

# STOP, DROP, & ROLL - Devotional

## Day 1

Matthew 2:1–3, 7–8, 12, 16; John 10:10

### Devotional

Before Jesus could ever preach a sermon, heal the sick, or go to the cross, there was already a death sentence hanging over His head. Herod's rage in Matthew 2 is not just the story of an insecure king; it is the visible expression of an invisible war. Behind Herod stands Satan, determined to stop God's rescue plan before it ever gets started. John 10:10 pulls back the curtain: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy." The enemy's agenda has not changed. He still seeks to kill (physically if possible, spiritually if not), to steal joy, peace, faith, and hope, and to destroy marriages, families, ministries, and integrity. Herod's slaughter is an early example of the same dark strategy that continues today. But John 10:10 does not end with the enemy. Jesus says, "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." This means no life is "neutral ground." If Jesus is not actively being trusted and followed, the enemy is quietly (or loudly) working. And if Jesus is being followed, the enemy's opposition often intensifies. Life makes more sense when it is understood as a battlefield where Jesus has already secured the decisive victory, but the enemy is still trying to inflict as much damage as possible before his final defeat.

### Application

**Reflection:** What areas of your life feel particularly attacked, drained, or chaotic right now—relationships, emotions, finances, inner thought life? When looking back over the past year, where can evidence be seen of the enemy trying to "steal, kill, and destroy"—and where can evidence be seen of Jesus giving life?

**Action:** Choose one area that feels under attack (for example: marriage, mental health, temptation, finances). Write it down and label it clearly as a battlefield, not just "bad luck" or "stress." Share that one battlefield with a trusted believer (friend, spouse, mentor, group) this week and ask that person to pray specifically against the enemy's work and for Jesus' life to prevail in that area.

**Prayer:** "Lord Jesus, thank You for coming that people may have life and have it abundantly. Open eyes to see where the enemy is trying to steal, kill, and destroy. Expose his schemes. Help there be agreement with You about the reality of spiritual warfare. In each battlefield that comes to mind, push back the works of the enemy and bring Your life, Your truth, and Your peace. In Your name, amen."

## Day 2

### Matthew 4:1–11

#### Devotional

Matthew 4 shows Jesus at one of His most human moments. Forty days of fasting leaves Him genuinely hungry, weak, and physically depleted. This is when the Spirit leads Him into the wilderness “to be tempted by the devil.” The timing is important. The enemy often comes hardest when people are tired, lonely, hungry, or emotionally drained.

Notice the pattern of the temptations:

Flesh (Physical appetite), Pride (Testing God / self-exaltation), Eyes (Power and glory without suffering)

In all three, the structure is similar: A lie or half-truth targeting a real human desire. Followed by Jesus refusing to reason with the temptation and instead replacing it with God’s Word.

His pattern shows how His followers can fight against temptation.

Temptation is not defeated by sheer willpower or clever arguments with the enemy, but by clinging to God’s truth above feelings, urges, and shortcuts.

#### Application

**Reflection:** When temptation comes, where does it usually strike first: bodily desires (flesh), ego/pride, or craving for control and comfort (eyes/glory)? When temptation shows up, is God’s Word usually present in your mind, or are your responses mostly based on emotions and impulses?

**Action:** Choose one of Jesus’ responses from Matthew 4 (verses 4, 7, or 10). Write it on a card or in your phone and keep it visible today. Each time a tempting thought or urge arises (even if it feels small), stop and verbally or silently repeat that verse instead of just arguing with the urge.

**Prayer:** “Jesus, thank You for standing firm in the wilderness when Adam, and everyone since, has fallen. Thank You that Your victory counts for Your people. Teach how to fight like You fought—by trusting the Father and speaking His Word. When temptation hits today, bring Scripture to mind and strengthen the will to choose truth over lies. In Your name, amen.”

## Day 3

### Matthew 16:21–23

#### Devotional

Peter loves Jesus. He has left everything to follow Him. He has just confessed, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Yet within a few verses, Jesus turns to that same Peter and says, “Get behind me, Satan.”

What happened? Jesus is explaining the Father’s plan: He must go to Jerusalem, suffer, be killed, and be raised on the third day. This is the heart of the gospel. There is no salvation without the cross. But Peter pulls Jesus aside and rebukes Him: “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” In human terms, this sounds loyal and protective. In spiritual terms, it is deadly. Jesus detects the real source behind Peter’s words. The same tempter who offered Jesus glory without a cross in Matthew 4 is now using the voice of a close friend to offer the same thing again: a path that avoids suffering, sacrifice, and obedience to the Father’s costly will. So Jesus does not gently correct; He rebukes sharply: “You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” This scene warns that counsel must always be filtered through Scripture, not just friendship, emotion, or sincerity. It also encourages humility—if Peter can be used in this way for a moment, anyone can. That is why there must be constant return to “the things of God,” letting His Word reset desires and thinking.

