

# JESUS WAS TEMPTED

CORE PASSAGE: LUKE 4:1-13

## CONTEXT

Following the glorious affirmation of the Father for the Son at Jesus's baptism, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert, where He fasted for forty days and was eventually tempted by Satan. Jesus's responses to three specific temptations demonstrated both His commitment to God's will and His readiness for the ministry task before Him.

## KEY CONCEPT

**Like Jesus, we can turn to Scripture to help us resist temptation.**

As you examine Luke 4:1-13:

- Reflect on the truth that Jesus, being human, experienced temptation just as we do.
- Identify the means Jesus used to resist temptation and to obey the Father.



## TIMELINE

John the Baptist Calls People to Repentance in Preparation for Jesus (Matthew 3:1-12)

**SESSION STUDY:**  
Jesus Is Tempted in the Wilderness (Luke 4:1-13)

Jesus Performs His First Miracle at the Wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11)

John Baptizes Jesus in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:13-17)

Jesus Calls Disciples to Follow Him (John 1:35-51)

### Daily Readings

- Day 1:** Mark 1:12-13
- Day 2:** Matthew 4:1-4
- Day 3:** Matthew 4:5-11
- Day 4:** Luke 4:1-4
- Day 5:** Luke 4:5-13
- Day 6:** Psalm 141



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

LUKE 4:1-4

### WE ARE EASILY TEMPTED WHEN OUR NEEDS ARE UNMET, BUT WE CAN RESIST.

*Highlight the details from the narrative that led Jesus to be tempted.*

**1** Then Jesus left the Jordan, full of the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness **2** for forty days to be tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over, he was hungry. **3** The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” **4** But Jesus answered him, “It is written: Man must not live on bread alone.”

#### THEOLOGY CONNECTION

**TEMPTATION AND SIN:** Temptation is not the equivalent of sin. Temptation can refer to natural and good desires that are twisted and directed toward pleasing of self rather than giving glory to God. Jesus was tempted like we are (Matthew 4), and yet, He never sinned but faithfully resisted temptation and followed the will of His Father. Knowing our weakness, we are to be on guard against temptation that may lead us to sin (Matthew 26:41), and we pray for God to deliver us from evil (Matthew 6:13).

**Key Concept:** Like Jesus, we can turn to Scripture to help us resist temptation.

Following His baptism, Jesus departed from the Jordan River, and Luke said He was “full of the Holy Spirit” (v. 1). Not only had the Spirit descended upon Jesus after He emerged from the water after His baptism, but the Spirit’s indwelling presence was now with Him as He continued preparing for His earthly ministry.

The Holy Spirit also led Jesus into the wilderness for a time of fasting and for the explicit purpose of being tested—tempted—by Satan. The Spirit’s involvement in Jesus’s time in the desert clues readers into the spiritual dynamics at play in Jesus’s earthly ministry. Spiritual warfare is the reality for all those who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior. Luke highlighted the spiritual warfare in this passage by recounting Jesus’s interaction with Satan after His time spent fasting.

**Why do you think God’s plan for our redemption included Jesus facing temptation?**

For forty days, Jesus fasted from food, experiencing in His human body intense hunger. Therefore, Jesus was in a particularly vulnerable position as Satan seized upon the opportunity, telling Jesus that He could command a stone to become bread and His hunger could be satisfied. Indeed, Jesus could turn a stone into bread; later He would turn water into wine (John 2:1-11), but Jesus combated Satan’s temptation by citing truth found in God’s Word, namely, that “man must not live on bread alone” (Luke 4:4; cf. Deuteronomy 8:3).

**How does Jesus’s response challenge your view of where true sustenance comes from?**

As believers, we too will continue to face temptation as we seek to live obediently to God, especially in moments when we are in need. When we believe the gospel, we recognize that we are free from the penalty and punishment of our sin. Thankfully, by God’s grace, we are also free from sin’s power over us. Yet we still battle with the presence of sin in our lives. Like Jesus, we must rely upon God’s Word in our fight against sin. God also gives us the Holy Spirit, who helps by assuring us of our salvation and empowering us in our fight against sin that remains present in our lives.



