

What Kind of King Is Jesus

by Gary Wilkerson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and meekness in ministry, focusing on Jesus' resistance to the temptations of power, popularity, and glory. It highlights the need for pastors to empty themselves of self-seeking desires and to seek a genuine, humble relationship with God. The speaker calls for a return to simplicity, authenticity, and radical love in ministry, pointing to the Beatitudes as a model for Christian leadership.

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Scripture: Matthew 4:1, Romans 12:10, Philippians 2:5, Matthew 5:3, Isaiah 57:15, Luke 14:11, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6

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Description

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Transcript

Thank you for coming from local places and coming from places around the United States and coming from places from overseas. We're honored and thrilled to have each and every one of you here with us. Turn in your scriptures.

I hope you have your Bible with you today or your phone app, your Bible app to turn to Matthew chapter 4, Matthew the fourth chapter. Begin reading in the first verse. Then Jesus was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Let me pray and then we'll talk about these temptations that Jesus had and the temptations that you and I as shepherds in ministry have as well. Father, we thank you for the power of your Holy Spirit. We are asking you to enliven this word and let it be resonating in our hearts and transformative to our lives.

We give thanks for this. Bless my words. Let them be words that would be an honor to you, honoring to you, exalting to you.

We give thanks for this in Jesus name. Everybody said together, amen. Amen.

So in context here, Matthew chapter 4 verse 1, he's being led by the Holy Spirit into the desert. But you know what happened just before that, right? There was another pretty dynamic experience that Christ had been affected with by the touch of his father's love on his life. You know, the story it's just found in the previous chapter, chapter 3, John the Baptist, the first verse is talking about John the Baptist is crying out to repent.

And then Jesus comes to him and John doesn't want to baptize him. But then Jesus says, let it, let it be. And then all of a sudden you hear these words in verse 16.

Here's the context of the temptations of Jesus. Verse 16, as soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. And at that moment, the heavens were, the heaven was opened and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

And a voice from heaven said, this is my son whom I love with whom I am well pleased. I'm sure you've heard this before, but this statement that the father made about the son was before Jesus had ever preached a sermon before Jesus had ever healed anyone who was sick before Jesus ever cast out any demons or raised any dead before any performance, before any act of ministry, the father was already pleased with him. What, what was the purpose? Why would he be pleased with them already? Simply because he was a son, our sonship, our daughtership, our, our, our identity is that we are sons and daughters of the most high God.

Our identity is not you're an evangelist, apostle, pastor, teacher, leader of a teen challenge program. Your identity is that you are a son and daughter of Jesus Christ. You are his beloved.

Isn't that good news for friends. And it's in that context, verse one, that Jesus is then led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting 40 days now, oftentimes we call this the three temptations of Jesus.

I actually believe it's five temptations, three by the devil and two just natural temptations. He says here after fasting 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry. After fasting breakfast, I am hungry.

Lunch becomes a glowing entity. And, and Jesus says, and he fasted 40 days and then he was hungry. What kind of intensity was in his soul? What kind of fire was burning in his bones where, where food barely mattered to him.

But if, but he being fully God and fully man, he would have been hungry throughout this 40 days and thirsting as well. So the first temptation could be simply said, even, even for the devil tempted him at all. It's like, I don't want to do this anymore.

I went into this wilderness to fast for 40 days, but I'm on day 20 and it's enough. The longest I've ever fasted was 21 days. And that was with several cheat days in between that.

This is the first time I'm ever telling anybody actually cheated. So don't tell my wife that because she didn't cheat. And I was at the pizza shop one of those days in the middle of those 21 days, but that's the longest I've ever fasted.

And man, I tell you, it can be, if you've ever fasted long, I know my friend, Claude is here and they fast every year for 21 days at the beginning of the year. And I always tell them I'm praying for them. Man, fasting is difficult.

And so Jesus could be tempted to say, it's just too much, too weighty. The burden, the responsibility of, of this call of the Holy spirit leading me into this fast, leading me into this prayer life, leading me into this preaching ministry, leading me into this ministry of helping addicts get free, leading me into this mission work that he has on my life. Sometimes it just gets overwhelming in the flesh, in the natural, without even the devil tempting you just in our own spirit.

It's like, I don't want to contend anymore. The, the, the disciples that couldn't cast out the demon, Jesus said, these kind of only come out by prayer and fasting. We live in a nation where our contending without prayer and fasting will be too weak for the demons in our land.

And, and so it's going to require this, but, but sometimes we get to the point is I don't want to contend anymore. I don't want to fight this fight anymore. The aggressive nature of ministry is overwhelming me.

And I, I just want to do something a little bit more lighthearted, a little bit easier. How many of you don't raise your hand, but how many of you pastors and leaders have wondered about what your other career would be if you gave up the ministry? Maybe it'd be, maybe you'd like to talk so you could be a good lawyer or, or you'd like to do something simple, like be a farmer, you know, but all of us have had that temptation to give up. And I wonder if Jesus had that certainly to stop contending in these 40 days and 40 nights.

And then he was hungry. And it's right in those times where you're ready to give up right with the time where you're most hungry, right at those times where you just feel like you're not sure you can keep contending for the gospel, keep contending for the glory of God to come, keep contending for that revival that you're praying for. Just when you're about ready to, to, to, to be at your weakest point, here's the next verse, the tempter came.

The enemy knows where to hit us, when to hit us, how to hit us. Each of us in a unique and different way for some, for some, it is one particular form for another gloriously with Jesus, this powerful text about Jesus. It says, Satan has come and he found no place in me.

Isn't that amazing? When Satan's come to me, he's found two or three places. I have to admit to you, he's, he's found a weakness here or a, a drawing to something fleshly there. And he's found that, but with Jesus, Satan's found no place within him.

