

## **Dr. Daniel K. Darko, Gospel of Luke, Session 6, John and the Preparation of Jesus, Luke 3:1-4:13**

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This is Dr. Dan Darko in his teaching on the Gospel of Luke. This is session 6, John and the Preparation of Jesus, Luke 3:1-4:13.

Welcome back to the Biblical e-learning lectures on the Gospel of Luke.

So far, we have been looking at the infancy narratives, and we finished the infancy narrative in the last lecture. Now we move on to chapter 3 of Luke, and we will go from chapter 3 of the Gospel of Luke to the very beginning of chapter 4, which I call John and the Preparation of Jesus. First, we will look at the ministry of John the Baptist.

In Luke, you will find out that the ministry of John the Baptist ends when the ministry of Jesus goes into full gear, unlike Matthew, where sometimes the two are working together at some point. In Luke, John's ministry ends when the ministry of Jesus begins. So, let's begin to look at the ministry of John in Luke chapter 3. Luke chapter 3, if I were to map it up in the ministry of John, I would map it up in this frame.

I will show the beginning of the ministry of John from chapter 3, verses 1 to 6. Chapter 3, verses 7 to 9, will be the preaching ministry of John. And then, I would proceed if I were to map it up to look at the ethical instruction of John in chapter 3, verses 10 to 14, followed by John's prediction about the one who is coming, the strong one, the one that will be Jesus. And then, we will look at John's imprisonment, which will go on to prepare the grants for the coming of Jesus.

So, let's begin to look at the beginning of chapter 3 as we get into the gospel of Luke. Now let me warn you that the beginning of chapter 3 has all these complicated names, and it is worth knowing where they are and the location. So I put a map for you to take a quick look at even though it will still be fairly difficult to track where these things are.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene. If you follow this map that I have for you, I don't have a lot of time here to be able to look at, but you look at the northeast of Galilee, you have some of the references there to follow and then further up, directly up towards the west, northwest of Galilee, you have Phoenicia, Syria and Iturea. Luke is trying to situate who is a leader at what time, and Luke is also trying to tell us about the ministry of John and, for that matter, Jesus

later on; the historical context of it is such that one needs to locate them in the Roman Empire.

Where these events are unfolding in the Roman Empire is a very, very small area called Palestine. Palestine will be the regions of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea, being the central base where Jerusalem is. Luke begins the account of John from chapter 1, chapter 3, verses 1 to 6, and I read, especially from verse 2. During the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness.

He went into all the regions around Jordan proclaiming baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, the voice of the one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight, every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hills shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, and all flesh shall see the salvation. Verse 7, He said therefore to the crowd that came out to be baptized by him, You brood of vipers, who want you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance, he said, and do not begin to say to yourself, We have Abraham as our father, for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children from Abraham.

Even now, the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that does not bear fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So, look at what Luke is doing here.

Luke shows us at the end of Chapter 1 that John grew up and left to stay in the wilderness. Here, in chapter 3, he tells us that the word of the Lord came. And the word of the Lord came to John while he was in the wilderness.

These events all unfolded in this specific historical context. John's ministry in Luke is going to be characterized in the pattern of Old Testament prophetic tradition. In fact, Luke Timothy Johnson, in his book *Prophetic Jesus*, tried to explain more about how to understand Luke and act as all about the prophetic tradition of the early church.

Luke reminds us that this man we are talking about, called John, will be and begin his ministry near the neighborhood of Jordan. And he will be preaching repentance and attracting so many people who will be coming to him. Yes, he was the same John that we talked about in chapter 1. He was the same one that we talked about, being the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth.

He would preach, and he would do something that we didn't know of in the past. In the Second Temple Judaism, we didn't know anything of a common tradition that says people were baptizing people in rivers and all that. We know that there are ritual baths.

But this particular guy, John the Baptist, which I think if he were to show up in your village, you would actually have a problem with that guy. Because of the way he is described, he dresses funny. He ate locusts and honey.

I mean, imagine what his dreadlocks would look like. Now talk about the shower; he lived in the desert. So imagine him showing up, and he comes and says, you have to repent of your sins.

But somehow, Luke tells us that the spirit of God was working through this man. He attracted so many to himself, and he preached a message of repentance. Those who came to him heard what he was saying clearly and repented of their sins.

