

Sermon followed by Service

March 6, 2022

Genesis 3 and Luke 4

If you were to draw a picture of Satan, would you draw his face with a smile or with a scowl? With a look of evil or a look of concern? It's his smile and his pretending to care about us, his pretending to want what's best for us, that make his lies especially dangerous, isn't it? With a smile and a look of concern he pretends and lies; with a smile and look of concern he puts out fake news and disinformation. With a smile and a look of concern, he wages a war of words against God and God's Word.

We see it in the Garden of Eden. Satan slithers in pretending to be helpful. He puts the idea out there for Adam and Eve that God is looking to keep us down, that God's Word is too constricting, that listening to God's Word is holding us back from a better life. Slithering and pretending to be helpful, Satan puts it out there that we'd be better off if we muted what God says and did our own thinking and choosing. Who doesn't like to hear that - "You're better off doing things your way than God's way"? "Your thinking is better than God's thinking"? "You'd be better off muting God, changing his channel"? You know what Adam and Eve did with that, with Satan's disinformation and lies. What about us? How many times, how many ways, has Satan gotten you? How many times, how many ways has Satan gotten us to mute God's Word, to switch the channel?

We see Satan with his same war on God and his Word out in the wilderness. Jesus isn't out there in the wilderness for a nature hike; the Holy Spirit led him there to do battle with Satan, to be tempted by Satan. We hear Satan appeal to pride - "If you are the Son of God." We hear Satan appeal to comfort and ease - "tell this stone to become bread." We hear Satan offer an easier way to rule the world - "bow down and it's all yours." We hear Satan twist God's Word and offer an easier way to gain a crowd - "jump and he'll keep you safe." Do you hear the appeal - "My way is easier than God's

way”? And Satan’s claim - “My word for you is better than God’s Word, God’s promise, God’s command.”

Why? In the Garden, in the wilderness, in our lives, why does Satan mess with God’s Word? God’s Word is God’s way to connect with us. God doesn’t just use a plate of brownies or a trail of bread crumbs to connect with us; he uses his Word. He doesn’t just grab us and drag us where he wants us; he uses his Word. You’ve heard Jesus’ promise: **“God so loved the world that he gave his One and Only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”** Where does believing come from? Where does faith come from? Not a plate of brownies, a trail of bread crumbs, or even God’s grip. **“Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ.”**

God’s way to connect with us isn’t grab and drag. God’s way to connect with us isn’t to impersonally program and reprogram us against our will. God’s way to connect with us isn’t just to sit back and watch us do our thing; that’s not really connecting, is it? God’s way to connect with us is by his Word. With his Gospel Word in here [Bible], he calls us, speaks to us, and wins our hearts with his promise of love. God connects to us through his Word.

So, if Satan wants to disconnect you from God, what would you expect Satan to do? Sometimes he might take away the plate of brownies God gives us so we grouse about how hard life is with God. Sometimes he might give us a trail of bread crumbs to lead us into sin. But mostly - to separate us from God, or to keep us separate from God - Satan messes with the Word that connects us to God.

How? Satan doesn’t present himself as out to destroy you. He comes with a smile, with a look of concern. Maybe with a question - “Did God really say...? - looking to create doubt. Or a word of encouragement - “Be true to yourself” - that sounds better to our pride than God’s Word. He

might offer a word - “there’s a quicker way, an easier way, a better way to live” than what God says in his Word. Whatever he says or does, you can count on this - Satan will mess with God’s Word to mess with your God connection.

And it can sound so good. Until what? Until we realize what we lose by listening to the devil. Adam and Eve realized what they lost right away. Sometimes we live in the devil’s lies for years muting God, changing the channel. Some people live in their lies - muting God, changing God’s channel - until they meet God face to face and hear his judgment - **“Away from me, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”**

We live in a world with so much fake news and disinformation swirling in us and around us. And we can’t just point our finger at Satan or out there at them; with our sinful nature we love to latch on to fake news and disinformation. With all the voices in us and around us telling us to mute God and to pick our own channel, it is so easy to be like Adam and Eve and to think our way better than God’s way and God’s Word.

Did you notice what God did for Adam and Eve? He didn’t just write them off; he didn’t just click them off. Instead God went calling, inviting. And he does that same thing for us - calling, inviting - through his Word, through his people. Sometimes he gives us a wake-up call and a shake, a pinch or a poke to wake us up to listen - “Where are you? What are you doing? Who are you listening to?”

We might not like the way God pinches or pokes, but when God calls you, when he nudges you, don’t do what Adam and Eve did. Don’t think you’re better off hiding. Don’t think you’re better off blaming others and excusing yourself. Don’t wait for God to do a grab and drag; don’t wait for God to do a forced reprogramming. Instead, listen to his Word, and answer like the tax-collector we heard on Ash Wednesday - **“God, have mercy on me a sinner.”** Listen to his Word that gives what God has for you - a

Champion to crush the devil's lying head - the Word that quashes and quiets the devil's lies - a Savior on a cross to pay for the ways we've muted God - a Defense Attorney speaking up for you, at his right hand in heaven, speaking God's Truth - "Forgiven, full and free, right by God and right for heaven."

