

**EVALUATION -
GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
04-22-2022
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Christian Soldier 67, Doctrine Of Kenosis, Part 8, Matthew 4, Our Lord's Evidence Testing.

Point 4. The Manifestation of Kenosis in our Lord's Evidence Testing.

There are three Greek words for life: bios, psuche, and zoe.

These words have different meanings, ..

Bios refers to the existence of life

Psuche refers to thinking of life as a normal function

Zoe refers to the Zoe, the supernatural way of life.

God has provided for the mature believer a zoe-life, which is beyond our imagination, and beyond our greatest thoughts and dreams; EPH 3:20.

EPH 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

There is nothing like the Zoe-life or the supergrace life from God.

Therefore, we closed the last time with ten principles on the “zoe life.

And since we had a few interruptions like the loss of electricity and our resurrection specials, I thought we would begin where we left off with those ten principles on the “*zoe life.*”

First of all,

1. This life is only found in Christ and gives us guidance and direction; JOH 1:4.

JOH 1:4 In Him was life, and this zoe-life was the light of men.

Notice:

Light gives you guidance, direction and clarity; PSA 27:1.

PSA 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?

There is no confusion or chaos or boredom with the zoe-life.

2. This “*zoe life*” is made available to anyone who believes in TLJC, JOH 3:15.

JOH 3:15 That whoever believes may in Him have eternal life [that is the “*zoe life*”.

The “*zoe life*” is a life more abundantly; JOH 10:10 " I came that they might have “*zoe life*,” and might have it more abundantly.

3. This “*zoe life*” fulfills the desires which are found in every one of us, JOH 4:14.

There is a deep desire placed within man by God that only God can fulfill.

All believers have been given this desire so that they will have an emptiness in their heart that only God can fulfill.

The principle is simple:

Just as the physical body craves for food and entertainment and the soul desires stimulation;

The human spirit, which is created by God at the moment of salvation, (Titus 3:5), also hungers to be filled.

This desire has been placed within the believer by God.

ECC 3:11 "He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart (the desire for eternal things),

It is a very delicate and sensitive desire that can be hindered by arrogance or emotionalism and it can be extinguished by hardness of the heart, scar tissue of the soul or occupation with the details of life.

This desire is in every believer, however, every believer does not have this desire fulfilled.

The more it is fed, the stronger it becomes and it can even carry the believer through the most difficult situations in life.

What is this desire and how can the believer meet the demands that it makes upon life?

Nothing can put this fire or this desire out.

In fact,.....

Extreme pressure only intensifies the desire even more.

It is a need that must be fulfilled.

This driving desire or craving for the Word of God also protects the believer in the time of pressure and adversity.

And only the “*zoe life*” can meet the challenge.

The “*zoe life*” causes the believer to stay occupied with the Word of God in time of disaster.

It gives him “*spiritual energy*” in time of pressure.

Many times the different trials and tests become a source of frustration for the believer and he just wants to run for cover.

Yet the believer with positive volition toward living in the “*zoe life*” can take comfort in doctrine.

Jeremiah sheds light on this burning desire.

JER 20:9 “But if I say, I will not mention Him or speak anymore in His name, His word is in my heart like a burning fire, shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.”

The “*zoe life*” is manifested by a burning fire within that cannot be quenched.

PSA 42:1 “As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for Thee, O God.”

Why does this desire reside in some but not in others?

Well, the believer at the beginning of his spiritual life is in a state of ignorance regarding the thoughts of God.

As the Christian life progresses, ignorance may continue because of negative volition or indifference toward doctrine or distraction.

However.....,

If the believer has had a taste of Bible doctrine and the grace and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is very difficult to quench that thirst.

David records for us this driving desire in PSA 63:1.

PSA 63:1 "O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water."

Earnestly means in an enthusiastic, devoted diligent, serious and intense way.

The soul yearning speaks of positive volition toward living in the "*zoe life*."

