

Subject, "The Roots of Victory."

Scripture. Matthew 4¹⁻¹¹.

Text Luke 2³⁻²

"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

I wish to speak upon the value and the necessity of quiet persistent preparation for critical moments in life.

You and I are being called up or constantly to face critical situations. The degree of success with which we meet such moments depends not upon the conditions of the moment, but upon the conditions of the past. "The roots of victory rest deep into the history of preparation. It is the

for a test Mother 2⁵² or suggesting
the essence of what I wish to say.
"And Jesus advanced in wisdom
and stature, and in favor with God
and men."

According to the calendar of
Ritualistic churches, this day is
known as the 1st Sunday in Lent. Now Lent is a survival of
the old Jewish custom of having
periods of feasting or fasting
when special religious ceremoni-
ies were performed. It was
essentially a spring time festival
which, after about 900 years after
Jesus lived, came to be modified
into a period of fasting and prayer
in imitation of the fasting and
prayer of Jesus during his

40 days temptation in the wilderness
as described in Matthew in the
parable which I read to you. The
period of Lent has no special sig-
nificance for us except as it
stands for the recognition, for the
hour, for the celebration of an event
which marks the turning point
in the life of Jesus, and perhaps
a turning in the life of the people
whose traditions we share.

But what, in fact, is the real
event in Jesus' life that the writer
of the Gospel is trying to fix
in this parable? It is evident
from the fact that the writer tries to
make it so immortal and fearful
that he regarded it as an event
of some importance. Now, let

us see what it really means.
We remember that just previous
to this so called 40 days temptation
in the wilderness, Jesus had been
baptized by John the Baptist in
the ~~Jordan~~. The story of Luke
tells us that about 15 years
before this time of Baptism and
temptation, Jesus had gone
with his father and mother
up to Jerusalem to the feast
of the Passover. At the time of this
visit Jesus for the 1st time in
his life had caught a glimpse
of the kind of life he wanted to
live. This little scene of the
boyhood of Jesus, which we
know so well from Hoffman's
beautiful painting, is very

real to us, for each one of us can recall some great moment of our early life, when we first caught a glimpse of the life before us, when we first began to grow into manhood and womanhood, and first began to think of what we would like to do in life. Such a moment in Jesus' life is this one with the doctor in the temple. Here he begins to become a man.

But he goes back home with his parents, works away at his trade, keeping his mind alert, studying human nature, learning to see the spirit of God in all life. Slowly but surely he was advancing in wisdom and

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station, and in favor with God
and man." But after these 15
years, he comes to the Jordan to
be Baptized of John in the Jordan.
This is an important day for
Jesus. Behind him is that long
hard struggling period of pre-
paration. Before him is the
uncertainty of his life, the uncer-
tain future. It is one of those
great critical moments of life
when one stops, hesitates, before
actually going ahead. As he
actually comes to the point of breaking
away from the past, and going
boldly into the future, he stops,
hesitates, awed at the signifi-
cance of the step in his life, he
almost recoils from its possible

danger and error. Just as one
steps, half turns back upon the
threshold as he is about to leave
the warm protected home and go into
the cold wintry darkness without
so Jesus standing upon the threshold
of his quiet, protected, secluded life
in Nazareth, hesitates before he
steps forth into the cold chilly
world to meet there his rebuff
and disaffectionments, his successes,
and victories. This moment of
Jesus life, a moment of doubt
hesitation, as he turns from his
early life to his ^{public} private ministry
is the real event of Jesus life
that no other is trying to describe.
It is this event that revolutionizes
churches now and celebrate

by their period of Lent.

II

But why should Jesus so hesitate and doubt at this period? What was there in his life or his teaching that made him feel uncertain at the critical moment as to whether or not he should take up his public life? The fact is that Jesus knew that the ideas that he was going to teach, the religion that he believed, that he must teach, nor not the traditional time honored religion of the Jews. The Jews were bound hand and foot, body and soul by their strict unyielding obedience to the Law of their fathers to the traditional ritual, to the time honored customs

concerning God and his relation
to his chosen people. These old
fores had ceased to have that
moral worth meaning that they
once had. Jesus himself attacked
them bitterly, "Woe unto you
Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites, for
ye cleanse the outside of the cup
and of the platter, but within
they are full of extortion and excess."

