

I. Autobiography vs Biography

A. Definitions

1. Biography - a life story written by someone else
2. Autobiography - a person tells their own life story

B. Gospels and the Wilderness Encounter

1. Gospels are biography - someone other than Jesus (eyewitnesses and gospel writers) tell the story of Jesus
 - a. Mary and Joseph, and shepherds could tell the story of his birth
 - b. The disciples can tell the story of his ministry, his death on the cross, his resurrection
 - c. But of the testing in the wilderness, only Jesus could tell, as he was there alone.
2. Testing in the wilderness is autobiographical
 - a. The details are not someone else's God-directed evaluation of Jesus' experience
 - b. The details of the testing in the wilderness are the details from Jesus' own perception of His experience.
 - c. Jesus tells His own story in His own words.

II. The Impact of the Jesus' Temptation in the Wilderness

A. Jesus describes His experience with a powerful word:

1. *Ekballo* - same word used of expelling demons, especially related to Jesus' success expelling demons
2. Driven, compelled, expelled from one context to another at the command of authority

B. Why does the Spirit authoritatively compel Jesus into the wilderness to be tested?

1. To demonstrate that the authoritative power in the life of Jesus is God the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Myth and Fact:
 - (1) Myth: Jesus' obedience, and power, are the result of His divine nature as the Son of God.
 - (2) Fact: All that Jesus is and does in ministry He does through complete reliance on the Spirit in His human nature
 - b. Law of Dependence: "Jesus lived His life, wrought his works, fought His battles, won His victory, not by the inherent power which belonged to Him as the 2nd Person of the Trinity; but in His human nature by the sanctifying and enabling power of the Holy Spirit that rested upon and in His manhood, His human nature."
 - (1) **Philippians 2:5-7 (ESV)** ⁵ *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,* ⁶ *who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,* ⁷ *but emptied himself, by taking*

- the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.*
- (2) **Acts 10:37-38 (ESV)** ³⁷ *you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.*
- (3) **Hebrews 2:14-17 (ESV)** ¹⁴ *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*
- c. The Son of God took our nature in its integrity, all the elements of our complex being, as it was designed and fashioned by the hand of God.
- (1) All that God created human beings to be, before the fall, Jesus Christ the Son of God was in his human nature.
- (2) Christ in His divine nature is the bridge from God to us, but in His human nature He is the bridge from us to God.
- (a) If Jesus confronts temptation merely in His divine nature, then there is no real contest and no real connection with human experience.
- (b) Jesus, as the Christ, is God's chosen and anointed representative of the human race. If Jesus does not win the battle over evil in His human nature, then neither do we and while there would still be glory to God there would be no salvation for us.
- d. The first Adam took upon himself the decision and power to overrule God;
- (1) the second Adam, Jesus Christ, relies entirely on the presence and power of God the Holy Spirit thereby fulfilling all this is intended by God for His human creation.
- (2) Jesus succeeds in being what every human being is created to be: fully on love with and fully faithful to God as a beloved child filled with God's Spirit
2. To demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is not merely a passive authority but an active agent in the life of faithfulness perfectly exemplified in Jesus.
- a. The Spirit not only commands Jesus but is the active agent in both

- sending and keeping Jesus in the wilderness.
- b. The Spirit is the authority of God that cannot be ignored or dismissed because it is the Spirit Who personally enacts compliance with His own authoritative command.
 - (1) **Philippians 2:13 (ESV)** *for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*
 - (2) **Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)** *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*
 - (a) The Spirit does not send the believer out into the world to fulfill the command of God in his or her own strength.
 - (b) The Spirit compels us into the world where He will do the work of God, the work of faith, the work of holiness in and through us, for God's glory and for our joy.
3. To demonstrate that temptation and testing are a normal part of God's supernatural plan to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord through a people saved by grace, filled with the Spirit, and perfected through suffering.
 - a. The testing of Jesus reveals the truth about reality: behind the scenes of the physical world a battle rages in the spiritual world that impacts our experience in the natural world.
 - (1) **Ephesians 6:10-13 (ESV)** ¹⁰ *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.* ¹¹ *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.* ¹² *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.* ¹³ *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.*
 - (2) Jesus takes up the battle lost by the first Adam in the garden and wins the victory in the wilderness.
 - b. Jesus' experience typifies the experience of all believers committed to living by faith through the power of the Spirit
 - (1) Testing comes to us as no surprise
 - (a) After the Father's affirmation of sonship came the test
 - (b) The momentary mountaintop spiritual experience is often followed by a season in the valley
 - i) Moses at Sinai descended to a sinful people
 - ii) Elijah at Carmel descended to a deep depression

- iii) Jesus faced Satanic sabotage
 - (c) Warnings
 - i) Jesus, - “In this world you will have tribulations; fear not, I have overcome the world.”
 - ii) Paul - **1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)** *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*
- (2) The content of temptation is always the seduction to disobedience.
- (a) Jesus’ temptation/testing placed Him in a situation of open choice between personal surrender to God’s will or open revolt against it.
 - (b) The test question is this:
 - i) Will you continue to please God as His child or will you take the opportunity to please yourself and avoid the potential for pain and suffering included in God’s will?
 - ii) “Will you accept and complete God’s mission for your life or will you act as an independent agent setting your own agenda for your life?”
 - (c) Whom God tests
 - i) God tested Adam in the garden
 - ii) God tested Abraham with Isaac
 - iii) God tested Israel in the wilderness
 - iv) God tested His Son
 - v) God tests believers
- (3) Testing can last a long time; our endurance is directly related to our reliance on and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- (a) What the Spirit supplies
 - i) A regenerate heart - a new creation
 - ii) A powerful weapon - the word
 - iii) A certain hope - the resurrection
 - iv) A permanent presence - indwelling
 - (b) What does the Spirit simultaneously require of us and develop in us?
 - i) **Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)** ²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* ²³ *gentleness, self-control; against such*

things there is no law.

III. Jesus successfully resists the efforts of the enemy to derail His commitment to the Father

A. The value of His success

1. He succeeds on His own behalf, proving He is the Christ
2. He succeeds as our substitute, our representative on our behalf, proving that through faith and the power of the indwelling Spirit of God, we too may gain victory over the temptations and testing that our part of our everyday walk of faith.