



Daily Devotionals

[click here to go to website – stmatthewsrichmond.org](http://stmatthewsrichmond.org)

MATTHEW 4:1-11 RESISTING TEMPTATION

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.

The Temptation of Jesus by the devil was really about an overall disobedience to the will of God, rather than an attempt to lure him into several isolated acts of immorality. What was actually at stake was Jesus' status as the perfect lover of God, the One who would reverse the effects of the Fall. It was the attempt to waylay the unfolding of the story of redemption, a story that had its roots in the original creation of everything as "good," and man as "very good" (Genesis 1:31).

What empowered Jesus to resist acting out of fear rather than faith, and therefore succumbing to the wiles of the devil, was the state of his spiritual health. Jesus had been obedient to the Spirit's leading (4:1) and he had fasted as a spiritual discipline to better hear the Word of the Lord in the wilderness. Furthermore, he knew the Scriptures well enough to refute even the most tempting of the temptations. Jesus had gone through the discipline to put on the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-17).

The antidote against the temptation to act out of fear rather than faith is the trustworthiness of God in our ongoing struggle. We find the record of the trustworthiness of God in the books of the Bible and are convicted of the truth of that trustworthiness through the Holy Spirit. In addition we are encouraged to live life based on that trustworthiness by the "cloud of witnesses" with which we are surrounded (Hebrews 12:1).

As we train and prepare our bodies for various physical challenges, we must also practice the discipline of spiritual fitness if we are to be ready to resist the temptations with which we are confronted. We open ourselves to the power of the Spirit through prayer, being a committed part of a faith-filled fellowship, and being grounded in Scripture.

Look with compassion, O Lord, on me as I strain to live in this world in obedience to your commandments. Empower me by your Holy Spirit to resist the distractions and lies of the devil. Keep me in your Word and ever ready to defend

the Truth through the use of your Word. But most of all, Father, clear my vision so that I can see Jesus and faithfully follow where he leads me, which is to your glory and my salvation. Amen.

Chuck+