That's one of the things I'm fasting for, praying for contending for that Satan comes to me. And he feels all he sees is the full armor of God with no place to enter in. And then the tempter came to him and said, and here's the second temptation, if you will, not, not even getting into the actual bread and stones and high mountain and the temple, but just this personal thing that Jesus was wrestling with.

And, and the tempter came to him, this is verse, verse three, and said to him, if you are the son of God, tell the stones to be turned into bread before the actual temptation, what we call classically in theology, the first temptation is turning this, the bread, turning the stones into bread. But before that is the real temptation. The real temptation of Satan was what happened to Jesus just in the previous chapter, just a few verses earlier.

Jesus hears this wonderful voice. It's the voice that you and I need to hear every morning. Every morning, every morning I wake up, I go to Psalm 139 and it just, and it says in Psalm 39, and I just read Psalm 139.

And I just, I just see, it says there that, that he knows me. He formed me in my mother's womb. He, before I give him a word, he already knows what I'm going to say.

He knows my going out. He knows my coming in. He, he, he knows the thoughts of my mind.

He knows the words that are coming out of my mouth, even before I say those things. And then at the end of the Psalm 139, he said, it says, and know my heart and see if there'll be any anxious way in me. And so I turn all my anxieties over to the Lord.

My anxieties of my ministry, my anxieties of four children, my anxieties of the night before when all 10 of my grandchildren were over at my house and I have been burned out in about an hour and a half. The next morning I get up, Lord, I turn all my anxieties over to you because why? Because he cares for me. And so when we understand he's formed us, he's made us, he loves us, he declares us his sons, his daughters.

When we understand that these temptations are so much more weak than they would be if we fall into this first trap that Satan is trying to trick Jesus with. If Jesus, if God really said that to you, did the father really, if, if you really are the son of God, I picture Satan in my hopefully sanctified imagination, I picture Satan saying, oh, hey, Jesus, that, you know, I was, I was kind of on the outskirts of that baptism thing. That was pretty wild, wasn't it? Man, I saw that voice come down out of heaven.

That was, that was really amazing. You, you, and then he said things about you. He's, that thing about being loved and man, you must feel really special.

You must be, but then all of a sudden he turns the table and says, now, is that really true though? And what Satan's trying to do to, to set up the other temptations is to get them to wonder about this first one. Am I really the son, beloved son of God? Does he really love me? Does he really care for me? Is he, you know, maybe even the question might be, if he, why did we go from a descending dove resting on my shoulder and a beautiful baptism with my cousin, John and the crowd around me and voices from heaven. And then the next thing the spirit does is lead me into the wilderness to not eat for 40 days and have the devil come and tempt me intentionally by the spirits leading.

It could be that Jesus, if he wasn't as he was connected to his father so richly, he could have begun to doubt that. And I think that's really what Satan's after in this, in these three temptations is, is to get us to ask these questions, to, to begin to doubt, to feel inside insecure, to feel inadequate, to feel unloved, to feel unwanted, to feel unwelcome, to feel like we're not a part, to feel like he gifted others, but he passed us by, to feel like he's moving mightily in other cities. But in my city, it's too tough.

He's moving in other churches, but in my church, it just seems to be cold and dry. Am I really the beloved of God? Am I really the one he has chosen and he's selected? And we see now in these three temptations, the first one, he says, take these stones and turn them into bread. Now, you know, in scripture, that other points where Jesus was doing these miracles of, of multiplying the bread, Jesus understood people come and follow me because I feed them.

I multiply bread. They love the miraculous works of mine. And I think what Satan was after here was to get Jesus to become popular among the crowds.

So my first temptation, I want to talk to you about the real temptations of Satan is the temptation of every minister is the temptation to become popular, to do things that will make me fit in with a crowd of followers,

that people that will acclaim, give me a claim, that people will give me applause, that people will follow me, that people approve of me, that people be pleased with me. And, and I can do things to manipulate a crowd, to draw a crowd. I can, I can be clever.

I can be articulate. I can be an intellectual. I can be theologically deep.

I can go into Greek and Hebrew. I can't even say it, let alone go into Greek and Hebrew. You can do all those things.

And we should do those things because God gives many in this audience, a great mind to be able to go into those languages and break them open to our congregation. But if you're doing it to impress people, I'm going to take these stones and all of a sudden they're going to become bread and they're going to look good and they're going to be shiny and sparkly. And they're going to fill people and they're going to, it's going to be so good that they'll tell other people about how good I am at turning stones into bread.

And all of a sudden I'll become popular. I'll become famous. They'll come to me for my miracles.

We can, we can attempt to create a crowd pleasing effect in our ministry. We can, we can attempt to draw crowds, to increase the numbers, to be loved, to be clamored after, to have affirmations as, not as God's beloved son, but accepted by numbers of people, to have a philosophy of ministry that bigger is better, that we want to tell these stones. And that's what Satan told him to do.

He didn't say touch the stones. He didn't say kick the stones. He didn't say put the stones in a baking oven and they'll be turned into bread.

He said, tell them, tell them. And we want to have the power of our tongue be of such richness and speak in such a way that is so glorious and so captivating and so TED talkish that, that we draw crowds because of who we are rather than glorifying Christ, honoring him. And so we try to be clever.

We try to be, we try to be cute. We try to entertain how, how sad and broken the heart of our father must be that many of his houses of faith led by men and women of God who are barely more than entertainers in our day, using pop psychology and TED talks and, and entertainment opportunities to, to draw masses of people. It's this temptation to be popular, to, to, to want more acclaim.

