

WHEN JESUS TAKES YOU INTO THE

WILDERNESS

PRECEPT

MATTHEW 4:1-11

¹ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

PROMISE

Just like how we experience different seasons of weather here in our country, we must also face the many different seasons of our lives. Ecclesiastes gives us many examples of seasons we'll face in life: times of birth, death, weeping, and joy. *"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh."* (Ecclesiastes 3:1-4). Today, some of us may be in the season of wilderness; a time of solitude, desolation, and barrenness. It surely is a difficult and emotional time; it could feel lonely, scary, and never-ending. What is so amazing is Jesus also experienced being in the wilderness, and He tells us of astounding truths in order for us to overcome this season and come out stronger in faith and in character.

DO NOT LIVE BY THE BREAD ALONE (MATTHEW 4:4). Jesus informs us that we must live ultimately by the Word of God. Despite his physical need of food and the temptation of Satan, nothing was more important to Him than to carry out the Word and will of His heavenly Father. May this encourage us to put the Word of God at the centre of our lives despite the difficulties we're facing in this time of wilderness.

DO NOT PUT GOD ON A TEST (MATTHEW 4:7). We must not play God or bargain to God what we're going to do just to get the outcome we want. We are to only do our part and leave the rest to Him, trusting Him in His will. Not everything is in our control. Remember that He is good and His love endures forever. He is our hope, so trust Him at all times.

DO NOT STOP WORSHIPPING GOD (MATTHEW 4:10). When taken into the wilderness, many of us complain and even stop worshipping God. Some of us, when we've been serving Him passionately and something bad happens to us, we think He owes us to only allow good things in our lives. There are times that God allows us to experience hardships in life for many reasons. He loves us enough to cause growth in our character and be the people He wants us to be. In times of difficulties, remember that He is our strength and our help. *"Blessed are those whose strength comes from the Lord."* (Psalms 84:5).

Jesus being fully man, was able to get tempted exactly the way we do but was able to obey the Father. Being fully God at the same, He went through the worst in the wilderness but triumphed in the face of adversities. Whatever wilderness we go through in life, we must stay faithful. When God brings us to it, He will deliver us through it.

PRACTICE

1. Wilderness. Have you ever experienced a wilderness season in your life and faith? If so, what was it like? How were you changed coming out of it?

2. Application. Knowing how we can overcome and thrive in the wilderness (Matthew 4), how can you encourage someone today who is going through a wilderness season in their lives?

PRAYER

I. Circles

- Pray for our youth and singles to grow in their love for God and share Christ to their circle of influence.

II. Young Couples Connections

- Pray for these couples as they lead the Young Couples groups: Oliveros, Imperial, & Gumasing.

III. North Life Connections

- Pray for these couples as they lead the North groups: Ocampo & Ico.

IV. South Life Connections

- Pray for these couples as they lead the South groups: Drapeza & Tablan.

V. East Life Connections

- Pray for these couples as they lead the East groups: Domingo & Torres.

VI. West Life Connections

- Pray for these couples as they lead the West groups: Solidum, Fabregas, and Gamboa.

VII. Young Once Life Connections

- Pray for our coordinators Rene & Lita Alipao as they continue to lead this group.