

Deliver Us #3: Freedom from Temptation

October 15, 2023

Luke 4:1-13

1 Corinthians 10:11-13

Hebrews 4:14-16

D E L I V E R U S
Life in the victory of Jesus

Begin with Prayer

In silence, invite the Holy Spirit to guide you. Then pray: *Empowering God, we pray that you will send your Holy Spirit to move us to understanding; to help us to believe the gospel; to give us strength and wisdom to live by it. Amen.* (Worship Sourcebook Q.3.5.8)

Reconnecting and Debriefing

Take a moment to check in with one another.

1. What was a high point and a low point from your week?
2. What's a 'guilty pleasure' you enjoy?

Introduction

Whether we gather in person or online, our goal remains the same: to be a people apprenticed to the life of Jesus. His life and teaching is our example and our source of truth. Remember the commitments we make to each other to foster safety and freedom as we pursue spiritual growth together:

- Whenever possible, please listen to the sermon prior to gathering (Sunday or online).
- While we are meeting (even online), commit to focussing rather than multitasking. Be all here.
- Give every person an equal opportunity to share, even if it takes time to form or finish their thoughts.
- Be respectful and non-judgmental.
- Honour sharing boundaries (only what you have permission to share, no gossip) and guard confidentiality (what we share here stays here).
- Don't try to fix, problem-solve or rescue; keep pointing one another to the truths of the gospel for our lives.

Listening to God's Word

We use the word 'temptation' in a variety of ways. It can mean something you are considering ("I'm tempted to go for a walk"), something you want to do but maybe shouldn't ("That cheesecake is tempting!"), or something that can pull you off a good path ("I'm tempted to go home with that alluring stranger"). While temptation is sometimes the simple appeal of a delicious dessert, it can also be the work of the devil and his demons who want to take us away from what God wants to do in our lives. Even when this is the case, the victory of Christ gives us freedom from temptation.

Small Group Discussion

- **Read Luke 4:1-13.** *What is your first thought when you read through this passage?*
- The Greek word for 'tempt' (to entice to improper behavior) can also mean to 'test' (to discover the true nature of something). *How does the idea of 'testing' change how you view this story?*
- **Read Luke 3:21-22.** Jesus was baptised just before going into the wilderness. At His baptism, the Holy Spirit rested on Him and God the Father declared that Jesus was His 'beloved Son.' *Since Jesus was just affirmed as God's loved son, why might the devil begin his temptations with "If you are the Son of God...?"*
- *Have you ever had a significant spiritual experience, and then find yourself struggling soon thereafter?*
- The devil's temptation often begins by undermining God's truth. Whether with Jesus in the wilderness or with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1), the devil tried to cause doubt about God's truth. *What truth do you "know," but can struggle to hold on to?*
- Jesus' three temptations concerned his immediate needs (turning stone to bread when he was hungry), testing God's willingness to take care of Jesus (jumping from the temple), and Jesus' purpose and

inheritance (receiving the nations). *In which of those three areas – immediate need, God’s willingness to take care of you, and purpose/inheritance – do you find you experience temptation?*

- *What would it look like to respond to temptation like Jesus responded to temptation?*
- **Read 1 Corinthians 10:11-13.** *What does ‘a way out’ from temptation look like?*
- *How have you experienced a ‘way out’ in your own life? What do you do when the ‘way out’ is not readily easy, clear, or simple?*
- **Read Hebrews 4:14-16.** *Take a moment to share some of the many the ways you have seen people tempted in general.*
- *When you think about Jesus, do you actually feel like Jesus experienced all those kinds of temptation?*
- *How does Jesus’ having experienced all various temptations impact how you approach Jesus when you are tempted, or when you have given in to temptation?*
- ***How do you sense the Holy Spirit calling you to respond to or act on what we have read and discussed?***

Practices – Responding with Scripture

In each of the Jesus’ three temptations, He responded with a Scripture. Some people have followed Jesus’ example by choosing a Scripture for different temptations they experience in their life and returning to it each time they are tempted. As a couple of examples:

Someone struggling with always needing to buy something might choose Hebrews 13:5 – “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”

Someone struggling with feelings of shame and guilt might choose 2 Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

If this is an exercise you have done in the past, share your **experience** with this practice. If this is not something you have done before (or even if it is), take some time to choose a verse that would be particularly meaningful to you.

If your group has established trust, give each person an opportunity to share an area where you are particularly vulnerable to temptation or doubting God’s truth. As a group, take a moment to listen to the Holy Spirit. Is there a verse that comes to mind? If so, feel free to share it.

If your group is still establishing trust, you can share your struggles more generally, or search for the verse individually and then share the verse you chose with the group. (Don’t worry if you don’t have the whole Bible memorized – you can use Google. 😊)

Caring for One Another

- *Take some time to pray for each other based on your discussion. You can pray all together or in smaller groups.*
- ***Do you or your family have a need that the Life Group can help meet?***

Using the **Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)** as a guide, based on what you’ve shared together, spend time listening to God and praying for one another.