



Week 3: Deluded

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Sermon Notes: Week 3: Total Devotion — Deluded

TAKEN UP

*“Then the devil took him to the **holy city** and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.” Matthew 4:5*

*“‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘**throw** yourself **down**.’” Matthew 4:6a*

*“For it is written: ‘He will command his **angels** concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”
Matthew 4:6b; see Psalm 91:11-12*

*“Jesus answered him, ‘It is also written: “Do not put the Lord your God to the **test**.”’” Matthew 4:7*

MESSED UP

*“Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you; for the LORD your God, who is **among you**, is a jealous God and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land. Do not put the LORD your God to the test as you did at Massah.” Deuteronomy 6:14-16*

*“So they quarreled with Moses and said, ‘Give us water to drink.’ Moses replied, ‘Why do you **quarrel** with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?’”
Exodus 17:2*

*“And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, ‘Is the LORD **among** us or not?’”
Exodus 17:7*

“...Moses said to them, ‘Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?’ Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank.” Numbers 20:10-11

“But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ‘Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.’” Numbers 20:12

*“These were the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites quarreled with the LORD and where he was **proved holy** among them.” Numbers 20:13*

LOOKING UP

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

‘For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.’

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:35-39

NEXT STEPS: A Fasting Challenge – Part 3

- Skip two meals this week (if you are medically able to do so)
- Spend the time memorizing Romans 8:35-39 (above)
- Share the Journey

Connect Group Discussion Guide: Week 3 —Deluded

OPENING

- How do we really know when someone really loves us?

GOING DEEPER

- Read Matthew 4:5-7. Why might Jesus be tempted to throw Himself down off of the highest point of the temple?

Leader's Note: Review Pastor Dirk's sermon in which he offers an answer to this question. Here is the video link:

<http://bethanychurch.com/home/blog/bethany-video/hungry-matthew-44/?wpv-bc-video-category=total-devotion>

- Read Exodus 17: 1-5 and Numbers 1-13? How did Israel “test God”? What was God’s response to this test?

Leaders Note: These two passages record separate events when Israel ran out of water. You may want to review other passages in the Psalms that refer to Israel testing God: Psalm 78:18, 41, 56; 95:9; 106:14. You may also wish to compare the case of Gideon, in Judges 6.

- How might we test God, and why shouldn't we do it?

Leaders Note: Oxford dictionary defines the verb, “test” as follows: “take measures to check the quality, performance, or reliability of (something), especially before putting it into widespread use or practice.”

You may wish to compare passages in which God is said to invite testing. When is this appropriate? See Isaiah 7:1-14 and Micah 3:10.

- Have you ever doubted God's love for you? If so, how have you worked through these doubts?

Leaders Note: You may wish to explore the reasons why people have difficulty accepting God's love, such as a bad childhood experience, a damaging relationship or a negative church experience. How can we overcome the obstacles to rediscovering God's love?

CHALLENGE

- Were you able to participate in the Fasting Challenge, Part 3? If so, describe your experience to the group.
- How can we encourage one another regarding the love that God has for us?