

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“If you are the Son of God...command these stones to become bread.

If you are the Son of God...all the kingdoms of the world will be yours if you worship me...

If you are the Son of God...throw yourself from the Temple parapet for God's Word says that God will command the angels to guard, you.”

Luke 4

How is the enemy able to tempt Jesus whom we believe to be the Son of God? By challenging his identity. How can he do this? Doesn't Jesus know who he is? Of course, he does. But as human beings when we are challenged by someone to “prove it,” to prove we who say we are, to prove who we claim to be, we often try to do just that. And usually it doesn't go good.

Look at what the evil one does. He uses the “If” word. That almost always works. Why? Because we are too often unsure of ourselves and who we strive to be. Others challenge us. We will show them. The enemy challenges us too. Right where there is a weakness. He challenges Jesus right in the area of his weakness. What is his weakness? It is the area of his strength, it is the very mission he has embraced. He has come to liberate us from our sin, to tend to us in our vulnerability, to care for the poor and the outcast. Well, you could do a whole lot more if you changed all these rocks into bread. And the power to do that—well, it seems to be there.

But rocks aren't meant to be changed into bread. Wheat is. It takes time and effort. And Jesus himself will become wheat that is ground and crushed and sifted. He becomes wheat—and then bread. His love will feed us. Not by becoming some Rock-changing Star.

And there is glory in God. Well there is a lot of glory here to. Wouldn't you like it to be yours, to bask in the glow of genuine appreciation? Well that would be wonderful but it has not all been given to the devil and the glory and glamor of this world pales before the real thing.

And lastly, take advantage of your relationship with the Father, Take the crazy risk and trust in God to save you. You are supposed to be the truly trusting one aren't you? Then do it! But Jesus knows that all that does it cheapen his relationship with the Father. Not only will he not throw himself down, he will allow himself to be hoisted on an ugly cross and die in great pain. To show his love. Isn't that a waste? Maybe it seemed that way. But then of course there was Easter Sunday morning. That kind of made it all worthwhile for everybody. My friends, resist the temptations. Reap the real rewards. Deal? That is the question of the week.