

WHAT'S IN YOUR WALLET?

Scripture Reading: Read Matthew chapter 4

You may have seen the commercial on television where a rampaging group of Vikings, representing high rates and fees, are coming after folks only to be stopped dead in their tracks at the sight of a consumer pulling out a Capital One credit card. The commercial concludes with the tag line, "What's in your wallet?"

Today's Scripture reading opens with Jesus, following his baptism, being led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Just as the first Adam faced the temptation of the devil, so also must Jesus, the one whom the apostle Paul calls the last Adam. Much is made of the fact that the devil introduces his temptations with "if you are the Son of God," as if the devil is challenging the fact of Jesus' sonship. The devil is not ignorant of who Jesus is and what took place by the Jordan River weeks earlier at Jesus' baptism. Rather, his line of attack is to assume Jesus' sonship but to get him to use his kingship authority for his own gain rather than to take the way of the cross in obedience to the Father.

Again and again, the Son of God is assaulted with temptations from the devil. He is tempted to turn stones into bread to meet his very real need of hunger after fasting forty days and forty nights. He is tempted to show off his power in Jerusalem and dazzle the crowds by jumping off the pinnacle of the temple and having angels catch him. He is tempted to bow down and worship the devil in exchange for the kingdoms of the world and their power. Powerful temptations to be sure, and with a chance to avoid the cross. Some have argued, though, that Jesus couldn't have failed since he was God. The time of testing was rigged they claim. Yet, the writer of Hebrews makes clear that Jesus was tempted in every way as we are yet without sin. In the fullness of his humanity, he faced the devil's attacks and overcame. The first Adam failed the test when it was his turn and we, his descendants, have suffered ever since. The last Adam passed with flying colors and we, who have trusted in Jesus, have benefited ever since! So, how did the Son of God overcome? How did he do it? He stood on the bedrock of God's Word. Whereas the first Adam doubted God's Word, the last Adam held firm and declared, "It is written." Again and again, he went back to the Scriptures that he had committed to memory and beat back the devil's attacks. "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" "For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" "

The Capital One customer in the commercial did not give way to fear in the face of the attacking marauders, he knew what was in his wallet. When we face the devil's temptations, we don't have in to give in either if we, like Jesus, have the Word of God in our hearts. So, what's in your "wallet?"

Action Step: Memorize Psalm 119:11.

Prayer Focus: For God to empower you to hide his Word in your heart.

Take-a-way: *When the devil comes calling, let the Word do the talking!*