 – *A Tale of Two Adams*

**Discussion Questions**

1. We read Genesis 3 and were again reminded how the first Adam failed. Though he was a perfect man created in God's image, he did not resist temptation, disobeyed God, and was driven from the garden. Here in Luke 4, we see the last Adam being tested. What is the outcome of Jesus finally being One who obeyed God perfectly?
2. Consider the two accounts again. How are they similar? How do they differ? Who initiated the temptations and why is that significant? Satan's strategy in tempting Eve included trying to get her to doubt God's word: "Did God actually say. . . ?" (Genesis 3:1). How did Jesus respond to each temptation of Satan? What does this tell us about God's Word?
3. We praise God that the throne of judgment has been replaced by a throne of grace for the believer. Look at Hebrews 2:14-18 and Hebrews 4:14-16. How does knowing that Jesus sympathizes with your weakness and aids you in temptation, encourage you to run to Him in your weakness? Discuss the effects of developing a prayer life that is fully dependent on God.
4. Pastor Mike asked us to consider the questions, "What do you think Christianity is all about? How do we know it's true?" What would you say to a neighbor or co-worker or not-yet-saved family member who asked you this? How does Luke 1:4 add to your response?
5. Which of the three ways in which the Son of God is tempted by the devil makes you easy prey?
  - Is God really good and kind, or is He withholding from us? (Not trusting God.)
  - Maybe there is a shortcut somewhere I can take? (Bypassing the Father's will.)
  - Surely God will take care of me even if I disobey Him. (Presuming on God's Fatherly care.)

How can you shore up and strengthen this area of weakness?

*(Continued, next page. . .)*

### Additional Reflection

Luther wrote about the distinction between what he called a "theology of glory" and "the theology of the cross." Consider the dangers of adhering to the "theology of glory" vs. "the theology of the cross."

In the March 2008 issue of *Tabletalk*<sup>1</sup>, Gene Edward Veith explains:

*A theology of glory expects total success, finding all the answers, winning all the battles, and living happily ever after. The theology of glory is all about my strength, my power, and my works. A theologian of glory expects his church to be perfect and always to grow. If a theologian of glory gets sick, he expects God to heal him.*

*And if he experiences failure and weakness, if his church has problems and if he is not healed, then he is often utterly confused, questioning the sufficiency of his faith and sometimes questioning the very existence of God.*

*But, Luther pointed out, when God chose to save us, He did not follow the way of glory. He did not come as a great hero-king, defeating his enemies and establishing a mighty kingdom on earth. Rather, He came as a baby laid in an animal trough, a man of sorrows with no place to lay His head. And He saved us by the weakness and shame of dying on a cross. Those who follow Him will have crosses of their own: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24).*

*Not that we have to suffer for our own sins. But faith in the Gospel, putting our trust in what Christ accomplished for us on His cross, entails acknowledging our own weakness, the failure of our own works, the complete abnegation of our glory.*

*And as we find ourselves in the cross of Jesus, we can find Him in the far lesser crosses that we have to bear. When Christians suffer, according to Luther, Christ is with us in our suffering. Spiritual depression can drive us closer to Him, who knows better than anyone what it feels like to be wracked with physical pain, to be abandoned and rejected by those He loved, to be forsaken by His Father. . . .*

*. . . Even in the secular spheres, contemporary Americans are mad after the theology of glory, expecting success on the job, perfect families, and either self-help remedies or government action to solve all our problems. But Americans today cannot handle suffering. We would rather die than suffer. We would rather be killed than suffer. Send for Dr. Kevorkian!*

*But the truth of Christianity is evident in that everyone does, in fact, have problems, struggles, and sufferings. And this can be their point of contact for Christ, who on the cross not only "was wounded for our transgressions" but also "has borne our griefs" and "carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4-5).*

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<sup>1</sup>Excerpted from "[Glory Versus the Cross](#)" by Gene Edward Veith *Tabletalk*, Ligonier Ministries, Inc., Sanford, FL