And Jesus takes him back actually to where Israel had failed in the first place. Israel had failed this very test. And so Jesus takes him to Deuteronomy chapter eight and says, God says, man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

This was a test that Israel had failed. And now the same test is coming to Jesus. Will you say, you know, has a good memory.

And he's remembering thousands of years ago, I tempted Israel about manna, not about being hungry in the desert. And they failed the test. They, they doubted God's goodness.

Jesus, will you do the same? Satan is certainly hoping for the fall of Christ just as there was a fall of Adam and Eve. And there was the fall of Israel in the wilderness. And Jesus uses that very verse intentionally.

It wasn't just, he was saying like, I don't want bread. He was saying, I'm going to use the very verse where they failed to show you where my father, by my trusting that I am the beloved, I am the son of God. He is already well pleased with me.

I don't have to turn stones. I don't have to become popular. I don't have to have masses follow me.

Even if 12 follow me, that's sufficient for what the father wants to do in my life. And so the second temptation then here in verse five, the devil took him up to a holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. And he said, if you're the son of God, throw yourself down for it is written.

He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up into their hands and you will not, and that will not strike your foot against a stone, throw yourself down. First thing he does is takes him to the holy city. He doesn't take him to Sodom and Gomorrah.

Did you notice that? Because Satan never takes us to a place we don't want to go. The temptation isn't for vile, wicked things. The temptation in ministry is for something really good.

I'll take you to the holy city and I'll put you up on the pinnacle. I'll put you up on the highest place. And then, hey, let's do this.

Let's do some tricks. Let's do some gimmicks. Let's throw yourself down.

And when you throw yourself down, you won't even strike your foot. You'll be, you'll, you'll kind of land like a gymnast, you know, when they go like, and they straighten out like that and you're going to land on the ground without faltering at all. And the crowds will see how I think the first temptation was to be popular.

The second temptation is to be spectacular. I want to put on a good show. I want to, I want to wow the masses.

I want, I want, and I, and so this is the temptation. It's not, it's not the temptation of Sodom and Gomorrah. It's the temptation of the pinnacle of the temple.

I want to be spectacular. I want to put on a good show. I want to put on a spectacular project.

I, you know, forgive me if I'm stepping on some toes here, but ever since I've been in the ministry, I've seen it every, every like, 10th year, it's like, reach the world by 1990. And then 1990s passed. And then it's the 2020 project.

We're going to, we're going to send out 20 million missionaries to reach the, you know, it's just every, just all the time, right? Am I right? Are you with me? Have you, you're too young to have heard all these projects that, and I'm not saying projects are bad. I'm not saying we shouldn't have vision and goals, but sometimes it's, it's a temptation. It's a lure.

I got to do something bigger down the street. They're doing this. Some of the God is doing that, but the Baptist are doing that.

So the Baptist have to be outdone by the Nazarene and Nazarene are outdone. And we have all these projects. And even in our churches, we want to, the pageantry of Easter Sunday now is, is bizarre.

It's bizarre. Oh, and I want, maybe I'm too old school, but I want to go back to, I want to come to a church on an Easter Sunday and we sing three hymns. And then somebody gets up and preaches the gospel and people get saved, you know, just, and, and, and I'm not preaching against Easter pageants.

So don't write to me later on there. They can be glorious and God can, the Holy spirit can use them, but it, but it's the motive of the heart, isn't it? Is it, is the motive to be spectacular and, and, and bigger and better and outdoing and to stand out? This is the spirit of competition. This is the spirit of jealousy.

That's the wrong motive. If we're doing something to, to draw more than the people down the street, it comes from a wrong motive. And that is to compare, to compare others to ourselves, to compete with other people, to, to see what they're doing and want to, to stand on the same kind of level with other people.

And it used to be, it used to be, you would come to a pastor's conference and you would sit around in the fellowship table afterwards. And ultimately it would come to a, what's your budget this year? What, what size is your building? How many people are attending your church? And, and there would be this comparison. And if you had smaller numbers, you might tend to feel a little shy or a little bit, and you might even leave the conference depressed.

I sat at a table and all five of the other pastors around there had well over a thousand people in their church. And I have 80 what's wrong with me. It's this, and the devil tempts us to be spectacular, to get more people to follow you so that you can compare.

Now we're in a generation where it's changed. Now we sit around the table and say, how many social media followers we have? How many are following us on Facebook? How many likes do we have? How many people follow us? And I tell you what, be careful, brothers and sisters, do not let that thing get in your spirit because it will corrupt you. It will derail you.

It will be a temptation that will take the anointing of God from your life and your ministry. I'm not preaching at anybody else. I'm preaching to myself because I was on all these social media channels on my phone.

And what I would do is I would look at them. And if I got more followers that day, Hey, we're up from this number to that number. I'd be happy.

And then if it was down, I'd be sad. Oh, what's happening? Let me rebuke my social media team. They're not getting me enough.

We're not being spectacular enough. We got to do something to boost those numbers so that we have now. And, and so the Holy Spirit convicted me.

I hadn't changed. I used to go to the conference and say, my church has grown from 800 to 1500. Now I'm going to there and saying my social media is following.

And I have this and I have that. It's boasting. And so what I had to do is I got my phone and I just, I have Instagram.

You have that little delete button. Pastors, maybe the delete button might be the best thing you have in your life to, to, to, I don't know if you have social media or not, or, but it's, but, and I'm not talking about the actual thing. Social media is good.

And it's powerful tool that God is using mightily world challenge loves the ministry. I know times where church loves the fact that we can reach around the world. So I'm not speaking about that.

I'm speaking about a heart issue. Something gets inside your heart and begins to draw you into, to, to, to the bigger, the better, the more spectacular, the comparison. I have this and you have that.

And I want to encourage you. Just let it die. Let, let it go.