When they repent, he baptizes them in a way of symbolism, saying that the old is immersed and washed in the water. As he brings them out of the water, they begin a new life and walk a life of repentance. For John, one key word in his ministry is repentance.

It is very important that one understands the baptism of John, the ministry of John in the context of repentance from sin. Repentance from wrongdoing that affects one's relationship with God and relationship with other people. Repentance does not only have to do with what one has to do in terms of a relationship with God, but repentance also has to do with justice, fairness, good contribution to society, and the way one deals with people at a day-to-day level, as we shall see.

In the area of thinking about John's baptism in particular, because it was not such a common tradition that we know of, sometimes scholars pause to wonder where this is coming from. Perhaps we don't have to know, but all we know is that the figure we read about, John, was a figure who functioned like a prophet in the Jewish tradition. Somehow, people recognized his ministry as such that they could see someone speaking from, about, for God, hear the words, and be willing to yield in repentance and submission so that he could baptize them. Howard Marshall, writing about the baptism of John, states that baptism was regarded as an outward ritual that signified the washing away of sin.

The mention of repentance shows that, like other Jewish ritual washing, it was understood as a symbolical action ineffective without the appropriate outward attitude. So, John calls for repentance, he baptizes, and when one comes from baptism, that person should demonstrate a lifestyle that matches with that repentance. Let me highlight a few things about John's ministry and teaching as we think about his ministry generally.

I already mentioned his character a little bit. Luke just says he grew up. Matthew tells us more about how he ate and how he conducted himself and others.

But John's audience, John's audience was people who were assumed to believe in the baptism. They believe that if they were baptized, they would actually be saved from God's judgment. Their repentance would divert or avert punitive reactions from God.

We also know that the centrality of his message is repentance, and he preaches in a very harsh tone, calling people from different social levels to repent of their sins. The best definition of repentance that I have come across is one that I read several years ago, perhaps over 20 years ago. There are many things I disagree with this particular author on, but his definition of repentance was so concise and precise that I committed to memory.

And this is J.W. McGarvey. In J.W. McGarvey's commentary on the book of Acts, McGarvey defines repentance as follows. Change of will is caused by sorrow for sin and leads to the transformation of life.

Repentance is, according to McGarvey, a change of will that is caused by sorrow for sin and leads to the transformation of life. And I think that captures what John is preaching here. Just saying I am sorry for my sins is not enough.

Just saying I come to be baptized is not enough. If you are sorry for your sins and you are baptized, that should lead to a transformation of your life. John will call on people in society, whether they are soldiers or tax collectors, to repent of the abuses that are part of what they are doing.

For John, the caution is even a strong warning. Judgment is inescapable if people will not repent of their sins. Judgment and the judgment of God will come.

In verses 10 to 14, he addresses different groups of people about how they need to change their way of life. Look at 3 from verse 10 onwards. And the crowds ask him, what then shall we do? And he, John the Baptist, answered them, Whoever has two tunics to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.

Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, Teacher, what shall we do? He told the tax collectors to collect no more than they were authorized to do. Soldiers also asked him what we should do. And he said to them, do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, or and be content with your wages. John will go on to explain in a very, very high stone.

But in summary, let me just outline this. In terms of poverty, which is a major theme in Luke, John's message and preparation for the coming of the Messiah touches on that. Be generous to those who need clothing and food.

If you have, share. Repentance must lead to concrete action. Justice and fairness is important.

If you are a tax collector by trade, don't take more from people than you are authorized to do. Don't use your knowledge of the tax system to rob the system. If you are in law enforcement and you are a soldier, be careful not to abuse power, not to extort people, not to accuse people falsely, not to make charges that do not exist, just to show that you are powerful.

John was addressing concrete social problems in preparation for the ministry of Jesus. Perhaps you may ask, to what extent then can you say John was preparing the grounds for Jesus' ministry? Well, in many ways, the uniqueness of John's ministry and the theme of repentance that he will be touching on is the reason why when Jesus comes and calls people to repent of their sins and teach on some of these issues, people will be ready and willing to embrace the message of the Messiah, Jesus. John makes specific reference to soldiers in his message in verse 14 of chapter 3, asking them to stay away from extortion.

