

It is Written

Matthew 4:1-11

Main Truth: Jesus came to seek and save the wanderer

Luke 19:5-10

Matthew 4:1 After identifying with sinners in His baptism, Jesus then identifies with them by facing severe temptation. He goes into the wilderness to physically struggle for 40 days and then faces temptation.

Jesus succeeded in what we failed to do. He faced legitimate temptation of sin and did not give in. Since we cannot atone for our sin on our own, we have to have a suitable representative to restore our relationship with God and provide the way for us to enter back into paradise for eternity.

The wilderness serves as a representative of separation, transformation, preparation and a step to redemption. Jesus had to enter into the wilderness for temptation and come out of it sinless and human.

Matthew 3:1 Psalm 63:1 The wilderness of Judea - *Ioudaia* in Greek. John preached in this wilderness and David experienced this same dry and parched land.

Israel also experienced the desert wilderness as the place that God transformed His people so they could be covenant partners in the promised land.

Luke 19:10 The wilderness represents more than just Jesus going out and fighting off temptation, it is the spiritual metaphor for humanity's eternal circumstances. Jesus willingly stepped down to put on flesh and be in the wilderness with us. It is in this barren wasteland that He faces what sinners face.

The Temptations

Hebrews 2:18 Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are---yet he did not sin

Matthew 4:2-4 After fasting in the wilderness for 40 days, Jesus physically faced hunger. Satan tempts Jesus to use his godly powers "if you are the Son of God" to create bread from stones.

In response to Satan's temptation, Jesus uses that which is written by God, the scripture found in **Deuteronomy 8:3**. He chose to demonstrate reliance of the Father's power in the midst of temptation.

Matthew 4:5-7 Satan quotes **Psalm 91:11-12** as a lie in tempting Jesus to throw himself off the highest point of the temple and telling him to jump off and that God has promised he will not hit the stoney ground.

The most effective lies are the ones that sound the most like the truth.

Satan is the father of lies:

John 8:44 “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

Jesus is the Lord of truth:

John 14:16 “Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Matthew 4:8-11 Jesus came to win all the kingdoms of the world and their glory back from Satan’s domain. And here Satan offers them to Jesus if He would only fall down and worship Satan.

2 Corinthians 4:4 All things belong to God. God only allows Satan to function as the god of this age for a purpose. This is why the fallen world we live in is such a mess. The kingdoms of the world are not Satan’s to give.

Deuteronomy 6:13 Jesus shows the only effective counter to deception is God’s truth, His Word, and not man’s wisdom. We must combat temptation with the Word of God.

Jesus knew and remembered what God’s Word correctly says. If Jesus used scriptures to combat temptation, then we likewise need to continue to study, memorize and value God’s Word. We need to know and use God’s Word to help us when temptation and testing comes our way.

Jesus had defeated temptation, not by the strength of the flesh, but by the power of God and His Word alone.

He faced temptation in the wilderness and did not sin. He remained the lamb who would be the perfect sacrifice for the world. Jesus is sinless.

Jesus has related to humanity and next He will begin his ministry to seek and save the lost.

Main Truth: Jesus came to seek and save the wanderer

Application: Stop wandering in the wilderness and run to the Father

Psalms 63 The psalm David wrote when he was fleeing for his life from Saul in the wilderness. This Psalm expresses David’s assurance in God.

Small Group Discussion Questions

It is Written Matthew 4:1-11

1. What is the longest you have ever gone without eating? How does being hungry impact you?
2. **Matt 4:1** Why would the Spirit lead Jesus to be tempted? Why in the wilderness for 40 days and nights? How does this fit with Jesus teaching the disciples to pray “Lead me not into temptation?”
3. What do you think is Satan’s chief goal in coming to tempt Jesus? What is the underlying theme of all of the temptations?
4. **Matt 4:2-4** Discuss the first temptation to turn stones to bread.
 - a) What would be tempting to Jesus about the devil’s suggestion?
 - b) How does Jesus respond?
 - c) What may have happened if Jesus had gone along with the tempter?
5. How is this a temptation to doubt God’s love? How are we tempted to doubt God’s love and provision in our lives?
6. What do we learn from Jesus’ response? What does the statement mean, “Man shall not live by bread alone...”
7. **Matt 4:5-7** Discuss the second temptation to test God’s word.
 - a) What would be tempting to Jesus about the devil’s suggestion?
 - b) How does Jesus respond?
 - c) What may have happened if Jesus had gone along with the tempter?
8. How are we tempted to doubt God’s Word?
9. What can we learn from how both Satan and Jesus quote Scripture?
10. What role can Scripture play in our own temptations? Discuss the importance of memorizing and knowing the proper use of Scripture. What other God-given tools and resources have you found helpful and hopeful in your own battle with temptation?
11. **Matt 4: 8-10** Discuss the third temptation to doubt God’s plan.
 - a) What would be tempting to Jesus about the devil’s suggestion?
 - b) How does Jesus respond?
 - c) What may have happened if Jesus had gone along with the tempter?
12. How are we tempted to take shortcuts to God’s plan? Why is it tempting, and what’s at stake when we do?
13. What can we learn from Jesus’ response? How might we sometimes put God to the test?
14. **Matt 4:11** What do we learn from the timing of the angel’s visit to minister to Jesus?
15. Where and when do you find yourself especially vulnerable to temptation? How might the Lord be inviting you to respond? How can your small group or others support you as you do?

Personal Study Guide

Memorize the Word of God

Aside from God's direct instruction to memorize His teachings, memorizing the word of God is helpful to us in our daily lives. There are benefits to memorizing Scripture that should compel us to *want* to do it, even if we weren't told to do so.

- It Renews Your Mind
- It Strengthens You Against Temptation
- It Imparts Wisdom
- It Helps You Live Rightly
- It Helps You to Know God's Will

The following verses are God's Word telling us the importance of knowing and memorizing His scriptures, the Bible.

Challenge for this week – Memorize Psalm 119:11

PSALM 119:11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

JOSHUA 1:8

2 TIMOTHY 3:15

MATTHEW 4:4

PSALM 1:1-6

PSALM 37:31

PSALM 119:9

JOHN 15:7

COLOSSIANS 3:16

2 TIMOTHY 3:16