

Doctrinal Summary of
Satan & Company: Overcome by Truth that is Known and Relied Upon

In Matthew 4:1-11 Jesus reveals the manner by which Satan & Company's strategy of deception is able to be overcome by relying on truth. Each of the three temptations recorded by Matthew reveal Satan himself attempting to use his strategy of deception upon the Son of God, God Himself in the flesh. Yet, Jesus was overwhelmingly victorious over each of Satan's deceptive attacks.

In the first attempt at deceiving Jesus, Satan appealed to the hunger felt in Jesus' body after fasting for 40 days. Yet, rather than affirm His hunger, Jesus declared, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" Notice the phrase, "It is written" in Jesus' response. He quotes God's Word back to Satan, relying on God's revelation to be what leads His decision making.

In the second attempt at deceiving Jesus, Satan used Scripture to appeal to Jesus' ego as an important individual in God's eyes. Yet, despite being the most important human to ever live (while simultaneously being God), Jesus again replied, "It is written, 'You shall not put the LORD your God to the test.'" Here, Jesus uses a harmony of God's Word to be overwhelmingly victorious over Satan's nefarious attempt at misusing God's Word against Him. In doing so, Jesus again relies on an accurate understanding and harmony of God's revelation to be what leads His decision making.

In the third attempt at deceiving Jesus, Satan appeals to Jesus through materialism, offering to trade everything Jesus could see in exchange for Jesus worshiping him. Yet, despite being the creator of all that He could see and the rightful owner of it all, Jesus again replied with the phrase "it is written," saying, "'You shall worship the LORD your God, and serve Him only.'" Again, Jesus relies upon the content of God's Word to be that which is the proper manner of thinking within Him. In doing so, Jesus relies upon God's revelation to be what leads His decision making.

Despite using his very effective and well-polished strategy of deception against Jesus, Satan's deception was completely ineffective because Jesus knew what is true and also relied upon it to counter the suggested falsehoods. Thus, in the same manner the believer can become overwhelmingly victorious over Satan & Company when he encounters their strategy of deception. This is identified in Ephesians 6:16 which says,

"In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one."

The phrase "shield of faith" is translated from the Koine Greek phrase, τὸν θερπεὸν τῆς πίστεως ("ton thure-on taes pis-teh-ohs") which more literally means, "the shield belonging to the dependency upon something to do something specific on one's behalf, based on response." Faith trusts something else to accomplish an expected work. For the believer, overcoming Satan & Company's attempted deception requires trust in the content of God's Word. It is the collection of God's revelation that serves as the object which the believer is to trust in order for it to accomplish the work of defeating Satan & Company's attack. As the deceptive proposition of Satan & Company attacks the believer, his knowledge of and subsequent reliance upon the Word of God allows him to be overwhelmingly victorious against the attack being faced. "The faith" refers to the collection of that which God has revealed for the believer to rely upon as truth. Knowing and relying upon doctrine defeats Satan & Company every time.