

### **Matthew 4:1-11 (NIV)**

1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” 4 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: ”He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” 7 Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” 10 Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Everyone faces temptation. It comes in all shapes and sizes. It comes at all times of the day and night. Temptation never ends. If all these statements are true, then it is vital that we learn how to handle temptation and even better to avoid it!

Jesus gave his disciples some words of advice in handling temptation. He told them to watch and pray. Watch and pray so that you won't fall prey to temptation. But how could Jesus relate to us poor sinners? How could he tell us how to handle temptation? He could because he faced temptation himself. Jesus faced every temptation possible in order to walk in our shoes. The writer to the Hebrews tells us, *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.”*

That's what we see in our portion of God's Word for today. We see Jesus being tempted by Satan himself. Satan attacked his physical wants and desires as a man. Jesus had been out there in the wilderness for 40 days all the while fasting. He was hungry. Yet he would not give into his physical desires, but instead he turned to God's Word for strength. Satan then tried to turn God's Word against Jesus by twisting a passage about God's protection. But Jesus used God's Word to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture. He foiled Satan's twist. Finally, Satan tried to relieve Jesus of his humiliation by offering him the whole world in return for worship. But Jesus would not be deterred from his mission. He told Satan to get away as he can only worship and serve the True God.

All of those temptations we can find in our lives. We have physical desires that are not God pleasing. We have been tempted to believe those who twist God's Word for their own benefit. We have even been tempted to “sell our souls” in exchange for the world. So how do we combat temptation? We follow Jesus' example and use the power of God's Word.

God's Word gives us all the guidance we need. God's Word gives us all the ammunition we need. By staying in the Word and knowing God's will for us, we can use that Word to defeat Satan's temptation. Dear Christian, use the weapons God has given you. Fight temptation with the Word. For as Luther said, “One little Word can fell him!”