

## When Temptation Comes

2026-01-04 – Luke 4:1-13



Before starting his public ministry, Jesus was baptized and spent 40 days in the wilderness. During those 40 days, he faced the devil and did what no other human had ever successfully done: he said no to each temptation. This week, we will look at what it means for us that he said no and how we can follow his example when we face temptation today.

Good morning. Happy New Year, everyone. I hope that you're still going strong in your New Year's resolution. It's only been four days. Okay. Mine is that the Bears would beat the Packers last year twice. So I've already succeeded in mine for the year. So set your sights low right now, I think. But I joke, I joke.

Well, it is good to see you all. If you've got your Bibles, I want to invite you to open to Luke chapter 4. We're going to be in verses 1 through 13 today.

We are starting a new series, but it's also not a new series. During Advent, we were in the Gospel of Luke, looking at the Good News and Great Joy of the coming of our King. And we're going to stay in the Gospel of Luke through Easter as we look at The Certainty of the Good News.

Luke is written by a guy named Luke, a Gentile doctor, who became a believer and then did everything he could to write out the details of the life of Jesus. He put them into an orderly account for a man named Theophilus. This is Luke chapter 1. And he did this in order that believers could trust with certainty in the instructions they have heard about the good news of Jesus Christ.

So our goal through this series is that we would walk in The Certainty of the Good News of the gospel, that we would stand on the word of God well.

### What will you do when temptation comes?

And to that end today, we are going to see our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ do exactly that as we look at the question of **What will you do when temptation comes?**

We are looking today at the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness in Luke 4:1–13. And out of what we see our Lord and Savior do is going to come a lot of principles that we can take in order to walk worthy before Him.

Because it's hard to resist temptation. In fact, in this world, if I can say boldly, one of the hardest things is that the world is trying to tell us there's no such thing as temptation. Whatever you do is good. Whatever you don't do, you don't do. There is no good or evil.

We see this in movies in the way there's no longer villains, but there's just complicated, misunderstood people that though they do evil, is it really evil or is it just their version of good? We see this in the news, which distorts on both sides, and we could spend hours on media, we could spend hours on social media, we could spend hours on all these things, but the reality is that what we are being bombarded with, internally and externally, is the idea that we choose good and evil. And if we choose our own good and evil, that there's no longer temptation. There's just what we decide is right.

The evil one in the garden sought to do this with the woman and the man. “Hey, did God really say? Did God say it was evil to do this? But wouldn't it be good if you did it anyways?” That's temptation. It's when we redefine good and evil and walk into sin. Temptation comes first and then sin, of course, but the reality is that we all face temptation. We face it from the world and we face it in our hearts because we are sinners.

And praise the Lord, we are saved by grace as we will talk about at the end of our service when we take communion together. But I want to ask you, **what will you do when temptation comes?** Because if you are a believer, you know that it comes. And you know that when it comes, if you're not prepared, we fall so readily. And so today we're going to look at how our Savior handled it in order to better understand how we should handle it going into this new year.

Let's pray.

*Father in heaven, we thank you for this day. We thank you, Lord, that you sent your Son, that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, that he lived a sinless life, resisting each and every temptation thrown at him. He died on the cross as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. He rose from the grave. He reigns in heaven and he is returning someday.*

*We thank you that through his work, for those of us who believe we have the Holy Spirit, and Lord, we pray the Spirit would be moving now, that it would be giving us eyes to see and ears to hear what your word has to say. Father, I pray you would speak to me and speak through me this morning, that these would be your words and not mine.*

*And we thank you, Lord, that as we pray all of this, we pray this in the name of Jesus, who never fell to temptation, but gave you glory and lived a perfect life. It is in his holy and precious name we pray. Amen.*

**What will you do when temptation comes?**

*When the devil “distorts” the Spirit’s leading, wield the Word to repel temptation*

Well, we're looking today at **What will you do when temptation comes?** And the first thing we're going to see is that **when the devil distorts the Spirit's leading, wield the word to repel temptation. Wield the word to repel temptation.**

**Then Jesus left the Jordan**, full of the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days to be tempted by the devil.

Luke 4:1-2a CSB

Luke 4:1 begins, ***Then Jesus left the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for 40 days to be tempted by the devil.***

Now, first and foremost, before we go any further, it says, ***“then Jesus left the Jordan.”*** Why was he at the Jordan? Well, in Luke 3:21–22, Jesus is baptized. And when he is baptized, the spirit descends like a dove and a voice says from heaven, ***“You are my beloved son, in you I am well pleased.”*** God declares that Jesus is his son.

