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Pastor: Have you ever thought of a something here, and that is that we notice from the gospel narratives, who Jesus is by listening to witnesses, that tells who he is. As we see Jesus to the eyes of witness on the early gospel narratives, it starts with the holy family.

Mary by surprise is encountered by the angel Gabriel and says to her, "you will conceive in your womb, and your son will be born of the Holy Spirit and he will be the son of the most high and you will name him Jesus". That the beginning, then about the same time, Matthew tells us that Joseph who was engaged to Mary has a dream also, and an angel says to him "Don't be afraid to take Mary as your be trust, she is a child, she is a great a child and of the Holy Spirit, and you will name him Jesus, for he will save his people form their sins".

Notice when learning who is Jesus through these witnesses on this case to angels. The shepherds, are keeping watch over their flocks at night, they are next to notice. There actually the word is guard, they are guarding their sheep at night. And suddenly an angel appears to them, this angel was not named, but this angel appears to them and their frightened and he said "Don't be afraid, I bring you good news of a great joy to all people, for you who is born on this day in the city of David as savior who is Christ the Lord, now we meet the great messianic praise who Christ is from this angel". And the shepherd then heard a chorus saying, by the way the angel was joined by multi heaven and host. Host is really named soldiers –heavenly soldiers, that's the Greek word.

Heavenly soldiers is an army chorus and they then sing the first Christmas carol to this shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest in the earth's peace, good will toward men, women, this is the good decision of God" and they here this, "then they go, they were told to go to Bethlehem, you will find a baby, wrapped in scalding clothes laying in a manger" and they go with their sheep, probably 8 or 9 sheep who knows how many sheeps they have.

But aren't you glad that Mary and Joseph couldn't find in to stay, wouldn't be bad if the shepherds have to go to a room 304 to find the Holy family, they were putted in a staple just the right place for the birth of Jesus just the right place for these first visitors, they were chosen by God to be visitors because every birth needs to have visitors who would attest to it and give witness to it, and this shepherds get to play that role.

And when they meet Mary and Joseph they tell Mary what they heard, and Luke tells us that Mary heard from the Shepherds, they witness on what they heard, it comforted her and pondered this things in her heart.

Eight days later, there was another thing that happens, Jesus was taken to this temple to be circumcised on the eighth day of his life, that fulfills tradition and then there is a man named Simon, you heard the text read by Jim. Simon was there he received a blessing from God that he

will not die until he sees the Lords Messiah. And when he sees his baby and he lifts the baby Jesus and he blesses Jesus and says “Now I can depart from my eyes has seen the Messiah, the Christ who is the savior”. He tells that, he gives one more piece of evidence on who Jesus is. But that’s not all, there is a woman in the temple named Anne, she’s 84 yrs. Old she was identified by her age, 84 yrs. Old and she sees the child and also lifts this child and blesses the child and we get one more word, she thanks God that now she seen the redeemer. Redeem is a Greek word for set free, the one who sets us free, she saw that. Still not finished, Matthew tells us that, foreign visitors came, they’re called Mejay, they’re probably Nebetians, they’ve come because they realize that the star, and a King was born in the Holy Land in Jerusalem, and when they come they see this young king and they honor him as king, they even give gifts: Gold, [05:15] and Mere to this holy family, so there is another witness they are the once that tells the family “We came to see a king, and now we have seen him”.

Now fast forward to Luke the 3rd chapter, all of these things are in the early chapters of Matthew and Luke, now we move to the 3rd chapter and we get another date. By the way chapter 2 of Luke dates the shepherds he says in those days that [05:43] that all the world should be enrolled, that was a taxation doing Coraines the Governor of Syria, dates, the birth of Christ to Cesar Augustus. But now move to the 3rd chapter, Luke, and he starts these way, “In the 15th year of the reign of the emperor Tiberius, we know a lot of roman emperors for the first century, this is the emperor that followed Augustus was Tiberius, when [06:11] the Governor of Jeddah.