And just, you have your Bible. That's all you need. A little fire in your bones and a Bible on your bookshelf and preach the word of God.

Faithfully. Wesley said it best. Don't worry about drawing crowds.

Just get on fire for God and people will come to watch you burn. And that's our, if our focus and our attention becomes on how do we bump our numbers up, whether it's attendance or on media, if that becomes our focus, we're going to eventually fall into this temptation. Got, we've got to do more.

It's slowing down. We've got to do more to stand out. T Austin sparks.

One of my favorite writer says it this way. These poor souls must in some way or another be on top in order. And in order to be on top, it must subject everything to itself, to the self becomes the, the, the thing that wants to become spectacular.

It must go one better and be one better than others. And there rises all the jealousies, all the rivalries, all the competitiveness, all the possessiveness, the, the impotence and the, excuse me, the importance to be on top and not underneath. This is the temptation, not only Jesus facing in the wilderness, but you and I as leaders face this.

There's some team challenge leaders here. Oh, my program has this many beds or it has that many beds. It has this budget or that budget.

You're in a missions program. We led this many people to Jesus. The numbers are important.

We want to pursue. We want to grow. We want to build.

We want to, have glorious God led ministries. But when this thing gets into the heart, it will, it will cause us to be, it will cause us to here's, here's the word I want to use. I'll use in just a second, but let me preface it with this.

When there's something the Lord has done in my heart, when I travel around to different nations, oftentimes, as soon as I get off the airplane, I feel something. I call it like prophetic empathy. It's not a word from God, but it's just sometimes it'll, I'll get a little depressed and I'll feel, I wonder what's wrong with me.

And all of a sudden Holy Spirit says, no, it's not you. I'm telling you what's going on in this culture. And, and, and I get off another plane and I feel like suicidal and another, you get off another country and you feel like fear or whatever it is.

And I just get that wherever I go. I don't even know what to call it. When I land back in America, do you know what I feel? Arrogance, arrogance, and that worldly culture has slipped into the church.

And it's an arrogance of I'm spectacular, or it's a defeated spirit. I'm not as spectacular as I want to be. And then what do we do? We redouble our efforts, try harder, work more, get after it more, double down

and do more so that I could too become spectacular.

The closest word to spectacular, there's not the word, the word spectacular is not in the Greek language of scripture, but the closest word I could find to that is the Greek word mega. I don't know if you knew that the word mega is the word for greatness in scripture. Oftentimes you use good, but oftentimes like the disciple who among us will be the mega is actually what the Greek word says there.

Who's going to be the megamist. I made up my own word there. The megaest among us who will be, who will have more mega than the other person's mega.

And we use that word in English today. Don't we have a mega ministry. We have a mega church.

We have a mega following. We're going viral. We have all these, these mega things that were not only.

And if you experienced those praise God for them and thank him and bless him with gratitude for those things, but it's, but it's for those who maybe are not experiencing all those things. You can still have the glory of God in your life and your ministry. You can have something rich, something powerful.

Don't chase after these things. Don't chase after mega. Don't chase after big.

Don't chase after popular. Don't chase after spectacular. Don't come here to time square church and look at the big screen back there and say, that's what I need.

Once I get the big screen, my church will become mega or the big choir. You don't need a big screen. You need a big God.

You don't need a, you don't need a glorious grand theater. You can meet in a, in a, in a school like I do with my pastor Chris and my home church. It's, we meet in a middle school and the glory of God is present there.

You don't need to be a powerful preacher. You just need to be on fire for God. You don't need, you don't need anything but Jesus.

You already have enough. I came to a conference once and it was when my church was struggling and I was downcast and, and I went there and it was, it was this huge choir and they had these guest speakers from all over the world. They were the, some of the best speakers I ever heard.

And instead of being encouraged, you know what it was? I got depressed. Oh my goodness. I'm so depressed because I don't have that.

I don't have that skill of preaching. I don't have that ability to lead that well. I don't have a 150 voice choir.

I don't have a budget like that. I don't have a building like that. What do I have? And the Holy Spirit, and I went back to my hotel room and I got down on my face on the carpet and I told the Lord, I quit.

I can't, if this is what ministry is, I can't do it. I can't keep up with the Joneses and I don't even want to try anymore. I'm sick of it.

And I said, I quit. And you know what I was expecting Lord to do? Oh, son, my dear, my dear younger brother stand and let me anoint you from head to toe because I need you. So I was, I wanted sympathy and I said, Lord, I quit.

And I hear the Holy Spirit say, good. I had never known the Holy Spirit could be rude. I was, it was very rude.

I'm hurting. Don't you see that? Quit. Yes.

Quit the aspirations for the spectacular, quit the aspirations for bigger, better, more visible, more notoriety, more fame, more invitations, more book deals, more just quit all that and hide yourself in the presence of God. What happened to the secret closet? Here's the secret closet now. I'm in the secret closet.

Hi, I'm in the secret closet. I got my selfie going here. I just want you to know that I spent a lot of time in the secret closet.

Here's my, here's where I get down on my knees. That delete button on some of the apps is a good one. Another thing you could delete is the, is the selfie button.

The thing that turns the phone around because I'm walking through the city here and everybody's like, right? What in the world is happening to our culture? It's this arrogance, selfie, me ism. And again, it's slipped into the ministry and it's so subtle because, and it's more subtle in the ministry because when they're doing it in the world, there's no, there's no good reason for them to be doing it. I'm taking the selfie to raise money for cancer.

They don't do that, right? This, but in the, but in our ministry, we do that. I'm, I'm doing this for the glory of God. I want to, I want my church to go from 5,000 to 10,000 because of the, for the glory of God.

I wanted to grow from 400 to 800 for the glory of God. I want to get more followers for the, and so our motives get mixed, right? Because there's some good things we want. And, and, but then the enemy attaches the things to it that don't belong in our heart and in our life.

