

Desert Times, a Lenten series
“The Temptation to Test God”
For the week of March 11, 2018
New City Church of LA

GROW & SERVE GROUP GUIDE

Start with Prayer

Get to Know One Another: Share a temptation that you are prone to.

Discuss Your Serve Portion

Reflecting on the Sermon

The devil quoted Psalm 91, God’s promise to protect Jesus. The devil said, if you are the Son of God, then test that promise. The undercurrent of this temptation was the presumption that “if God does not protect you, God is not with you.” Jesus knew that he would carry the sins of humankind. He would fall, and God would not send his angels to catch him. Would he still believe that God was with him? Could suffering and the will of God go together? The devil said no. But Jesus said yes. Jesus would submit to the Lord’s will for his life. He was not going to complain or quarrel with God or test God even if he had to fall out of God’s hands.

We are tempted to construe God’s promises on our own terms. There are a lot of promises in the Scriptures. What do we do with these promises when we are suffering? The devil tries to tempt us to think that this means that God is not with us, that God is not keeping his promises, that God is not real. The devil is constantly trying to create suffering in our lives and the world and then use the suffering to blame God. That’s his scheme.

How do we resist such a temptation? Remember the gospel, find community to remind us of God’s character, and engage in the process of building a relationship with God.

Share one thing you learned or applied to your life from the sermon. Any questions from the sermon?

Going Deeper: Bible Study

1. Read Luke 4:9-13, Psalm 91:11-12, Deuteronomy 6:16, Exodus 17:1-7.
2. How is testing God like sitting in the judge’s sit with God on trial? What is wrong with testing God?

3. What was the temptation of Jesus? Jesus knew that he was called to die on the cross for our sins. What is the devil trying to get Jesus to think?
4. How do we understand God's promises in the Scriptures when we are suffering?
5. In what ways is the devil trying to get us to misuse God's promises in the Scriptures?
6. How have we become judges of God rather than submitting to God as the judge?
7. In what ways are we tempted to blame God for the mess we make or the devil makes?
8. In what ways are we tempted to use God as a genie? Why is this wrong?
9. In what ways do we put God in the box of our expectations?
10. How can we resist this temptation to test/judge God?

Share what's going on in your life.

Pray for one another, the church, and your neighborhood