

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

SERMON: The Way of Testing
SPEAKER: Pastor Andrew
CORE SCRIPTURE: Luke 4:1–13 **WATCH SERMON** | **SERMON NOTES**

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

SUMMARY

In this second week of our Lenten series **On the Way with Jesus: A Lenten Journey Through Luke**, Pastor Andrew explored Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. Following His baptism, Jesus—full of the Holy Spirit—was led into the desert where Satan tempted Him three times regarding how He would use His power: turning stones to bread (provision), worshiping Satan for worldly authority (power), and jumping from the temple (proving His identity). Unlike Adam and Israel who failed their tests, Jesus succeeded by trusting His Father and staying faithful to His mission. This passage reveals what true humanity looks like—Spirit-filled, Scripture-saturated, and submitted to God's will.

SHARE

Think of a time when you faced a significant test or trial (a difficult decision, a season of waiting, a temptation to take a shortcut). What did that experience reveal about your faith or character?

READ

Let's read **Luke 4:1–13** together out loud as a group.

DISCUSS

Feel free to pick/choose what is most helpful for you. Remember, the goal is to have rich, relational, authentic, Jesus-centered discussions.

1. What stood out to you the most about the sermon?

2. In Luke 4:1-2, Jesus is described as "full of the Holy Spirit" and "led by the Spirit" into the wilderness where He was tempted for forty days. What does this teach us theologically about the relationship between being Spirit-filled and facing trials? How does this challenge common assumptions that spiritual maturity means fewer struggles?

3. Look closely at Jesus' three responses to Satan (verses 4, 8, and 12). Each comes from Deuteronomy (8:3, 6:13, 6:16)—Israel's wilderness testing. What does Jesus' use of these specific Old Testament passages reveal about His identity as the "second Adam" and the true Israel who succeeds where others failed?

4. Pastor Andrew said, “Our full humanity and our freedom to re-image God is tested moment-by-moment.” How does Jesus’ example in the wilderness redefine what it means to be fully human? Where do you see yourself tempted to live “less than the human being we are created to be”?

5. The second temptation offered Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world” without the cross (verses 5-7). Pastor Andrew emphasized that Jesus “gains by giving up his selfish ambitions” and chooses “a crown of thorns to lift others up.” Where are you currently tempted to pursue influence, success, or control through shortcuts rather than the way of the cross?

6. In the third temptation, Satan twists Psalm 91 to manipulate Jesus into testing God. Do you have examples of seeing “scripture twisting?” Where might you be tempted to become a “sign-seeker” who demands God validate your significance?

7. Pastor Andrew asked: “Are we using circumstances to define God or letting God define our circumstances?” How would you honestly answer that question about your current season of life?

NEXT STEPS:

- Gain victory in your private world: This week, identify one area of your private life (prayer, Scripture reading, rest, relationships) that needs strengthening. Commit to one specific practice that will help you be more “in touch, in tune, in line, and in love with the Holy Spirit.”

- Exercise God-given authority faithfully: Reflect on where you have influence or authority (work, family, community). Ask God to show you one way you can use that power to serve and lift others up rather than for self-promotion.

- Memorize Scripture for spiritual warfare: Choose one of Jesus’ responses from Luke 4 (verses 4, 8, or 12) and memorize it this week. When temptation comes, speak God’s Word out loud.

PRAY:

Spend time praying together as a group:

- **Confession:** Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal areas where we’ve been using circumstances to define God rather than letting God define our circumstances. Confess specific temptations to take shortcuts, seek validation, or manipulate God.
- **Dependence:** Pray for a deeper filling of the Holy Spirit and sensitivity to His leading, especially in seasons of testing and trial.
- **Strength:** Ask God to strengthen each person’s private world—their relationship with Him, their knowledge of Scripture, and their trust in His timely provision.
- **Mission:** Pray that we would use our God-given authority and influence to serve others and advance God’s kingdom, not our own agendas.

CONNECT:

Check out **The Hub** for upcoming community events, workshops, and opportunities to serve together as a group. Be on the lookout for ways your small group can come alongside others in our church family or the broader community during this Lenten season.

CLOSING:

As we continue this Lenten journey with Jesus toward Jerusalem, may we embrace the wilderness seasons as divine training grounds. Let's trust that trials are not signs of God's displeasure but arenas where our faith is strengthened and our true humanity—reflecting the image of Christ—is formed.