



## St John Lutheran Church

1017 Montana  
Libby, MT 59923  
(406)293-4024

Luke 4: 1-13

God's Word...God's Lens

**Many of us...especially** as we age...**need to** wear glasses so that we can see things clearly...**so that** we can function without **"optical disability"** ...**so that we** can read **and** drive **and** just get along in our everyday lives. **It's amazing what** a the proper lens can do to help us bring things into sharp focus and see something clearly.

**God's Word is** like a pair of glasses. **Without these glasses... without these** Holy Scriptures... **you simply** cannot view the world rightly. **Apart from these** Words... **every one** of them... **everything remains** unfocused and blurry. **You cannot rightly** see yourself ...**and you** cannot clearly see your surroundings until you have the glasses...**the lenses** of God's Word. **Then and only** then everything comes into focus and you see well.

**Today's Gospel not** only shows your Lord Jesus being severely tempted by Satan... **but it** also shows Him wearing the glasses of God's Word. **"He ate nothing during those [forty] days,"** writes St. Luke, **"and He was hungry"** (Luke 4:2). **The thought of** a few mouthfuls of bread at that point must have been nearly overwhelming... **but Jesus** looks at His own life through the glasses of God's Word. **"It is written,"** He answered, **"Man does not live on bread alone"** (Luke 4:4). **It is almost** as if Jesus says, **"This hunger is not so bad, everything considered. I know that I have not eaten in many days, I know that I am now very weak and in great pain, but I have the Word! I believe the Word! My Father in heaven (Matthew 10:32) has spoken and He has said, 'Man does not live on bread alone.' He knows where I am; He knows what I need; He will sustain Me. Looking at My situation through God's Word, I see that things are not nearly as bad as they may seem."**

**So "the devil led Him up to a high place and showed Him. all the kingdoms of the world"** (Luke 4:5). **But Jesus wears** the glasses of God's Word... **and He** looks upon world with all its kingdoms and all its wealth through the Word. **"It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only'"** (Luke 4:8). God's Word says, **"The earth will be completely laid waste and everything in it plundered"** (Isaiah 24:3). **Certainly a doomed planet...something full** of sin, no matter how beautiful is not worth the smallest bow in Satan's direction or the tiniest doubt in the promise of God.

**"You trust in God's Word, Jesus. Prove it! 'Throw yourself down from. the highest point of the temple'** (Luke 4:9). **You trust God's Word so much! You're wearing those fine 'Scripture' glasses! Put Your money where Your mouth is, You Son of God!"**

**But Jesus truly** wears the glasses of God's Word. **He sees things clearly...He knows what is going on...He truly believes** what His Father has said. **He needs no proof... no demonstration... no verification. He trusts. He lives by faith. He knows that** all His days lay well within His Father's grasp and He patiently... **willingly endures** His earthly life will all of its temptations and sufferings. **He knows that** His life is not His own. **He views everything** through the lens of God's Word: **"It says, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test'"** (Luke 4:12).

**God's Word brings** things into focus rightly. **Without God's Word ... without His glasses... these Holy Scriptures... you cannot** view the world as it truly is. **You cannot view** life rightly! **You have been** given the

same exact glasses that our Lord Jesus Himself wore and wears... **the very** same Word of God... **the very** same Scriptures that Jesus so completely trusts during the days of His wilderness temptation. **Just as Satan** tried to get Jesus to take off His glasses... **so also** does that great liar and deceiver want you to take off yours.

**But unlike Jesus... we... because** of our sinful nature are only too willing to do what the devil asks....**that is** we are only too willing to take our God given glasses off as they sometimes appear to be a burden. **Remember what it** was like to have been in grade school. **We all know... all** too well how our classmates treated the kids who suddenly showed up in school one day wearing glasses. **It would have been** much safer and much more comfortable to simply take the glasses off and hide them in the desk... **to pretend that** a person doesn't actually need to wear them... **that he** or she can see just fine without them. **This rather than** face the insults and taunts of kids who call a person "four eyes" and the other ongoing mean spirited teasing meant to hurt feelings.

**There are other** reasons someone might take off their glasses. **Early on we learn** that it's pretty smart to remove eyeglasses if one is going to contemplate fighting or other fistcuffs... **by removing** glasses it helps to prevent further injury the glasses might cause and such removal also would protect a potentially expensive investment!

**We weep and** we cry because life is hard and we suffer many things and we lose the people we love. **And when we cry... our instinct** again is to take our glasses off. **These are worldly** thoughts and experiences we can relate to in our lives. **But, what about the glasses of God's Word?? Do we dare ever take THESE glasses off??**

**Dear, beloved people** of God: **Do not be** fools! **Do not let** Satan tempt you into removing your glasses **for any reason at any time.** **These glasses... these Words** spoken to you by your God... **are the** only thing you possess that has any worth at all! **Who cares if** people mock you for wearing them? **Those folks who** would mock you need the glasses as much as you do! **Who cares if** these glasses seem to get dirty and tear-stained in the toil of your existence? **You still see** better with them than you ever will without!

**The lenses of** God's Word are so vitally important in your life. **For it is only with these glasses that you can see correctly...only with** God's Word can everything that happens in your life make any sense at all...**only** God's Word can bring your life and your existence into focus! **Without these glasses...without these lenses... these Holy Scriptures... you cannot** view the world rightly... **for without** God's Word the world will appear terrible and vile... **and your life "nasty, brutish and short."**

**Without the glasses** of God's Word... **you cannot** view your God rightly either. **Without the glasses** of God's Word... **you will** be unable to see that He takes your sin seriously. **Without the glasses** of God's Word... **you will** never recognize the fact that everything **you say and do and think and meditate** in your heart is cause for your eternal condemnation in Hell.

**But God has** spoken to you. **He has given** you His Words... **the Words** of the Scriptures... **and these** Words (like a pair of glasses) give clarity and comprehension to everything you look at as Christians. **You look upon** Jesus in today's Gospel and you see there...**not just** another guy who was tempted!...**but you** see your High Priest. **You see the** One described in the book of Hebrews as "**tempted just as we are, yet without sin**" (Hebrews 4:15). **Through the glasses** of God's Word you see that Jesus did more than simply spar with the devil... **but that** your Lord entered into a life-and-death struggle **for your sake... a struggle** that began in the wilderness... **culminated in** Jerusalem... **and ended in death and resurrection** of the **Very Son of God...all for you!**

**This new ability** to see... **this new** vision that comes by the glasses of God's Word also allows you to look at your own life differently. **Though your life may** be full of constant troubles and quarrels and heartaches... **you now** know that this life is only temporary. **The glasses of** God's Word allow you to look into the future... **to a** new day in which "**there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain**" (Revelation 21:4). **Though you may** feel the pressing weight of your sins... **and though** you may feel the pangs of a guilty conscience... **look through** the glasses of God's Word! **Then you will** see that "**there is now therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**" (Romans 8:1) and that God has cleansed you "**from a guilty conscience**" (Hebrews 10:22) by your Baptism.

**There is only** one real temptation in which Satan would like to succeed. **He wants to** tempt you into taking your glasses off. **He wanted to** do so with Jesus in today's Gospel... **but he failed. He need not** succeed with you, either. **God has given you** those glasses. **They fit you** well. **You look good** in them... **no matter** what anybody says. **These are the** glasses of God's Word. **And now you see everything clearly....As the Scripture** says, "**Anyone who trusts in [God] will never be put to shame. for Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved**" (Romans 10:11,13). In the Name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit...Amen

Lent 1C, 2007

Rev. Eric M. Christiansen  
St. John Lutheran Church  
Libby, Montana