Hello everyone,

     Here we are then, in the period of Lent, a time of great importance in the Christian calendar, and a time of great importance for each of us as we journey through the forty days and nights towards Easter. The reading for this week is Luke 4:1-13, the temptations of Jesus that come at the end of his sojourn in the wilderness, where he prepared for his ministry.
       Jesus is hungry and he is tempted to use his power to turn stones into bread. The devil is very subtle and perhaps not very obvious, but Jesus is prepared and he is able to overcome these tempting advances. If he had failed, then all of his future ministry would have been undermined. But he doesn’t, and he remains strong in the power of the Holy Spirit and the word of God.

         So, how are you when it comes to temptation? What is it that poses the greatest threat to your Christian life and journey? What are the areas of life where the devil can use all his subtlety to get at you? Be honest now!
          If it happened to Jesus, it will most surely happen to us. So what did he do? He responded, in all three cases of temptation, by falling back on the word of God. “One does not live by bread alone,” he retorts, according to Luke. This is a quote from Deuteronomy 8:3, which refers to the Israelites being given manna as a kind of bread in the wilderness, “to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone,  but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”
         Matthew, in his gospel, quotes that whole verse, but, as we see, Luke leaves out the last part. I wonder if he assumes we would know the second part of the verse, like Jesus did.
          Anyway, the point is that the Israelites grumbled even though God had provided for them, and they rejected God’s word given through Moses. The devil had really got to them. Jesus knew all this, and in quoting the verse, he showed that things had changed....... for ever.

       Our theme hymn says, “Break thou the Bread of Life O Lord to me.” Verse 2 says, “Thou art the Bread of Life O Lord to me, thy holy word the truth that saveth me.”
        This is a timely reminder for us to use this Lenten season in order to get into God’s word, seriously. Perhaps read a gospel, or one of Paul’s letters. Learn a few verses off by heart. Practise recalling a particular verse from your daily reading throughout the day.
       During Lent, try to make a positive effort to “Break open the Bread of Life “ in the power of God’s Spirit and be an overcomer like Jesus. The Lord’s Prayer says these things:-
       Our Father; Give us this day our daily bread; Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

  May it be so!

                     God bless,
                            Graham

 *Produced by Graham Wassell on behalf of the Bents Green Holy Habits Planning Group (Debs Barnett, Glenn Evans, Martyn Read, Graham Wassell, Daphne and John Wilkins).  You can find more information on the Circuit Holy Habits Programme on the Sheffield Methodist Circuit website and also the Sheffield Methodist Circuit Facebook page.*