

# The Testing of Jesus

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[ 0 : 00 ] I'm going to read the passage again for us. Matthew chapter 4 verses 1 through 11.! The word of the Lord says, Jesus told him, It is also written, Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

And he said to him, I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me. Then Jesus said, Go away, Satan.

For it is written, Worship the Lord your God and serve only him. Then the devil left him and angels came and began to serve him.

Let me pray for us. Lord Jesus, I pray now that as we study your word, you would open our hearts, open our minds, open our eyes and our ears. Help us to understand your truth. And God, apply it to our lives today.

We love you and praise you. And it's in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Amen. So the testing of Jesus or the temptation of Jesus, this comes on the heels of the baptism of Jesus, which we talked about last week.

[ 1 : 44 ] And I want you to notice some things about the way that this builds off of each other, these events build off of each other. If you look in Matthew chapter 3, verse 16, when Jesus was baptized, as he came out of the water, the Spirit of God descended on him in the form of a dove.

Remember this? So the Spirit of God anointed Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and prepared him for his ministry. And then here in verse 1 of chapter 4, we see that Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness for the purpose of him being tempted by the devil.

Did you catch that? Jesus is a passive participant.

He is led by the Spirit into the wilderness so that he could be tempted. There are three very important truths to recognize at this point, because they're going to set the foundation for the rest of our study in this passage.

First is that Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Spirit. But I want you to notice that the Spirit of God and God the Father are not the ones, or is not the one who tempts Jesus.

[ 3 : 01 ] Why? Well, because we know from God's Word, James chapter 1 verse 13, that God cannot tempt with evil. God cannot be tempted with evil. So that naturally brings up the question, how was Jesus tempted?

Me and Miss Amy talked about that this morning, because she's like, hey, I'm doing the same thing that you're doing this morning. And I was like, well, how do you think Jesus, why do you think Jesus was tempted? Like, you want to give me the answer? No, I'm just kidding. So we talked through this a little bit.

We talked through this a little bit. And this is, this is one of those things that we have to, we have to take a moment and recognize the two natures of Christ, that He is truly God, and He is truly man. There is two natures to the person, Jesus Christ, the God-man. This was outlined in the Athanasian Creed, and it's called the hypostatic union, that there is a union of these two natures with Christ, and there's no overlap.

There's no confusion. He is both truly God and truly man. So how is Jesus tempted? Well, notice that the temptations in the scene, we've already read the passage, come from an external force.

[ 4 : 13 ] They're not internal battles that Jesus is facing. Jesus, as a human, was subject to external sources of temptation. But internally, Jesus would never fall into sin.

It wasn't going to happen. So you see this, this human nature exposed to the external forces of the evil one in the form of temptation.

But Jesus remained pure. But I want you to notice that, that Jesus was led by God into the wilderness, but God did not do the tempting. The devil showed up, Satan showed up to tempt Jesus.

Now, I also want you to see that in verse 2, Jesus was already led into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil, but He had to wait for 40 days and 40 nights.

At first glance, it sounds like God did not plan this trip very well for Jesus, right? Hey, you have a meeting in the wilderness to be tempted by the devil, so go out there and wait.

[ 5 : 16 ] He'll show up. And the devil was late to his appointment. Is that what's going on here? No, of course not. God led the Son, Jesus, into the wilderness for this intentional time of preparation before the temptation, before the tempter showed up.

So Jesus, yeah, He was hungry after 40 days and 40 nights. There's no question He was hungry. But spiritually, He was filled. He had spent this time in prayer, in fasting, in communion with the Father, preparing for His ministry, and preparing especially for the efforts of the enemy who would attempt to stop God in His tracks.

There's a principle for us here in the fact that Jesus prepared before He faced the spiritual battle, and that is, we also should prepare.

In fact, if we show up to the battle, a spiritual battle, ill-prepared, we will fall flat on our faces. So take the time to prepare, study God's Word, love God's Word, be filled with God's Word so that on the day when temptation comes, you can stand firm the same way that Christ stood firm.

Now, the third thing I want you to see as we get started here is that the devil operated under the authority of God the Father. God is completely sovereign.

