




# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

## Questions for Community Group Discussion

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?  
...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- Gallup reports that 90% of Americans believe that God (of one sort or another) exists, while only 70% believe that Satan does. Do **you** believe in a literal devil? Why or why not?

How have your views changed over the years? What (or who) produced that change in you?

- Pastor Doug spoke of the "complexity" of evil—that it **cannot** be explained simply by economic, social, physical, or environmental factors. Sometimes healthy, wealthy, well-educated people do unspeakable evil while some others, who are deprived of basic needs and dignity, are capable of righteous acts. How would secular society explain this paradox? How do you explain it?

He also noted the progression of **beliefs** ⇒ **thoughts** ⇒ **emotions** ⇒ **actions** (see [Sermon Summary](#)). Using this truth—and factoring in the involvement of Satan—dissect the following common events:

1. becoming impatient in traffic or in a check-out line
2. being rude to a family member or coworker
3. giving in—*again!*—to porn or gossip

- Review Satan's crafty use of **consequences** and **accusations** in tempting us ([Sermon Summary](#)). Who will tell us how you've seen those dynamics in your own life?

**Need help resisting temptation?**  
For free biblical counseling, e-mail:  
[BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com](mailto:BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com)

## Application-Challenge

- Adopt a biblical world view of evil. Don't think that evil is due to external conditions; there is an actual devil who promotes and magnifies the evil in our hearts.
- Understand the biblical concept of grace. Until we appreciate the radical, costly grace Jesus came to offer, temptation and accusation will continue to have great power over us.
- Call upon the truths of God's Word. Jesus knew that he couldn't handle life without it; he meditated on it and memorized it. What role is Scripture playing in **your** life?

## Sermon Summary (Key Text: Luke 4:1-13)

Jesus consistently relied upon God's Word for perspective and strength in the midst of Satan's all-out assault on Jesus' spiritual integrity (Luke 4:1-13). Today we'll see how God's Word functions in a very practical way to help us handle the temptations to evil which come our way.

**[1] The complexity of evil.** Today, many question the existence of a literal devil. I believe in a literal devil (and so did Jesus!). I would go so far as to say, "It's dangerous **not to** believe in the Devil." Those who reduce evil to mere sociological or psychological factors are seriously out of touch with reality. The biblical doctrine that there are real evil entities, called demons, out there is not naïve. To the contrary, it avoids naiveté about evil; it takes seriously the depth and complexity of evil. Satan preyed on Jesus' hunger and fatigue, tempting him to make stones into bread. Satan used psychological warfare, playing on the fact that Jesus came into the world to be its King, when he offered him the kingdoms of the world. Satan tested Jesus' confidence in God as his protector when he challenged him to hurl himself off the pinnacle of the temple. "Go ahead and jump—unless you doubt God can be trusted to protect you." Satan sought to create an alliance between himself and Jesus' inner drives for sustenance and protection. Likewise, Luke 22:3 says that Satan entered into Judas, and as a consequence, Judas looked to betray Jesus. Satan harnessed the envy and resentment that was gaining a foothold in Judas' life. And that foothold led Judas to take actions which he never imagined himself taking. Satan is subtle, not dramatic. Satan does the same with us, utilizing grudges to gain a foothold (Ephesians 4:26-27; also see 1 Timothy 3:6-7 and Hebrews 2:14-15). According to the Bible, evil is complex and multidimensional. It has physical aspects, sociological aspects, economic aspects, spiritual aspects (1 John 2:15-17). And Satan orchestrates it all.

**[2] The strategies of evil.** As we look at Satan's temptation of Jesus, for the most part, they are good things that are being held up to Jesus (food, world-wide kingship, divine protection). Satan doesn't say, "Jesus, I want you to commit adultery," or "I want you to lie," or "I want you to steal." You may wonder, "Well what's wrong with Jesus satisfying his hunger or receiving authority over the kingdoms of the world?" Nothing. Satan tempted Jesus to pursue good things, but which would require disobedience to God in order to obtain at that time. From this, we see that any good thing that becomes more important than obedience to God is a very bad thing. That's what Satan was trying to do. Many people have told me stories of how, when God denied them a good thing they desired, they walked away from God, showing that that thing was more important to them than God. That's demonic. When Satan tempts us to sin, he typically minimizes the **consequences**: "*The consequences won't be all that bad. You have a standing in grace. God will still accept you. Go ahead. It'll be all right.*" Then, when we've taken the bait, he magnifies the consequences through **accusation**: "*Look what you have done! Look at what a failure you are! God can't love you anymore. How can you even look at yourself in the mirror?*"

