

temptation vs. truth

MATTHEW 4:1-11

THE QUESTION

How can Scripture help us deal with temptation?

THE POINT

When we face temptation, we can overcome it by knowing and applying Scripture.

01

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

PEOPLE

God gives us the Bible to deepen our relationship with Him and to resist the temptation to serve ourselves.

LET'S start

QUESTION

What is something new you have recently learned how to do? *Talk about how it came about and why it excites you to know how to do it.*

CONNECT

Game: What Am I?

Come up with a list of action items and tools, such as a guitar, a drill, a car key, and a pencil. The key is to come up with items where you must take action for them to work. Then, come up with three descriptive words to describe each item.

Here are some examples: guitar (strings, music, six), drill (battery, fix, screws), car key (small, key chain, panic button), and pencil (number 2, 24-count, school).

Next, split the students up into two teams and have them come up two at a time (one per team). Then, describe the item using the three words and see if students can guess the object you are describing. End the time by telling students that these items don't have their full effect until you put them into action.



DID YOU KNOW?

On average, most semi-pro guitarists own around five guitars.¹

LEADER PACK ELEMENTS

If you have the optional Leader Pack, consider the following:

ITEM #: Engage students in the session and introduce the main idea by displaying the **Poster Name**.



LET'S look

MATTHEW 4:1-11

BIBLICAL SETTING

In Matthew 3, we see John, the Baptist (“A voice of one crying out in the wilderness”) introducing Jesus, “The Lamb of God.” This marks the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry, and His baptism is performed to fulfill all righteousness. As God, the Father, speaks, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased,” we see a beautiful moment between Father and Son. Now, in Matthew 4, Jesus begins His ministry by being tested by the devil in the wilderness. In this moment, we witness the humanity of Jesus as well as the power of His words.

MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 4:10

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ Then the tempter approached him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” ⁴ He answered, “It is written: Man must 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, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

He will give his angels orders concerning you, and they will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

⁷ Jesus told him, “It is also written: Do not test the Lord your God.”

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ And he said to him, “I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me.”

¹⁰ Then Jesus told him, “Go away, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and began to serve him.

LET'S talk

THE POINT

When we face temptation, we can overcome it by knowing and applying Scripture.

FACING TEMPTATION // MATTHEW 4:1-3

› CONTENT SUMMARY

Even our sinless Savior, Jesus, was tempted. Yet, He was not tempted to see if He would sin; He was tempted to show the power of obedience to God's Word. The three temptations Jesus faced in this passage echo the tests Israel faced in the wilderness. According to one commentary, "Every Scripture that Jesus quoted in response to his temptations were drawn from God's message to the Israelites about their wilderness test" (CSB Study Bible). In the interactions between Jesus and Satan, we see Jesus' humanity (v. 3 – Jesus was hungry) and divinity (v. 3 – "Son of God"). We also see how cunning and crafty Satan is—he took something that may have appeared the same but was vastly different (the stones he pointed to may have looked like small loaves of bread). **God's Word gives us the power to resist every temptation of Satan.**

› APPLICATION TO STUDENTS

Every day, students face a wide range of temptations. Today's students spend more than seven hours per day on screens. Satan's lies and deception are just a finger click away. What's crazy about Satan's tactics in this passage is that he was using the Bible. How many of us would know a lie if we heard it? Often, when we face temptation, we exchange the truth for a lie (Romans 1:25) because we live in an instant-satisfaction society. **Satan's lies provide momentary pleasures that ultimately harm us, separate us from God, and don't satisfy.** When we give in to his lies, we dig the "sin hole" deeper and deeper until we are sinking and can't recognize what truth is. When Adam and Eve chose Satan's lies over the Father's truth, "the eyes of both of them were opened" (Genesis 3:7).



Why do you think God allows temptations in our lives?



What influence do the people we associate with have on temptation?



How do you determine what is truth and what is a lie?