[ 6 : 50 ] And so every ounce of authority that the enemy has was given to him by God. And we know this. We see this play out in the Old Testament story of our good friend Job.

You remember Job? Job had a good life. He had a lot of kids. He had a lot of money. He loved the Lord, and he was righteous. But Satan told God that he thought Job was only righteous because he had good things.

And that if God let those things go away, Job would, you know, denounce God. So the Lord gave Satan permission.

Job 1.12 says, Very well, the Lord told Satan, Everything he owns is in your power. However, do not lay a hand on Job himself. So Satan left the Lord's presence. And after that first bout of permission, Job's livestock and his children and a lot of his property were destroyed.

Job didn't give up on God. Remember, his wife came up to him and said, Are you serious? Curse God and die. You remember that? Terrible advice from a spouse, by the way. But she tried.

[ 7 : 59 ] She was like, Hey, give up on God because he's given up on you. Job wouldn't. He said, Are we supposed to only take the good things from God and not also the bad? Job 2.6 says, Very well, the Lord told Satan, He is in your power.

Only spare his life. So then, after this, the enemy goes and gives Job these painful, painful boils. He takes away his health. Still, Job remained faithful to the Lord.

But I want you to see, in the story of Job, we see the fact that anything that Satan does is under the authority of God because God is completely sovereign.

Now, we have to get rid of this thought in our minds that Satan is on some level playing field with God as if he's some equal opposing force.

He is also omnipotent. He is also all-knowing. He is also omniscient all places. And God and him are battling it out and we're the battlefield.

[ 8 : 58 ] Like, we have to get rid of that thought. Satan is not on God's level. Satan has authority only as much as the Father allows him to have. We have to understand that.

We have to understand that. In this scene with Jesus, where he was subjected to the temptations of the evil one, is further proof that this is all within the power and the plan of God.

Now, there's other things that we need to look at, too, as we get into this passage. And the first thing is that this scene is something of a retelling of the story of the Exodus and the Israelites.

All right, how many days was Jesus without food? Forty. How many years were the Israelites wandering in the wilderness? Forty. That's right.

I know somebody was like, Forty? Oh, yeah, Forty. You know what I mean? I do that. I'm like, I don't want to answer until someone else does. But this story of Jesus, it mirrors the story of the Israelites in the wilderness.

[ 9 : 57 ] And it mirrors it in a handful of ways. First of all, the Israelites were led by God into the wilderness. Did you know that? Exodus chapter 13, verse 17 through 22 says, When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them along the road to the land of the Philistines, even though it was nearby.

For God said, The people will change their minds and return to Egypt if they face war. So he led the people around toward the Red Sea, along the road of the wilderness, and the Israelites left the land of Egypt in battle formation.

And you jump down to verse 21, The Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to lead them on their way during the day, and in a pillar of fire to give them light at night so that they could travel day or night.

The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night never left its place in front of them. The Lord led the people of Israel into the wilderness. They were in the wilderness for a journey that should have taken them, by the way, should have taken them about 10 or 11 days to get from Egypt to Kadesh Barnea right outside of the promised land.

Should have taken them about 11 days. But along the way, God tested the people. God tested the people. Deuteronomy 8.2 says that God tested the people so that He could prove what was in their heart.

[ 11 : 09 ] In other words, if they loved the word of the Lord and His commands and would remain faithful to Him or not. As we know, they did not remain faithful to the Lord. And so God cursed a generation.

They had to stay in the wilderness for 40 years. An entire generation died off before the people were allowed to enter the promised land. That's not the only example of a biblical test.

In Genesis chapter 22, Abraham is tested by God with this offer to sacrifice Isaac. You remember this? It's one of the most strange passages in Scripture, it seems like.

Sacrifice your son, the son of promise, God told Abraham. And Abraham, unlike the Israelites later, actually trusted God. In fact, Hebrews chapter 11 tells us that Abraham trusted God so much that he knew that he could give him his son back from the dead.

So he was willing to be obedient even to the point of sacrificing the son of promise. So Abraham was tested and he passed the test. Now in these two examples, in the Israelites and in Abraham, we see examples of people being tested by God.

