

Have you ever debated making a long trip? Sometimes it is not easy deciding what to do? Do you really want to go back to your class or family reunion? Are you sure you want to accept the invitation to visit a friend you haven't seen in a long time? Do you wonder what will happen if you make the trip home? There are a lot of things to consider before setting out on a long trip. Do you have enough time and money? Can you overcome the obstacles that need to be taken care of before you leave? Is this trip really worth while?

The Lenten Season is a journey to the cross as we remember the journey that Jesus made almost 2,000 years ago. Why did He do it? He knew the challenges he would face along the way. He even knew that the cross would be the most painful thing anyone would ever have to endure. Why did Jesus make that trip? Our weekend services during Lent will try to answer the question, why did Jesus go to the cross? The quick and simple answer is He did it because He loves us.

The journey began for Jesus with the temptation. We all face temptations. Jesus was tempted, too, at the very start of His public ministry. After he was baptized, Jesus was lead by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness where he fasted for 40 days. Sometime near the end of that 40 day period, Satan came to tempt Jesus. What would Jesus do?

To answer that question we have to go all the way back to the very first temptation. Adam and Eve were created perfect by God. They had a perfect relationship with God and with one another. They lived in a perfect place called the Garden of Eden. God loved Adam and Eve and wanted them to love Him back. He gave them everything in the garden except for the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God told them not to eat the fruit of that tree.

One day Satan began talking with Adam and Eve through a snake and said to them, “**Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?**” (Genesis 3:1 NLT) He planted the seed of doubt and they swallowed it. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and in the process brought sin and death into the world. God warned them that if they ate the fruit of that one tree they would die. Their perfect relationship with God died that day when they ate the forbidden fruit and tried to hide from God. Their perfect relationship with each other died that day, too, when Adam tried to blame Eve for his actions. But God still loved them. So he made a plan to restore them to His family, a plan that would send Jesus to the cross.

We know what temptation is like. We've all fallen victim to it. We've all given in to it even when we've been determined not to. [We're like the guy in this video clip. ([Bluefish TV, Drive in](#)

Temptation) 11:00 Services] We've all sinned. We've all let God down. We all deserve to be punished.

But God still loves us. He wants to restore us to His family. That's why Jesus made the Journey to the Cross. It is all part of God's plan. Jesus would live a perfect life in our place. He would defeat Satan and Temptation for us. He would pay the price for our sin and rebellion.

The first challenge came when Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness. If Satan could get Jesus to sin just once, God's plan to restore us would be destroyed and we would not be saved. But Jesus did not sin. He didn't give into temptation. We also need to remember that Satan tempted Jesus. God doesn't tempt anyone to sin. Because we live in a fallen world we will face temptations. But God doesn't tempt us. Never has. Never will.

Satan tempted Jesus to doubt his relationship with God the Father when he said, "If you are the Son of God." He tempted Jesus to act selfishly, to take a short cut to fame, to seek personal power. He tempted Jesus to become the kind of king the people wanted instead of the Savior that they needed. He tempted Jesus to accept the world's standards for success, to make one little compromise to avoid the pain and suffering of the cross. Satan made promises that he could not keep because Satan is the father of lies.

But Jesus knew why He came. Jesus never lost track of his mission or purpose in life. When Satan tempted him, Jesus responded with God's word. He didn't use God's word as some sort of magical charm. Jesus turned to the Scriptures when facing temptation because he was used to turning to God's word in times of prayer. Because Jesus defeated Satan and temptation, He was able to begin the long journey to the cross. If we follow Jesus' example, remain close to Him and take God's Word to heart, He will help us face and defeat temptation, too. And He will forgive us when we give into temptation and turn to Him for forgiveness.

Why the journey to the cross? Paul put it this way in Romans 5:18 (NLT). "Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone."

That day in the wilderness Jesus said "No!" to Satan and Temptation. He said "No!" to compromise, to selfish ambition and to doubt. In the process Jesus said "Yes!" to the cross. Nothing would keep Him from fulfilling God's plan to save and restore us. He said "Yes!" to forgiveness and life. He said "Yes!" to you and to me. Thank God that He did. Amen.