The dry and weary land where there is no water speaks of the spiritual droughts that we all have at one time or another.

Positive volition toward the doctrine of the "*zoe life*" is the driving desire which motivates believers to overcome all obstacles and center their life around doctrine.

JOH 4:14 But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

4. This life is made available to us in time, not beginning with eternity, JOH 5:24.

JOH 5:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, "has" eternal life zoe life or the life which comes from God , and does not come into judgment, but "has passed" out of death into life.

Too many of God's people are waiting to die and then they think they will have the time to live for God.

5. This "*zoe life*" is given to us through the intake of doctrine, JOH 6:27.

JOH 6:27 "Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life [zoe-life], which the Son of man shall give to you, for on him the Father, even God, has set his seal."

6. This "*zoe life*" is given without measure depending upon the believer's desire for it; JOH 3:34.

JOH 3:34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure.

Always remember no matter whatever you face that:

1CO 6:19 your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

1CO 6:20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

7. This life can never be taken away, Joh 10:28-30.

JOH 10:28 And I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.

JOH 10:29 "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

JOH 10:30 "I and the Father are one."

8. This "*zoe life*" is described in Joh 17:3 as "knowing" God and TLJC.

JOH 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.

9. It is through the written communication of Bible doctrine that this life is offered to every member of the human race, Joh 20:31.

JOH 20:31 But these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God; and that believing you may have zoe life in His name.

10. In PHI 4:11-12, we have the correct interpretation of the "*zoe life*" is for the believer who sticks with doctrine and lives in the way and the truth manifested by the Kenosis life.

PHI 4:11 Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

PHI 4:12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity;

in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

This is what it means to be on the right side of history or to accept your calling and place in life.

This, of course, refers to the lifestyle and thinking of the mature believer.....contentment no matter what.

This is the result of perception, metabolization of and application of Bible doctrine.

This is living in "the zoe-life."

For the true purpose of receiving doctrine is to recognize what TLJC means when He said in JOH 14:6:

JOH 14:6 "I am the way [entrance], and the truth [doctrine], and the life [zoe]; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.

The reason why truth is so important is because of what it produces as mentioned in our passage when the apostle Paul said:

PHI 4:11 Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

The Truth leads to the Christian life, or the zoe-life.

Zoe means the function of life.

In the spiritual life, zoe refers to the super-grace life which is the objective of Bible doctrine resident in the soul.

This zoe-life refers to an extraordinary peace that God desires for us to experience even in time.

The "*zoe life.*"

This sense of inner peace and contentment may decrease or increase because this new life, the zoe life, a life of complete contentment is given little by little.

In the eternal state, this zoe-life will fill you entirely.

However, the point is that:

As God has a plan for our lives which enables us to recognize death to old sin nature with its selfish desires, as a part of that plan, He also gives us the experience of zoe-life in time.

Now, we have been noting the evidence testing of our Lord and how He passed the first test which was to use the Word of God as His divine solution to the temptation of Satan.

The humanity of Jesus Christ underwent evidence testing at the beginning of His three-year earthly ministry.

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).

So, to stay in context, let's review the evidence testing of the humanity of Christ at spiritual maturity.

Inside the PPOG, the humanity of Christ advanced through all stages of spiritual growth, reaching maturity at an early age.

In LUK 2:40 And the Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

His attainment of SSE, characterized by love for God, and His attainment of spiritual autonomy, characterized by impersonal love for all mankind, are described in LUK 2:52.

LUK 2:52 And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom [momentum in the PPOG] and stature, and in favor with God [personal love for God] and men [impersonal love for all mankind].

The background for the evidence testing of Christ's humanity is the declaration of His spiritual maturity.

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

He had spent thirty years in *preparation* for a three-year ministry, and now.....

He was at the threshold of executing the plan of the Father which would climax in His death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and session.

The context in Matthew describes the shift of Christ's ministry from private to public.