15 years after the beginning of Tiberius reign is the date 29 of the Christian era. So now we have the date when Jesus began is mystery. He was in his early 30’s, 29 is the date. And there we meet the John The Baptist, the most famous of all the witnesses. John The Baptist was at the Jordan baptizing, he baptizes Jesus, he is the one who says “I baptize with water but one follows me, I am not unworthy to untie his shoe lays, he will be baptize with the holy spirit and fire”. And in John’s gospel he actually uses the great words and says he is the son of God. He points to Jesus. This is another witness. Notice we are learning who Christ is, we are learning who his baby is who was born just three days ago that we celebrated, he is all these things but there is one more witness you need to meet. Is a witness from darkness, it’s a witness from outlandish and outrageous place, it’s the devil. He is going to bear the witness too and now you will meet him in his witness in the forth chapter of Luke.

So open up if you want to follow the text, its Luke chapter 4 after the john the baptize incident now chapter 4. Jesus full of the holy spirit, returned from Jordan where I was with John the Baptized and he was led by the spirit in the wilderness, where for 40 days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during the days and when they were over he was very hungry. And then the devil speaks to him.

There are 3 temptations were going to meet, before we meet the temptations we need to ask the word itself. What is temptation? We’re going to have to witness to Christ through temptation in the way he was tempted. Temptation is a Greek word for Pirelli. We use it every time we say prayer, “let us not to temptation”. It is a weird kind of Pirelli, it is odd sort of Pirelli, it is the Pirelli or danger that happens when a person is persuaded either by a dare or a promise, anyway

those are the 2 things that we're tempted by a dare or a promise to make a choice, we make the choice and that by my own choice I bring harm upon myself or others. So the harm that happens is not when somebody pull out a gun and shot me but because I was tempted to pull out a gun and to the wrong thing so temptation is Pirelli that happens when I'm tempted, when I promise either by dare or by promise to make a choice that in the end is harmful and that's what's happening to Jesus, he is going to be tempted by the evil one, tempted by the devil and he is going to face 3 temptation.

First one has to do with his hunger, notice the text, the devil said to him "if you are the son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread. The King James bible use the word command and so the revised standard version also uses the word command, that's not the word in Greek, there is a Greek word for command, that's not the words here. Here the simple logos is used so the proper translation and if you read the Jerusalem bible, they give you the proper translation, is these " if you are the son of God, just say it and the rocks will become bread". You don't have to command , command is urgently you need to command the rock. "No you don't have to command the rock, just say it". See how saddle it is? Just say it and the rocks will become bread. That's the temptation.

By the way, that temptation recognizes that Jesus Christ has power it is a temptation concerning his power, his authority. "If you are the son of God, just say it, and the rocks will become bread". Here's how Jesus answers that temptation, he answers it by saying it is written and now he quotes from Deuteronomy the 8th chapter, the sin that he was quoting from was were the children of Israel were brought across, you know they had the great rescue out of Egypt but now they are out of the wilderness themselves and they are beginning to starve and in fact they are complaining, they say to Moses "what did you bring us out here in the wilderness -to starve? We don't have any food." And they are starving and God took pity on them because of their pitiful state and they give them Mana, that kept them alive, but then when they got the Mana, he give them this word, he said "I am giving you these to keep you alive, but you should remember that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the lord. That was my authority, it's my kindness that is giving you these bread, so our lord decides to quote the last line from that text to the devil.

"So if you are the son of God, say it to the stone to become a loaf of bread". Jesus answered it is written "One does not leave by bread alone, I am going to trust the Lord for who I am, not you". So that's how Jesus answers that temptation.