Now here's the encouraging part about the second temptation. Mega ministry is not a bad thing. As a matter of fact, if you still have your Bibles open to Matthew chapter four in verse 16, it says about Jesus, after he's successfully went through all these temptations, you know what it says about Jesus? It says verse 16 from the people living in darkness have seen a mega light.

They call Jesus, the Greek calls Jesus a mega light. He, he could reach masses. He could reach multitudes.

He, he could draw crowds, tens of thousands of people. And, but, but his heart went through this test and he was successful because he said, take me up to the highest pinnacle, take me up to Jerusalem and tell me that I could fall down to the ground and avoid injury. And Jesus is thinking to himself, this is the very city, Jerusalem, where I will be crucified in less than three years.

And this temptation is I can escape the cross. I can escape the pain of sorrow and bitterness, the cup, that drinking down the dregs of the cup. I can avoid all that and still get the pinnacle of a ministry.

And Jesus responds to him going back to Deuteronomy. Once again, it is written, do not put the Lord your God to a test. Again, Deuteronomy chapter six, going back to Israel where they failed this test.

They, they murmured and complained and God said, you were tested and you complained because there was not water in the rock in Deuteronomy six. And now Jesus uses Deuteronomy a second time to contend against the powers of darkness. Third, we see this, this is, is what is in verse 14.

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain. Do you notice something interesting in here? The spirit led Jesus into the wilderness, but there's this language that I find quite strange. Like in verse five, the devil took him and had him stand.

Again, in verse eight, the devil took him to a very high mountain. It's almost like Satan was moving him in places. Satan was, stand here, come over here.

Look at this. It's, it's really a weird, when I read that, it's really, it's really weird to me. It's like, why did, why did God allow the devil to do that? There's because there's a testing coming and sometimes we, we, we, we rebuke the devil and actually God is, and you may think this is theologically way off base, but, but, but God is Lord of hosts.

He's, he's over all. He, Satan is not a contending God. God is over Satan.

God rules and reigns over everything. And so, so even these things, these little things that he took them and he put them here and he said this to them, it's all under the sovereignty of God. God is doing something to show Jesus truly.

He is the beloved son of God and that God is well pleased with him and that Satan has no place in his heart. And so, so he says here, the devil took him to a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of this world and their splendor. And he said, I will, all these, I will give you, if you will bow down and worship me, this is the last temptation I want to talk to you about.

It's the, it's the, the temptation for, for glory and honor and power. I'll give you all these kingdoms. You'll be powerful.

You'll, you'll, you'll be. And some ministers really don't have a temptation for mega as long as they have power and glory. They're these, these, these, these are the people that we would call in this room today, myself included to repent and ask the Holy spirit for a fresh touch of love in our heart.

When we power up on people, when, when we are known as a leader of a ministry and people are afraid of you because you snap real quickly, you, you, you lose control. You, you, you, you get angry at people. You, your, your, your, your heart's often not right.

You, if they do something wrong, a low, low performance, it's immediately. And sometimes there's a bitterness that gets into our hearts. And we, even though they're people that are working with us or for us, we, we almost hold them in contempt.

There's this anger, that angry spirit within us, because we are looking for this temptation that Satan offers is for power. It's, it's, it's the word there is doxa. Have you heard that word before? Doxa doxology, the word doxa praise God from whom all blessings flow.

That's the song called the doxology. It's the song of glory of God or the power of God or the honor of God. And Satan wants Jesus.

And he, the, he wants us as Christian leaders to have a desire for doxa without it being submitted to Jesus, without being submitted to the king of Kings that in other words, we want praise. We want glory. That was the fall of Satan.

Wasn't it? He wanted to be as glorious as God was and that fall then translated to Adam and Eve that fall translated them to the children of Israel in the wilderness, wanting to test the Lord. And now that's coming to Jesus and they're tempting him to Satan's tempting him to go after glory and power. And Jesus says, that's enough.

I don't need credit. I don't need recognition. I don't need your glory.

I don't need your power. I don't, I don't need your doxa. I don't need all the splendor of this world.

I will not bow down to you. Jesus says enough of this temptations. And then Jesus says, verse 10, away from me, Satan, for it is written.

You shall go to Deuteronomy chapter six, again, worship the Lord, your God and serve him only. I love the fact that Jesus, when Satan comes to him, it's like this contending and Jesus goes, okay, Satan, bring everything you've got at me. And in return, I'll choose to limit myself, my confrontation.

I'll choose to limit it to one book in the Bible. Let's just take Deuteronomy and I'll fight you just with one book. And then in the last two temptations, it's all from chapter six.

It's like, no, Deuteronomy is too big a book to fight with you, Satan. Let's just go to Deuteronomy six. I'll just quote all the scripture from Deuteronomy six, and I'll be enough to get you to run from me, Satan.

That's the power of the word, my friends, where we can count on that secret closet and we can count on our, you know, in our study life. And, and if we're not looking for popularity and if we're not looking for fame and looking for splendor, if we're not looking for power, then, then we're going to find that, that place where we're preaching the word that we're, we're preaching the word faithfully. We're another rebuke that Lord's getting.

And I'm just listing my rebukes that I'm, this is my confessional, maybe a little bit, and maybe we'll open up the pulpit for others who'd like to confess her later today as well. But, but mine is I've noticed over the past few months, I, I tend to spend about 90% of my time studying scripture for a sermon or I, or I'll, I'll read something. And instead of letting it sink into my heart and soul and mind, they're like, Oh Lord, let that breathe on me.

Let that, let that convict me. Let it speak to me. Let it change me.