## PERSONAL PREPARATION

LUKE 4:5-13

### TRUSTING GOD AND RELYING ON HIS WORD CAN HELP US RESIST TEMPTATION.

*Underline phrases that indicate Jesus's appeal to Scripture in His responses to Satan.*

**5** So he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

**6** The devil said to him, "I will give you their splendor and all this authority, because it has been given over to me, and I can give it to anyone I want. **7** If you, then, will worship me, all will be yours." **8** And Jesus answered him, "It is written: Worship the Lord your God,

and serve him only." **9** So he took him to Jerusalem, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here. **10** For it is written: He will give his angels orders concerning you, to protect you, **11** and they will support you with their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." **12** And

Jesus answered him, "It is said: Do not test the Lord your God." **13** After the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time.

#### GOSPEL CONNECTION

Jesus was tempted as we are, yet He resisted the devil's temptations and remained without sin. Thus, He was the blameless sacrifice needed to atone for our sins.

**Key Concept:** Like Jesus, we can turn to Scripture to help us resist temptation.

Jesus was tempted by Satan two more times in the wilderness. In one, the devil took Jesus to a high place on a mountain, a vantage point from which they could see all the kingdoms on earth. Claiming authority over them, Satan offered Jesus the “splendor” of the kingdoms and the opportunity to rule over them, and Satan’s trade-off was straightforward: Jesus would only need to worship him (vv. 6-7).

Satan’s words were filled with lies and deceit, and Jesus recognized his scheme at once. The crux of the matter was not merely splendor and power over kingdoms. Satan aimed at Jesus’s heart and desired the worship that belongs to God alone. What’s more, Satan’s temptation represented a shortcut away from the ultimate goal of Jesus’s mission—the cross.

**What are some ways we are tempted to take shortcuts to avoid suffering in our mission to take the gospel of Jesus to the world?**

Jesus responded to Satan by quoting Deuteronomy 6:13, reaffirming that God alone is worthy of worship. Again, Jesus countered Satan’s lies with truth found in God’s Word, wielding the Scriptures as a weapon in the fight against temptation and sin.

#### VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

“The Bible in the memory is better than the Bible in the bookcase.”<sup>1</sup>

—Charles Spurgeon (1834–1892)

In another attempt at tempting Christ, Satan brought Jesus to another high place, the temple pinnacle, and challenged Jesus to throw Himself down from it. This challenge was consistent with Satan’s customary subversive tactics because of an added twist—Satan quoted Scripture, referencing Psalm 91:11-12 to justify the temptation. If everyone saw Jesus jump and angels keep Him from hitting the ground, no one could deny Jesus is God’s Son, right? Jesus, however, was not persuaded. He recognized the temptation as an attempt to manipulate God to act. “Do not test the Lord your God,” Jesus replied, quoting Deuteronomy 6:16.

**What Scriptures have helped you avoid temptation and sin in your life?**

## GROUP EXPERIENCE

# DELIVER US FROM TEMPTATION

Read the passages below. Record insights on how internal desires and external influences tempt us and how we can resist those temptations.

INTERNAL DESIRES	EXTERNAL INFLUENCES
Romans 6:11-14	Luke 22:31-32
Galatians 5:17,19-21	Luke 23:33-39
Ephesians 2:1-3	Ephesians 6:10-18
James 1:12-15	1 Peter 5:8-9

How does Scripture help us to resist temptation?

What are some ways we can use Scripture proactively in the battle against temptation and sin?

**Key Concept:** Like Jesus, we can turn to Scripture to help us resist temptation.



## HEAD

How can we find passages of Scripture that will be helpful in our battle against temptation and sin?

**PRAYING SCRIPTURE**

Read and pray through Psalm 141 with a posture of relying on God in your battle against temptation and sin. Acknowledge His sanctifying work in your life, and request His protection from temptation and the Spirit's conviction for sin in your life.



## HEART

How does Satan make us doubt God's goodness and faithfulness in our lives?

### PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



## HANDS

What action steps will you take to avoid or resist temptation in your everyday life?

