

Do You Really Want to Be Like Jesus?

Scripture Reading — Luke 4:1-13

Jesus . . . was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.
— Luke 4:1-2

For years, Professor Richard Lischer taught preaching at Duke Divinity School in North Carolina. He knew all the right answers and could debate with the brightest of students. Then his only son, Adam, came down with cancer, and Lischer had no answers. Still, he could go with what he knew as a Christian. He wrote, “Two paths opened before [my son]: one would take him through the maze of chemo and radiation to an uncertain end. The other, originated in his baptism and nurtured by the rituals of his new founded community, would lead through the labyrinth to his true destination” (Stations of the Heart). Lischer believed his son’s identity was forged in his baptism, not in his having cancer.

When Jesus was baptized, he received the amazing confirmation that God was pleased with him. Then the Spirit led him into the wilderness for a showdown with the devil. Would Jesus follow Satan’s suggestions for living to please himself?

The devil is always eager to help us live for ourselves instead of for God. Will you exchange your true identity as a son or daughter of the Lord for earthly things? Do you really- want to be like Jesus? The challenges in the desert can only be overcome if we follow the words of Proverbs 3:5-6: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Prayer

Father, remind me of my identity in Jesus. Help me to resist Satan with your Word and wisdom. Amen.

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