LET'S talk

KNOWING SCRIPTURE // MATTHEW 4:4-9

› CONTENT SUMMARY

The words “it is written” give us incredible insight into Jesus’ knowledge and understanding of Scripture. In verse four, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3, placing an emphasis on the importance of obeying God’s commands over even our daily needs. As we examine Jesus’ ministry, nothing was more important to Him than doing and fulfilling God’s will—this was kingdom work. In verses 5-7, it’s crucial to see that Satan misquoted and manipulated Scripture. This is who he is and what he does at the core. Again, Jesus quoted Scripture (this time Deuteronomy 6:16) and combatted Satan’s lies. While Satan is powerful, the “kingdoms of the world” belong to God ultimately, and He gave Jesus authority over the world. **Every time Satan misquoted and twisted Scripture to tempt Jesus, Jesus came back with Scripture, and Satan did not have an answer.** This is why it is so important for us to know what Scripture actually says.

› APPLICATION TO STUDENTS

It’s essential that we know God’s Word. We must ask ourselves, are we spending time reading the Bible so we really know what it actually says? Simply knowing some Bible stories is not the goal. In this passage, Jesus quoted verses that directly caught Satan’s lies. Knowing the Bible will help us stand on God’s truth when Satan tries to convince us of his lies.

When we immerse ourselves in the Word, the Word will take hold of us.



What does the phrase “it is written” tell us about Jesus’ understanding of Scripture?



Why is it important for us to know the Bible? What are ways we can grow in our understanding of Scripture? What is the difference in reading and knowing the Bible?



Does the Bible influence how we see our situations, or do our situations influence how we see the Bible? Explain your thoughts.



LET'S talk

APPLYING SCRIPTURE // MATTHEW 4:10-11

› CONTENT SUMMARY

In verse 10, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:14 and 10:20, reminding us that creation is never more powerful than the Creator. After Satan's third attempt, Jesus commanded him to leave. What's incredible for us to see in this passage is the way Jesus applied His knowledge of the Scriptures. **Jesus quoted the Old Testament and did not give in to temptation—He allowed God's Word to lead and sustain Him.** Jesus told the Pharisees in the New Testament (Matthew 15:8-9) that their lips honored Him, but their hearts were far from Him. May this not be said of us. Then, in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), what do we see? Jesus again emphasized the importance of **truth in action.** He told His disciples to go, baptize, and teach. Do we need to know the truth of God's Word? Absolutely. Should we put it into action and apply it to our lives? You bet!

› APPLICATION TO STUDENTS

Students today need to know what Scripture says and live it out in their everyday experiences. His Word will never change—it is consistent and accurate, and it always will be. Since this is true, we can see the importance of applying Scripture when we look at how the Bible impacts our lives, even as we are tempted to sin. In this passage, Jesus gave us a real example of how to deal with temptation: combat temptation with the truth. Will we do it perfectly every time? No. However, our prayer must be, "Jesus, make me more like You every day." Psalm 119:10-13 reads, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."



Why do you believe Jesus chose the words "worship the Lord your God, and serve only him" in this passage?



How can a wrong theological understanding lead to wrong application?



How can correctly knowing and applying Scripture help introduce others to Jesus?



LET'S go

Bible Meets Life

THE QUESTION ➤ How can Scripture help us deal with temptation?

THE POINT ➤ When we face temptation, we can overcome it by knowing and applying Scripture.

The battle between the flesh and the Spirit can often seem intense. This passage reminds us that temptation does not have to control our lives. While facing temptations can often feel overwhelming, we can overcome them. We can take comfort that Satan has no power to make us sin. Everyone is tempted to sin, but being tempted is not a sin in and of itself. Even Jesus was tempted. We can resist any temptation he throws at us. How? By knowing and doing what the Bible says. Embracing this truth will deepen our relationship with Jesus and reveal a better way for us to live.

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

God gives us the Bible to deepen our relationship with Him and to resist the temptation to serve ourselves.

FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD

MOVING forward

Take a moment this week to reflect on who or what influences your life. What voices are you allowing to impact you? It's essential to surround yourself with people who speak the truth and encourage you to pursue Christ more intentionally.



MEMORY verse

This week, let's memorize
Matthew 4:10 together:

Then Jesus told him, “Go away, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”

MAIN TAKEAWAY

What is one thing
you took away from
today's session?

Think about this:
Knowledge of Scripture
is great. Application
of that knowledge
is where we will
see transformation
takes place.