

OVERCOME THE DEVIL WITH GOD'S WORD

Matthew 4:4 It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ “

Immediately after John the Baptist baptized Jesus, Matthew tells us Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness. While there for forty days, the Devil (tempter), Satan (the adversary) tempted Him to sin. Matthew, chapter 4, records one of those temptations. Jesus had not eaten and was very hungry. The “tempter,” His “adversary” told Him to use His divine power to turn rocks into bread to satisfy his hunger.

Jesus responded, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ “(Matthew 4:4) In this temptation, “bread” is a mere detail. The real issue is man’s dependence upon God. Thus, Jesus appealed not to His hunger, nor to the fact that He could use His divine power to turn the rocks into bread, but to the Scriptures. Jesus said, “Man shall live . . .by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

Ephesians chapter six encourages Christians to use the entire armor that God provides when under spiritual attack. In the list provided by St. Paul, only verse 17 lists an offensive weapon. It is “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

God has been feeding hungry people since He created the Garden of Eden. He created the Garden of Eden to feed Adam and Eve; provided Israel in the wilderness with bread from heaven (manna – Angel food) for 40 years; bread for Elijah delivered by ravens and then by a widow; and 5,000 men on one occasion and 4,000 on another ate bread miraculously provided by Jesus from a few loaves of bread.

Your tempter, your adversary, the Devil, the Scriptures say, seeks to devour you. His goal is to destroy your faith relationship with your heavenly Father. Instead of praying, “Thy Will be Done” Satan tempts you to tell God what to do. (In Jesus’ case, Satan told Him to turn rocks into bread, when there were countless ways God could minister to Jesus’ need.)

How then do you overcome the Devil's temptations? You tell Him, "It is written!" That is how Jesus did it. Use ". . .the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. . ." (Ephesians 6:7)

Prayer: Holy Spirit, equip me with the words of Holy Scripture when I am tempted by my spiritual adversary, the Devil, that He be overcome not by my power, wisdom or cunning but by the almighty power of God. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Almighty God, Your Word is cast Like seed into the ground;
Now let the dew of heav'n descend And righteous fruits abound.

Let not the sly satanic foe This holy seed remove,
But give it root in ev'ry heart To bring forth fruits of love.

Let not the world's deceitful cares The rising plant destroy,
But let it yield a hundredfold The Fruits of peace and joy.

So when the precious seed is sown, Life-giving grace bestow
That all whose souls the truth receive Its saving pow'r may know.
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