

Read: Mark 1:12-15

Ready? Repent!

Mark 1:12-15

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

"Kids! We have to get ready! We have guests coming over tonight!" Jose and Gabriella looked at each other, rolled their eyes, and did one big sigh at the same time—"Ugh, really?" They knew exactly what was about to happen. Jose and Gabriella would have to do a whole pile of house chores—empty the dishwasher, vacuum, clean their rooms, and more. They also knew they would need to shower and change into nicer clothes. After all, their Abuela was coming over, and everyone knew how picky their grandmother would be. She always pointed out every speck of dirt or dust!

What things do you have to do when guests come to your house? Cleaning and chores like Jose and Gabriella? Do you need to help make food or set the table? Maybe something else? Have you also noticed that when there is an extra special event with guests, there's always more you have to prepare?

Here's one more question to consider today: How much have you prepared for one other special guest . . . for Jesus? We heard today that Jesus preached the message that the kingdom of God has come near. That's still true today. God's kingdom is near us because God comes to us in his Word in Baptism and in Communion. We also know that Jesus will be coming back soon on judgment day with his eternal kingdom.

Whenever Jesus comes to us, he's looking for more than just dirt or dust. Jesus sees every dirty speck of sin in our lives. That could be scary! How am I supposed to prepare for Jesus when I struggle to fight temptations and I sin so often?

Take comfort in God's Word for today about Jesus' temptation by Satan. Remember that Jesus fought Satan and won. Jesus resisted all temptations and sin. And then, Jesus took away all our sins on the cross. He washed us squeaky clean in his blood so that there are no more sin-stains on us! So how can we be ready for Jesus? You heard what he said today, "Repent!" Be sorry for

your sins, turn away from them, and find forgiveness in Jesus. He alone will make you ready and prepared for him as your special guest.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- How did Jesus show his power over Satan?
- What are good choices around the house that Jesus can help you to make instead of sinning?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- In what special ways does Jesus come to us now? (*Hint: There were three mentioned in the devotion.*)
- Name two big temptations that Satan brings to children your age.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Explain this statement: Jesus defeated Satan with his life *and* death.
- What are ways that you can grow stronger in faith and resist temptation and sin?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Savior, thank you for defeating Satan with your life and death. I know that your power alone will help me to resist temptation and avoid sin. Help me with this every day. Amen.

Hymn: CW 200:1,3 – A Mighty Fortress is Our God

A mighty fortress is our God, A trusty shield and weapon;
He helps us free from ev'ry need That has us now o'ertaken.
The old evil foe Now means deadly woe;
Deep guile and great might Are his dread arms in fight;
On earth is not his equal.

Though devils all the world should fill, All eager to devour us,
We tremble not, we fear no ill; They shall not overpow'r us.
This world's prince may still Scowl fierce as he will,
He can harm us none. He's judged; the deed is done!
One little word can fell him.