And you may say, Matt, we already know that from Luke 1 and Luke 2. Gabriel said it in Luke 1 and 2. Now the voice of God speaks from heaven and makes abundantly clear that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Now right after this, you would expect, ***“then Jesus left the Jordan,”*** the next thing you would expect is the temptation. But if you've got your Bible open, you see a very long list of names. The Genealogy of Jesus (Luke 3:23-38) that takes us from Joseph to Adam, to the very first human made in the image of God. (The humanity of Jesus shown through a genealogy that traces to Adam)

Now in a storytelling critique, if I was an editor of a novel being written, the Gospel of Luke, I might say, hey, why are you putting that there? That should be an appendix. Right? Like it's kind of in a weird place, except, except this is the firm focus of the humanity of Jesus. We see he's fully God, and then we're reminded of the human line.

By the way as we talk about the temptation (Luke 4:1-13 – The Temptation of Jesus – The only human [from Adam on] to fully resist temptation) there's a giant list of names there for your sake I'm not going to read all of them but each and every name there I can assure you even though we don't know much about many of them each and every one of them when temptation came they fell. The stage is set that the son of God who is also a son from the line of David when he goes in the wilderness will face temptation. How will he handle it?

**Then Jesus left the Jordan**, full of the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days **to be tempted** by the devil.

Luke 4:1-2a CSB

It's important to note a couple other things. First off, he leaves ***full of the Holy Spirit***. This is by God's design, not the devil's schemes. What the devil does here works out for God's plans.

It's also important to note when it says *“for 40 days to be tempted by the devil,”* the temptation we can think of here is we can think it's the three temptations at the end. But the word to be tempted in the Greek is to be continually tempted. He spent 40 days in the wilderness where the devil did each and everything he could think of to tempt Jesus, and Jesus never fell once.

Lastly, before we move forward, it's important for us to have a right theology of the devil. Because in our modern world, if the devil is spoken of, he's either a comical horned goat man demon thing with red skin, or he's misunderstood, or he's an equal opposite to God. None of these are true. God is not a force of good and the devil is his equal and opposite. This is not yin and yang. The devil is created.

Later in this very passage, the devil is going to say, “I'll give you all the kingdoms of the world because they've been given to me.” The devil did not have authority even to rule without God allowing it because of man's fall.

It is important that we know this because as we talk about Jesus, we are talking about the one who is fully God, “this is my beloved son,” and the one who is fully man from the line of David. And as we talk about this, the Creator is being tempted by part of his creation. If we do not see this, we will minimize what is happening.

Sometimes, if you've ever been in a Bible study when you were in your early 20s and everyone's trying to be edgy, someone will say, well, could he have been tempted? What if Jesus would have fallen? Jesus Christ is fully God, meaning he is perfect and unchanging in every way. When he was in the wilderness being tempted, he could not fall, but he did endure temptation. He was hungry. He was tired. Throughout his ministry, we see times when he's exhausted, times when he experiences sorrow. We see times when he prays to God, “if there is any other way, but not my will, that yours be done.”

He could not fall, he did not fall. But it is important for us to know that he faced temptation. The distinction of Christ to us is because he was not from the seed of Adam. He came from a woman, but he was from the line of God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Because he was not from the line of Adam, he did not have internal temptation. It was all external forced upon him. And of course, he repelled all of it.

And so as we read this, we need to keep all of this in mind. This is not the devil who has more power than Jesus tempting him. Jesus has restrained some of the attributes of God while he's in human form, but he is still fully God.

He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over, he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” But Jesus answered him, “**It is written:** Man must not live on bread alone.”

Luke 4:2b-4 CSB

***So Jesus ate nothing during those days, and when they were over, he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”***

And here's the first temptation. You have the power to take care of a physical need, so do so. You have all this power. You've spent 40 days fasting and following the Lord. Now, just use your power to end your hunger.

Now, we don't understand this type of hunger. Jess and I were driving home from Iowa this week, and we're like, oh, what are we going to eat when we get home? Well, let's just pull up an app and type in and make sure the food's delivered as we get home. We have such power today that we don't even think of it. And that's like, well, you pay the delivery driver, but this time we'll do it. But we can talk in that terms, but that's a power that is an external. We think of food in a very different way today.