That word of forgiveness, that word of God's truth, connects what Satan's lies broke. With Jesus and his Word you have life with God, here and forever in heaven. Let me tell you something I look forward to in heaven - no more lies, no more fake news, no more disinformation, no more he-said-she-said. No more wondering "Who's right, what's right, who's telling the truth?" No more doubting the wisdom of God's Word; no more doubting the Truth of God's love. Instead, perfect peace with God and his Word.

Today, we're still surrounded by the fake news, lies, and disinformation. But we aren't on our own. Out in the wilderness, you saw how Jesus put the devil in his place. You heard how Jesus handled Satan's challenges to God's Word, how Jesus handled Satan's twisting of God's Word. Jesus took God's Word in the Bible - not some secret Word he brought from heaven. He took the Word he learned from his mom and dad, the Word he learned in confirmation classes, the Word he heard and learned in church - Jesus took the Word, and with it he squashed and quashed the devil's lies.

You have that same Word in here [Bible]. You can have that same Word ready for action in here [heart and mind]. Reading the Bible, digging into the Bible, Bible Study - isn't for people with extra time on their hands. Reading the Bible and Bible Study are for people who are tired of dealing with lies and disinformation, for people tired of wondering and doubting. Reading the Bible and Bible study are for people who love God, who love God so much they want to know more and more about him. And reading the Bible and Bible Study are for people dealing with Satan's lies, people fighting to put the devil back in his place. All that sounds like us, doesn't it?

In here, you have what God gives to connect us to him. In here, you have what God gives to defend us with him.

So don't settle, and don't fall for the disinformation out there and in here [heart]. With Jesus and his Word, you have something better - you have the Truth of God! Amen.

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THE SERVICE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we are surrounded by a giant, satanic disinformation campaign feeding us lies not only about God's identity and purpose, but also lies about our identity and purpose. The hurt and heartache we see around the world is just a taste of the cost and consequence of believing Satan's lies.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we see God's answer to Satan's disinformation campaign. Jesus steps in for us to face Satan with his lies and put him in his place. Now Jesus calls us to rise above the disinformation and fake news and to share his Grace and Truth!

OPENING HYMN

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

Hymn 863

A mighty fortress is our God, a trusty shield and weapon;
he helps us free from ev'ry need that has us now o'ertaken.
The old evil foe now means deadly woe; deep guile and great might
are his dread arms in fight; on earth is not his equal.

With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss effected;
but for us fights the valiant one whom God himself elected.
You ask, "Who is this?" Jesus Christ it is, the almighty Lord,
and there's no other God; he holds the field forever.

Though devils all the world should fill, all eager to devour us,
we tremble not, we fear no ill; they shall not overpow'r us.
This world's prince may still scowl fierce as he will, he can harm us none.
He's judged; the deed is done; one little word can fell him.

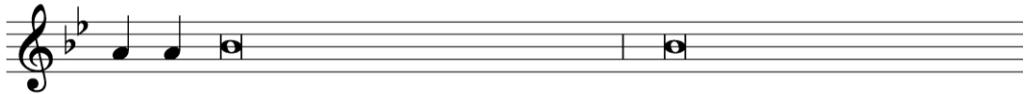
The Word they still shall let remain nor any thanks have for it;
he's by our side upon the plain with his good gifts and Spirit.
And take they our life, goods, fame, child, and wife,
though all may be gone, our victory is won; the kingdom's ours forever!



For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of



God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and



praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, com - fort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST (CHOIR)

CW p.176



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his



peo - ple on earth. Lord God,



heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther, we



wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your



glo - ry. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and



peace to his peo - ple on earth.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,



Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer - cy on us. You are seat - ed at the

right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his

peo - ple on earth. For you a -

lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,

you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ,

with the Ho - ly Spir - it in the glo - ry of

God the Fa - ther. A - men. A - men.

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his

peo - ple on earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Mighty God and Father, as our Lord Jesus walked into the wilderness to face the devil's temptations, he did not fall for Satan's lies or falter in his resolve to save us from the lies of Satan. By his mighty victory, bolster our faith so that in the face of Satan's lies and false teaching, we hold true to your Word with courage and confidence; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Genesis 3:1-15

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' "

"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it.

She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed are you above all livestock

and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly

and you will eat dust

all the days of your life.

And I will put enmity

between you and the woman,

and between your offspring and hers;

he will crush your head,

and you will strike his heel."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine.

Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN - CHOIR

“Faith and Truth and Life Bestowing”

Hymn 636

*Faith and truth and life bestowing, open now the Scriptures, Lord,
seed to life eternal sowing, scattered on the wind abroad.
Let not hearts, your Word receiving, like a barren field be found,
choked with thorns and unbelieving, shallow earth or stony ground.*

*May the Spirit’s pow’r unceasing bring to life the hidden grain,
daily in our hearts increasing, bearing fruit that shall remain.
So in Scripture, song, and story, Savior, may your voice be heard.
Till our eyes behold your glory give us ears to hear your Word.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Luke 4:4

“It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but by every word of God.’”

