

## **Jesus' Temptation and Our Temptation**

The Advent season is a time when we focus on the incarnation – Jesus taking on flesh and blood. We remember especially that Jesus became one of us so that He could die for us. This year we are focusing on one aspect of Jesus' incarnation: His experience of being tempted. Our hope is that this study will help us grow in our love and adoration for Jesus and in our confidence that he can help us in specific temptations that we face. The two really go hand in hand: the more we love and adore Jesus, the more we will trust Him in our everyday living. In this study we are focusing on Jesus' first temptation in the wilderness, the temptation to turn stones to bread.

**Opening Discussion:** What's the longest you've ever gone without food?

### **Read Matthew 3:13-4:11**

1. How are the baptism and temptation narratives linked?
2. What is the nature of the devil's first temptation? What about this temptation might potentially appeal to Jesus?
3. What would be wrong with Jesus miraculously turning stones into bread to satisfy his hunger?
4. In Jesus' response to the devil, he quotes Deuteronomy 8:3 (Read Deuteronomy 8:1-3). How does Jesus apply what Moses was teaching in Deut. 8:3 to this first temptation to turn stones into bread?

Steve said:

***Resisting temptation requires a radical reliance on the word of God.*** . . . Jesus was so immersed in the truths of the book of Deuteronomy (it's plot/story) that He recognized that when the tempter said, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread," that He was facing the same temptation as the children of Israel in the wilderness. He was able to respond from a deep place in His spirit, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" He wasn't merely quoting a Bible verse as if it were a magic bullet. He was speaking from a deep, substantive understanding of God's Word. He was basically saying, "As with the children of Israel, I will eat when God speaks and provides bread."

5. How would you describe what it looks like to have a "radical reliance on the word of God"?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What might it require in your own life to get to a place where you can respond to temptation out of "a deep, substantive understanding of God's word"?

Steve said:

Are you convinced that God's word is essential for your life? Do you treat it like food - something you cannot live without? Or do you view God's word as optional and non-essential for your well-being? Like Jesus we need a long-term commitment to read and understand and memorize Scripture. Only then will we be able to recall it and employ it in times of temptation. Without this commitment we're pretty much stuck in our current conditions. With this commitment, our knowledge of Scripture (our knowledge of God, really) will increasingly provide wisdom and power in times of temptation.

7. Are you convinced that God's word is essential for your life . . . for your battle with temptation? Explain.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What is one step that you could take to have a deeper experience with God's word that would truly help you in your battle with temptation?

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**Advent Reading Guides** – If you were not at Faith on Sunday, a reading guide was handed out for the Advent season. If you are looking for a way to begin engaging the Scriptures, this might be a good way to do it. You can either pick one up next Sunday or you can find it on our [website](#) on the home page under the description of the Advent sermon series.