

July 22/23, 2023
"The Devil"
Pastor Brad Holmes



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2023 SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Intentional activities to deepen our relationship with God and mold us to be more like Jesus.

JULY PRACTICE Solitude

Day 1 John 1:1-12 | The Work of Jesus

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12

It helps to understand the temptation of Jesus by understanding WHO Jesus is and WHAT HE DID so we can be part of his family. It is easy to misunderstand who Jesus is and fail to grasp why his death and resurrection are so important. It starts when humankind's sin separated us from a right relationship with God. God restores this by sending his son, Jesus. Jesus was rejected by humanity and crucified on the cross for our sins. This punishment is in place for sins, past and future. After dying on the cross, Jesus was placed in a tomb, conquered death and rose from the dead. His resurrection is a declaration that his payment is sufficient for the penalty of sin.

Jesus then ascends into heaven and sits on the heavenly throne at God the Father's right hand. When we put our faith and trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins, we are adopted by God and become his child. It's a relationship only available when we believe and receive that Jesus's death on the cross paid the penalty for our wrongs. Because Jesus did all of this for us, we can enjoy a new relationship with God. It is the only way we can be his son or daughter.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Thank God for what Jesus did on the cross that paid the penalty for your sins. If you have not yet placed your faith and trust in Jesus for your sins, you can do this where you are right now. If you have questions or are unsure how to proceed, we'd love to connect with you. Contact us at btw@adabible.org.

Day 2 Ephesians 1:1-14 | Identity

For he [God] chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. Ephesians 1:4-6

Jesus is baptized, and the voice of God says, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). God's words confirm the identity of Jesus. This identity of Jesus as the Son, and his obedience to the will of the Father, directly ties to our identity in Jesus. Because Jesus is who he is and did what he did, we are able to enjoy a relationship with God. Paul describes this relationship in Ephesians 1.

Trusting in Jesus for the forgiveness of sin means we are adopted into the family of God (Ephesians 1:5). This adoption gives us "every spiritual blessing in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3), "redemption through his blood" and "forgiveness of sins" (Ephesians 1:7). In much the same way God reminded Jesus of who he is, sometimes we need to be reminded of who we are in Christ. Not knowing our identity in Christ or looking for that identity in other places results in far less life far than what God wants for us. When we reflect on our identity in Christ, we can live in confident obedience to the God who brought us into his family.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY In your journal, list the things Paul says are true of you as a believer in Jesus in Ephesians 1:1-14. Then, every time you pray today, thank God for one of the things on your list. Allow your identity in Jesus to shape all that you do.

Day 3 Luke 4:1-13 | If...It

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. Luke 4:1-2

Following his baptism, Jesus is tempted by the devil in the desolate wilderness. Satan's primary form of attack is doubt. Questioning the authority and power of Jesus, Satan casts doubt on God's love and goodness. He does this by using the word "If," "If you are the Son of God" (Luke 4:3; 4:9). In this way, he wants to cast doubt on what God said. In all three of Jesus's responses, he returns to Scripture, "It is written: Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." Jesus repeatedly returns to the truth of God's Word as he exchanges the "If" of Satan with the "It" of the Bible.

Still today, Satan continually uses voices that tell us God doesn't care about us or can't be trusted. "If God loved you, you would have been offered that job, the relationship would have worked out, or God would provide what you need." Our response to these doubts needs to be the same as Jesus—replacing the "If" of the devil with the "It" of Scripture. Instead of believing the lies of Satan, we need to remember the truths of Scripture, "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" (1 John 3:1).

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Memorize 1 John 3:1 as a first step towards replacing "If" with "It." Place this verse in a location where it will continually remind you of God's love and goodness. He is a God who can be trusted!

Day 4 Luke 4:5-8 | It's All Yours

Jesus answered, "It is written: Worship the Lord your God and serve him only." Luke 4:8

Taking Jesus to a high place, Satan tells Jesus, "Worship me and all of this is yours. You can have everything: authority and glory." This temptation offers Jesus an out. Rather than suffer the pain and humiliation of a trial, multiple beatings, mocking and death on a cross, Jesus can skip all that by worshiping Satan. He offers Jesus a choice: suffering or no suffering? Who to worship? Who to serve? He offers Jesus all the splendor and power without suffering and pain. Jesus responds by choosing, worshiping and serving God alone. Everything he is, does and chooses belongs to God.

We also get to choose. We can say, "It's all mine. I will spend my money how I want to, sleep with who I want to and do whatever I want." Or we can say, "God, it's all yours. You get my money, time, body, relationships, where I live and my free time. Everything. It's all yours." These are choices we make every hour of every day. Like Jesus, the right choice is to say to God, "It's all yours."

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY In your journal, list the relationships, roles, experiences and things that make up your life. Next to each one, write, "It's yours." Conclude by thanking God for each one as you recommit them to the Lord.

Day 5 Luke 4:9-13 | Test

Jesus answered, "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Luke 4:12

The final part of the temptation sees the devil take Jesus to the highest part of the temple, some 450 feet up. There, he tells Jesus to jump, knowing that God would not allow harm to come to him. Jesus again goes to Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:13) and tells Satan there is no need to test God and his care. Jesus knows his Father loves him, and there is no need to prove it. God's love and care for him is secure.

We also can rest in who God is and who he says we are. We do not have to listen to the many voices trying to define who we are and how we should live. When we place our faith and trust in Jesus, we are forever adopted into God's family. This means that we can live in confident assurance that God will always be with us. Because he is, we can trust him and rely on the truth of his Word. This trust means we can give him every part of our life, knowing that he loves and cares for us. It's a faith that can withstand every temptation.

IN YOUR CHAIR TIME TODAY Focus on the lyrics of "Worthy, Worthy" as you join Ada Bible's worship team in their worship of the Lord. "Holy, holy is the Lord Almighty. Worthy, worthy is your name. All of heaven joins the universe ever crying. Worthy, worthy is your name." Sing these to yourself as a reminder of who God is and what he has done.