



Date: _____

Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Life's Turning Points Series, Lesson 45

Lesson Title: Jesus is tempted: Jump!

Take Home Point: Give up control – get God's power.

Warm-Up:

Have you ever heard a child say, "I don't need any help. I can do it by myself," when faced with something you know is too difficult? I can't remember how many times I heard that over the years with my own children, all the way from learning to make their letters to driving a car. Part of that was simply their growing up, but part of it was yearning to be in control regardless of knowledge or ability. I knew I could help them, and I wanted to, but they were firmly convinced they had complete control of the situation. Unless it was dangerous or had other serious consequences, I usually would let them try until they came to me for assistance. When they stopped trying to do the activity on their own, it got accomplished.

Read: Matthew 4:1-10

Observation (What happened?):

What did Satan say to taunt Jesus in verse 6? How did he attempt to legitimize his temptation?

What did Jesus use in response?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Since Satan quoted Psalm 91 accurately, what was still wrong?

What did Jesus mean when he said, "Never tempt the Lord?"

Insight:

What was the temptation here for Jesus? It was to take control of the situation and be seen for what he was – the victorious Messiah. It was to seize back the glory he had set aside in coming to earth and reject God's plan. Control was the issue, as it is for us today. Who is in charge of your choices, your time, your resources, your perspective on life? It is either God or you. If it's not God, you are in big trouble, because you do not really have control; you only think you do. Letting him take control releases us from the anxiety and fear that we won't get our way. George Matheson wrote the following words over one hundred years ago, and he captured the essence of the paradox we face – to truly be powerful, we must give up control and let God do His work.

*"Make me a captive, Lord, and then I shall be free;
Force me to render up my sword and I shall conqueror be.
I sink in life's alarms when by myself I stand;
Imprison me within your arms and strong shall be my hand."*

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What situation beyond your control are you trying to control?

Ask God to relieve you of the burden of control and let him do his work in you, in others, and in the situation.