**[3] The defeat of evil.** Jesus showed that the way to defeat evil is by drawing upon Scripture. In fact, whenever Jesus found himself in a time of crisis, he broke out the Scripture. He did it here (v. 4, 8, 12) and the most obvious other occasion was when he was dying on the cross (Psalm 22:1 & 31:5). Whenever a person is in crisis, in pain, the real "you" comes out. Unfortunately, in our case it's not usually Scripture! What comes out is what is in our hearts—see Mark 7:20-23). What came out of Jesus? Scripture! Jesus had completely saturated his mind with Scripture. It shaped his life. It nurtured him. It was his daily bread, his drink. Jesus knew the Scriptures so well that he didn't just cite any old passage. No, he quoted passages appropriate to his temptation. If we put anything ahead of God, it becomes an idol. But when we refuse Satan's false beliefs and lies, he loses power over us. **Beliefs ⇨ thoughts ⇨ emotions ⇨ actions.** On the other hand, if we're unable to combat Satan's lies with the truth of Scripture we're in for miserable lives.

Note that Satan **didn't** try to get Jesus to break a commandment, to directly do evil. The one thing Satan wanted at all costs was to stop Jesus from going to the cross. Jesus wasn't just a do-gooder for us to follow; he is a Savior who forgives guilty sinners. Satan doesn't mind you seeing Jesus as your example, but he doesn't want you to see him as your Savior! When we realize that our sin is so serious that Jesus had to die for it, this helps us see how wicked sin is, and that fortifies us against Satan's temptations.

### Talking To God About This Week's Message

*"Heavenly Father, today I want to be a 'doer' of the Word, and not just a 'hearer'. Amen."*

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

**Jesus relied on the Word of God to prevail over Satan's schemes.  
We can too—but we've got to "marinate our minds" in Scripture as Jesus did!**

Biblical meditation is the **exact opposite** of the pagan concepts of "mindfulness" practiced today. Mindfulness, and other forms of Eastern religious meditation, tell us to **look within** to find solutions. The form of meditation Jesus practiced **looked to God** and His Word for strength and perspective.

You too can learn to withstand the pressures of the world, the flesh, and the devil (1 John 2:15-17) through **biblical** meditation. Simply follow the procedure found in "**How to Meditate Biblically**".

You can meditate on any passage you'd like—it's all inspired and inspiring!

Not sure what passage to meditate on? No problem! Consider getting started with any of these:  
Psalm 23    Colossians 1:15-20    Philippians 2:3-11    Galatians 5:14-24    Romans 8:31-39

### **How to Meditate Biblically**

The Bible says that the person who **meditates** on the word of God is "*like a tree planted by streams of water which yields fruit, does not wither, and prospers in everything.*" This M.E.D.I.T.A.T.E. acrostic helps...

- M** — **memorize**
- E** — **emphasize** key words
- D** — **define** key words
- I** — **individualize** it
- T** — **think** about it
- A** — **apply** something
- T** — **thank** God through it
- E** — **enjoy** the Lord!

**Day One**—Write on a 3x5 card the verse(s) you wish to meditate upon. Carry it with you each day.

- Review your verse(s) ten times throughout the day **aloud** (you're working on **M**emorizing it).
- As you review aloud, **E**mphasize key words (the words or concepts which have great significance).
- What did God teach you through this experience? What can you thank God for?

**Day Two**—Review your verse(s) ten times throughout the day today.

- Using a standard English dictionary, write down the **D**efinition of each of the key words.
- What did God teach you through this experience? What can you thank God for?

**Day Three**—**I**ndividualize your verse(s) by putting your name in the verse(s).

- Thoughtfully review this **individualized** version ten times throughout the day today.
- **T**hink about it! What did God teach you through this experience?

**Day Four**—Review your verse(s) ten times throughout the day today.

- Mark any commands (positive or negative) or examples (to be imitated or avoided).
- Write down how you will **A**pply this to your life today. Pray for God to help you to be faithful.
- Journal your experience of obedience—what can you **T**hank God for?

**Day Five**—Again review your verse(s) ten times throughout the day today, but now, each time...

- ...end the passage with the following worshipful, heart-felt affirmation, "**Yes, Lord, I believe.**"
- As an act of trust in your heavenly Father, apply the truth of this passage in some way today.
- Journal your experience of obedience. What is the relationship between obedience and **E**njoyment?

**Day Six**—Review your verse(s) ten times today. Make sure you've memorized it word-perfect!

- Again, end the passage each time with the worshipful, heart-felt affirmation, "**Yes, Lord, I believe.**"
- Read Psalm 1:1-3. Journal about your week-long experience with biblical meditation. Specifically:
  - How was it "refreshing" (Psalm 1:3a)?
  - How were you "fruitful" (Psalm 1:3b)?
  - How were you "resilient" (Psalm 1:3c)?
  - How did you "prosper" (Psalm 1:3d)?