



It is no secret that my favorite passage in the bible is Matthew 4: 1-11. To me it's good versus evil, up close and personal. On one side the devil incarnate; on the other Jesus the Christ. When I read this I am reminded that God's plan is pretty precise and more than obvious to those willing to seek Him first. After 40 days of fasting in the desert, Satan offers Christ "all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor." We should all give pause and realize the power the devil has to tempt each and every one of us as we go about our daily lives, essentially on his turf.

The truth be told, Lucifer and the Lord hung out in heaven. You could call them boys; that is, until Lucifer got the big head and was banished to the physical real. In this confrontation of all confrontations, once Jesus rebuked him for the third time, scripture says, "Then the devil left Him and angels came and attended (to) Him." So, once Christ withstood and overcame the temptations, God then delivered unto Him all that Satan had offered and more. When you get this, then you'll realize, it was Christ's birthright anyway. Now, if I follow this correctly, the devil probably knows the bible better than we do. He understands what tempts us, because he knows what pleases God. They were roadies, remember? Then it stands to reason that I'm a much easier target than Jesus and so are you. My ruination won't necessarily require the promise of the whole world and all of its splendor. But since I am made in the image of God, perhaps the key to my ultimate salvation might be to surrender all that I have and all that I am to Him, who is my Lord and Savior. It's His anyway, right? That way, I won't fall into the trap that suggests it's mine and I have the right to more. By doing so I should be able to see the devil coming with the intention of fooling me into believing life can and should provide me with more than God has already blessed me with. If (and that's a big if), I can see the devil coming, just maybe I can position myself to withstand the need to have my wants and desires satisfied by sacrificing the integrity of my soul for momentary gratification.

## Spiritually Speaking... with James Washington

Written by James Washington  
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Trust me. I do understand there is a difference between temptation to sin and a test of faith. What I'm hopefully shedding some light on is how simple all this appears to be when looked upon from a spiritual perspective rather than an earthly one. Once Jesus answered each one of Satan's successive temptations with... "It is written," (1) Matthew 4:4 "Man does not live by bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord." (2) Matthew 4:7, "It is also written, do not put the Lord your God to the test." (3) Matthew 4:10 "Away from me Satan! For it is written, worship the Lord your God and serve Him only." ...then the devil left and the angels came.

The key to getting on the other side of temptation seems to be to walk in the Word consciously, so you can understand that 'just saying no' to the devil is an absolute guarantee of getting all that you desire and all that you need from life. In order to do this, we must realize how cunning Satan is in getting you to see, or not see that he is the source of your temptations. When in doubt, shout. Call upon the name of the Lord and eventually Satan will be replaced with angels also ready to attend to you. Last time I looked. It was all your birthright too. "Seek ye first the kingdom and whatever it is that you desire, you will have and more..."

May God bless and keep you always.