The question has been, what kind of soldiers would John have the opportunity to address directly? Three views have emerged from that. One view suggests that the soldiers in question are Roman soldiers who will be responding to a Jewish prophet. If that is so, then we are guessing here that Gentiles will be responding to a Jewish prophet and will be coming to be baptized by a Jewish prophet in accordance with Jewish customs because they know it is the right thing to do.

Well, that particular view is not the most common view. In other words, quite a few hold that view. Another view suggests that the soldiers in question may be forces of Herod Antipas, who may be based in Peraea.

If that is so, then their religious convictions will align with what is going on, and John will be calling them to repentance, or they will be asking John first, what shall we do? John will seize the opportunity to tell them what to do. More and more scholars seem to be suggesting that the soldiers in question here will be Jewish auxiliaries who will usually police and protect tax collectors while they go about their duties. If that is so, then the reference to tax collectors and soldiers will make sense because they will often be in one area together.

Whatever the case, John's message should not be missed. Whether you are a soldier or tax collector, do what is right when you claim to repent. These days, when we think about followers of Jesus, sometimes I wish we had John the Baptist telling and calling us to do what is right.

You may ask why. Nowadays, saying you are a Christian doesn't mean you live and love justice and fairness, do what is right, speak what is right, and engage people

with respect. There are too many who think repentance means I settle issues with God, and it doesn't matter what happens between me and fellow human beings. The message of John the Baptist speaks to the understanding of repentance here.

Repentance is not; I settle it with God, and that's it. No, I settle it with God, and because I settle it with God, I can now treat people who are made in the image and likeness of God the way they deserve to be treated in fairness and respect, and whenever I don't treat those people well, I destroy or violate rules of engagement with my relationship with God who made them in his image and likeness. The religious conviction that says I can only check in with God and do whatever I like around me counters the ministry of John the Baptist and Luke's account of what the gospel entails as we go on.

John will go on to speak in chapter 3, verses 15 to 18, about the coming of the stronger one. As the people were expecting, all were questioning their hearts concerning John and whether he might be Christ. But John answered them all, saying, I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not ready to untie.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to declare his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into the barn. By the chaff, he will burn with unquenchable fire.

So, along with many other extortionists, he preached good news to the people. But Herod the Tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, for all the evil things that Herod had done, added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison. Now, when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, You are my beloved son.

With you, I am well pleased. John preached about the coming of the Stronger One. John talks about the Messiah who is coming.

The Messiah is more powerful. John is even unworthy to unstrap his shoes. The Messiah comes with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Oh, if you are charismatic, I know what you are thinking. You are thinking that the Holy Spirit and fire are the traditional languages that we use. But let me pause here to tell you something.

In the Gospel of Luke, reference to the Holy Spirit and fire may not be what you think. Is Holy Spirit, yes, and what does fire signify? Judgment. Fire is not, oh, the fire of God coming to settle on people's heads, and they go, yeah, speaking in tongues.

No. The Holy Spirit and fire is the Holy Spirit and judgment. Here, we are told that he is even talking about the axe that is already ready to cut the tree that is not bearing fruit down.

Judgment is in question. In other words, John calls for repentance because lack of repentance attracts the judgment of God. Lack of repentance attracts punitive retaliation from the divine agent who is in control of our world.

As Marshall puts it, Jewish sources show that in the first century, the pouring out of the Spirit in the last days could be understood as a means of cleansing and salvation and or as a means of fiery judgment. Less clearly attested is the association of the Messiah with the gift of the Holy Spirit. When John says he comes with the Holy Spirit and fire, he comes as the one who purifies, cleanses when people repent, and also judges.

John will be in prison, and he will be in prison by Herod because he was very strong and firm about what Herod had done wrong, taking away the wife of his brother. And that was a problem. And with incest, John is not going to pause because the message of repentance might not be a message that somebody should be able to be selective and say, you can't deliver this message to the powerful.

When Herod dismissed his wife, Athena, oh sorry, when Herod dismissed his wife, daughter of the Arabian king Aretas, he married Herodias, who was his niece and the former wife of his brother. That prompted John, knowing that it was not culturally appropriate and religiously right, to rebuke Herod. His courage was the courage of a real prophet.