But in contrast to these contemptuous
Jesus had learned to see God in
nature, in man, and in his own
soul. Jesus had found God the
father. To him the real essence
of the religious life was love to
God and love to man. So long as
these foors actually contributed to
the moral and religious life, Jesus

did not object to them. Only when they looked more contemptuous, and dwarfed the spiritual life did Jesus ignore these forms. When the Pharisee of Nazareth hit him for plucking the grain on the Sabbath which was contrary to the law, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; so that the son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath." The point is that Jesus was a man of plain common sense, and he would accept these forms only as they ministered to his moral and spiritual life.

Now Jesus saw the great moral significance of his ideas; he realized that to give expression to them would bring contention

and strife into the Jewish life. He undoubtedly realized that it would bring upon him reproach, disgrace, and perhaps death. He knew that the ideas which were developing in his mind, and were feeding his moral and spiritual nature, would bring contention and opposition among the people whom he knew. So it was that Jesus hesitated just at the time he was to begin preaching. He was tempted. Should he keep to himself those great ideas, that were so noble and soul satisfying, or should he make the sacrifice, and at the risk of his own life give them to others? What was the great

temptation of Jesus. Because Jesus realized the great importance and significance of his teaching, he stood there as it were, after his Baptism, debating with himself as to whether he should do the greater work of his public ministry, or re-heeding to enjoy his own quiet life as a carpenter in Nazareth. It is just as when a great sailing vessel beating against the wind sails along on one tack for a time, when the time comes to take a new tack, to sail in a different direction, responsive to the turn of the rudder, she begins to change her course, but there is a moment, when the sail hangs

love, when the shif guineas and
heritotes, seeming uncertain first
what to do, and then suddenly
the mind fills the soots and
with a fling she takes up her
new course. So poor, at this
turning point of his life, step
heritotes, uncertain. But soon the
decision is made, and he follows
his new course of sober life
unerringly, unfalteringly,
through the opposition of his own
people, through the desertion of
his friends, the treachery of his
enemies. Through all these
trials he moves slowly and
steadily to the very day when
for his love for God and man, for
his uncomplaining devotion to

truth he stoned the great test,
and laid down his life for
others. So Jesus great temptation
was one of those turning points, one
of those dramatic critical moments
in his life, when great issue was
at stake, and when he was
called upon to show what kind
of stuff he was made of.

- III We are especially interested in this particular event of Jesus life, not because it was a temptation, not because it was a moment of trial, but because we can look back upon that moment, and with a feeling of pride and satisfaction know that it was a moment of great victory. So great and momentous were the

power at stroke, that we have to
find an explanation for the victory.
Where are the roots of victory? When
did he win the victory?" We go
to a plant whose growth we have
been watching for weeks, so
we find there the full blown flower.
We stop in amazement. A miracle
has been performed. How wonderful!
When did it blossom?" We stop
to think. We trace back of the worths
of growth, we remember the germinating
seed breaking up through the earth,
we remember the 1st tender leaf; we
remember when the small delicate bud
appeared, and then how we watched it
grow, and expand and enlarge, and
then suddenly the flower. When did
it blossom? It has been blossoming all

the time, day by day the growth and
progress has been towards the bloom.
The roots of the flower go back to the
earliest movement of seed life under the
ground. When did Jesus win the
victory. Not at this great critical
moment, long before that the
victory had been won. This moment
of dramatic victory is simply the
flowering of his long preparation.
The roots of his victory run back
into those early years. There with
his father and mother in Nazareth,
there among his young friends, or
a boy, or a youth, or a young man,
there at the carpenter's bench, there
in the quiet, complex village
life of Nazareth, that is when
Jesus had won his victory.

In the quiet, luminous tone of daily life Jesus had already overcome his great temptation. Although at the very moment when he is to show the product of his years of preparation, he stops, hesitates, doubts, yet the temptation had been overcome, and the victory had been won in those days when in the small things of daily life, he had learned to do the thing that was right, and noble and true. It is after all the unwritten record of Jesus life that is the noblest and truest. We find him in this great crisis of his life true to a deep noble principle, ^{but} ~~and~~ in our imagination we go back of that event, and find the work

of the victory in the silent
conquest made in the hours
of slow fumbling preparation, when
unnoticed by the world, by the
very volatility of his own soul he
won victory after victory. Such
a training, such a preparation, must
throw the beauti-ful blossom.

