

March 26, 2022

Tempted and Tested

Matthew 4:1-11

Matthew 4: 7, 10 (NRSV) - Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” ... Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’”

As I read this scripture, I kept coming back to verses 7 and 10. Temptation comes in so many different forms. It is no secret; the last two years have been hard. So many times, it has felt like I am wandering in the wilderness, hungry and alone and unsure of what to do next.

I think that this time has also felt full of temptations, too: Do what's easy. Do what we want instead of what is best for all.

Thinking of self before others. I'd like to say that I never fell to any of those temptations, but the more likely scenario is that we all have at some point. Temptations urge us to take the easy path, instead of the right path.

God and our faith urges us to do what's hard, but, sometimes, we choose the shortest, easiest choice instead.

As Christians we are taught to love and take care of our neighbors and to not judge others. During this pandemic, we have all fallen to the temptation of not following those basic rules that we've been taught our whole lives.

We have judged others for their choices of how to best keep their families safe during the pandemic. We have said they are being too cautious or not cautious enough. We have failed to take care of the strangers we encounter each day by doing what we believe is safe for us instead of being concerned for the safety of others.

We have made assumptions about each other based on the choices we see being made. We have tested God by pushing against the ways he has charged us with living.

Being tempted is hard. Standing strong against that temptation is even harder during difficult and stressful times. Right now, we are being tempted and tested each day. We must make the choice each day to stand strong and serve God, instead of giving into the temptation to serve ourselves.

Prayer: *Lord, please help us to continue to fight the temptation of doing what is easy for us instead of doing what is right by you. Amen.*

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