But Herod got mad, and Herod was upset with him and imprisoned him. We know that Herod will kill him. But coming back to the ministry of John, John will be so clear, so courageous in delivering the message of God that many will be attracted to him and come and be baptized.

And Luke tells us that of the many who came, one was Jesus. Luke does not tell us anything about why Jesus would like to be baptized, but in Matthew's account, Jesus enters into dialogue with John. In which John asks Jesus, I am not supposed to baptize you because you are the righteous one.

You have no need for repentance, in effect. But in Matthew's account, Jesus' response to John was that he wanted to be baptized so that all righteousness of God would be fulfilled. In the case of Luke, we are not privy to whatever interaction that happened between Jesus and John.

But we are told that John baptized Jesus. Something that happened in Matthew also happens here. When Jesus was baptized, that was going to be the beginning of Jesus' ministry and the end of John's ministry.

The heavens would open at the baptism. And Luke will tell us, unlike the other gospels, Luke will say The heavens opened while Jesus was praying. Perhaps this is a good place for me to tell you that you should be observing as you follow these lectures on Luke.

Luke's emphasis is on the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, and his emphasis is on prayer. For Luke, major events begin with prayer. Key actors or agents of God are inspired, led by, or empowered by the Holy Spirit to do the work of God.

Luke, the man I introduced to you as the elite, believes in the power of the Holy Spirit and that the Spirit has to be an agent in every world. He so believes in the power of prayer to say one would need to seek the face of God. As I like to say, one needs to check in with God.

Personally, I find out that in every aspect of my ministry, when I devote more time to checking in with the one I call my old man, God, in prayer, things begin to go a little bit more smoothly. In the ministry of Jesus, right after baptism, Luke says he prayed. And as he was praying, the Holy Spirit came upon him.

The Spirit came in the form of anointing, and we are told the Spirit came with even like a dove settling on his head. This will become a visible symbolism that, indeed, this has happened to the child of God who comes into the world as a Messiah. So imagine this: there is a visible manifestation of the anointing of God coming on him in the form of the Holy Spirit and the dove.

And then there is an audible attestation that also comes out that says, this is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased. This is the Messiah. John has done some spectacular things, but John's ministry has just climaxed.

In this person, Jesus, I am well pleased. And I am ready to do something in this world with him. Luke moves straight after this occasion and begins to talk about the genealogy of Jesus.

I mentioned earlier on at the beginning of this lecture that, unlike Matthew, who traces the genealogy of Jesus to a Jewish root of David and Abraham, Luke traces the genealogy of Jesus to Adam, the father of all human beings, because his gospel is a universal gospel. His gospel is one that says God is reaching out to the entire world. And as a Gentile writing to a fellow Gentile, it makes sense that that is where he places the emphasis.

His genealogy differs from that of Matthew. If you look at Luke's genealogy, you will see that he presents his genealogy in the opposite direction. And as I mentioned, for Luke, the genealogy is traced from Adam.

Luke, unlike Matthew, will give certain names that are important that Matthew does not add and certain names that are important to Matthew that Luke does not add. In terms of genealogy, one could make other observations, such as Jesus will begin his ministry at about 30 years, as Luke would track it down for us. He will show us part of his interest in all this is to trace the origin of that Jesus who was just baptized that he told us about to David through the genealogy of Joseph so that when he starts his ministry, we will begin to think about the Messiah who comes in the tradition and the lineage of David.

The divine attestation will show that this man is going to be the beloved son who is going to work in obedience and in pursuit of what God expects of him. Luke would then move on to mentioning his 30 years, and then he would go on to tell us that the spirit will lead Jesus to be tempted. And in the temptation, he will talk about 40 days.

So, let me draw your attention to some of the significance of the age 30 and 40 in narrative discourse. When you think about 30 and 40, you may think about this. 30 is the age at which priests and Levites traditionally start their duty to perform ministry to God.

30 is a perfect time for Jesus to perform his ministry. According to Jewish tradition, David began to reign when he was 30. 30 was the age when Joseph became the prime minister of Egypt.

It is the age that God's dream that he gave him will come to pass. It is also the age in ancient Jewish culture that most men will be seen as mature enough to marry. Oh, but I know what you are thinking.