[ 12 : 19 ] And in both cases, you see who benefits from that test, right? Abraham benefited from seeing, wow, I truly do love the Lord.

I really am willing to fear him and follow him wherever he goes. And of course, generations of the Israelites were blessed by Abraham's example of faithfulness in that test. The people of Israel, when they left Egypt and they were traveling through the wilderness, they were the ones who stood to benefit from recognizing that they remained faithful to the Lord because they would see God was faithful to us, we've been faithful to him, and we know the covenant promise says that he will provide good things for us.

He will give us this land, he will fulfill all these promises. They stood to benefit from the test, but they failed it. So the question comes, who is going to benefit from this scene where Jesus is tested?

And I think that what we see here in the temptation of Jesus, the wilderness scene of Jesus, is that by making it through the wilderness, unlike the Israelites, by making it through the wilderness, Jesus proves himself to be the Son of God and the perfect, sinless, spotless sacrifice sacrifice that we need for salvation.

Because unlike Jesus, we're very similar to the Israelites, and we fail. We fall short. But Jesus, to be a worthy sacrifice and king, had to be battle-tested and prove himself obedient.

[ 13 : 58 ] So we're going to look now at the first temptation. The first temptation. Provision and trust. Verses 3 and 4 says, Then the tempter approached him and said, If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.

And he answered, It is written, Man must not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. So I want you to see that of course the enemy comes at the end of that 40 days when Jesus is physically exhausted.

We talked about that already. Physically exhausted, but spiritually strong. The enemy, he is not omniscient, he is not all-knowing, okay, which means he will attack when it seems like we would be at our weakest.

He will attack us when it appears like we are at our weakest. And Jesus being hungry, I mean, can you imagine the hunger after 40 days and 40 nights? I know people, I won't say any names, who get hangry, that's when you are so hungry you get angry, after 45 minutes, okay?

Again, I won't say any names. I won't. Anyways, that was a joke, that was a joke. It takes like two hours. Okay.

[15:11] Jesus is exhausted, he's hungry. Think about this, not only was he not fed, he also had slept on the ground for 40 days and 40 nights. He was in the wilderness. I don't think I could survive in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights, especially without food.

And yet, this is exactly what Jesus has done. And the enemy sees this as a moment of weakness and tries to seize the opportunity to tempt Jesus. He's been declared the Son of God by the Father. Satan knew this.

There's no question. When it says, if you are the Son of God, it wasn't like he was doubting the sonship of Jesus. It's more like, along the lines of, since you are the Son of God, right? It's already been proven.

God has already spoken. You are his Son. But I'm going to mess this whole thing up, right? And that's the plan of the enemy, is to cause God's people to stumble and mess up God's plans.

That's his whole M.O. And then he comes to Jesus with this very deceptive but simple temptation. You hear it, right? If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.

[16:09] That doesn't sound that bad, right? That doesn't sound terrible at all. It's like, how is that a temptation to sin? Well, the response of Jesus shows us what the core issue is. When Jesus replied, it is written, man must not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Jesus began a pattern that we'll see in the rest of these temptations where he quotes from Scripture from Deuteronomy chapter 6 through 8. Okay? And in Deuteronomy chapter 6 through 8, you see this retelling of the Israelite story, right?

That Moses is recounting how they failed. And now you see Jesus who fulfills these things perfectly. So, the first response comes from Deuteronomy chapter 8 verse 3.

And in that response from Jesus, we see that the temptation is for Jesus to stop trusting the Father's provision and instead take matters into his own hands and prepare food for himself, take care of himself.

Right? And it's not a bad thing for Jesus to create bread. We know this, right? Jesus created bread when he fed 5,000 people. It's not a bad thing to create bread, especially if you're God.

[17:17] It's a great thing. But in this case, Jesus would have been rejecting the plan of the Father and the guidance of the Spirit and taking matters into his own hands.

That's the core temptation here. The enemy is saying to Jesus, stop trusting the Father. You're hungry. You're hungry. He doesn't even know how hungry you are.

