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Doctrine of Kenosis; Part. 11. The three parts of our Lord's evidence testing.

We have been noting the evidence testing of our Lord and how:

The three parts of His evidence testing challenged His relationship to:

1. The Holy Spirit; (MAT 4:1-4).
2. The Word of God; (MAT 4:5-7).
3. The plan of God; (MAT 4:8-10).

He passed the first test which was to use the Word of God as His divine solution to the temptations of Satan.

Matthew 4 records the evidence testing of our Lord, which was the ***first event*** in His public ministry.

At the outset of His public ministry, He was immediately taken into the desert, alone, to face evidence testing.

For in MAT 4:1 we read Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Three persons were involved in the testing of Christ: the humanity of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the devil.

MAT 4:2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

MAT 4:3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God [and you are], command that these stones become bread."

Our Lord's temptations to His humanity not only came from outside, but He was tempted by Satan personally as He tried to get our Lord to use His divine nature, MAT 4.

Let's take the divine nature.

2PE 1:4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature.

The divine nature of Christ was not able to be tempted because God is immutable and immutability demands that God does not change.

God cannot change.

Even if we are faithless, He does not change; 2TI 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.

In Titus 1:2, we have the confidence of eternal life, from a God, who cannot lie.

And here is the motivation that comes from having the God that we do.

HEB 6:18 in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us.

Also, our Lord as God is sovereign.

Sovereignty can do whatever it chooses and would never condone sin.

He cannot do anything that would violate His nature.

The sovereignty of God cannot change His mind about sin.

The perfect righteousness of God cannot be corrupted by sin.

The justice of God is cannot be unfair.

This is how the temptations of Christ and who He is, is brought out in MAT 4 and also applies to our Doctrine of Kenosis.

There are so many principles that theologians have missed concerning kenosis.

Why?

Because it means such things as:

He had human volition but used His volition within the love complex, an absolute place of virtue.

JOH 15:10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

Again before, we see how the Lord handled Satan's temptation in MAT 4:4, remember what Satan said in:

MAT 4:3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "Since You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

Satan, of course, recognizes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Satan is a fallen angel, all fallen angels are in eternity.

As far as they are concerned the angelic creation is divided and we have the two categories: the elect angels and the fallen angels.

Satan is the leader of the fallen angels and they have already fought in eternity and lost, so Satan recognizes that Jesus is the Son of God but obviously it does not save him.

He is already in his category for eternity, which is the eternal lake of fire: MAT 25:41.

Since we are in the Gospel of Matthew, look at MAT 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels:'"

He has had his chance and he is out of the picture now, but it should be noticed that the devil and his angels will end up in the eternal lake of fire.

REV 20:10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Satan recognizes that if he can get Jesus to turn stones into bread, even though He is deity [the Son of God], He can act independently of the Holy Spirit.

As we have noted, Satan learned the lesson quickly, Jesus cannot be bought for any price.

Notice that gall of Satan when he says to our Lord "command" the stones to become bread.

Eight points on this first temptation:

1. Jesus is hungry and He has the power to turn stones into bread which would be very simple for the Son of God to do.
2. To turn stones into bread would mean depending upon His own volition and upon His own divine power rather than the power of the indwelling Spirit and the volition and plan of the Father.
3. The relationship of the humanity of Jesus to the indwelling Holy Spirit is under test.
4. Jesus is being tempted to obtain a lawful thing in an unlawful way — apart from the power of the Spirit.
5. Jesus is being tempted as to the sufficiency of the grace of the Father for daily needs. We face the same issue today.

The Father's provision is grace. The issue is grace versus legalism.

6. Would Jesus provide food for Himself by turning stones into bread or can He wait for the Father to provide all His needs.

He knows that the Father's purpose for Him is to go to the cross and even though He has gone without food for forty days he knows that He will not die until He goes to the cross; that is the Father's plan.

The point is:

Does He have the patience to wait for the Father's plan to operate or is He going to jump out ahead and not wait upon the Lord?

Our Lord knew;

ISA 40:31 Yet those who wait for the Lord Will gain new strength; They will mount up {with} wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.

Issue to us:

Do we have the patience to wait for the Father's plan to develop in our lives or do we jump out ahead of it?

7. This introduces the faith-rest issue: Are we going to trust the Father or are we going to do it ourselves?

8. The Father will not permit the humanity of Christ to starve to death because GEN 3:15 and ISA 53 and all of the Levitical offerings tells is how the Savior would die.