You said, oh, but you told me that the woman will be around 12 years old, and the man, you say 30. Yes, and yes. Both Jews and Romans have the same tradition of men getting married between 26 and 30 years old.

For Jews, in particular, 30 years is one of those times that they feel mature enough to marry. So, the age gap calculation, if you're already doing it, is right. Yes, the average man who marries the first time to a virgin is likely to have about 17 to 18 years gap.

Now, you shouldn't be surprised by this if you're in America. After all, it's becoming a global phenomenon. I don't know which date you are watching this tape, but as of this year, 2019, the president of the United States actually has a 24-year gap between him and his current wife.

And there are politicians who have 18, 17, some 20-year age gap between them and the wife. I'm just trying to draw your attention to the fact that we don't think that this is too weird of the ancient world because there are so many things we do now that we can be so self-righteous and go in and blame the ancient world. I am not saying Jesus got married to anyone at 12.

All that I'm saying is for Luke to tell us Jesus will begin his ministry at 30 at the age that in Jewish tradition, men will assume significant responsibility, and that responsibility includes being able to have a wife and a family. 40 is also a significant year, a significant number in Jewish tradition. We are told here that Jesus will be fasting for 40 days and 40 nights in Luke.

Moses was also involved in such an exercise for 40 days, as we read from Exodus and Deuteronomy. And we know Elijah fasted for 40 days in 1 Kings chapter 19. So, when you think about these traditions that we are talking about, think about a long-held tradition.

Some have asked whether 40 is symbolic or actual. That is an issue to contend with or to debate sometime later. My point here is that Luke knows the customs, traditions, and norms of Jews.

He's trying to situate us or inform us that it is not a mere coincidence for us to think about Jesus beginning his ministry at 30. If a priest begins ministry at 30, it's actually a good time for society to respect what he has to give. And people actually see him as a fair person who is called to the work of God.

Luke will go on to talk about the temptation of Jesus. Now, notice the segue. He told us that when he was baptized, the Spirit came upon him.

And when the Spirit came upon him, it came upon him in the form of a dove. And a voice from heaven came to confirm that this is indeed the beloved Son. Then Luke went on straight to give us genealogy as if he was confusing us.

He was not confusing us. He was just trying to say that the person I told you about, the one on whom the Spirit settled with audible confirmation that he is the Son of God, is also the one who comes from the root of David through the lineage of Joseph. And then he comes back to continue in chapter 4, verses 1 to 13, to tell us now about what happens to the one who experienced the power of the Holy Spirit.

So, let's read Luke chapter 4 from verses 1 to 13. And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, for forty days being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days.

And when they were ended, he was hungry. And the devil said to him, If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread. And Jesus answered him, It is written, My shall not live by bread alone.

And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time and said to him, To you, I will give all this authority and your glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you then will worship me, it will all be yours. And Jesus answered him, It is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.

And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, He will command the angels concerning you to guard you, and on your hands, they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. Verse 12 Jesus answered him, It is said, You shall not put the Lord your God to the test. And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

The temptation of Jesus here in Luke reveals a lot of things that I wish I had time to unpack, but I don't. First, you want to note that Jesus was led by the Spirit to be tempted in the wilderness. I mentioned that John was in the wilderness, a place of isolation, a place of solitude.

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he would be tempted all by himself and the devil. The temptation would occur in Luke during the 40 days that he would be fasting and praying. That is to say that the devil is going to tempt him at his most vulnerable place when he appeals to him to turn stone into bread, knowing that he has been fasting.

The temptation would occur when Jesus was most, most hungry and vulnerable. But one thing you should not forget as you look into the temptation is that it is not a temptation about the vulnerabilities of Jesus at the time. But it is also a text about his identity, his loyalty, and his commitment to who he is as the Son of God.

When you think about the devil and his temptation, before I point out a couple of things to you, please note that in the case of Jesus, the temptation came, if you like, at his highest point of spirituality. It is after he had come out of baptism he experienced the power of the Holy Spirit; there is a visible and audible sign to show that this is the Son of God. That is when he will be led into temptation.

You also want to notice that when he was going to be led into temptation, it was not the devil who would lead him into temptation, but it is the Spirit who would lead him into the wilderness to be tempted. The Spirit would expose him to temptation. The Spirit would expose him to the most powerful spiritual force that rules this world and controls its affairs.

