

Following the King – study four
Our Daily Bread – Matthew 4:1 – 11

It's worth contemplating how literally Jesus was speaking when he taught his disciples to pray, "Give us today our daily bread" (Matthew 6:9 – 11 TNIV). On one hand it's valid to say that Jesus simply wants his followers to look to God to supply our food and other daily needs. However, Jesus also spoke about bread in a more spiritual sense, describing himself as 'the bread of heaven' and 'the bread of life' (John 6:35 - 42). Also at the last supper Jesus took bread and broke it saying, "This is my body given for you..." (Luke 22:19).

In 1956 RBC Ministries made the connection between our need to remain in God's word and Jesus' words, 'Our daily bread'. Today millions of copies of 'Our Daily Bread' devotional guide have been translated into almost 30 different languages around the world. This handy little booklet is yet another reminder that, "People do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). But more importantly, Jesus' 40-day fast in the wilderness serves as a powerful testimony that remaining in God's word is as vital to our spiritual lives as food is to our physical survival.

More extensive Bible study notes on this passage can be found at www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/Matt/Gods-Son-Passes-Test

1. According to Matthew 4:1 why was Jesus in the wilderness in the first place?

2. Read Matthew 4:2 – 3. Imagine Jesus' physical circumstances when Satan tempted him to turn stones to bread. Can you relate to Christ's weakness at the time of this temptation?

3. Jesus responded to each of Satan's three temptations with the words, "It is written" (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10). Why is God's written word (the Bible) so vital to our faith?

4. What did Jesus mean when he said, "People do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God"? (Matthew 4:4)

5. Satan launched his second temptation against Jesus also quoting the phrase, "It is written", followed by a quote from God's word (4:5 – 6). Jesus then counterattacked with his own, "It is written" statement. Why is it so important to learn to use God's word correctly? (I.e. why is misusing God's word as bad as not using it at all?)

6. The result of Jesus relying on his Father's word is that God's angels did finally come and attend to him (See Matthew 4:6 & 11). As Christ's disciple, is the quality and quantity of time you spend in God's word sufficient to equip you to withstand life's tests, as Jesus did?