

matthew experiencing the presence of the Kingdom

----> **connect...** Psalm 111 helps us to focus on the faithfulness and sovereignty of God. Read a couple of verses each day and use them to worship and praise your King. Today read Psalm 111:1-2.

----> **discover...** Read Matthew 4:1-11. Today we are going to learn about how Jesus was tested in the desert. Later, we will see why He was tempted. (The Greek verb translated “tempted” can also be rendered “tested.”)

1. Look closely at verses 1-4. Who led Jesus into the desert? _____

a. By who was He tested? _____

b. When did the testing begin? _____

c. What was the first test from the “tempter?” _____

d. What was Jesus’ response? _____

e. Jesus was quoting God’s Word as recorded in Deuteronomy 8:3. Read Deuteronomy 8:1-5 to help gain an appreciation of the consistency and fluidity of this amazing book. Share your thoughts.

2. Read verses 5-7 carefully. What does the tempter want Jesus to do now? _____

a. What does Satan use to tempt Him with? (v. 6: see also Psalm 91:11-12) _____

b. How does Jesus respond? _____

c. What pattern do you see developing with Jesus’ responses? _____

d. What does Hebrews 4:12 say about the Word of God? _____

----> **consider...** Write out Psalm 119:11.

Knowing God’s Word “by heart” is the most valuable weapon you have to fight and win with as you are tempted by the tempter – Satan. He is the father of lies—lying is his native language (see John 8:44). Does this motivate you to know the Word? Express your desire to God and ask Him to give you a teachable spirit.

----> **apply...** Can you think of a “test” you face often? An area where you’re tempted to sin? Can you find a verse to combat that temptation with? (Ask for help if you need it.) Try using it ASAP! Begin by learning Psalm 119:11 by heart.

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----> **Connect...** Read Psalm 111:3-4 and use them to worship and praise your King.

----> **Discover...** Read about the third recorded test of Jesus in Matthew 4:8-11.

1. What does Satan tempt Jesus with this time? _____
 - a. How does Jesus respond? _____
 - _____
 - b. What did the devil do? _____
 - c. Who attended to the needs of Jesus? _____
2. What impresses you about this whole encounter between Satan and Jesus? _____

3. It's important to remember that when Jesus left His throne in heaven to come to earth, He took on the very nature of man (see Philippians 2:6-8). He faced these trials as a man—not as God. Why? Read the following verses from Hebrews and see if you can answer that question.
 - a. Hebrews 2:14-18 (“he” is Jesus.)
 - i. Why was He made like us? _____
 - _____
 - ii. Why is He now able to help us when we're tempted? _____
 - _____
 - b. Hebrews 4:14-16
 - i. Who is our high priest? _____
 - ii. Can He sympathize with our weaknesses? Why? _____
 - _____
 - iii. This incredible truth lets us approach Him with confidence. How is His throne described? _____
 - _____
 - iv. What will we find when we decide to approach His throne? _____
 - _____

----> **Consider...** Do these words of God encourage you? Are you hearing what they say? I John 4:18 tells us that perfect love casts out fear. God loves you perfectly! You can go before Him with confidence no matter what you're dealing with—He sympathizes and is waiting to pour out His grace (not punishment). The “rod of our oppressor” wants to block that path. Will you let him? Talk to God about what you learned today and thank Him for His grace.

----> **Apply...** Are you “hiding” something from God, fearful to bring it before Him? Act on the truth of His Word and approach that throne of grace now.
Keep learning Psalm 119:11.

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----> **Connect...** Read Psalm 111:5-6 and use them to worship and praise your King.

----> **Discover...** Read Matthew 4:12-25. It's important to note that Matthew wrote this gospel topically rather than chronologically. Between the end of Jesus' testing period and the statement in Matthew 4:12 comes the ministry described in John 1:19-3:36. We'll read later in Matthew why John was imprisoned.

1. What did Jesus begin preaching? (v. 17) _____
2. He brought a great light to Galilee. How was this light revealed according to verse 23? _____

3. What happened in verses 18-20? _____

4. How about verses 21-22? _____

5. What happened as soon as the word about Jesus got out? _____

 - a. What did Jesus do for them? _____
 - b. Did only His "called out" disciples follow Him? Who did? _____

6. Think about the ramifications of what Jesus was doing and preaching (v. 23). There had been approximately 400 years of silence (the time between the Old Testament and the New Testament). Share your thoughts. _____

----> **Consider...** It's believed that Jesus was in his early thirties when He began His public ministry. It began with intensity and continued with even more intensity for approximately three years. He's calling people to repentance—to face their sin and realize their need for a Savior and Jesus, the one who saves. Have you sincerely thanked Him lately for coming?

----> **Apply...** Continue learning Psalm 119:11.

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----> **connect...** Read Psalm 111:7-8. What do you learn about the Word (precepts) of God?

----> **discover...** In Matthew 5 we see Jesus beginning to describe kingdom living. He's giving a profile of His character while teaching truth and at the same time laying out what it means to follow Him. Because we are attempting to get through the whole book of Matthew in sixteen lessons, we won't be able to spend a lot of time breaking down in detail all the points of His radical teaching. You may want to dig deeper on your own.

1. Read Matthew 5:1-12, paying close attention to the first six verses. Who is teaching? _____
2. Fill out this chart:

Verse	Blessed are: (character trait)	Because: (rewards)	How would you describe this character trait?
3			
4			
5			
6			

----> **consider...** As you can see, this is a tall order, but Philippians 2:12-13 tells us we are to work at obedience, knowing that "it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose." We know for sure that what Jesus is teaching is His good purpose so we can be assured that God will work in us as we choose to obey. Discuss the chart you've just made with Jesus. He is speaking to you just as assuredly as He was speaking to His first disciples.

----> **apply...** In your journal, record your thoughts. Keep learning Psalm 119:11.

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----> **Connect...** Begin with Psalm 119:9-10 to worship and praise your King, and then read the whole psalm aloud as an offering of praise to God!

----> **Discover...**

1. Continue with the chart you worked on yesterday, beginning with Matthew 5:7.

Verse	Blessed are: (character trait)	Because: (rewards)	How would you describe this character trait?
7			
8			
9			
10-12			

2. For emphasis, let's review the rewards by questioning ourselves. Ask yourself:

- a. Do I want to inherit the kingdom of heaven?
- b. Do I want to be comforted?
- c. Do I want to inherit the earth?
- d. Do I want to be filled with righteousness?
- e. Do I want to be shown mercy?
- f. Do I want to see God?
- g. Do I want to be called a son of God?
- h. Do I want to receive rewards in heaven?
- i. WHAT MUST I DO?

----> **Consider...** Jesus gives descriptive teaching on how this "disciple" looks in the next few chapters. Is your spirit ready to be taught? Do you desire to obey? Psalm 37:4 says "delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart." Love Him and He will transform you. Walk through the above questions (2 a-i) with the Lord.

----> **Apply...** Recite Psalm 119:11. Matthew 5:3-10 is a great passage to hide in your heart. Spend a few minutes meditating there.