And when he comes to one with that spiritual force, the Spirit, after exposing Jesus to doing that, will demonstrate that indeed, Jesus has the power to triumph over the most powerful evil spiritual being in the world. So, when he lands into ministry, he can subject all forces of evil by mere words. And his followers can subject those forces of evil by the utterance of the name of Jesus, who demonstrated his power over them in this wilderness experience.

The other thing you should not forget is the temptation of identity. I never would wish you to forget that. Because when the voice came from heaven, the voice said, this is my beloved Son.

The devil comes in and says, if you are the Son of God, do this. If you are the Son of God, do try to sow doubt into his identity as the Son of God. Before I get back to Luke, I would like to point out that the temptation between Matthew and Luke has different ordering.

The contents are pretty much the same with slight variations. Matthew's writing to Jews used more quotations, but Luke also used quotations from the Hebrew scriptures. Luke said, Jesus was led to be tempted.

Luke uses the word *perazo* in Greek to describe the situation that Jesus will go through. So, walk with me on this winding road on the definition of the word to be tempted. This word means to entice, to improper behavior or action, to seduce, to bring him into a state of compromise.

The word also means to entrap in the process of inquiry, to ask questions so that by the time you are answering it, you will trip up and say things you are not supposed to say and make commitments you cannot keep or say things that somebody will hold you up later on that you did not mean to say. The word to be tempted also means to make proof or to put to the proof, whether with good or with mischievous intent. The word also could be used to describe God putting people to the test to prove that they can stand firm, as to say, a test of character.

The word is sometimes used in the Bible also in reference to people putting God to the test. When Satan or the devil comes to Jesus to tempt him, nearly all these definitions are in play. Trying to entice him about food, oh, you are hungry, 40 days and 40 nights, oh Jesus, how good it would be.

I mean, you are so powerful if you can look at some of these stones around here. I mean, I don't know what the stones would look like in the wilderness, but oh, these stones, I mean you, excuse me, you can turn them into bread, but guess what? God has done this before in the history of the Jews. In the wilderness, when they are

hungry, he gives them manna from heaven. I mean this powerful stuff, food, just turn it into bread.

He says I know what you are doing. You cannot entrap me to say or do what I will not do. And step after step, step by step, Jesus defeats all the plots, schemes, and stratagems of the devil. He was led by the spirit to the wilderness, and he would prove that, indeed, he is the son of God.

When you look at what is happening between the baptism and the temptation narratives, I have what I call here the nexus that is noteworthy. The identity of the son of God as a voice from heaven is going to be tested when he encounters the devil. Relationship with God is attested as a beloved son.

He will be pushed to see if he can go against God's will. God validating his standing as the one in whom he is well pleased is still going to be tested. And if you think the devil does not know what he is doing, he will cast doubt on Jesus' identity.

He would like to alter his mission. He would like to ask him to locate himself in a place of power. Oh, if you will bow, I will give all this to whoever I wish.

Some have said the devil had no such power. No, that is misleading. Because if you look at the spirit cosmology of early Christianity, the world without Christ is a world that is ruled and controlled by the devil.

And that world that is ruled and controlled by the devil is indeed a world where the devil and his agents control the affairs of the world without Christ. So, the devil did have some power. And he did have some people in charge of high places.

He was entrapping Jesus to yield to his agenda against God's will. But you see, God is the God of this world. No power can stand before God.

The devil himself is subject to God. Therefore, if Jesus would withstand all his temptations, Jesus would now have power above the powers of the forces of evil. That way, somewhere later in the church, in the name of Jesus, spirits of darkness will come out.

In the ministry of Jesus, he will call on demoniacs to have the spirit leave them, and they will leave. In the ministry of Jesus, because he has been given power that is above all other powers, he will bring the dead back to life. He will heal the sick.

Inasmuch as he will bring hope to the hopeless and strength to the weary, the plots of the temptation are evident. And as I like to put it, I give you three ways to look at the plots of the temptation.

Also, as a careful watchword for your personal life. As I tell you or summarize what is going on with the temptation of Jesus, the number one thing is passion.

Understand that the devil is fully aware of our passion. And he knew that if he could appeal to the passion and the desires of Jesus, he would do well. He did that.