Jesus, after 40 days of fasting and of prayer, he's hungry. And his power is far more supreme than ours. He could just look and say, bread. and it would be so. And that's how the devil tempts him. He says, use your power for your own good rather than for following what the Lord has for you. It's a simple temptation, but it's a temptation to the Messiah. Just do whatever you want.

We know from the gospels that Jesus walks in accordance with the will of God, and the devil is saying, walk in your own will.

Jesus's response is, “***It is written, Man must not live on bread alone.***” (Deuteronomy 8:3)

And these words, when we read them, he's using the right scripture. He's in Deuteronomy chapter 8, and there are a couple things we need to understand about his quote. First and foremost, in the days in which Jesus lived, when somebody said a quote like that, “Man must not live on bread alone,” a good religious follower, someone who knew the Bible well, what they would do in response to that is they wouldn't just say, oh, those are words in the Bible somewhere else. They would think about the storyline of that passage.

Because when Jesus says, “***My God, my God, why have you forsaken me***” when he's on the cross, he's quoting a passage that if you read all of it, you realize that he is not in that moment saying God has forsaken him. He's speaking of his relationship with God. When a quote is made like this, we need to understand the context. Jesus understands it well.

Jesus, who has been in the wilderness 40 days in hunger, this is what he's quoting.

Remember that the Lord your God led you on the entire journey these forty years in the wilderness, so that he might humble you and test you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. He humbled you by letting you go hungry; then he gave you manna to eat, which you and your ancestors had not known, so that you might learn that **man does not live on bread alone** but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.  
Deuteronomy 8:2-3 CSB

*“Remember that the Lord your God led you on the entire journey these 40 years in the wilderness so that he might humble you and test you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. He humbled you by letting you go hungry, then he gave you manna to eat, which your ancestors had not known, so that you might learn that **man does not live on bread alone**, but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”* (Deuteronomy 8:2–3)

Do you see any parallels there to 40 days? There's a lot of them. And here's Jesus using the right scripture, the right context. He knows the storyline of scripture and he uses it.

Now on top of that, every quote that Jesus uses today comes from the book of Deuteronomy. And you may be like, well, you don't read Deuteronomy. You always get to the end of Exodus and then you skip to the New Testament because it gets kind of weird and there's all these things. No, but Deuteronomy in the Old Testament is the book that the kings, when they became the king of Israel, do you know what they were required to do? Write the book of Deuteronomy down and keep it with them at all times. A good king in Israel would fend off temptation through the book of Deuteronomy. And what does Jesus do? He uses the book of Deuteronomy. He so holds the storyline of scripture that everything he does in this passage aligns with it. We need to do the same.

He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over, he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” But Jesus answered him, “**It is written: Man must not live on bread alone.**”

Luke 4:2b-4 CSB

When Jesus says “*It is written, Man must not live on bread alone,*” he is **wielding the word of God well.**

**What will you do when temptation comes?**

*When the devil “distorts” the Spirit’s leading, wield the Word to repel temptation*

We talked in the fall about the armor of God. You've got the helm of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the belt of truth, the shoes of gospel peace. You've got the shield of faith, and you have one offensive weapon, the sword of the Spirit.

Believers, let me ask you, when you are struggling in sin, how often when you're struggling with temptation, how often do you turn to the word? I've talked to many believers who say, you know, I know I shouldn't do this, I know it's wrong, but in the moment of temptation, they don't turn to the word. They just sit there and say, I know it's wrong, I know it's wrong, I know it's wrong, and then they fall.

If you're not swinging the sword at least a little bit, you're not going to send the enemy off. It's a simple idea, but it's one that we fall short of all the time.

More than that, more than that, we need to wield the word well. If you just open up every time you have a sin issue in your life, you open up randomly to a place in Joshua, you're just reading the deeds of where Israel's land was gathered, you may say, the Bible doesn't help me.

But if you're struggling in pride and you open up to Proverbs 29 and you read that for the stiff-necked who don't listen, suddenly their neck will be broken. If as a parent you struggle with, I know I need to discipline my child, but it would be easier to just in this moment let it pass. Well without the rod you'll just spoil the child. Without discipline you're not going to like where your child ends up. That temptation if you know what the word says and promises you're not going to fall to it. If you know the words in James 3 about the tongue, you're not going to gossip. Because you know gossip sets the world afire. If we know the word and the storyline of scripture, when those temptations arise we're not just going to say I know this is wrong we're going to say I know what right is. This is important. Jesus doesn't just say random Bible verses he speaks the truth exactly as it applies to the situation. You may say well I'll never know the word that well. I won't either, but shame on us if we're not trying. Shame on us if we're not looking.