Let it transform me. Let it just be a word from heaven to me instead of going, Oh, that, that would fit in that sermon I want to next week. Or, Oh, that, that would be a, I could quote that text or that verse.

And, and, and this becomes a resource for sermons. And it was never intended to be a resource for sermons. It can be used mightily for the message that God gives to us, but let the message dig into our own heart first.

Let it be something that convicts us, that changes us, that moves us. And, and, and so Jesus uses the word to rebuke Satan and Satan flees from him. That's what it says.

The, the, the verse, next verse there, the devil left him and the angels came and attended to him. In the last few minutes I have with you, I wonder what temptation Satan would do in the modern times. Would he take a pastor and put them on top of the Supreme court, looking over Congress and the white house and saying, I'll give you all the power to bring a moral revolution to your nation.

If you'll just quiet down the preaching of the cross, if you'll just quit all that prayer and fasting stuff, if you'll quit that repentance stuff, I'll, I'll, I'll give you, I wonder if that would be an equivalent of, of the temptation of Jesus today, or, or, or, or maybe he would take you to the office of in my city, a beautiful magazine, the Christian magazine. But one of the things that I think goes wrong with it is not in its magazine itself, but it's in us. When we read it, there's this magazine called outreach magazine.

And every year they come out with a, have you seen this? The a hundred largest churches in America. And then they have another article attached to it. The hundred fastest growing churches in America.

And, and I think Satan might want to take us to the offices of outreach magazine and say to us, I can put you first on that list. For the next 20 years, you can be the fastest growing. You can be the biggest, you can be the big, you can get the mega.

I'll give that to you. I wonder if that would be one of the temptations, or maybe it would be the iPhone store, not just to get the latest iPhone 12, but to, but to get the apps on it. And the temptation be, I can give you millions of followers, tens of millions of followers.

They will, they will put comments on your sermons about how you are the greatest preacher in the world. I can give you that. You see, these are the temptations.

I think if I'm honest with you, I think we're facing those things, but the real temptation isn't, and I'm wrapping things up here now. The real temptation is, is some of these things, but I think there's a deeper temptation. I think Satan is asking Jesus a bigger question is what kind of King are you going to be? What kind of King will you be? Will you be one that seeks splendor and power and mega and fame? And Jesus rebukes him and he leaves.

And then Jesus begins to show what kind of King he will be in the next few verses. In the next few verses, he talks about the darkness. They're going to see a light.

And then in verse 23 of chapter four, now what he's doing is, is, is, is he's, he's demonstrating what kind of King he's going to be. And it's not until you overcome all those temptations that you'll be allowed to get to this place. It's, it's, it's being free from all those poles of, of the world worldliness that gives you this opportunity.

Now, verse 23, Jesus went to Galilee, teaching their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness over the people and news about him spread all over Syria. And the people brought him all who were ill with various diseases, suffering, pain, demon possessed and having seizures and paralyzed. And he healed them and large numbers of crowd gathered from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and regions around the world.

Now look at this. Satan took Jesus up on top of a mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world. And he said, you can have all the power, all the doxa, all the glory, all the popularity, you can have all this stuff.

And Satan tries to get them to go for it that easy way. And Jesus says no. And then all of a sudden Jesus comes down to the Valley and he sees the poor and the sick and the lame.

And all of a sudden you see, God is not, I'm not preaching against big numbers or large churches or, or growing ministries or online presence that touch millions of people around the world, but I'm just talking

about the way we go about it. And Jesus refused to do it in a fleshly manner of self gain, self promotion, self exaltation. He said to death with all that, I die to all that because what I want instead is to walk among the poor and the sick and the lame and the broken and, and preach the gospel, preach the good news.

And so he begins to preach the good news and there's healing all around. And they come from all of those places that are mentioned in this chapter are what you would see from the high mountain in Jerusalem. You would see all the way to Judea and the Decapolis, the 10 cities, and people came to Jesus and he had a truly more mega ministry than Satan could have ever offered to him.

And then Jesus not only just demonstrates the ministry, but he, he declares the ministry. And by declaring the ministry, we see this in, in chapter five, he says, blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are those who meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Blessed for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers for they will call the children of God.

And blessed are you when you're persecuted because of righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad because great is reward in heaven for the same way they persecuted the prophets before you.

Then he goes on to say, you are the salt of the earth, but if the salt loses its saltiness or another translation says, if the salt loses its savor. And I think Jesus is speaking this to us. If we lose the beatitudes in our ministry and instead of meek, mourn, lowly, humble, we are haughty and arrogant and striving for the highest place and the highest parts of the pinnacle.

If we're doing that, we lose the King that Jesus is. Jesus isn't saying try hard to be meek and mourn. He's saying this is who I am.

I showed you by demonstration who I am now. I'm describing who I am to you. I'm describing my heart to you.

I'm describing what I desire in ministry. And there are four gospels and the 89 chapters and the 12, 13,000 verses and almost 70,000 words in the four gospels. Out of all those words, Jesus only uses two words to describe his own heart.

It's the only place he said, this is what my heart is like. You want to know me, read the beatitudes. But if you want it in concise nature, two words describe my heart, nothing else.

It's not power. It's not splendor. It's not mega.

It's not mad. It's not all these things. Two words describe my heart.

You know what they are? Humble and lowly. Only two words Jesus used to describe his own heart. I am another translation, meek and gentle.

This is something that I think is missing from many of our ministries today. And this is no easy calling. This is no light message here today.

There's a heaviness to this in my heart. There's a weightiness to this that says God wants to squeeze us into his mold. The olive that are crushed, they're pressed to make the anointing oil.

The historians tell us they went through three different presses. The first one broke the outside of the skin and some of the olive juice poured out. The second one began to squeeze the interior of that.