The humanity of Christ signified His positive volition to the Father's plan by submitting to baptism by John, the herald of the King, MAT 3:13-15.

Although John baptized many people, the baptism of Christ was unique.

Immersion in the water symbolized our Lord's obedience to the plan of the Father for His first advent, a plan that no one but the impeccable Lord Jesus Christ could execute.

Christ's declaration of His submission to God's will evoked the strongest possible confirmation of our Lord's spiritual maturity.

It all began with His water baptism.

For in MAT 3:13 we read Then Jesus *arrived from Galilee at the Jordan {coming} to John, to be baptized by him.

MAT 3:14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?"

MAT 3:15 But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit {it} at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him.

MAT 3:16 And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, {and} coming upon Him,

MAT 3:17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

As true humanity, Christ had utilized the prototype PPOG for His life and fulfilled the pattern of spiritual growth.

Now:

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

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

A lesson for the believer can be found in the first word of MAT 4:1.

"Then" indicates that evidence testing was the first item on the agenda for Christ's public ministry.

No believer is qualified for **maximum** Christian service until he has advanced to spiritual maturity and passed evidence testing.

By the way, I did not say that no believer is *qualified* for Christian service until he has advanced to spiritual maturity and passed evidence testing.

I said No believer is qualified for **maximum** Christian service until he has advanced to spiritual maturity and passed evidence testing.

Service for God increases in quality as the believer grows spiritually.

Zeal to serve the Lord does not automatically qualify the Christian for service; ROM 10:2.

ROM 10:2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.

Enthusiasm can exist in the immature as well as in the mature, and in fact religious zeal can characterize even morally degenerate unbelievers.

My point being is that another lesson our Lord taught us which is not to be emotional or zealous when being tested.

Look at Paul's advice:

1CO 15:34 Become sober minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God.

Look at Peter's advice 1PE 5:8 Be of sober {spirit,} be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

1PE 5:9 But resist him, firm in {your} faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

So,.....

This is not to discourage Christian service by any believer at any level of spiritual growth but to anticipate maximum service as a result of maximum preparation.

Evidence testing is the final category of suffering for blessing.

The Christian life begins with growth, not with service.

And.....

The quality of Christian service improves as the believer accelerates his spiritual growth through each increment of suffering for blessing.

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

The humanity of Christ was residing inside the PPOG.

He was therefore filled with the Holy Spirit, as He had been since His virgin birth.

Notice in MAT 4:1, that Jesus was led by the same enabling power of the Spirit that leads the mature believer in the PPOG.

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

By the way.....,

Why in the world would God turn His only Son over to Satan to be tested if there was no Angelic Conflict?

You see, whenever someone studies intently and comes up with principles of doctrine that the average loser pastor doesn't understand, instead of searching it out they have a need to attack!

They don't want members of their congregation thinking that someone else knows more than them!

So they attack!

They discredit!

They reject and undermine things they don't understand!

Now:

The third-party present in this temptation was the defense attorney of the appeal trial, Satan himself.

Although the humanity of Christ was led into the desert by the Holy Spirit, the devil would administer the testing.

Intense physical duress was part of the circumstances for Christ's evidence testing.

In the desert He went without food for forty days.

Therefore, we are now ready for MAT 4:2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

The humanity of Christ was hungry every day for all forty days He spent alone in the desert.

He was famished and already was suffering sharp, constant physical pain when evidence testing began.

The first part of our Lord's evidence testing attacked His relationship with God the Holy Spirit.

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

Now, Satan knows the Bible!

Satan knows theology.

Although he lives to exalt himself and oppose God, Satan knows from observation a great deal of true doctrine.

Disarmingly, he approached Jesus with a true point of doctrine only to suggest a false conclusion.

Christ is the Son of God.

That is accurate information.

"Son of God" is our Lord's first royal title as divine royalty; His first royal family is the Trinity.