Now, our Lord Jesus Christ knows the Old Testament.

He has been fasting, which means He has been thinking about the Old Testament scriptures, and He knows that there is no scripture that says that Messiah will starve to death; GEN 3:15.

Will He believe it or not?

Our Lord believed this and that is why He gave the answer that He did in MAT 4.

And this has tremendous application to us:

Can we depend upon the plan of the Father for our lives or do we have to jump out ahead with human viewpoint?

There is just one hitch.

If we do not know doctrine you have nothing to believe and you do not have enough faith to operate in the faith-rest technique.

This temptation, of course, brings out a tremendous factor:

If God doesn't open the door for you tomorrow so that you can see daylight, are you going to fall apart?

I told you there are a lot of principles in this doctrine.

If you do not see the end from the beginning all you need is to know what the Word has to say and God will provide your daily needs; MAT 6:33-34.

Just as He provided the biggest need you ever had, which is salvation, He also will provide the lesser which is logistical grace support; ROM 5:8.

Look at ROM 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

ROM 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath {of God} through Him.

ROM 5:10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved or delivered by His life.

All that it requires on your part is the operation of the faith-rest technique and you can have a life of perfect peace and blessing in the midst of the pressures and testing's and trials of life.

There is no command for you to fall apart through anxiety.

This leads us to our Lord's answer in verse 4

MAT 4:4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

“He answered” is an aorist active participle, and when you put them together you have an idiom which means He told Satan off.

He not only gave him an answer but He gave him a dogmatic answer, an answer which couldn't have had greater power behind it.

He simply gave him scripture.

For forty days, He had been living on the Word and now He is ready for the devil.

Our Lord knew Deuteronomy because He quotes from Deuteronomy and:

He gave Satan a dogmatic answer: “It is written” = perfect tense, it is written in the past with the result that it goes on forever.

1PE 1:25 But the word of the Lord abides forever.

Now,.....

Some of you may be wondering how did our Lord know this passage if it hadn't been written yet by Peter?

The answer to that is found in:

ISA 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.

The passive voice of the verb “it is written,” means that the Bible receives writing from men as the thought content of the Bible comes from God and to us as the mind of Christ; 1CO 2:16.

Prin: Victory always comes through the Word.

The Word is the object of the faith-rest technique in our passage.

The Word is the basis for true spirituality for the Word teaches us to rebound and to live in the Word of God, which is maximum knowledge of doctrine and occupation with Christ.

If you do not know the Word, you do not know Christ.

“Man shall not live by bread alone”

Remember that:

Deuteronomy is the book that describes the walk of the people in the land. “Man shall not live” indicates that it takes more than mere survival to be alive, and to be truly alive is to be alive unto God.

Our life relationship with God on this earth is through the indwelling Spirit.

When Jesus Christ set up the pattern, He had the indwelling Spirit, the filling of the Spirit, and consequently He indicated that just having food, shelter and clothing and the necessities of life isn't living.

Man does not truly live apart from relationship to God, and so, man is not going to live by bread alone.

The word “alone” means that real life is more than just eating and drinking in the natural realm because it can lead us to the spiritual food of knowing God.

You must have the logistics because you must also eat to survive.

However:

Relationship with the Lord must come first.

Food is necessary to sustain physical life, but the sustaining of physical life is meaningless without spiritual life.

Five principles on physical and spiritual food.

1. Bread or physical food is necessary for physical life but bread is a mere detail in man's dependence upon God.
2. It isn't the food but the promise which guarantees the food that counts.
3. While bread is necessary to sustain life it is a mere detail in survival.
4. What really sustains the believer is the promises of the Word because food and shelter can be taken away from us in a moment of time but we keep on having the promises of God.

However,

5. When the time of testing comes it isn't what is in the Bible that counts, it is what you have taken out of the Bible and transferred into your frontal lobe that counts; both in the mind and the heart.

Notice that in the resistance of temptation on the part of our Lord Jesus did not rely upon His deity,

He relied upon the Word of God and He resisted this great temptation through the Word of God.

This is the principle of divine versus human viewpoint.

This leads to the concept that all spiritual victory is directly related to the Word of God, and your ability to have spiritual victory is based upon your understanding of the Word.

Therefore, notice our Lord's answer.

MAT 4:4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

A few principles for this first test.

1. Reliance on the Word of God rather than the word of man is the pattern of this victory.
2. All spiritual victory is related to the Word.
3. Jesus never put His own power or His own works above or on a level with obedience to the Father's plan.

