

# More Than a Manual

*Scripture and Background Information for February 5-11.*

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

For most Christians we hear about the importance of the Bible to our understanding and growth in our faith but if we are honest, that's not exactly our experience. Instead, we find it confusing, boring, or irrelevant and instead of consistently engaging with Scripture, we find that we avoid Scripture itself. God designed Scripture for so much more than what we often experience. This series is an invitation to view Scripture the way God intended and to begin to engage with it in fresh ways that help you understand more of its purpose and find the One behind it all along.

## **Background for Matthew 4:1-11:**

At the end of Matthew 3, Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist which signifies that Jesus will soon call his disciples and begin his public ministry. But, before Jesus embarks with his new companions, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness so that He can be tempted by the devil. The point of these temptations is to figure out whether Jesus will choose to exercise His power for His own benefit and avoid suffering. Since Jesus' mission is to suffer for the sins of the world, it is important that he passes these first tests by not simply achieving His goals in the easiest way possible. He needs to reject the devil's offers and remain obedient to the will of His Father which will ultimately lead Jesus to sacrifice Himself for our sins so humanity can be saved through Him.

There are 3 things that the devil tempts Jesus with and each of them tests specific desires Jesus would have. First, He is offered food because he is hungry from fasting but says no. Then, Jesus is told to prove that He is the Messiah and the Son of God which would cause many people to follow and worship Him, but he refuses. Lastly, Satan offers Jesus the opportunity to rule every kingdom of the world. Even though He is meant to be king over all God's creation, yet again, He refuses. But it is not just that Jesus refuses but also how he refuses that is interesting. He uses Scripture to combat these temptations and quotes a different verse from Deuteronomy each time.

## Insights and questions to engage with the text:

1. What is the significance of Jesus, who is God, using Scripture to combat these temptations?
2. How can/has Scripture helped you in moments of temptation that you have or will face? What passages have you looked at to remember truth and cling to the Lord?
3. How does Jesus' use of Scripture impact the way you understand the Bible and engage it yourself?
4. Reflect on the entire "More Than a Manual" series. In what ways have your view of the Bible changed? How do you hope to engage with the Bible differently in the future?

\* Old Testament References in Matthew 4:1-11

Verse 4 → Deuteronomy 8:3, Verse 6 → Psalm 91:11-12, Verse 7 → Deuteronomy 6:16, Verse 10 → Deuteronomy 6:13