In your bulletin, there's a little chart. If you're struggling with pride or lust or these different things maybe read these verses this week. Spend time in these passages this week. Think about them. Pray through them. Because the reality is when we struggle in sin, we need to have the word to stand on. We need to wield the word if we're going to repel temptation.

**What will you do when temptation comes?**

*When the devil "distorts" the Spirit's leading, wield the Word to repel temptation*

*When the devil "distorts" the Father's glory, trust the Word to reveal the truth*

And this leads us to the second point we see in the passage. **When the devil "distorts" the Father's glory, trust the Word to reveal the truth trust.** The word to reveal the truth.

So he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 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. If you, then, will worship me, all will be yours.” And Jesus answered him, “**It is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.**”

Luke 4:5-8 CSB

***The devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And you may say, well, what does this mean exactly? He shows him a vision and says, “All the kingdoms of the world can be yours. 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. If you then will worship me, all will be yours.”***

And what is the temptation here? The devil is saying, worship and follow me. It's similar to what happened in Eden when the temptation was, instead of being made in God's image, if you eat from this tree, you will be like God.

I don't think the devil knows Jesus is going to be crucified because then he might have worked against it. The devil is not all-knowing the way God is. He does not see the future the way God does. But what I think when I read this passage is that Jesus knows what this temptation is saying. Jesus knows that in Philippians 2, he humbled himself to the point of death, even death on the cross, so that God would lift him up and at the name of Jesus, every knee would bow and tongue confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

And to Jesus, the temptation in this moment is you can skip the cross and have the glory. But Jesus says “No.” Do you ever wonder about his love for you? Multiple times in his ministry he says I will follow the Lord's will other than doing what I would prefer and praise the Lord he did that because that is why we take communion.

When the devil gives this temptation Jesus responds “**Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.**” This is from Deuteronomy chapter 6. When the Israelites in the promise or they're not in the promised land yet but Moses had just told them “Hey, when you go into the promised land You're to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.” You are to say this and repeat it and pass it on to your children year after year, generation after generation, so they are prepared. And when you enter the promised land, do not worship the gods there, but fear and trust and worship the Lord.

Jesus is quoting Deuteronomy 6:10–15 in order to say here, I'm not going to follow your plan. I'm not going to worship anything less than God Almighty.

**What will you do when temptation comes?**

*When the devil “distorts” the Spirit’s leading, wield the Word to repel temptation*

*When the devil “distorts” the Father’s glory, trust the Word to reveal the truth*

Jesus trusts that the word is true, and he follows in that, and we should do the same.

Now, what does this mean for us in practical terms? Whenever I think about this idea, the idea of **trusting the word to reveal the truth**, I think about all of the ways the world utterly distorts the truth.

As a young man, when I struggled with lust, one of the things that I heard regularly was, “Hey, Matt, that's just how you were made. It's not your fault. It's how you were designed.” As if Adam in the Garden of Eden was sinful. We were made in the image of God. We are not beasts.

When we study the word and stand on the foundation of the word, we are going to have to wrestle with the reality that what the world says is permissible is not. When we study the word well, we are going to reject so many things that we are being taught.

As a pastor, one of the conversations I get asked about a lot, people ask me, well, how do you deal with male and female roles in marriage? How do you deal with male and female roles in eldership, things like that? And do you know if I just started spouting my opinions, and I've seen people who do this, it's always disappointing, because when you talk about your opinions, things just crumble.

But every time I've talked to somebody where I just flip to what it says in Timothy or Titus or what it says in the word and I say, look, here are the foundations. Here are the foundations in Genesis, **male and female, he created them**. The male is the head, the female is the helper. Every time I go to the New Testament and say he is clear about who an elder should be, the reality is, that we don't have to worry about the crumbling of truth. We have to stand on what is already there.

And I say these things because in our modern world, the things that creep into the church are things that creep into the church because the temptation is not met at the door. The temptation lingers and slips in, and all of a sudden we're fighting over things that Scripture is abundantly clear about. And when we do that, we watch as truth erodes in the church, and what a silly and wrong thing. We should not be fighting within the body of Christ because we should be trusting that the word is worthy to stand on. **Trust the word to reveal the truth**.