To rely on the power of the Spirit was the Father's plan for the incarnate Christ, therefore in obedience to the Father's plan He relied upon the power of the Spirit when he used the Word.

4. Jesus found strength, not in performing a miracle, but in the Word of God.
5. Reliance upon God and fulfilling the plan of God depends upon the believer become spiritually self-sustained by feeding on the Word and converting the Word into strength.

Just as physical food goes in and is converted into energy so doctrine in the frontal lobe is converted into divine power, orientation to the plan of God.

In verses 5-7, we have the second recorded temptation.

MAT 4:5 Then the devil *took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,

MAT 4:6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, #He will give His angels charge concerning You'; and ' On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone."

MAT 4:7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Since the power is in the Word and since Jesus Christ in His humanity is relying on the Word, Satan tried to pull the power out from under Him.

He tried to undermine Him by destroying the Word as the norm.

The principles of the second temptation:

1. The second temptation deals with the believer's relationship with the Word.

2. Since Jesus resisted the temptation to act independently of the indwelling Spirit and the power of the Word, Satan attacks the source of resistance which is the Word itself.
3. Satan attacks the Word by quoting the Word, distorting the Word, and using a passage which is not pertinent to the situation.
4. To distort the Word by removing it from its context and interpretation has led astray many sincere and ignorant believers.

Sometimes the more sincere the believer the more stupid the believer!

In Verse 5, we have the location of the second temptation.

MAT 4:5 Then the devil *took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,

The first word “Then” is an adverb referring to the next temptation with the devil taking Him into the holy city, Jerusalem.

Some system of transportation was employed that we are not told about.

The “holy city” always refers to Jerusalem in the Bible; “Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple.

The word “pinnacle” is a porch, and the pinnacle of the temple is a wing of the temple which was constructed by Herod the Great.

This particular porch is actually 450 feet over the valley of Kidron so they are standing and looking over a cliff which was 450 feet straight down.

In Verse 6, we have the temptation.

MAT 4:6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, #He will give His angels charge concerning You'; and ' On {their} hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone."

Satan is talking to Jesus Christ and he says now to His deity: “Jump.”

But.....

Deity can't jump because deity is omnipresent and is everywhere.

So, it can be seen how the devil is trying to distort things.

The command is an aorist active imperative, which means that the devil has the gall to command God Almighty, our Lord Jesus Christ, not only to change stones into bread, but now to jump.

Jesus had just said previously that He would live by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God.

He has declared Himself upon the principle that in His humanity He will rely entirely upon the Word of God.

This will be the pattern for His Doctrine of Kenosis.

So, the devil says in effect that if He is going to rely upon the Word of God, there is no reason why He can't jump off this cliff.....

And.....

He now quotes a portion of scripture to prove the fact that He ought to jump just to demonstrate that He would live by the Word.

“for it is written” = Satan is now quoting Psalm 91:11-12 and He rationalizes that because the deity of Christ can't jump he will go back to the humanity of Christ.

The humanity of Christ is going to rely on the Word of God and Satan quotes scripture to imply that He can jump.

Notice Satan's distortions:

1. To jump into the valley would violate the law of gravity and our Lord would be tempted by Satan to prove He is God by performing a miracle from His own deity.
2. In his own subtle way, the devil is trying to trick the humanity of Christ into proving His deity by performing a miracle such as jump and have God catch you.

Since you are God, Jesus, then prove it --- jump and catch yourself.

3. God does not protect the operation of negative volition in defiance of divine law by using miracles to solve.
4. If someone pushes the Lord over the cliff then the scripture, which the devil quotes, might apply but there is no one else present to do the pushing including the devil, he can't because of the rules of the Angelic Conflict.
5. There is no protection for the one who acts independently of the Word, even when using the Word in a distorted fashion.

Remember GEN 3 and the first mention principle.

GEN 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

GEN 3:2 And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

GEN 3:3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.' "

GEN 3:4 And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die!

GEN 3:5 "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Notice in MAT 4:6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, #He will give His angels charge concerning You'; and ' On {their} hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone."

6. There are times that you could be falling and having been pushed, God would protect you but this is a case of where you do it of your own volition and this passage does not cover suicide.

God does not protect from death that believer who tries to commit suicide.

Suicide is the superimposition of human volition over divine volition.
Suicide the words were added by Satan.

Satan added to distort.

He could not completely distort this passage without a subtle addition to it.

There are times when God's protection are definitely promised.