And the third one took the skins that were left over and put them in a third press and crushed the skins to get any remaining anointing out of it. And my brothers and sisters, don't despise being pressed by the Holy Spirit. Don't despise the crushing that we find ourselves in.

Don't despise this humbling of ourselves. We as pastors in America, more I believe than any other nation, need to remember that God is calling us to a humble ministry, to be humble men and women of God, to look for God's presence in our brokenness, in our emptiness. Philippians chapter two says that Jesus came and he emptied himself and became, do you know what the next word is? He became nothing.

That makes me want to scratch my head. How and why does Jesus become nothing? He emptied himself out of all of his own desires for things and just allowed himself to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And I want for myself and I pray for you and I hunger for you that you would be a person, a man or woman of God who says, God, press me till every ounce of juice is poured out.

Press me, crush me till every ounce of self is dead inside me. Crush all my dreams and my aspirations. Crush this American spirit of being better and bigger and greater than everyone else.

Crush it, God. Destroy it within me. I want nothing left of that inside.

I want to be like Jesus, empty myself. I was on the phone last week with a young man and I don't know if you guys that are my age, sometimes you, you speak to a young man and you'd be like, oh my goodness, how can you be 30 years old, 32 years old and have that much of Jesus in you? His name is Zach Mikaribs and Zach was a pastor of a growing church and he felt like God just said, lay it, lay it down just, and he went to a college because it was a Christian college, but some of the students there were smoking pot and partying and he just wanted to be an influence on them. So I think the best way for me to do this is I want to be one of the coaches of their soccer team.

And so he was a coach of the soccer team and occasionally they would ask him to speak at chapel. And in February of this year, he got up in chapel and he preached a message from Romans chapter 12. And he just said, Romans 12 says, you know, honor others more highly than yourself.

Don't think of yourself too highly. And he preached this pretty simple sermon and he, and he walks off stage. He was telling me this story.

I said, I walked off stage and I, I texted my wife. I love what he texted. He said, laid another stinker.

I'll be home in about 15 minutes. Have you ever, have you ever left a sermon and felt like laid another stinker? I sometimes I'm halfway through my sermon. I'm thinking to myself, this is a stinker.

But, but he's, he goes off stage and, and says, I laid another stinker. But, but as he finished his sermon, he said, Hey, if any of you want to stay and pray, I got about 15 minutes. I'll, I'll come down to the altar and,

and pray with you.

And he said, 19 students came down to the altar to pray and then they just decided to stay. And then they started to stay a little longer. And, and somebody got up with a guitar and just started singing.

No, no big to do just a guy with a guitar. Matter of fact, he told me that guy who got up with a guitar, led worship for 16 hours straight. And it was, it's what we know is Fox news tried to cover it.

Tucker Carlson tried to go and they wouldn't let him come to the Asbury awakening, the outpouring of God's spirit of Asbury six, I think it was 13, 14, 15, 16 days straight, nothing but prayer and praise and worship and teaching of the word. And he said, you know, Gary, when that happened, when we ended it, my phone lit up, come speak at this conference. Come, come, come, come do this.

Would you pastor? He's got said the invitations were bizarre to him. And I love what he said next. He says, so, you know what I did? I just gave my wife my phone and said, just hold this for a few days.

And why don't you and I just go away. And he said, I won't accept any invitations. I'm not going to, I'm not going to build my ministry on, on something that I didn't do that the Holy Spirit did.

I'm not going to, I'm not going to take advantage of this moment in time to build a platform for myself. And so he took three months off and just said, I'm just going to go seek the face of the Lord and pray if I should come back and coach soccer next year, whatever the Lord has for me. He said this to me, the revival that touched this generation was marked by these things.

Can I listen for you real briefly? And I know I'm going a little long in time. We've got about ready to pray for you. He said, it was marked by these five things.

It was peace for a very anxious generation. It wasn't hyped up. It wasn't, it was just the peace of Christ was there.

People could breathe and look at the word and kneel and pray for one another. It was the peace. And they said it was simple for a very distracted and overstimulated generation where, where so much is going on or so much coming in our brains.

And just our phone has more information than our old encyclopedia. Botanicals used to have the 24 volume one, your phone, you have 20 times more data and press. And he said this, this generation, even though it's mesmerized by the, the content that's being thrown at them and they love it, there's something in their heart that says, I don't really want that.

I want something simple. I want the simple gospel. I want the simple Jesus.

I want simple church. I want simple fellowship. And the third thing he says is radical love and commitment.

I was giving me the radical love and community for a generation that is lonely and isolated, feeling like they have friends because they have 200 followers or on Facebook and they feel like they have friends and they don't have friends. And so the church in true church and revival is, is, is full of radical love and community for one another. He went on to say that this revivals that are going to touch this generation will be, I love this nameless and faceless.

And that's why he just shut himself down. He said, I don't want anybody to know me. I wanted to know Jesus.

He said, he said, people ask me all the time, you know, what's, what's your, what's your Instagram number? He said, you don't need my number. You need Jesus's number. I love, I love that nameless and faceless leading in humility in a generation of celebrity culture.

And again, that, that spirit has crept into the church, a celebrity culture, and it's a generation of fallen leaders. And they want men and women of God who are pure and holy and set apart. And lastly, they wanted to be authentic and honest in a generation that's full of fake slick and overproduced.

They just wanted to be authentic and honest. And I tell you, I had to, I had to tell Zach, I said, man, I want to apologize to you. I want, I want to repent because I had, I had, I had become so arrogant.

I said, Zach, man, my heart is so arrogant because I thought I was doing it right. You know, like we don't need revival. Don't need to travel places.

Just, I got my Bible and I can get on my knees and pray. And I can, I have my, I stay revived. That's what, that was my spirit.