When Jesus is tempted over and over, what he does is he points back to the word. We should do the same. When we talk to people about the Bible, we should not be ashamed of what it says. We should not be worried about how people will respond when they hear the truth.

That is one of, I think, the greatest temptations in our modern world is that the Bible is problematic. You look at what is happening in our world where if you speak against something,

people say it's hate speech or this or that. And we live in a world that just does not want any measure of absolute truth if it is founded in scripture. And that is all the more reason to stand on it.

Read the book of Acts and you will see that if we are not going to stand on our convictions, we will fall. The book of Acts is full of believers that despite the growing persecution, again and again they give glory to God and they trust his word and they proclaim Christ's death and resurrection. We are called to do the same. We need to trust the word to reveal the truth.

When we're in the world talking to others and we're tempted to falter, tempted to kind of fall back away from them or fold in because we're not sure how, we need to trust that the word can stand on its own and we need to speak in its favor. If we do not do this, we are going to fold inward, and that is not what we are called to do as followers of Jesus.

When the devil distorts the Father's glory, tries to twist the truth, trust the word to reveal the truth.

**What will you do when temptation comes?**

*When the devil "distorts" the Spirit's leading, wield the Word to repel temptation*

*When the devil "distorts" the Father's glory, trust the Word to reveal the truth*

*When the devil "distorts" the Word of God, know the Word well to reject his lies*

And this brings us to the last point in this passage. **When the devil distorts the word of God, know the word well to reject his lies. Know the word well to reject his lies.**

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. For **it is written**: He will give his angels orders concerning you, to protect you, and they will support you with their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." And Jesus answered him, "**It is said**: **Do not test the Lord your God.**"

Luke 4:9-12 CSB

***The devil took Jesus to Jerusalem and 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, for it is written." He's quoting scripture now. Twice Jesus has said, "for it is written," and now the devil says, all right, "for it is written." "He will give his angels orders concerning you to protect you, and they will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."***

And I need to set the stage for you. Because the temple has two places that you could argue are the pinnacle. Scholars debate this. It's either he's standing on the top of the most holy of holy places on the outside, on the roof of it, or there's in one corner of the temple, there's this tall

tower. But in either place that he's at, he would be up incredibly high. Remember, the temple curtain is 60 feet tall. And so the temple is a massive building.

And wherever he's at, the idea here, if you've ever seen superhero movies, you know the scene where everyone's like, oh, we're losing, we're dying. And then the superhero and like lands in their midst.

The temptation here: drop into the temple grounds in power.

The temptation here is reveal yourself to be the Messiah in power.

The temptation here is come in strength the way the people are looking for instead of how he enters Jerusalem. He comes in on a donkey. He comes in proclaiming peace. He comes in like a lamb led to the slaughter and the devil is saying don't do that. Come in strength and yet Jesus is going to turn the world upside down through his death and resurrection. He rejects fully what the devil says.

Now it's important to note If you're thinking, well I don't know the word as well as the devil. If he comes at me with this. Well, I want to tell you, if you go look at what the devil is quoting, there's a very fascinating thing here. The devil misquotes, probably not on accident.

For he will give his angels orders concerning you,  
to protect you **in all your ways.**  
They will support you with their hands  
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

Psalm 91:11-12 CSB

The quote the devil says is "**He will give his angels orders concerning you to protect you, and they will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.**" But what Psalm 91 says is, "**For he will give his angels orders concerning you to protect you in all your ways.**" (Psalm 91:11–12)

And the language of "in all your ways" in the book of Psalms, Psalm 1 talks about, **don't walk in the way of the wicked, for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.** The idea of way or path in the book of Psalms is when you are walking righteously, the Lord is with you.

If the devil had properly quoted, Jesus would have just looked at him and said, you said it. But by omitting those words, the devil is trying to twist and distort. And this isn't the first time he's done it. "Did God really say, you cannot eat from any tree or you will die?" The twist, the distort, or if you see it, if you look at it. And then she said, "if you touch it". And the point is the distortion happens and then keeps going because she doesn't correct it. And the man who's standing next to her doesn't correct it either in the garden.

