



Date: _____

Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Life's Turning Points Series, Lesson 44

Lesson Title: Jesus is Tempted: Turn These Stones to Bread

Take Home Point: Give up self-centeredness – get Kingdom-mindedness.

Warm-Up:

In Charles Dickens' novel, *A Christmas Carol*, we are introduced to Ebenezer Scrooge, who in Dickens' own words was "...a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, secret and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster." What made Scrooge that way? A few pages later, Dickens allows Scrooge to explain his way of life: "It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly!" Scrooge was so intent on gratifying himself, he could only look inward in complete self-centeredness. He had no time for anyone else, and certainly not for the things of God. Of course, as the novel progresses to its end, Scrooge learns the lessons of looking beyond himself.

Read: Matthew 4:1-10

Observation (What happened?):

Who led Jesus into the desert to be tempted?

What did Satan say to taunt Jesus for his first temptation?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why did Satan tempt Jesus to turn stones to bread? Why would that be tempting to Jesus?

What did Jesus mean when he said that we live on the words from God?

Insight:

Satan tempts Jesus where he was weakest – after 40 days of fasting "...he was hungry." What an understatement! Satan knew Jesus would desire food after fasting; he also knew Jesus could create food as he wished. So what was the temptation? It was for Jesus to use his creation power to satisfy his desires instead of living as a human being completely in God's will as he was sent to do. Temptation always comes back to desires – wanting something enough to block out everyone and everything else, including God's Word and ways. Look at James 1:14-15: *"Everyone is tempted by his own desires as they lure him away and trap him. Then desire becomes pregnant and gives birth to sin. When sin grows up, it gives birth to death."* We are severely tempted in this world, but it's not hopeless. We're not alone in our struggles. Romans 8 assures us that the Spirit helps us in our weakness, and that we are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How do you learn what are the words of God? How much time do you spend reading and contemplating (meditating) Scripture?

What do you say to Satan when he is tempting you? On what or who do you lean?