The 2nd temptation. The devil lifts him up and shows him instant the Kingdoms by the way pearls was used here which means the territories. The territorial kingdoms, all the kingdoms/territories of the world. And the devil said to him " to you I will give their glory and all these authority for it was given over to me and I'll give it to anyone I please, if you then will worship me (by the way that's not the worship it was used, it means to do obeisance, if you would bow to me is the better translation), it will be yours. Jesus answers him, the answer of Jesus was very interesting because he ignores the outrageous and extravagant promise, notice, he was not tempted by daring nor he was tempted by a promise. I am tempted by a promise by the devil, he doesn't have the

kingdoms of the world, its outlandish and we learn that from the new testament but he doesn't have that, he says he has it, but he doesn't. by the way these is a good listen to learn on your economic planning, when you have a deal offered to you by some of these "I can offer you 74 interest on this deal that we got" and you say to your wife "you know it sounds to good to be true" folks it is. When it sounds to good to be true is probably not true. And the devil is making these outlandish promise put notice our Lord, he ignores the promise completely, doesn't make fun of the promise, instead he just simply says "It is written, you shall worship the Lord your God and serve only him". That's a biggie.

3rd temptation. The third temptation is the most saddled, here is the devil maybe he is learning, he is a tempter, he is learning lessons and the first two dares promise didn't so now he decides to quote from the Bible itself and a great text, Its Psalms 91 it is a text that shows how tenderly God cares for his servant and he cares tenderly for his servant and protect him, so he quotes from that, he now took Jesus from the Jerusalem, place him on the panicle of the temple and said to him "if you are the son of God, throw yourself down from here for it is written he will command his angels concerning you to protect you, on their hands they will bear you up so you will not dash your foot against the stone". That's Psalms 91. What a promise, how tenderly cares for his servant and Jesus answered him, here he gives his swift and simplest answer, he said "do not tempt the Lord".

By the way the last line was interesting, when the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until the opportune time. By the way do you know the word Diablos means? Diablos is used for the word devil, there is several words used for the devil in the new testament but the evil one, satan, the devil –diablos, the tempter. Diablos is combined word in Greek, Diablos means sphere and by verb it means to throw the sphere like to sphere someone and that would be diablos. Daya means continually sphere's somebody to continually a javelin on someone and I enlighten the last line because it's interesting because diablos is also translated as slanderer, the devil is the slander, he is the one who continues throwing the arrow, he is throwing the arrow to hit you somehow trying to tempt you somehow and so it's interesting the last lines has he departed to a new opportune time, he has more arrows to throw but not now, Jesus has won the first test.

You know I'm grateful for these witness from the darkness, these witness from the devil to who Christ is, because in different ways, all through this witnesses we have learned who he is, we learned who Christ is and on the first and last Sunday of this year, we need to learn who he is because we just celebrated his birth, we need to know who you celebrated. And we learned who he is from Simian he is a savior and the Christ, from Anna that his the redeemer, from Majay that he is a King, we need to know that and now from the devil even we learned who Jesus is. We know how he tempted and how he answers the temptations.

Lets take the first temptation. In the first temptation, Jesus is tempted to use his power to take care of himself, to turn miraculously into mysterious natural food, Jesus rejects it. And as a matter of fact we know from our Lords life that he will get hungry like everyone gets hungry. He is going to eat like everyone else eats, and in fact one of the seven last words of our Lord on the cross is when Jesus says "I Thirst" he is going to get thirsty like everyone, he will not

miraculously given water on the cross, he will not miraculously be given bread. Now he has the power to multiply the bread and he did it with 5 thousand people in the lake of Galilee. He took a boys lunch not rocks but a boys lunch of barlos of fish and multiply them, I think that a miracle. But he did it for others, he healed people for others he had the power to do it and he did it but now for himself. In fact Jesus Christ is the son of God and son of man, he will identify with us. He will get hungry, like we get hungry, and he will be thirsty like we get thirsty. So he is not going to be the kind of phantom Christ who creates phantom food for himself, he is going to identify with us. So he rejects the temptation causes him not to identify with us when he turn rocks into bread. In fact you know something curious, the first great Heiress of the early church , the first falls doctrine of the early church was not a doctor of identity of Christ. Hold your breath folks it was a doctrine that denied the humanity of Christ. In first john we hear it, John says test the [20:02] if they are God, every spirit that says God came into the flesh, is a God but every spirit or every one that said he did not came from into the flesh is not of God. That was the first great Heiress which one of the phantom Jesus loved the idea of a divine Jesus but not a human Jesus who would sweat and die and face death on the cross. Jesus rejects that temptation so we know that Jesus Christ the son of God, is a son of man.