The devil misquotes scripture and Jesus responds, ***“It is said, Do not test the Lord your God.”*** (Deuteronomy 6:16)

And I love that it goes from “it is written,” “it is written,” to “it is said.” Because “it is said,” again, he's quoting Deuteronomy chapter 6, he's in verses 15 through 20 now. But also with “it is said,” he's not just saying it's written, but he's saying, here's a right interpretation of what is written. It's like trash talking. It's saying, no. He's repelling in full measure. He's saying, you can't twist this with me. Jesus is literally like the word made flesh to dwell among us. And he's like, you are not going to distort my word. He says, ***“Do not test the Lord your God.”***

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*When the devil “distorts” the Spirit’s leading, wield the Word to repel temptation*

*When the devil “distorts” the Father’s glory, trust the Word to reveal the truth*

*When the devil “distorts” the Word of God, know the Word well to reject his lies*

When the devil distorts the word of God, we need to know the word well to reject his lies. We need to wield the word, we need to trust the word, and we need to know the word well.

I hope you see there's kind of one point here. There's different angles to it. If we're going to resist temptation, we need to know the Word of God well, and we need to wield it, and we need to see it as the source of truth. If we don't do that, we are going to fall. We are going to fall hard, because outside of the truth, everything crumbles.

This is Jesus talking about build your house upon the rock, not upon sand where the house built upon sand stumbles. If you want to build your house on the rock, you build it on the word of God.

In very practical terms, if you're struggling with pride, and if you're not struggling with pride, guess what? That means you're really struggling with pride. But if you're struggling with pride, you need to go to places like Proverbs and James, and you need to wrestle with how wise and how mighty you think you are. And you need to use that because otherwise, in your pride, you're going to become stiff-necked. You're going to harden your heart. You're going to look more like Pharaoh than Christ.

If you struggle with gossip: if you struggle with gossip, I want to tell you that the lie that we tell ourselves is comparative. Well, that's not gossip. I know what gossip is. If you struggle with gossip, the problem with gossip is it's not just one thing. The reality is, well, I just need to inform them. It's not what you think, or I was just helping, or I was just this or that. Gossip is something that we rationalize.

None of the sins we fall into do we fall into saying, I'm doing evil right now. What we do is we comparatively talk about the evil of others instead of wielding the word well. We try and set the

standard away from ourselves, because if we set the standard away from ourselves, we can walk in comfort. Had I been in the garden, I wanted to beat him from the fruit. Therefore, I'm a little bit better than Adam. No. Again, if you're struggling with pride.

If you're struggling with lust and you say, I know it's wrong, you need to know what scripture says about it. You need to go to 2 Samuel. You need to dig into David and his foolishness of seeing, desiring, and taking a woman he knew was not his. You need to see the outcomes of that you need to read Psalm 51 and his repentance you need to wrestle with these things. If you think your sin issue is unique and no one's ever faced it, I promise you, you need to read things about pride. I keep coming back to pride because it's the most devastating of the sin issues. It's the one that if we don't walk in humility it pulls us down more and more. The blindest Christians are the ones who walk in pride. It's pride that informs the other sins as well, because we think, well, I'm strong enough in my own strength.

Jesus, by his will, could have just had Satan go away. Instead, what he shows us repeatedly is he wields the word that we would understand what we should do.

I hope you see this, because the reality in the modern church is a lot of times we don't think about the fight we should be having. Instead, we fold. The modern Christian church, and I'm speaking broadly, when you look at different denominations that are folding in what they believe and walking away from the truth, there is this reality that it is so simple, that when you say, well, what went wrong? Well, what went wrong was that they were not wielding the word of God well. And each individual, we are called to do this.

And you may say, Pastor Matt, what happened? I'm going to fall. I'm going to fail. Yeah. You are. I don't say this all to you saying it as I've got this all figured out from up here. I fall too. But what I want to tell you is Jesus, when he came, you know, he could have just come as a baby. And when Herod slaughtered all the babies, he could have just died there, but he didn't. He came and he lived a sinless life to show us how to walk before him.

We have the Holy Spirit so that we would walk well before him. We have been redeemed by the blood of Christ so that as we walk in this life with the Spirit, we can do the good works that have been prepared for us. Every time we resist temptation, every time we walk in the truth, we are doing what God has created us to do.

And it is such a sad reality when Christians don't even bother to start the fight, when we fold to sin, when we let the world dictate what is wicked and righteous. We cannot do that. If we do that, we are diminishing all that our Lord has done.

And then you say, Pastor Matt, but I know I'm going to fail. One of my issues is a fear of failure. Well, we just saying, "Who the son sets free is free indeed. I'm a child of God. That's who I am." That's from scripture.