Take care of yourself. Provide for yourself. And the enemy does the same thing still today. He tempts us in these very subtle ways. It's the same temptation that leads us to be gluttonous and greedy, to want more and more for ourselves.

It's a temptation that leads us to say, God, I trust you as long as you let me keep my storehouses full. God, I trust you as long as I don't have to worry where my next meal will come from.

God, I trust you and I know you are good as long as I never have to wonder how I'm going to pay my mortgage or make rent. God, I trust you. I really, really, really trust you as long as my bank account never gets below that threshold that makes me uncomfortable.

[18:23] It's the same temptation. It's for us to put these parameters around the trust that we can place on God. It's a dangerous place to be. The enemy is tempting Jesus to show that he does not trust the Father and that he doesn't trust the plan of God or the provision of God.

and Jesus saw right through it. You know, I would suggest that you and I should be prepared for these subtle attacks of the enemy. They seem simple.

They seem like they're not that big of a deal. Right? When we let anxiety get the best of us and try to keep everything under our control instead of trusting the goodness of God.

It seems simple but it is deadly. Jesus fell. Jesus would not fall for it. Now the second temptation comes from verses 5-7 and it says that then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, if you are the son of God throw yourself down for it is written.

Stop right there. Notice that. For it is written. You see the enemy here. He's like, oh Jesus, you're going to use scripture? Okay, guess what? I can do that too. Ready? But the issue is that here's what Satan does. Here's what the enemy does. He will use God's word and twist it to make it seem like it says something that it doesn't.

[ 19 : 44 ] We see this today in the church all over the place. The enemy has infiltrated the church in such a way that there are pastors who will stand up and declare something that is clearly stated in God's word is not stated in God's word. Right?

Or something that is said in God's word really doesn't mean what we think it means. Right? This is what the enemy does. If we can, if we can, you know, stop trusting the authority of scripture, then, hey, the enemy has us right where he wants us.

Because who gets to tell us how we ought to live? That's what he does. He turns to scripture. He says, it is written, he will give his angels orders concerning you and they will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

So, so Satan quotes here from Psalm chapter 91 verses 11 and 12. Okay? Psalm 91 is a psalm that speaks to the protection of God for his children. So, if you are one of God's children, there is a beautiful passage in Psalm 91 that promises this unbelievable, overwhelming protection of God. He will not allow your foot to slip. It also says in there, by the way, that you'll trample over like cobras and lions and all this kind of stuff. But, we're not one of those churches that brings up snakes.

[ 20 : 52 ] So, you know, I don't do snakes. We all know that. But anyways, that's what it says in Psalm 91. Psalm 91. It's this amazing promise of the goodness of God and the protection of God.

And so, again, you kind of, you see the subtle, the subtlety here from the enemy where he brings up this psalm and he says, look, this is what God says. This is it. You can do it.

Right? If you jump off this temple, you'll be protected. You'll be, because God said he would protect you. Well, look, I trust God, but I'm not going to reach my hand into a cobra's mouth. You know what I'm saying? Can I get an amen on that, by the way?

Come on. I mean, seriously. But look at Jesus' response in verse 7. Jesus told him, it is also written, do not test the Lord your God. So you see the core issue here again.

This, this refutation from Jesus comes from Deuteronomy chapter 6. Do not test the Lord your God. He says to the enemy, he says, look, what you're asking me to do is put God to the test.

[ 21 : 52 ] What you're telling me to do is, is to throw myself off of this thing so that I can prove, I can force God's hand. Right? I can prove that he really will send angels to protect me.

And that is absolutely a sinful heart. This comes from Deuteronomy chapter 6. Again, where Moses reminded the people of the dangers of testing the Lord.

And the first time they tested God, he points back to it in Deuteronomy chapter 6. It's found in Exodus chapter 17. Exodus 17. This is after Mount Sinai. Right? The people of Israel, or I guess it's before Mount Sinai.

This is when the people have taken up camp at Rephidim. And they go to the rock at Horeb. You remember this? They were thirsty. They were really, really thirsty. And so they went and they grumbled and they complained and they said, look, is God even here among us?

