



Date: _____

Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Life's Turning Points Series, Lesson 47

Lesson Title: Jesus Is Tempted: Come Down From the Cross

Take Home Point: Give up living for yourself, get life with God.

Warm-Up:

When I was much younger, I used to watch a long-running television game show called *Let's Make a Deal*. During that show, ordinary people in the audience were called to "come on down" to try to win big money and prizes. In fact, that's why people would go there – to get a chance to change their lives by winning stuff. But there was a catch. Before having an opportunity to win a prize, a contestant was given another prize worth far less than the "big one" hidden and waiting behind Door #1, Door #2, or Door #3. So the contestant had to choose to hold on to the small prize or give it up to get the big prize. It was always interesting to me to see how the contestants responded. Would they keep the lesser thing, or give it up to go for it all?

Read: Matthew 16:22-23, 27:39-42; Luke 23:39

Observation (What happened?):

What did Jesus call Peter in Matthew 16:22?

Who did Satan use to tempt Jesus to come down from the cross?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why do you think Jesus was so harsh with Peter?

From today's reading, what do you find to be the motivation for Jesus to stay on the cross?

Insight:

As we asked in previous lessons in this series, what was the temptation for Jesus here? It's pretty obvious – he would escape the agony he was experiencing as a human being, not have to die and be separated from his father, and prove he was the Son of God. But as he told Peter, that would not have been of God. So he stayed on the cross. Many people say he stayed on the cross because of his love for us, and it's true that he loves us forever and unconditionally. But in Matthew 16:23, Jesus tells us why he really endured the cross. It was what his Father wanted. And Jesus was obedient to the will of God. In Hebrews 12:2 it says that Jesus endured the cross because of the joy he saw ahead – the joy of faithfulness to his Father. That can also be our joy. But we have to be willing to give up our faith in ourselves, our desire to do things our way. We have to resist the temptations that so easily beset us. Do you know what God wants of you? Have you asked him? When you know his way are you diligent and dedicated to follow it? Those are vital questions to be answered by everyone who lives by the name of Jesus Christ.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Are you harsh with temptation? Are you aware of being tempted when it occurs?

Pray for the children in your small group to become alert to temptation, recognize it for what is, and ask God to help them resist it.