Your status, if you are a believer as a child of God, is not built upon your strength or righteousness, but upon his. And every time as you seek to resist temptation that you fail and fall, it is another time to look to the one who never did.

I want to make sure this is very clear, because if we are not ready to go to battle **wielding the word, trusting the word, and knowing the word well**, we are going to fall again and again.

After the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time.  
Luke 4:13 CSB

And the other reality, believers, if you think, well, I did it once and it worked, but then I failed. **After the devil had finished tempting Jesus he departed from him for a time.** For a time the devil bides his time with Jesus. The devil does not leave us alone and say well it didn't work. I'll give up.

The more people you talk to in the Christian walk, the more wisdom you hear from people, what you are going to hear again and again as people get older, it's not that they stop having temptation. It's that the ones who do well and who walk righteously are those who learn to lean on the word and learn to live by the word. This is the image that we get Old and New Testament. This is being transformed to look more and more like Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. You have been given everything you need to resist temptation. The problem is often we don't even go to battle ready to resist.

Temptation	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Fear to stand for the Gospel	Acts 3:1-4:31	Acts 6:1-8:8	Matthew 25	2 Timothy 1-2	2 Timothy 3-4	Luke 4
Gossip	James 3	2 Timothy 2	Titus 1-3	1 Timothy 5	Proverbs 20-21	Luke 4
Greed	James 4-5	2 Corinthian 8-9	Hebrews 12-13	Matthew 6	Luke 18	Luke 4
Lust	Proverbs 6	Galatians 5	Matthew 5	2 Samuel 11-12	Psalms 51	Luke 4
Pride	James 1	James 2	James 3	James 4	James 5	Luke 4
Sloth (laziness)	Ephesians 4	2 Thess 3	Matthew 25	1 Timothy 5	Philippians 2	Luke 4

I want to encourage you, this week as you go out, and I want to just guess for a moment that as I've been talking, there's been something I've said, a sin issue. Maybe it's lust, maybe it's pride, maybe greed, gossip. I've got a list of seven. Maybe it's idleness or sloth or laziness. There's a whole generation of young men that just sit around on phones or sit around on computers and young women. I don't want to, but video games, whatever it may be, whatever is that temptation. Maybe it's the fear to stand for the gospel.

How many times I talk to believers who don't know what to say in the moment when they need to say something? That's in your bulletin and I want to encourage you, whatever it is that's been popping up that you're like, oh, I don't like it when he mentions that one. Or I know I struggle with that one. And this isn't an exhaustive list. I know the Catholic Church has like the seven deadly sins. There's many sins. There are many sins. And so whatever that sin issue is, You need to lean into the word. You need to know the word well enough to repel that sin issue when it comes up.

If I can say boldly, when you know Bible verses well, you know all the angles that come with that. One of my favorite verses to get misquoted is people talk about “iron sharpens iron” as discipleship within the church. But then they forget that iron sharpens iron means that everywhere else in your life, you're being shaped by those around you and influenced by those around you. Does that make sense? It's not just a good thing, iron sharpening iron, not even in that passage when you read it in context, because it's the heart of man reflects the man, or the heart of man reflects the man. That's a few verses later.

There is a reality that we need to know the word well enough, not to just feel good about the words we read, but to know the storyline of scripture so that when the world seeks to erode the truth, we stand on the word of God.

**What will you do when temptation comes?**

*When the devil “distorts” the Spirit’s leading, wield the Word to repel temptation*

*When the devil “distorts” the Father’s glory, trust the Word to reveal the truth*

*When the devil “distorts” the Word of God, know the Word well to reject his lies*

So what do we do with this? **We wield the word well.** We study the word well. When we feel temptation, we make sure that what's coming out of our mouth is the word of God. And you may say, well, what about when I'm at work? Matt, you don't know it, but there's someone at work that every time they speak, I want to yell at them and I'm angry in my head and bitter. And I'm like, then maybe don't say it out loud, but maybe in your head, be reciting a passage of scripture about anger and about bitterness and about what God has to say.

When someone else is gossiping and you're like, well, now I'm a party to it, in your head when you think about James 3 and you think about the tongue sets wildfires, do you know what you can do? You can say, I don't need to be a part of this conversation. You can walk away.

The point of this is whatever it is, we need the word to handle these moments well.

Hopefully your New Year's resolution involved Bible reading in some way, shape, or form. I know a lot of people start to read the Bible in a year, hopefully something like that. But what I want to encourage you in is look at the quality of what you're reading. Look at the temptation you are facing and use the word to land well.