Is God even here? Because we're thirsty. And if God were here, I wouldn't be thirsty. So see, the people of Israel tested the Lord. And Moses, he called them out on it.

[ 22 : 55 ] He called them out for this. But they tested the Lord and then God, still God is faithful. Right? And he told Moses to go up and hit the rock and that God would stand before him and water would come out and the people would have something to drink.

Still God takes care of his people. But the sinful heart of the people is on display. That as soon as they were inconvenienced, they doubted the faithfulness of God. As soon as they had something come up that didn't feel right, they doubted the goodness of God.

We cannot, we cannot doubt God because it will lead to us having this heart of trying to test God for him to prove himself.

Jesus saw through the temptation. He said, I'd never doubt the goodness or faithfulness of the Father. He's always proven himself to be true. Now, we see people fall victim to this temptation today.

It's often true of people who have refused to, you know, whether it be get back into church or give their life to Christ. We see this, this heart quite often where people say something along the lines of,

yeah, I'll go back to church when God shows me that he's real.

[ 24 : 11 ] God has to show me that he's real so that I can worship him. God has to show me something before I'll give him anything. Have you ever heard this before? That's, that's a sinful thing.

That's a sinful way to live. But that's what happens when we test the goodness of God. There are churches who take this same idea and they twist scripture in such a way where they say, if you give to the church, your bank account is going to overflow.

Test God. He'll prove it. He's faithful. If you give me all of the money in your bank account and your retirement account and your savings account and your secret money stash, if you give that all to me, then I know that God will take care of you.

How ridiculous. How sinful. And yet people who are just led astray fall victim to this all the time. But this is the sinful idea of testing God.

We don't have to test God, friends. We know that God is faithful. He proves himself to be faithful time and time again. It's so incredibly dangerous to have a mindset of testing God.

[ 25 : 16 ] To think it appropriate to test the God of the universe who spoke everything into being, who gives you breath, the same God who cares for you and who gave his son to die on the cross for you, to test him is incomprehensible because he is always faithful.

He is always good. We're not called to test God. We're called to live by faith. And that's exactly what Jesus did here in his response to the enemy. I'm not going to put God to the test.

I'm going to live by faith knowing that God cares for me. Knowing that the Father cares for me. I don't have to put God to the test. God doesn't have to be under my thumb. He doesn't have to be in my control. God is God.

I am not. I'll trust him and live by faith. Now look at the third temptation, this shortcut, this promise of power. It says in verses 8-10, again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their splendor.

And he said to him, I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me. Well, this temptation is not very subtle at all, is it? This one's pretty obvious.

[ 26 : 25 ] This one's pretty obvious. He's asking Jesus to commit idolatry, to worship something or someone other than God himself. And the enemy makes some promises here, by the way.

He says, he shows him all of the kingdoms of the world in their splendor and he says, I will give you all these things if you'll fall down and worship me. So you have to ask the question, well, could he have given those things to Jesus? Could he have given the kingdoms of the world to Jesus?

I think the answer is yes. We know that God has given the enemy a certain amount of control over the earth, right? 2 Corinthians 4, verse 4, calls him the God of this age.

And so, yeah, he has some area of dominion. Again, it's under the authority and the sovereignty of God, but he has some aspect of power. Now, remember, he's the prince of lies, so I don't think he was going to follow through on his end of the deal on this promise, by the way.

But I think that he had this dominion and he was truly offering Jesus something. The issue is that he was offering Jesus a shortcut. You see, Satan didn't know how God was going to bring his plans to fruition.

[ 27 : 31 ] Satan had no idea how God was going to redeem all things. Satan had no idea how God was going to fulfill the promises of the Old Testament. He had no clue. He had no clue. So, he knew God was going to win, he was going to lose.

And his option here, it's like a last ditch, right? The Hail Mary, throwing the, trying to, last pass, trying to win the game. His effort here was to convince Jesus to commit idolatry so that he would stumble and fall.

And the way he did it was by promising him what he knew would be his one day anyways. You see what he did here? But he's offering Jesus a shortcut.

