

Mark 1
Immediately!
Lent 1

February 21, 2021
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
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Grace, Mercy, and Peace be unto you from God our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

[Introduction] [1] IMMEDIATELY!

You see, Mark doesn't lollygag around.

He gets to the action.

And the action is [2] IMMEDIATE!

The word – it just drags us by the hand from scene to scene
as Jesus heals people, casts out demons,
forgives sins, and raises the dead.

The first place we encounter the word is here—in Jesus' Baptism.

We can almost still hear the Father's words "You are my beloved Son" (v 11),
and the water seems to have barely dried on Jesus' head
when the Holy Spirit pushes him into the wilderness.

"The Spirit [3] *immediately* drove him out into the wilderness" (v 12).

[Tempted as Us]

[4] Immediately, Jesus is tempted in all ways as we are.

Yes, [5] immediately Jesus goes from water to wilderness.

[6] The Holy Spirit, who descended upon Jesus in his Baptism,

[7] now drives him into the desert

with the same urgency with which God took the children of Israel
from the Egyptian side of the Red Sea

to the wilderness side of the Sinai Peninsula.

Was Jesus' temptation

an occasional thought that passed through his mind while he fasted?

Was he limited to just one temptation a day?

OR Was it two or three or four or countless times a day?

Mark is sparse in his details about Jesus' temptation,
but this he does teach us:

Jesus was tempted *all* forty days of his time there,
for "he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan" (v 13).

[8] The writer of Hebrews gives us this insight:

*“For we do not have a high priest
who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses,
but one who in every respect
has been tempted as we are, yet without sin”* (4:15).

[9] Some may find it offensive to say that Jesus was tempted in every respect—to think Jesus was tempted by the most heinous of sins can be offensive.

Tempted to steal?

Tempted to curse?

Tempted to commit adultery?

We get uncomfortable, and don't want to think about it.

We don't get a laundry list of temptations for Day 4 or Day 34,

but the fact still stands that Jesus was tempted

in every respect

throughout those forty days

and throughout his ministry.

To the very end, Jesus is tempted—[10] even on the cross.

Remember, after these wilderness days,

Satan waited for a more “opportune time” to tempt. (Lk 4:13).

Some of us would have given Jesus permission cursed his enemies,
even to have cursed throughout the incredible pain he suffered on the cross.

But Jesus did not.

[11] He prayed to his Father; he prayed for his enemies;

he gave comfort to the repentant thief

who at least once and probably more times

had given in to temptation that led to his own crucifixion.

By his complete and full temptation,

without sin,

without faltering one single time,

Jesus has *credited your account*

with perfect resistance of all temptation.

[12] Jesus prayed for you and your temptations
even as he died for you.

And this was *for you*.

[With Help and Hope]

You see...

[13] IMMEDIATELY, Jesus comes to us with help and hope.

[14] At your Baptism, these words were prayed: “And deliver us from temptation.”
Jesus has been and will continue to be by your tempted side
until you are finally at peace
and rest eternally with him.

Because you are a beloved son or daughter of the heavenly Father,
you have all the help of his Son, Jesus.

[15] Oftentimes, Satan plays the same old song of your temptations.
He plays it over and over.
Satan is a keen observer of behavior,
and he will not let up until you breathe your last.

But you are not without help and hope.

Remember, Jesus was tempted in every way,
and that means Jesus was tempted in *ALL* the ways you are tempted.

With that in mind, the offensiveness of his temptations slips away,
and immediately we have something to firmly grasp.

[We Turn to Jesus]

So then,

[16] Immediately, we turn to Jesus when we are tempted.

Those great words of comfort from Hebrews even go on:

[17] *“We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need”* (4:15–16).

As tempted people, we can draw near to God’s throne of grace!

For Jesus has IMMEDIATELY opened the way for you.

AND Not only do we hold on to our Savior Jesus,

who has been through the very temptations you are going through,
but we also cry out our urgent prayers to our heavenly Father,
who hears every word.

[18]

Our Father, aid those caught in addition

*And immediately tempted to give into the drugs and alcohol,
to greed and gluttony.*

Our Father, guide those who are forsaking a vocation in life,

*And immediately tempted to crave success and accolades,
material items and worldly goods.*

Our Father, comfort those drowning in despair

And immediately tempted to give into the Devil's lie that there is no hope.

Our Father, lead us not into temptation.

In his own prayer,

Jesus puts into your mouth

the very words of his temptation experience:

“Lead us not into temptation.”

So, when do we pray these words?

[19] Immediately(!) before the Lord's Supper,

where we receive the body and blood of Jesus,
who resisted all temptation.

Immediately(!) as we wake up in the morning AND

Immediately(!) as we go to bed each night. AND

Immediately(!) as we are tempted.

[20] Dear people of God,

this precious gift strengthens you,

your flesh and mind and spirit, in times of temptation . . .

and forgives you for every time

that you give in to those temptations.

Jesus is here for you, even now—right now!—

[21] IMMEDIATELY in your temptation,

to help you resist

and to restore you when you fall.

Jesus, who was tempted, helps you when you are tempted.

And He does this... [22] IMMEDIATELY! Amen.

So we... Declare his glory among the nations,

his marvelous deeds among the people. AMEN! (Psalm 96:3)
