

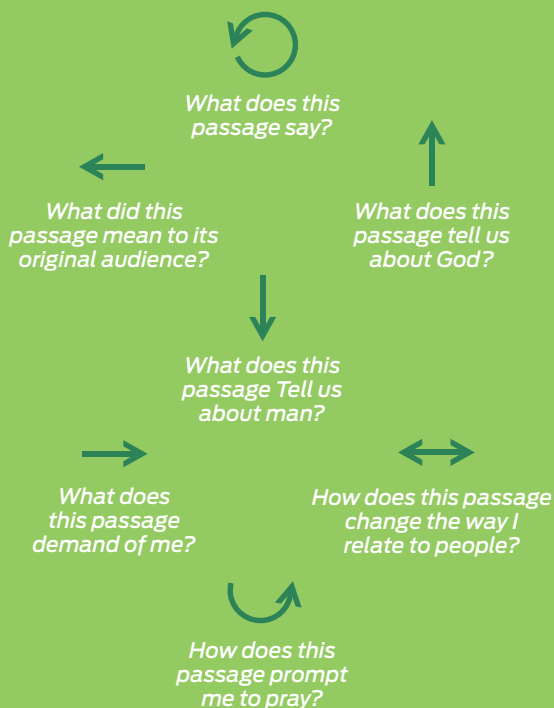
# Daily Devotions



Day 1

## Luke 4:1-4

### The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



In the first temptation, Jesus is tempted to choose physical desires over spiritual priorities. Notice that when Jesus was at the peak of physical hunger at the end of a forty-day fast, that is the moment the devil came to Him to tempt Him with bread. Have you noticed this happen in your life? At the peak of your hunger for intimacy, attention, joy, or peace a temptation comes along that offers a short-cut solution to meet your desires. Physical hunger isn't bad. Neither is our hunger for intimacy, attention, joy, or peace. And food isn't bad either. Often, the things that satisfy our hunger aren't bad things. But they can be good things used in the wrong time, and the wrong way, for the wrong purpose. They can be shortcuts that keep us from having to trust God and do things in His way.

**When are you most vulnerable to neglect spiritual priorities?**

## Day 2

# Luke 4:5-8

In this second temptation, Jesus is tempted to pursue the right thing in the wrong way. Satan offered Him all the power and glory of the resurrection without the pain of the cross. It was the ultimate short cut. All He had to do was give Satan His worship. And isn't that true for the shortcuts we are often faced with? We can take shortcuts to power, better grades, popularity, and prestige, all we have to do is turn from our allegiance to the Lord for a brief moment, and we can have it. Just a little cheating. Just a little manipulation. Just a little passivity. And these moments seem little and maybe even insignificant, until we really begin to consider that we have to turn our worship away from God and toward those other things in order to make those choices.

**What things are you tempted to pursue with a shortcut?**

## Day 3

# Luke 4:9-13

Do you ever feel like God owes you? Saying that God doesn't owe us anything is much easier to say than to believe. The moment tragedy or suffering strikes, something wells up within us questioning how God could allow this to happen to us. We love Him, we serve Him, we've given everything to follow Him. And now THIS?! Of course, this mindset comes as a result of thinking we are owed comfort, success, and safety by God, and because of that, we have a tendency to measure God's faithfulness by our own physical comfort and success. If I have good relationships and am doing well in school, that means God is faithful. If my family is healthy, then God is faithful. But God's faithfulness cannot be measured by our circumstances. He will take care of us and do all He promised, but that doesn't mean it's going to look like we expect.

**In what ways are you tempted to think God's goodness and grace are measured in the comforts and earthly gifts He provides?**

# Matthew

## 4:1-11

Where Matthew and Luke detail all three temptations, Mark just gives us two verses and a quick, succinct overview of the whole forty days. But there are some key similarities that Mark is still sure to point out. He notes that this happened immediately after Jesus' baptism, and he writes that the "Spirit drove him into the wilderness" (v. 1). Neither Matthew, Mark, nor Luke wanted us to miss seeing God's hand in Jesus' wilderness experience. And while we don't always have the privilege of knowing what trials in our life happen because God leads us directly into them and which trials happen as a result of our sin or just the brokenness of the world—we can be assured that God is always present. When we are tempted, He is with us. When we feel isolated and alone, He is with us. And He will not waste a trial or temptation or test. He will use every struggle and pain to make us more like Jesus, to draw us into a deeper relationship with Him, and to remind us of His love for us.

**How does it make you feel to know that God might lead you into a trial?**

# Mark

## 1:12-13

Temptations can feel heavy and like we have no way of escape. But that's just a part of the trap. It's never true. Any time you are faced with temptation, there *is* a way out. Every single time. God promised. And He has never made a promise He did not keep. He will always give us a way out, we just have to look for it and ask Him to show us where the escape route is. The other part of this verse says God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can handle. It's as if God has a shield around us and He knows what our limits are when it comes to being tempted. That means no matter the temptation you are facing today, even if it feels impossible to resist, even if it seems like there is no way out—you are able to stand firm. There is a way out. In the same way Jesus withstood temptation, He will empower you to remain faithful to Him.

**Reflect on a time when you clearly saw God give you a way of escape in the midst of temptation. Or, identify a current temptation you are struggling with and spend time seeking the Lord and asking him to show you what the way of escape is for you today.**