But then I was talking to him. I said, I realized, Zach, I'm far from revival. I need a fresh touch of the Holy spirit.

I need God to move again in my life. I need, I need, I need to go back to simple. I need to go back to, to, to uncomplicated.

I need to go back to authentic. I need to go back to, to Jesus as my all in all. And I'll tell you what, it, it, it crushed me in a good way.

It broke me in a good way. And, and, and I am now like Jesus was contending when he was fasting, I am contending in prayer for a broken and contrite heart to be humble and meek. And, and, and I didn't title the sermon humility and how I obtained it.

But, but, but I am, but I am contending for humility in the pulpit, humility in our pastorate, humility in our leadership, humility in the way we treat our staff, humility. We are going to need it for the, to reach this next generation. And my arrogance isn't going to do it.

My, my striving after splendor and grandeur and mega isn't going to do it. Matter of fact, this generation wants the opposite of that. It wants a nameless faceless, simple Christian community where love abounds.

That's where the revival started in, in, in Romans 12, love one another dearly, esteem others more highly than yourself. This is, this is the, this is the, this is the King that Jesus wants to be. And this is the King that Jesus is.

And this is the kingdom he wants us to have. Father, I pray now. I want you to stand with me if you would.

I pray now in Jesus name, as we get ready to take a short break, I just pray in Jesus name, God, that you would, you would continue to break our hearts, continue to crush, crush us, continue to press us. Lord should, should be, would be willing to pray a very desperate and dangerous prayer in this auditorium today. Make me nothing, empty me, take my reputation from me, take any popularity from me, take it all.

As long as I have more of Jesus, as long as I can stand and preach the authentic full gospel of Jesus Christ, as long as I can squeeze me as you may, but Lord, let there be an anointing pour out of, of the squeezing. And I would just like to give an invitation. Now, if any of you here just say, I see myself very easily getting derailed, but I, I, I want to invite you to join me in a invitation to become nothing, to, to empty ourselves, to have no reputation.

And it doesn't mean your ministry will flail and fail. Matter of fact, the promise that God gave me, if I will be willing to, to, if I will be willing to be nothing, he will use me to bring revival and spiritual awakening to many nations. And, and, and, and I don't say that in a sense, he's going to just pick me singularly.

He's going to use many people, but he's going to use a nothing generation, nothing of myself, try to deflect the glory. If somebody's putting the spotlight on you, just put a mirror up and let the lights go other places. If that's you, would you mind just stepping out of your seat right now and just say, pastor Gary, I want to join you in this journey you're taking.

You're, you're, you're in the beginning of it. And I want to walk into this with you, Lord, make me nothing, empty me, crush me, break me, shake me. God, get this arrogance out of my heart.

Lord, let there be something new in me. Let there be something fresh in me. God, take the striving away.

Lord, take, take the, Oh God. And what I pray as well as God, we have to be filled with this voice that says we are the beloved son and daughter of God, or the temptations will be too overwhelming out of our fleshly emptiness. We'll be looking to be filled with things, but Lord, if we are filled with a godly emptiness, then all these things will be meaningless.

They will, they won't have their luster, but what we'll have God is a hunger for revival, a hunger for spiritual awakening in our nation. And God, we won't be pulled into the, the lores of the temptations that we have in pastoral ministry, but we will just look to you and say, God, I don't care how many people are in my church. I don't care what I see on my iPhone.

I don't care what kind of likes I get. What I care about is your presence living in my heart, Jesus. Do I honor you? Do I glorify you? Do I magnify you? Is my life an honor to you, God? Do I exalt you or do I exalt myself? Am I hungry for you to move or do I want people to be moved by me? Take me and take us out of the picture and only use us.

And when you're done using us, we would in turn say to you, I am an unworthy servant. I've only done what you commanded me to do. No more, no less.

Use me as you will God. And Lord, I believe if you will, with our open hearts, crush our selfish aspirations, our, our, our longings for a extravagant destiny, all these things we hear constantly in the American pulpits and Lord, instead of advocating for that Lord, we are contending against that against that fleshly spirit. And Lord, I just, again, I repent.

I've been in repentance for the last few weeks. Lord, my heart is so arrogant. It's so arrogant, God.

It's so wanting so much for me. And God, I think there's some brothers and sisters here that can maybe relate to that in some portions of their life. And we want to be free of it, God.

We want to be so free of it so that you would shine through us, Jesus. Not, not in the illumination of ourself or our name, but you, Jesus, be high and lifted up and the train of your road filled the temple. Not my name, not my face, not my light, your light, Jesus.

You are the mega light, God. We are just mirror reflections walking in your shadow. So come now, Jesus.

And I pray for all my brothers and sisters who stepped out of their seat saying, I'm hungry for this, God. I'm hungry to be nothing. And Lord, if we will do this, I really, truly believe all our disappointments, our discouragement, the accusations that we're not enough, we're failures, we got to do more.

Lord, all of that will fade away. It will be crushed by the power of the Holy Spirit and Satan will have to do what Jesus said to him. Get away from me, Satan.

Get away from me, devil, because I have something greater for my children. I'm not going to ascend to the pinnacle and look over the holy nations or the nations myself. I'm going to come down to the valley and just in Jesus be nothing.

Just care for the poor and love people who are sick and let you draw who you will, God, to the ministry you have for me. But we thank you, Jesus. And I thank you for hungry hearts that have come into this room today.

Thank you for this response that people are. I think we're in agreement here today saying we really need this in our nation and nations around the world. We probably need the same thing.

The flesh is the flesh, whether it's here or Norway or Afghanistan or Africa. The flesh is the flesh, God, and we want the flesh to be removed from us in this place of freshness of the spirit.

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