

Overcoming the World

Matthew 3:7-4:11 We describe people as worldly when they are consumed with their own lusts. First John 2:16 tells us what these three lusts are: the lust of the eyes (greedy longings in our minds), the lust of the flesh (seeking sensual pleasure in obsessive, indulgent ways) and the pride of life (trusting in our own selves and our resources more than we trust in God). This verse says that these lusts are not of the Father, but they are of the world. Jesus, however, through His victory over temptation and through His death, burial and resurrection from the dead, has overcome the world. In this story of the temptation of Jesus we see Satan tempting Jesus as he tempted Eve in the areas of the three beautiful desires—to enjoy God, to glorify God and to worship God. Satan thought he would also succeed in seducing Jesus. He forgot one very important fact: Jesus was the Word of God made flesh. The Word is the offensive sword of the Spirit against Satan, and Jesus wielded this sword effectively against the enemy. We can do the same.

TO ENJOY GOD AND HIS CREATION. In Matthew 4:1-4, Jesus had been fasting for forty days, and He was extremely hungry. Satan tempted Jesus to turn the stone into bread. At the thought of bread, Jesus remembered how bread tasted, and as He did, His salivary glands were alerted. He remembered how bread smelled, looked and felt. Even the sound of bread being chewed in His mouth came to Him. Jesus, however, did not give in to the cravings of His five senses. Satan was seeking to gain control over the emotional area of the soul of Jesus, but Jesus spoke aloud, “It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” Satan was stabbed by the sword, but he did not give up the battle for the soul of Jesus.

TO GLORIFY GOD. In Matthew 4:5-7, Satan recognized the power of God’s Word after the first temptation. He used the Word, but misquoted it to Jesus in an attempt to gain control of

Jesus' will. Satan tempted Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the temple to prove that the angels would bear Him up. Satan quoted from Psalm 91:11-12, but he left off the phrase "to keep thee in all thy ways." Angels will come to our assistance if we are walking in God's ways, not our own. Jesus was God in the flesh, and if He fell for this temptation, Jesus would be walking in Satan's way, not God's way, because God the Father had a plan for God the Son—to die on the cross and to be resurrected. Jesus knew this, and He said, "It is written, you shall not tempt the Lord your God." Another stab wound was delivered to Satan.

TO WORSHIP GOD. In Matthew 4:8, Satan attempted to gain control of the mind area of Jesus' soul by showing Jesus the kingdoms of this world. He offered them to Jesus if He would bow down and worship him. Jesus said simply, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve." The devil then left him for a season.

**READ: Genesis 5:1-7:24; Matthew 3:7-4:11; Psalm 3:1-8;
Proverbs 1:10-19**