He did that. He knew that people like prestige. He appealed to Jesus' sensibilities for prestige, authority, and fame.

He says I will give it to you. I will give it to you. But you see, led by the spirit, Jesus will triumph over that.

Because his ministry is just opposite that, he is humble. He was born in a manger.

His parents show a deep sense of humility. We are told he walked in submission under his parents. His ministry was going to be the humble leader going about his father's business in our world.

And the devil also knows, and he did this to try with Jesus, that power is one place you can get people to fall. Questioning his identity as the son of God, he was appealing to him to say he would give him the miraculous ability to do extraordinary things ahead of time.

Jesus would not buy that. So whether it is passion, desire for food or something like that, or more of the appetite to yield, for too many of us, it's not the desire for food. Nowadays, it is sex.

It is greed. But for some of us, it's food. But the point I'm trying to make is that the devil's strategy has remained the same.

He appeals to your passion and your sensibilities to have power and prestige and see whether you will yield. You see, Jesus will not yield. And he serves as a good model for us.

In closing this session, I bring to a point of reflection that the ministry of John the Baptist was going to climb to where the ministry of Jesus was going to begin. The ministry of Jesus did not begin in a very glamorous fashion. The ministry of Jesus began by identifying with ordinary folks who acknowledged he has since been baptized and was baptized.

The ministry of Jesus will continue when the Holy Spirit will come upon him, and the Spirit will expose him to temptation. But you see, in that temptation, he will triumph. And because he will triumph, from chapter 4, verse 14 onwards, he is going to begin

a ministry that he is going to affirm again that his life and ministry are all about what the Spirit is doing, working through, and in him.

And in that, he will discharge the mandate that God has given him to save the world. This mandate Luke will write later to Theophilus in the book of Acts to say it will still be continuing by the time he ends his writing. The kingdom has been advancing.

Yes, it has from Jerusalem to the regions of Judea, to Samaria, to the ends of the world, of the earth. And you know what? The ministry advanced so fast, so powerful that the power of the Lord Jesus Christ will take hold of a young man's life.

A young man was reading a book that somebody had given him titled The Greatest Conqueror. In reading that book, reflecting on what Jesus will come and do in our world, the power of the Gospel will take hold of this young man's life. He will be transformed and will not be the same.

The guy will leave from an African village. Over time, he will be in different cities, just trying to tell the world that, indeed, the power of the Gospel is real. The young man is speaking to you now as an old man with a bald head and a strange accent.

Yes, it is me. The ministry of Jesus did not begin in a glamorous fashion. But it began in obedience with confirmation, attestations, and annunciations that, indeed, he was doing what God wanted him to do.

And he was doing it faithfully. Triumphant over temptation will release him into the world to conquer the works and the people the devil has entrapped and put into difficult conditions. I hope that as you follow these lectures with us, you are allowing God to work in your life in a very special way.

And you are leading, or let me say, you are leaning towards the work of the Holy Spirit to come and take hold of your heart. To come and transform your life. To come and give you a sense of true repentance as John preached.

As you envision your place on a journey with the Lord Jesus Christ or encountering Jesus down the road as we go through this series, May I encourage you to be open. When God comes to work in your life, he will expose you to something you don't know you could do.

And he will reveal to you more things about yourself than you think you knew. May God help you and grant you grace. May God bless you.

Maybe as you follow these lectures, you are in the middle of a major temptation. May God grant you the strength of the power of the Holy Spirit so that you may be

able to come out of it successfully. Remember, Jesus dealt with the devil through quotations from the Bible.

He was crying and leaning on to God in prayer and fasting. If your temptation is getting heavy, just keep crying out to God. Don't yield.

Stand firm. Stand true. Feed on the word of God.

Trust him. Trust him to get you out. And I pray that as he helps you to get out, you will follow with us in the rest of this course, realizing that, yes, indeed, God is faithful.

He is trustworthy. We can count on him, and we can believe in the saving grace of his son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for listening and following these lectures with us.

May God bless you and give you more grace. Amen. Let's go to chapter 4, verse 13.

This is Dr. Dan Darko in his teaching on the Gospel of Luke. This is session 6, John and the Preparation of Jesus, Luke 3:1-4:13.