In the early morning hours
the sleeping army is aroused
by the Bugle call to Arms, prodding
out across the still dark air. Sud-
denly as out of the very darkness
of the night, an enemy will come
upon them. The roll is sounded.
Immediately all is life and activity.
Men fall into places, lines are
formed, the charge is sounded;
the battle fought; the victory won.

that was the chawotic critical moment, but the victory was won in the long hard drills when the crude mass of men were being made over into a well organized, thoroughly drilled army. The victory was won in those silent lonely hours when the men sitting before the camp fire, solemnly vowed to themselves that they would give their life for the country.

To whom we all say in our rushing busy life to do honor to the man whose name like to think in our time of peril won a great victory for our country. We read in the accounts of his life, and in the stories of American history of the

great dramatic events when great
victories were won, and the
indefatigable of the colonists as-
sumed. But you know and
I know that it is in the un-
written record of Washington's life
that these victories were being
slowly won by the year of noble won-
by separation. We know that the
great courage and power of the
American colonists displayed at
that moment, was but the natural
flowering of the plant of inde-
fation which had been
planted in new soil generations
before.

In the victories of those moments
when so much is at stake, when
the issue of a life or a nation

is to be determined, are won, not at the critical moments, but in the hours of preparation. Jesus' great temptation had already been resisted in those quiet years of hard work by the carpenter bench, and in his life among the people of Nazareth, for in those days Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

II It is not because these ideas are of historic interest, it is not because they throw light upon the character and power of Jesus, but it is because they throw light upon the problems of your life and myself. Each one of us in our own way is working out the problem of his life

Sometimes we feel disheartened and discouraged because we do not get along faster, sometimes we are willing to find fault with our opportunities, but we must remember that it is only at rare moments that our lives are varied ~~of~~ above the common place. If we are to win the victories we must win them in the quiet every day round of action in our homes, among our friends in our business. If we can win victories there, the victories will come also at the great moments. The plant to worry leaves but few blossoms.

Then again there is one problem of our life that we ought to be

pearing for. We live along year after
year without sorrow or misery.
But sooner or later the time is
coming when we must part
with some dear friend. Out of the
very stillness of the night comes the
great sorrow. It takes us by
surprise, we are not prepared
for it. Rushed, not knowing in
which direction to turn, we suffer
and despair. It is to prepare
for such fatalities as that that
you & I need the growth and
development in the clef spiritual
things of life. When I hear a man
say that he has no need for
the religious life, I shudder to think
of the helplessness and despair
which any great calamity, woe

bring up for him. The works
of a victory over a great sorrow
and hardness, are in these quiet
hours when we learn to fix
our minds upon the great and in-
spiring ideas and hopes of brotherly
love, in the presence of the great
Father.

But let us direct our thoughts
in another direction. I think
that this story of Jesus Lamphibius
is of special interest to such
people as have inherited or been
so fortunate as to see the real
worth of modern liberal religion.
I had hoped that as I suggested
the great importance of Jesus
victory, that you would see
the very close analogy between

Jesus temptation, and the temptation
of Liberal Christians. We know
that we have a conception of God
and man and the religions
life, that is more real, vital
and inspiring, than the con-
ceptions held by the so called
conservatives. You & I enjoy
our simple faith in God and
man, but we know that there
are thousands of human souls
whose lives are poisoned, made
unhappy and miserable, simply
because no one has told them
of a simple religion, of love to God
and man, which finds its manifesta-
tion in a free ^{noble} soul and a
noble life. The man in the
temple with the doctors we see

by Channing and Parker and Emerson, and the hundreds of Brains and who made a sacrifice for their cause and soke. But the great temptation has not yet come, when we shall be called upon to make the sacrifice. The roots of the victory must be in the preparation that you and I are working in our lives now, I say the great temptation has not yet come. But you know and I know that the Christian church is being judged and weighed as it never has been before, we are entering upon the period of chastisement temptation. By our lives of purity, and love

and service we must work
one sober reveler of the truth of
great religious life. By the in=
dictive work lies will the value
of the church be determined. We
are the army of truth and
our victory in the moment
of battle must be won by the
daily trials. Jesus won his
victory, because he had ad=
vanced in wisdom and stature,
and in favor with God & men."

East Boston. Feb 21, 1904.

Din. Chofel .. 29 1804.

Preached in a undefined form to
Young people at Salem, Wash. 6th 1804