In a moment, we're going to take communion. And when we take communion, we're going to praise the Lord that his son was sinless. We're going to praise the Lord that Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, never fell, that he wielded the word well each and every moment, that he willingly died for our sins as a perfect sacrifice. He rose from the grave, he ascended to heaven, and he sent his spirit that we could follow in his example.

I want to invite you, though, for just the next couple minutes to just pray. If you're a believer, I want to ask you to be praying right now "Lord, I know this is the place where I fall. This is the place where I fail." And to be praying, not just, "Lord, help me to not fall or fail," but be praying, "Lord, what in your word do I need to know?" And then take and make a plan for this week to spend time in the word so you're ready to not fall to that again.

If you're here and you're not a believer, I want to encourage you to spend this time praying that the Lord would open your eyes to the wonderful truth that his sinless son died for your sins. If you're not a believer, communion is not for you. Scripture makes that very clear. I don't say this to exclude you, but to tell you I don't want to give you false hope of salvation, because the only salvation we can receive comes from believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So I'm going to go. I'm going to invite you to pray. And in a couple of minutes, I'll come back up. We'll take the elements together, and we will close in prayer in one last song.

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***On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."***

***In the same way also, he took the cup after supper and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.***

Let's pray.

*God in heaven, we thank you that you sent your son and that he lived a perfect life, that he resisted every temptation, we thank you that we have a savior and a Lord who knows what temptation feels like and yet has never fallen. We thank you that he though we ask Father if there's any other way but not my will be done we thank you Lord that he held the cup. We thank you that he died on the cross for our sins he died a perfect sacrifice that we could stand before you redeemed by his blood. And we thank you that he rose, he ascended into heaven. We thank you for your spirit and for your promise that he will return someday and put an end to sin forever.*

*We praise you, Lord, for this time that we have. And we pray, Lord, that as we go out, Lord, we confess, I confess, Lord, that I fall to temptation far more than I should because I do not wield your word. And I pray, Lord, that for each of us, that we would move forward today, wielding your word well.*

*In the moments, Lord, when we feel our pride welling up, or we compare, or where we walk in wickedness, Lord, because we think, well, it's not that bad. Or where we allow the world to permeate and to speak into us in ways that we should not, Lord, we pray that through wielding your word and through the work of your Spirit that we would stand strong and repel the evil one.*

*We thank you, Lord, that you have given us your Spirit and your word that we are equipped to stand. And we pray, Lord, that we would do that together as we seek as one body to follow in your name. We thank you for the certainty of the gospel. We thank you for the death and resurrection of your Son. And it is in his holy and precious name we pray. Amen.*

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We heard a great word today from Luke 4. And for our benediction, I want to pull over Romans chapter 6. It says, ***What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin, so the grace may increase? God forbid, we died to sin. How can we live in it any longer?*** (Romans 6:1–2)

Christ overcame and He's freed us from the penalty of sin and from the power of sin. He hasn't freed us from the presence of sin yet. But that's why we wield the Word by His grace, by His Spirit, that the Spirit through our hearts, as we're in the Word, that He gives us victory over sin.

***“What shall we say? Should we continue any longer in sin so the grace can just increase? God forbid we die to sin from its power and from its penalty through Christ our Lord.”*** (Romans 6:1–2)

Amen and amen. Let's go in peace.



Digging Deeper – **When Temptation Comes** – Luke 4:1-13

1. What stood out to you from the sermon?

**Read Luke 4:1-13**

2. What stands out to you as you read through the passage?
3. What does it mean for us that Jesus faced temptation?
4. What is the consistent way in which Jesus responds to temptation?
5. What should change about our worship knowing what Jesus has faced and overcome?

The next three questions can be answered out loud as a group, or privately. The point of these three questions is to think about temptation that you regularly struggle with, and what it would look like to respond in a similar way as Christ did.

6. Think about a temptation that you regularly face in how you act. What would be a Bible verse to have on hand that would help you resist sin when this temptation arises?
7. Think about a second temptation that you regularly face in how you speak. What would be a Bible verse to have on hand that would help you resist sin when this temptation arises?
8. Think about a third temptation that you regularly face in how you think. What would be a Bible verse to have on hand that would help you resist sin when this temptation arises?
9. Take sometime to end in prayer by sharing prayer requests and praying for one another.