

ALL !N WITH JORDAN EASLEY

Face To Face With The Devil

Encounters With Jesus | Part 4 | Matthew 4:1-11

INTRODUCTION

We all love the mountaintop moments in our walk with God. These are the spiritual highs when His presence feels near, His voice seems louder, and we just know He is moving. But when you experience spiritual victory, you can almost always expect a spiritual attack. If it can happen to Jesus, it will most certainly happen to us.

Immediately after His baptism, a powerful moment of divine affirmation, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. He went directly from a heart-to-heart moment with the Father to a face-to-face encounter with the devil. This passage is more than a historical event; it is a model for our own victory. It's not whether we won't be tempted, but how we should respond when we are.

KEY POINTS

1. Preparation for the Battle

Before Jesus performed a single miracle or preached a single sermon, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. After fasting for forty days, He was physically weak, but He remained spiritually strong. We do not fall into sin because we are weak; we fall into sin because we have not prepared to battle the devil in our weakness. Weakness is not the absence of power, it is the posture that positions us for God's power. Your preparation determines your preservation. We must sharpen our swords long before the enemy shows up by committing to a life of devotion, staying in the Word, and connecting with other believers.

2. Presentation of the Bait

The devil's primary strategy is to distort your identity and cause you to question what God has already declared about you. He whispered to Jesus, "If you are the Son of God..." tempting Him to prove an identity that was already secure. The enemy still uses this tactic today, tempting us to meet legitimate needs in illegitimate ways or to test God by misusing Scripture. Doubting God is the foundation for disobeying God. This is why we need discernment that comes from knowing not just a few Bible verses, but the very heart and character of God.

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3. Power in the Book

The devil offered Jesus a shortcut to kingship, a crown without a cross. In each of the three temptations, Jesus responded in the same way: with the Word of God. He did not use His emotions, His logic, or even His divine power. He consistently replied, "It is written," quoting Scripture to combat the lies of the enemy. You cannot defeat the devil with willpower; you need Word-power. The Word of God is not just information, it is a weapon. When Satan speaks lies, we must speak Scripture. To do that, we have to treasure His Word in our hearts.

4. Protection from the Father

After Jesus stood firm and commanded the devil to leave, the enemy fled, and angels came to serve Him. The breakthrough often comes after the temptation, not during it. This is our encouragement to hold on and not give in. The enemy is persistent, but he is not permanent. Every test has an expiration date, but God's faithfulness never does. Because of Christ, we are not fighting for victory, we are fighting from victory. God does not just send you into battle; He shows up after the fight to refresh you.

Our victory over temptation begins long before the battle. It starts with preparation. A passive spiritual life leaves us vulnerable, like a soldier walking into a gunfight with an empty holster. We must be proactive by filling our lives with prayer, time in the Word, and authentic community. These disciplines fill us with the Holy Spirit, who empowers us to stand strong even when we feel weak.

The enemy's primary target is our identity in Christ. If he can make us doubt who God says we are, he can lead us into disobedience. Our defense and our offense is the Word of God. Knowing what God has declared about us as His chosen, forgiven, and empowered children is our shield. Speaking the truth of Scripture is our sword. We must hide God's Word in our hearts so we are ready to fight back against the lies of discouragement, bitterness, and failure.

Finally, remember that temptation is a season. Jesus has already won the ultimate victory over sin and death. Because He is in you, you are not fighting for victory, you are fighting from it. Endure the test with hope, knowing that the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. Stand firm, and trust that God will meet you in your wilderness and provide the strength and refreshment you need.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. In what practical ways can you better prepare for spiritual battles during seasons of spiritual peace or victory?
2. The devil tempted Jesus by saying, "If you are the Son of God..." What lies does the enemy whisper to you about your identity in Christ, and what specific Scriptures can you use to fight back?
3. How does knowing you are fighting from victory, not for victory, change your perspective on the current struggles or temptations you are facing?