#### Application

**Reflection:** What kind of advice or influence from others tends to pull you away from costly obedience—urging comfort, shortcuts, or compromise? Where might advice from someone loved be more about “the things of man” than “the things of God”?

**Action:** Identify one voice in your life that has significant influence (friend, family member, podcast, author, etc.). This week, evaluate their regular messages through Scripture: do they more often reinforce self-protection and comfort, or surrender and obedience to Jesus? Ask God for discernment before making any significant decision: “Is this counsel aligned with Your Word, or just what feels good?”

**Prayer:** “Lord Jesus, thank You for loving Peter enough to correct him and for loving Your people enough to preserve this story. Grant discernment to recognize when words—even from people who care—are pulling away from the cross-shaped path You call for. Guard from being a mouthpiece for worldly thinking in the lives of others. Fix minds on the things of God, not just the things of man. In Your name, amen.”

## Day 4

### 2 Corinthians 10:3–5, 1 Peter 5:8

#### Devotional

Most of life's battles look physical: conflicts at work, tension in marriage, anxiety, financial pressure, hidden habits. But Scripture insists that a great deal of what is faced has a spiritual core. Paul writes, "Though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh." The weapons used are not merely human strategies—willpower, anger, manipulation, distraction. Instead, they "have divine power to destroy strongholds." What are these strongholds? Paul describes "arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God," and then says, "we take every thought captive to obey Christ."

That means the real battleground is often between the ears. The enemy plants lies, distortions, and accusations that exalt themselves against God's truth. When such thoughts run free, they become strongholds—deep mental and emotional patterns that resist God's Word. Taking thoughts captive is not passive. It is an active, ongoing discipline of recognizing a thought, refusing to let it rule, and deliberately bringing it under Christ's authority. Peter adds another layer: "Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." The enemy is not distant, idle, or indifferent. He is roaming, watching for an opening—fatigue, resentment, isolation, pride.

#### Application

**Reflection:** When anxious, tempted, or angry thoughts show up, what usually happens—are they entertained, argued with, or ignored until they grow? What kinds of recurring thoughts in life most clearly contradict the character and promises of God?

**Action:** Today, pick one recurring destructive thought (for example, "I'm alone," "I'll always be this way," "I have no value"). Write it down. Under it, write a specific Scripture that contradicts that lie (for example: Hebrews 13:5, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Psalm 139:14). Each time that thought arises today, "stop, drop, and roll": pause, pray a short prayer ("Jesus, I bring this thought to You"), and recite the chosen verse.

**Prayer:** "Father, thank You that the weapons You provide have divine power to destroy strongholds. Reveal the lies and thought patterns that are not from You. Teach how to stop ignoring the spiritual battle, to drop in prayer rather than panic, and to roll by replacing lies with Your truth. Make minds and hearts captive to Christ, not to fear or temptation. In Jesus' name, amen."

## Day 5

Matthew 16:24–25, John 10:10

### Devotional

The enemy whispers, "Protect yourself. Avoid pain. Do whatever feels right. You deserve to be happy." Jesus says, "Deny yourself. Take up your cross. Follow Me into places that may be costly." At first glance, Jesus' path seems like losing and the enemy's path seems like winning. But Jesus insists it is the reverse. To "save" life on selfish terms—grasping for comfort, avoiding obedience, controlling outcomes—eventually loses life: emptiness, slavery to sin, broken relationships, spiritual death. To "lose" life for Jesus' sake—surrendering rights, preferences, and ambitions to His Lordship—leads to truly finding life: peace with God, freedom from sin's dominion, a clear conscience, eternal hope.

The "abundant life" Jesus offers is not a guarantee of ease or earthly success. It is a life rooted in Him, secure beyond circumstances, fruitful in love and holiness, and anchored in the hope of resurrection. The cross comes before the crown—for Jesus, and for all who belong to Him. Following Jesus will cost something: reputation, habits, certain relationships, sinful pleasures, maybe even career opportunities. But not following Him costs infinitely more. The enemy's endgame is destruction; Jesus' endgame is eternal joy.

### Application

**Reflection:** Where has following Jesus already cost something—and how has He met you in that cost? What area of life is being clung to most tightly, an area where Jesus might be saying, "Lose this for My sake, and you will really find life"?

**Action:** Identify one concrete way following Jesus might cost you this week (for example: confessing a hidden sin, ending a compromising relationship, returning something taken, setting a boundary, forgiving someone). Commit that specific act of obedience to the Lord in prayer, and if appropriate, share it with a trusted believer who can encourage and support that obedience.

**Prayer:** "Lord Jesus, You denied Yourself, took up the cross, and laid down Your life so that people could live. Thank You that You do not sugarcoat the cost of following You, but You also promise real, abundant life in You. Show where self is being protected instead of being denied. Give courage to take up the cross in whatever specific way You are calling. Help there be trust that whatever is lost for Your sake will be more than repaid in the life You give. In Your powerful name, amen."