7. When the believer uses his own volition to operate independently of God's plan, God's Word, or God's law then he is outside of divine protection.

God does not protect that believer who tries to commit suicide from death.

Suicide is the superimposition of human volition over divine volition.

Suicide is the arrogant expression of a person who does not care about others and how their suicide affects them.

Suicide is going out as a loser because of selfishness.

Arrogance, jealousy, emotionalism, anger, selfishness, and negative decisions tells us that committing suicide is a sin; PSA 31:15 My times are in Thy hand;

What Does the Bible Say about Suicide?

Christians will not find the word "suicide" in Scripture, but the fact of suicide is seen throughout Scripture is an evidence of the struggle some have with the effects of mankind's fallen nature.

The Bible teaches that Satan, the father of lies, comes to steal, kill, and destroy God, on the other hand, God emphasizes the sanctity of life.

What Does the Bible Say about Suicide?

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Suicide in the Old Testament:

1. Abimelech committed suicide;
2. King Saul;
3. Saul's armor-bearer;

4. Ahithophel, Absalom's counselor;
5. Zimri set himself afire in the king's house;
1KI 16:16-18.

There is only one example of suicide. Judas, Jesus' disciple and betrayer, hung himself when he understood he had betrayed "innocent blood" (MAT 27:3-10).

There are many reasons why people might commit suicide, and some are not addressed directly in Scripture.

For example,

A chemical imbalance, causing severe depression, or mental illness may drive people to commit suicide.

The Bible teaches that Satan, the father of lies, "was a murderer from the beginning" (JOH 8:44). He comes to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10a).

Satan plants destructive thoughts in people, even Christians, and they may choose to act on Satan's lies and kill themselves.

On the other hand,

Jesus Christ Gives Life which emphasizes the sanctity of life.

Jesus came to give us abundant life and freedom (JOH 10:10b).

The Lord doesn't want us to live in fear, but to discover strength and help in Him.

ISA 41:10 'Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

PSA 34:18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, And saves those who are crushed in spirit.

PSA 34:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous; But the Lord delivers him out of them all.

We can cast our cares on the Lord and know He will not condemn us (PSA 55:22; ROM 8:1-2).

PSA 55:22 Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.

ROM 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

ROM 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

All of us have been made in the image of God and it is extremely important that we understand what that means; GEN 1:26-27.

GEN 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

GEN 1:27 And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Therefore, mankind is not allowed to murder anyone, including ourselves (GEN 9:6-7).

GEN 9:6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.

GEN 9:7 "And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it."

Suicide opposes the natural tendency of humans to preserve their own lives.

It is contrary to caring for others, cutting off the potential for loving relationships with family and friends, and is contrary to loving and honoring the Creator.

God wants his children to choose life, not death;

DEU 30:19 "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,

It is our sovereign God's right to give and take away life; JOB 1:21.

JOB 1:21 "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Humans are required to be faithful stewards of the life God gives and the devil is trying to get our Lord to reject that faithfulness from God the Father.

Believers are temples of the Holy Spirit and don't belong to themselves.

In the New Testament, we learn the Holy Spirit indwells believers and Christians should treat Him with respect; 1CO 6:19.

Suicide is not an appropriate response to our problems since suicide dishonors our body and the Lord who created us; 1CO 10:31.

Suicide is a rejection of 1CO 10:31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Suicide is a rejection of Col 3:17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

God wants us to care for our bodies in the same way Christ cares for the church; EPH 5:29.

EPH 5:29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church,

Many New Testament saints and Jesus Himself were tortured and put to death, but they did not commit suicide.

Instead, like Paul, they "fought the good fight" of faith until their death (2TI 4:6-8).

Nothing can separate true believers from God's love in Christ (ROM 8:38-39; JOH 10:27-30).

For the Christian, all sins—past, present, and future—are forgiven through faith in the atoning work of Jesus.

For Jesus to jump into the valley of Kidron would have meant certain death for His humanity.

8. It was not the Father's will for Jesus to jump. It was the Father's will for Jesus to die some three years later on the cross.

There is a principle behind all this and that is more insidious or subtle than the use of God's Word to get someone to act independently of God.

That is the way the woman fell.

Back in the garden the woman fell because she added to the Word of God.

This goes on all the time and people are constantly misusing the Word of God in order to act independently of the will of God and the plan of God.

This is pseudo-spirituality.

Satan has used a scripture here that is true but it is not pertinent to the situation.

This leads us to the answer of our Lord.