



June 7, 2021

Every day, each one of us chooses the standards we will live by. If we want to gain positive results in life, the standard that will help us prevail every time is the matchless Word of God. Distractions and temptations may compete for our attention and allegiance, but we can choose to keep a spiritual perspective in life by holding fast to what is written in God's Word. Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of someone who believed God's Word and held fast to it rather than letting himself succumb to distractions and temptations. We see this in the Gospels when Jesus was directly tempted by the Devil. By looking at the four individual temptations the Devil set before Jesus Christ, we can get a clearer understanding of how Jesus Christ was able to maintain a spiritual perspective in life by holding fast to God's Word. He quoted God's Word to the Devil with the phrase "It is written" and prevailed.

The first temptation Jesus Christ faced involved self-preservation. At the point of this temptation, Jesus had been in the wilderness for forty days without food.

Luke 4:3,4:

And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

Here we see that Jesus quoted what God's Word says in Deuteronomy 8:3. He held fast to that Word, trusting God to take care of his needs.

After gaining victory over this first temptation, we see Jesus Christ overcoming the Devil's second attempt to distract him from doing God's Word. The Devil took Jesus up to a high mountain, showing him all the kingdoms of the world. In this account, recorded only in Luke 4, the Greek word translated "world" is *oikoumenē*, meaning the inhabited earth. The Devil offered him the love and worship of the *people* on earth.

Luke 4:5-7:

And the devil, taking him [Jesus Christ] up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world [oikoumenē] in a moment of time.

And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

We'll see in verse 8 that Jesus Christ decided to believe the Word stated in Deuteronomy 6:13 and keep God first, holding fast to "It is written."

Luke 4:8:

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

In the third temptation, the Devil tried to distract Jesus Christ from living the Word by offering him recognition. The Devil took Jesus Christ to the pinnacle of the Temple, challenging him that if he was the Son of God, he could cast himself down without getting hurt. The Devil even quoted scripture out of context to try to fool him.

Matthew 4:5-7:

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Jesus held fast to the truth he knew from Deuteronomy 6:16. He knew not to test God by doing something foolhardy to see if God would deliver him.

In the fourth and final temptation, the Devil tried to distract Jesus Christ from believing God's Word by offering him all the resources of the entire physical world if he would fall down and worship him. This event is recorded only in Matthew and is a temptation for greed.

Matthew 4:8-10:

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world [kosmos, the entire, physical world], and the glory of them;

And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

What an answer! Again Jesus Christ chose to keep a spiritual perspective by holding fast to what the Word says and not letting himself get off course from doing the Word.

At every turn, Jesus Christ believed God's Word and held fast to "It is written" over the distractions and temptations of the Devil. We can follow his example and do the same in our own lives to prevail. We have the choice of what standard to follow in our daily walk, and we can choose to follow the only standard for truth—the Word of God.

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