

# The Vine

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Sermon Series: Kingdom

The Kingdom in the Gospel of Luke

## Week One: Kingdom Tactics February 3 - 9, 2008

Take some devotional time over the next two days and read the first four chapters in the Gospel of Luke. Note especially what happens in chapter three, because we will dig in to the first section in chapter four.

Tactics. Every war has them. Every fight has them. Even the Super Bowl has them. Merriam-Webster describes tactics as “the art or skill of employing available means to accomplish an end.” In The Vine this week we will be looking at tactics in one such clash in the Bible. “The event can also be compared to a cosmic, heavyweight championship fight. This is but the first round of many battles Jesus will have with Satan and other demonic forces throughout Luke’s gospel”.<sup>1</sup> As we watch how Jesus interacted with the adversary, let’s notice the tactics employed by both sides. Consider how this might help us in our walk with Christ.

Each week will include a time for reading through four chapters of Luke. This will get you through the entire Gospel of Luke during the six-week series (yes, there are 24 chapters in Luke). Our hope is that you spend two days prayerfully reading through the four chapters. Each week will also involve three encounters with a smaller passage during which you will dig in and study.

Our hope is for you to see the entire Gospel of Luke from a bird’s-eye-view. Then we want you to slow down and really dig in to one passage. So as you read and study, keep an eye out for the themes that flow through the entire book of Luke. Also, as you dig in, consider how the smaller passage fits into the whole book of Luke.

### First Encounter

**Read Luke 4:1-13 slowly. Then read it again looking for what structure the passage might have.**

The first part of chapter three details Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River. This is the same Jordan he is returning from in verse one of chapter four. What do verses one and two say about Jesus’ mind-set? How does Jesus end up in the desert?

What is the significance of the Holy Spirit’s role?

Let's look at the first temptation (vs. 3-4). Why is the timing of this temptation so convenient for Satan? Re-word the temptation and say the temptation out loud in the tone you think Satan used. What is Satan implying about Jesus? About God the Father?

### The Number 40

The number 40 shows up several times in the Bible. Here are just a few examples:

- Israel is in the desert for 40 years.
- It rained for 40 days on Noah.
- Moses fasted for 40 days. (See Exodus 34:28 and Deuteronomy 9:9)
- Elijah fasted for 40 days. (See 1 Kings 19:7-9)

It seemed that whenever the number 40 shows up, something significant is happening.

Jesus refers to Deuteronomy 8 in his response. Read Deuteronomy 8:2-3. Who caused the hunger, both here and in the Deuteronomy passage? Why? Why doesn't Jesus just make bread and eat?

**Prayer Reflection:** Lord, show me where I look for satisfaction apart from you. Where do I go to have my needs met? Lord, you are all I need. Teach me to hunger and thirst for you.

## Second Encounter

**Read Luke 4:1-13 slowly two times.**

What new things do you see?

In the second temptation (vs. 5-8) what is Satan using as bait? Is he able to deliver?

What does Satan want Jesus to do? What would that look like?

What are the two parts of Jesus' reply? How do the two parts go together?

How tempting would this temptation be for you?

## Satan

**SATAN** technically means *an adversary*. The NIV Bible Dictionary describes Satan as “the chief of the fallen spirits, the grand adversary of God and man.” 1 Peter 5:8 says, “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” 2 Corinthians explains that Satan “masquerades as an angel of light.” The New Bible Dictionary says, “The witness of the New Testament then is clear. Satan is a malignant reality, always hostile to God and to God’s people. But he has already been defeated in Christ’s life and death and resurrection, and this defeat will become obvious and complete in the end of the age.”

In the third temptation (vs. 9-12) Satan misuses Psalm 91. What is Satan questioning about God?

Satan ironically uses (or rather, misuses) Psalm 91 in the third temptation. Read Psalm 91 but expand from just verses 11 and 12, which Satan uses, by looking at Psalm 91:9-13. How would the surrounding verses contradict what Satan was trying to do?

**Prayer Reflection:** Lord, where has my life’s focus drifted off course? Am I pursuing image, power or recognition instead of pursuing You? Lord, I pray Romans 12:1 to You. I offer my body as a living sacrifice to You. This is my act of worship. I am Yours. I worship no other!

## Third Encounter

**Read Luke 4:1-13 slowly again.**

What verse stands out as you read? Pray about it.

What are the tactics used by Satan? Does he use these tactics today? Against you? What should your response be?

What are the tactics that Jesus uses? Again and again he goes to scripture. What does Jesus' use (and also Satan's use) of Scripture say about what our tactics should be?

Written by The Vine Team.  
Send your comments  
and questions to  
[thevine@kcconline.org](mailto:thevine@kcconline.org).  
We would love to hear what  
you think about it.

What is the devil's response to this failure?

For more on temptation see James 1.

**Prayer Reflection:** Lord, show me the areas of weakness in my life that Satan may try to exploit (spend some time listening to the Lord). What truth do I need to hear from You regarding those areas (spend some time listening to the Lord)? Lord, I thank You for ... and I pray against Satan's lies and stand on the truth of who I am in Christ.



# Small Group Guide

**NOTE: This is a guide. The following questions are designed for you to choose the ones that best apply to your group. Feel free to add to these questions or reword them as you prayerfully prepare for your small group.**

In Luke 4:1, what is the significance of the phrases “full of the Holy Spirit” and “led by the Spirit”? What does it mean to be “full of the Holy Spirit”? Why would the Spirit lead Jesus, or us for that matter, into the wilderness?”

In the first temptation (Luke 4:3-4), to what was Satan appealing?

How is the first temptation similar or different from the temptation of Adam and Eve in the garden (Genesis 3)? The setting? The effects?

What is the significance of “if” in the first temptation? Satan questions Jesus’ identity as Son of God. How does Satan still use this tactic on you today? What should your response be?

In the second temptation, if Jesus would have said yes and worshiped Satan, what kind of king would Jesus have been? What would that Kingdom be like?

Have you ever been tempted in a similar way? How? What allows us to stand firm in the face of this kind of temptation?

Look at Deuteronomy 6:13-19. How does this passage connect to Luke 4? Can you find two of the quotes Jesus used? Massah refers to Exodus 17 where the people complained about being in the desert without any water.

As you look back on your life, can you recall a season of real testing? What was the battle/temptation about? How did you fight that battle? What would you do differently today?

Which best describes your awareness of the spiritual battle:

- I attribute every bad thing that happens in my life to Satan.
- My first reaction is to pray against the enemy in difficult times.
- I believe there is a spiritual battle going on, but I am usually late to recognize it.
- I never consider that what I am going through may be a spiritual battle.
- Other. Explain.

Where do you sense the greatest testing/temptation in your life right now? How can we pray for you?