

SERMON NOTES: Sunday 9th March 2025

Text: Luke 4:1-14

Lent 1C

So, temptation.....

Let me go out on a limb here
and say that most of us aren't tempted
to do truly diabolical things,
because most of us aren't diabolical people.

I've never been tempted to kill anyone.
Or to steal a car.
Or abduct a child.
Or hurt someone just for the pleasure of hurting them.

But, temptation...we to be sure we don't fool ourselves.
We're all tempted.
And usually tempted to do things
that start out not sounding too bad.

I've been watching a series on a streaming service –
'Stan' I think it is, that's called "Breaking Bad".

I've found it to be a powerful lesson
in temptation and sin.

Walt, the main character
is diagnosed with inoperable cancer
and he wants to provide for his family.

That's a noble goal, right?
How could you go wrong there?
So...he decides to manufacture an illegal drug: Crystal meth.

A good person.
Who has good intentions.
And good ideals.
Tempted to do the wrong thing...to do the right thing?

Like being tempted to eat from
from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil...
so as to discern what's right and wrong.

"Knowledge" isn't a bad thing, is it?
Don't we try and teach our children
the difference between right and wrong?

But, is it what God wanted for Adam and Eve?
Then?
In that way?

After his baptism,
Jesus goes into the wilderness and fasts for forty days.
Then he is tempted by Satan.
He's eventually tempted to seek after his own glory and power—diabolical stuff.

But, that's not where Satan starts.

He first tempts Jesus to eat some bread,
which Jesus can make out of a stone.

I mean, why not?
Is there anything particularly wrong with that?
After fasting for forty days, he can't eat a little bread?
He can change water-into-wine,
but not some stones into bread. That's not allowed?
But for Jesus, the real question here is—

.....is that what God had in mind for him on that day?

Was that God's plan for Jesus right then?

Was that how God wanted Jesus to be fed?

Well given the outcome, obviously not.

You see it seems to me,
temptation isn't just about the desire to
stick your hand in the biscuit tin.

It's about being led towards disobedience.

It's a lack of discernment—
or if you like
being willing to deviate from the discerned will of God.

The Christian life is meant to be
a life of seeking after God.
Listening for God.
Following God.

And, when following God's will,
sometimes we'll pass up things that are O.K.

Things which God didn't have for us to do this day,
or in this particular way.

Spiritual maturity looks not just
for the things that are passable,
or explainable.
Not just for the things that will get us into trouble.

But, spiritual maturity
looks for the way that God has set before us,
and then summons the courage to go there—
and to ask for God's help along the way.

PRAYER...

Lord our God,
you alone do we worship,
only your word gives life.
Sustain us your Church on our Lenten journey.
When we walk through the desert of temptation,
strengthen us to renounce the power of evil,
how ever we experience that to be.
We ask this through Him
who is our deliverance and our hope,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.