Secondly the kingdoms, kings shows no interest in territories in fact I think prophetic movements need to remember that. The king of God in the new testament is not territory it's a relationship with the King. Its relationship, its knowing the king that redeems our sins and sets you free and out of love you respond to him, its not territory. Jesus is not interested in territory and that becomes very clear he does not take away our freedom which is territorial promise on what the devil is offering but take away your freedom and then you become territorially dominated in an empire who dominated you, and its a lot of that in a religion today not from Jesus Christ he is not interested in that.

CS Lewis so that and put it on Screwtape letters and an interesting way he pointed out in one of the letters he has the devil speaking the Screwtape saying this but notice how Screwtape sees this, he says you must have wondered by God the enemy doesn't uses power more with us? But now you see the irresistible and the indisputable are the two weapons which is the very nature of his scheme on the bids that he use, merely to override the human will which would happen if he turns rocks into bread, to override a human wheel, it would be useless, he cannot ravish he can only woo. To cancel them to a simulate them people will not serve his goal, and Lewis saw this, he learn it from our Lords resisting than temptation to turn rock into bread, No his not going to overwhelm your senses and take away your freedom I wants you to have a relationship with him but you have to do it on your free choice.

One of the great promise of the gospel I said "If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him". Jesus Christ resist that temptation. And then the third, you are saying you are the lord of life, therefore if you jump of this panicle the angels will collect you, will gather you up until you hit rock, because God has so much tender are for you, but we know from the life of our Lord Jesus Christ we sang it into him, the song of Bethlehem today, Jesus Christ will not conquer death by evaporating it, he will go to the valley of the shadows of death like we go to the valley of the shadows of death. He will face death and will disarm it by taking it and that's the cross, no one expected these, the devil is predicting that it shouldn't

happen, that if the angels will pick him up, our own Lord disciples tempted it on that way, says 'No it will never happen to you' and Jesus has to reject his temptations too, no he goes by way of the valley of the shadows of death, he face his death and takes it.

So notice what we've learned about Jesus Christ he is the savior he is the one who saves and he does in through identifying with us and going to the valley of the shadows of death which we face, he has power, that's why he can't be tempted. Have you ever thought that you can't be tempted if you don't have a power, you must have power for to be tempted. If some bunch of gangsters that want to shave points of a basketball tournament is got to happen, you go to Las Vegas and you go to gamble and the way the gamble on tournaments is gamble on the points spread, so they want you to have many points and they go to a guy and now the gangster goes to the guy on the team and says "I want you to miss three free throws strategically I will give you the signal when you miss the free throw since since nobody can control that and maybe a three point shot, I want you to miss some three point shoots use up the time and the clock so we can shave the points goes that's what we're gambling on". The only problem is the gangsters not trained tempter and he goes to a guy who happens to be the team announcer and says "I want you to shave points and yeah I will give you \$100" but the only problem is he is a bad tempter because the guy is only a team announcer, If I ever afford I get up to the line, I can do it, I can't do it, I don't have that kind of power so that's not really a temptation, his not in the game, he can't play that role, so his not tempted.

Jesus was tempted because he has the power, he has the power to multiply the bread, he has the power to heal, the power to save and that's why he can be tempted and he chooses to resist that temptation to not be along side of us, so he is the son of God and son of man. He is a redeemer, his the savior and his the one who gives us life, and now we're back to the shepherds in the field when the angels sang the first carol, Glory to God to the highest, and on earth piece. That's a word that you can't force salvation. Peace – salvation, to anyone is the good decision of God is good decision.

Heavenly father thank you for Christmas, thank you for the Jesus Christ of Christmas, thank you for all of this witnesses that helps us to understand who he is even this witness from darkness which plays his own role and helping us discover the lordship of Christ, the goodness of Christ and his life on our behalf, now bless us in Christ name we pray. Amen.