It's a shortcut to power and authority and dominion. It's a shortcut to praise and glory and splendor.

It's a shortcut to reverence and respect. The enemy offered Jesus the glory without the cross.

He offered Jesus the adoration without the suffering. But if Jesus had taken that, he would not have been the suffering servant described in Isaiah 53. He would not have been the sacrifice, the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

[ 28 : 37 ] So obviously, he's not going to fall for this. But nonetheless, that's what the enemy is offering here. And Jesus says, Go away, Satan, for it is written, Worship the Lord your God and

serve only him.

What was the major issue for the people of Israel on their wilderness journey and then once they entered the promised land? Idolatry. They were so tempted to worship the gods of their age for the benefits that those false gods promised, right?

To worship Baal, the rain god, so that they could have abundant harvest. To worship Asherah, to worship Moloch, to worship all of these false gods.

This was their greatest temptation along the way. And could I just suggest that the greatest temptation that we might face today is also idolatry? I'm sure the gods have different names.

We serve at the pleasure of the God of money. We serve at the pleasure of the God of power. We sacrifice people at the altar of more authority, more dominion.

[ 29 : 50 ] We're willing to do whatever it takes to get ahead. The enemy makes the same promise to so many. Look at all the shiny things of the world. Look at all the splendor and the glory of the world.

I can give that to you. But you have to stop serving the one true God and follow me. It's, I mean, in this case, when he says it to Jesus, it's like, well, that's pretty obvious.

And yet, when we face these same struggles and these same temptations for us, it's so hard. It's so hard to say no to the enemy. Why? Because we like money.

We like power. We like authority. We like pride. We like to feel like we're God. And that's what the enemy offers. So we have to see through the lies of the enemy and remember the example of the Israelites in the wilderness and remember the example of Jesus and worship the Lord God and serve only Him.

We have to put away the temptation to follow the gods of this age. Jesus knew the plan of God, the Father. He knew that the promised kingdom that He was about to secure through His death and resurrection was far greater, far more expansive, far more cosmic than anything the enemy could offer Him.

[ 31 : 08 ] He trusted God's plan and stood firm in the face of temptation. We must look ahead to the kingdom of God and the fulfillment of His promises and stand firm against the temptations of the enemy because I promise you the inheritance that you are set to receive if you trust in Jesus Christ as Lord is so far greater than anything the enemy can give you temporally here on this earth.

It is so much better to trust Jesus and be satisfied with Him and glorify Him forever than it is to spend 50, 60, 70 years on earth with fun things.

Serve God. Serve God only. So what does all this mean for us today? Because then you see in verse 11 the devil left Him and the angels began to serve Him.

I want you to see that at the end of this whole scene Satan has asked Jesus to stop trusting the Father. He's asked Jesus to take care of Himself. He's asked Jesus to stop serving the Father. But Jesus stood firm and what you see at the end is that God the Father cares for His own. He sends angels to take care of Jesus to presumably provide nourishment and food and to revive His spirit and physically His body.

[ 32 : 26 ] God cares for His own and I want you to see that there is the hope of God caring for us outside of or beyond the temptation that we face in the moment. There is hope.

But the enemy will tempt us the same way that he tempted Jesus. He'll tempt us to doubt God's goodness. He'll tempt us to stop trusting God and to take matters into our own hands.

He'll tempt us to test God time and time again and he'll tempt us to worship Him so that we can secure the things that He offers. But we have to stand firm.

We have to stand firm. We have to see through the lies of the enemy because there's never a moment where God stops providing for His own. Now I know I talked with Miss Amy about this a little bit this morning but a lot of times you'll hear this passage preached and the real emphasis is to remember Scripture so that you can diffuse the fight.

You know, you can win the fight. You can win the battle. If you memorize enough Scripture then when you're facing temptation you'll have victory because you have Scripture memorized. Right?

You've heard this? So I don't want to minimize the importance of remembering Scripture.

[ 33 : 35 ] You should be memorizing Scripture. Absolutely. Ephesians chapter 6 talks about the armor of God and it calls the Word of God the sword of the Spirit. That's an important tool.