At the time Satan was speaking, Christ held two royal titles.

His first royal title, "Son of God" is eternal in nature; He has always been God.

His second title, "Son of David," was acquired at the moment of His virgin birth, His entrance into the human dynasty of King David.

Now,

At thirty years of age, He was embarking on the earthly ministry that would culminate or reach its' climax with the strategic victory over Satan at the cross; COL 2:13-15.

COL 2:13 And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

COL 2:14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us {and} which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

COL 2:15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

And.....

Three years from the time of His evidence testing, Christ would win His third royal title, which would be awarded to Him upon His ascension and session at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

So, Satan took his usual arrogant approach.

He is such a brazen liar that he used the true doctrine of Christ's royalty as a weapon against our Lord.

This was the very doctrine that most threatened Satan's arrogant plans. In fact, Satan would be strategically and tactically defeated as part of the doctrine of Christ's royalty.

So,

In a subtle attempt to trip our Lord into defeat, Satan virtually granted Christ the victory in advance.

Evidence testing is Satan's cross examination of every witness presented by God in the historical trial of all fallen angels.

Inside the PPOG for his life, the humanity of Christ advanced through all stages of spiritual growth, reaching spiritual maturity at an early age.

1. In LUK 2:40, TLJC had reached SSE.
2. In LUK 2:52, TLJC had reached SA.
3. In JOH 1:14, TLJC reached SM.

4. Therefore, in Mathew, He was presented by God in the historical trial of Satan known as the Angelic Conflict.

I told you there are a lot of subjects and doctrinal principles that we can find in MAT 4 and our Lord's temptations.

And therefore, He was immediately taken into the desert, alone, to face evidence testing.

The issue is this:

If the humanity of Christ even sins once during this test then He cannot go to the cross and die for the sins of the whole world.

Therefore, He will not only be tempted like we are but He will be tempted far beyond anyone of us!

Note that it was God the Holy Spirit who is the One who led our Lord to this test!

In evidence testing and the angelic conflict, God the Holy Spirit is not the one who puts us to the test, He is the one who leads us to the test,

The Holy Spirit will lead us to the test but He will not tempt us.

That's why JAM 1:13 says "Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone."

The humanity of Christ was hungry every day for all forty days He spent alone in the desert.

Now, the first part of our Lord's evidence testing attacked His relationship with God the Holy Spirit.

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

Satan knows the Bible!

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So, Satan took his usual arrogant approach.

He is such a pompous liar that he used the true doctrine of Christ's royalty as a weapon against our Lord.

This was the very doctrine that threatened Satan's arrogant plans.

The basis for Satan's first attack was his knowledge that in hypostatic union, the deity of Christ, has the power to accomplish any miracle.

Satan knew that the deity of Christ was faithfully sustaining the universe at that very moment, COL 1:17; HEB 1:3.

COL 1:17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

HEB 1:3 “He upholds all things by the word of His power.”

The act of turning stones into bread would have been a small matter for divine omnipotence.

So,

This first part of our Lord's evidence testing was an attempt by Satan to persuade Jesus Christ as the God-man to exercise His deity contrary to the Father's plan.

Satan tempted the Lord to operate independently of the Holy Spirit, who was the Father's provision in the PPOG for sustaining Christ's humanity during His first advent.

To fulfill the mission that He voluntarily accepted from God the Father in eternity past, Christ had to rely on the system of provisions that the Father provided for Him.

This means that He did not use His own divine attributes independently to benefit, sustain, or glorify Himself.

This is the true Doctrine of Kenosis.

All Satan wanted Jesus Christ to do was to use His deity independently of the Father's plan to show that in His humanity our Lord could not depend on the Father's provision.

Furthermore,

Our Lord was preparing the way for the PPOG and the Church-age believer's dependence on the power of God.

Turn stones into bread?

Omnipotence could have turned the whole mountain into bread.

However, this would have compromised the function of His humanity under the sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit.