

No Shortcuts to Glory: Matthew 4: 1-11

1. **Fasting.** Jesus fasts and prays in preparation. What is the purpose of fasting? Share with the group if you have fasted, and the benefits associated with fasting. In what ways can it be misused?

2. **Temptation.** What is temptation? “The devil made me do it.” Have you heard that refrain before? If so, what is wrong with it? To what extent is the devil involved when we’re tempted?

3. **Tools for dealing with temptation.** Christ draws on Scripture, and uses it in particular ways. Read Deuteronomy 6 and 8 to see the context from which Jesus quoted. Can you identify the way he uses Scripture, and what can we learn from how he uses it? Read James 1.13-15 and discuss what God is teaching through this short passage.

4. **The Devil.** Either we’re too interested in him, or we ignore him. That’s a paraphrase from C.S. Lewis’ writing. Do you agree? What middle way might be preferable? See James 4.7-8. What is James’ advice for dealing with the devil?

5. **Spiritual Warfare.** Read Ephesians 6.10-18. Discuss Paul’s suggestions for resisting the devil. Is there any danger in being too focused on the warfare idea?

Submission. Jesus ends up submitting to the way of the Father. Following a path of suffering. Is this also a means of resisting the devil?