Okay? You don't want to show up to a battle ill-prepared. You don't want to show up to a sword fight with a pocket knife. Right? You want to show up with a sword. So prepare your heart prepare your

mind memorize God's Word let it sink deep into your life and let it guide you.

But I don't want you to forget about what in the armor of God what is said to extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one because it's not the sword. It's the shield of faith.

At the end of the day if we're trusting in our own ability to remember Scripture so that we can stand firm against the schemes of the devil we will lose that battle because he's not he's not all powerful but he's stronger than us in our own strength.

But if we have faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God who has defeated the enemy who has overcome who has already won the victory then he offers to us that same victory.

[ 34 : 42 ] Hebrews 4.15 talks about how Jesus is a great high priest who's not unfamiliar with our weakness because he was tempted in every way as we are yet without sin. And then verse 16 says so then we can approach the throne of grace for mercy in our time of need.

You see that? Jesus Christ has secured us access to the Father so that when we face temptation we don't have to battle it out in our own strength. We don't have to trust our memory and trust our ability to snap back with Scripture at the enemy.

We can trust in the one who has overcome. We can seek him at his throne and request mercy and trust that God will give it to us so that we can have victory over temptation.

So by the shield of faith have faith in the faithful one and don't let yourself lose the fight. Right?

You're going to lose the fight if you fight on your own but if you trust in Jesus you can have victory.

Jesus is not just our example he is also our protector and our shield. Jesus is our refuge. Jesus had victory. Jesus won. Jesus passed the test and now he makes it possible for us to pass through tests.

[ 36 : 01 ] So if you're facing temptation right now and I know like in the room this big and I know that there's people in this room who are battling real temptation right now in life. There's no doubt. I mean statistically it's like everyone is.

Right? Someone is facing a temptation a struggle a battle spiritual warfare can I encourage you stop facing that battle in your own strength.

Run to Jesus. Hebrews 12 1 and 2 says therefore since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin that so easily ensnares us let us run with endurance the race that lies before us keeping our eyes on Jesus.

Keeping our eyes on Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith for the joy that lay before him he endured the cross despising shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus is the one we should look to. Jesus is the one we should run to. When we're facing temptation and if you're facing temptation right now look to Jesus don't look to yourself don't look for inner strength to overcome to win if you do that you're going to fall flat.

[ 37 : 21 ] Look to Jesus he's had victory he's the perfecter of our faith follow his example and look to the joy that lays before you which is your inheritance in him and look to Jesus for victory.

Jesus Christ is the one we keep our eyes on so don't look away run after him he paved the way and he made it possible for us to have victory. So I'm going to pray for us we're going to sing a closing song I just want to encourage you this morning like I read a passage like this and I'm reminded of the very real battle that we face.

This is a Ephesians 6 says that we don't face our battle against flesh and blood but against rulers and principalities of darkness in this evil age. there is a very real spiritual warfare that takes place in our world there's a real spiritual warfare taking place in our country and in our state in our county in our city and you and I as followers of Jesus have an opportunity to stand firm and see victory but it doesn't come from within.

It comes from Jesus Christ the one who has already overcome the one who has been victorious. So look to Jesus and then if you've never given your life to Christ and you're trusting in your own strength to save yourself to secure your salvation to be good enough to stand before God one day stop running in your own strength.

Jesus Christ died on the cross so that you could have life and you can have victory over temptation and sin. it's a real victory.

[ 39 : 02 ] It's not temporary it's permanent because of him. So look to Jesus trust in him today. I'm going to pray for us and you respond as God leads.

Lord Jesus thank you for who you are thank you for your word and your truth we love you and we praise you God I pray that you would sink your word deep into our hearts let us take this example of

Christ let us take the witness of his perfection and let it guide us so that we can seek you on the day of trouble so that we can rest in you our refuge and strength we can trust in you as our shield and protector and Lord if there's anyone in this room who does not yet know you God I pray that you would bring them under the wings of your protection I pray right now God that you would call them to yourself for salvation we love you Jesus it's in your name that we pray amen amen