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'"

The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"

The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. For it is written:

" 'He will command his angels concerning you
to guard you carefully;
they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered, "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY

"God Has Spoken by His Prophets"

Hymn 639

God has spoken by his prophets, spoken his unchanging Word,
each from age to age proclaiming God, the one, the righteous Lord.
In the world's despair and turmoil one firm anchor holds us fast:
God is King, his throne eternal, God the first and God the last.

God has spoken by Christ Jesus, Christ, the everlasting Son,
brightness of the Father's glory, with the Father ever one;
spoken by the Word incarnate, God from God, before time was;
Light from Light, to earth descending, he reveals our God to us.

God is speaking by his Spirit, speaking to our hearts again,
in the ageless Word declaring his own message, now as then.
Thro' the rise and fall of nations one sure faith is standing fast:
God abides, his Word unchanging, God the first and God the last.

SERMON

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Eternal Father, your Word is a lamp for our feet and a light to our path. You inspired the Scriptures for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that your servants might be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Lead us to love your Word more and more and to receive your message with great eagerness.

You have given us your Word that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in his name. Enable us to see the wonders of your love in Christ from the beginning to the end of your holy book.

Help us to see Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

Work in all your people, especially in parents, the resolve and patience to teach little children the simple truths about the Savior who loves them. Walk with us as we take our children to the manger, the cross, and the empty tomb. Let them find Jesus in stories, songs, and prayers.

Move us to bring up our children in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Provide wisdom and commitment to teachers who train our young people in Sunday Schools and youth Bible classes. Deepen their knowledge of your Word as they prepare and share the lessons they teach. Move them to model a sincere devotion to the Scriptures.

Lead us to plan for and support the Christian training of children.

We thank you for enabling our congregation to provide elementary (and secondary) education for our children. We know our schools are your special blessing, and we pray for the resolve to establish and maintain standards of excellence in all aspects of education. Move us to be generous in our offerings so that teachers may teach and students may learn in fitting surroundings.

Lead us to provide Christian schools that reflect the immensity of your love.

Bless the schools and teachers who prepare public ministers of the gospel for service in our churches and around the world. Lead teachers and professors to be faithful to your Word and provide insights that enable them to pass on your truth to their students. Ignite the zeal of young men and women to be willing and eager to share the truths of Scripture with others. Move us to support with our prayers and gifts the schools our synod has established.

We pray that you send workers in your harvest fields.

Work in us that we may find the lasting value of growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ. Lead us to be faithful in our personal study of the Scriptures and in participating in regular Bible classes. Rid us of all thoughts that Christian education ends in our youth. Make us life-long students of your precious Word.

Lead us to believe that at every age your Word remains a lamp for our feet and a light to our path.

THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)

(Individually packaged wafers are gluten-free.)

PREFACE

CW p.183



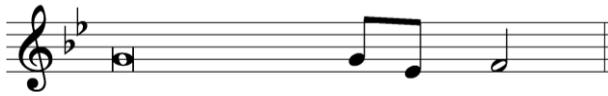
The Lord be with you.



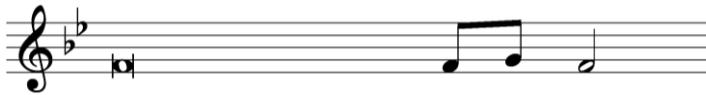
And al - so with you.



Lift up your hearts.



We lift them up to the Lord.



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

CW p.184



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,

God of might. Heav-en and earth are full of your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho -
san - na in the high - est!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lord God, you are worthy to receive thanks and praise from all people. You created the world and all who live in it, and in your mercy you saved us. We give thanks to you for the grace of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Though in very nature God, he took the nature of a servant and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. He offered himself as a sacrifice for sin and redeemed us from its curse and penalty.

He rescued us from the terrors of death and restored eternal life with you. He conquered our enemies and gained for us the kingdom of grace and glory.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood, and lead us to remember his suffering, death, and resurrection. Forgive our sins and fill us with the hope of new life in heaven. Hear our praise and receive our thanks as we worship you—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my T body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my T blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

JESUS, LAMB OF GOD

CW p.186

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are: "Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us. Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the".

sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
 Je-sus, Lamb of God, you take a-way the
 sin of the world; grant us your peace.

DISTRIBUTION

PRAYER

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet you have given us in this Sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit, help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and T give you peace.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“God’s Word Is Our Great Heritage”

Hymn 640

God’s Word is our great heritage and shall be ours forever;
to spread its light from age to age shall be our chief endeavor.
Through life it guides our way, in death it is our stay.
Lord, grant, while worlds endure, we keep its teachings pure
throughout all generations.

OFFERING

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with your mobile device.*



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