**1. Motivate**

When have you realized “looking for a sign” to guide a decision was not such a great idea?

* saw the sign, but nothing happened

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View at <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_ygt34z9e>

If you have no wi-fi where you teach, best to download to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/2f9hk3sf>

* the sign never showed
* realized it was a dumb sign
* saw the sign, but the opposite of what I wanted happened
* my parents/kids found out and laughed so hard they cried
* did the random Bible verse lookup to decide what to do
  + first verse “Judas went and hanged himself”
  + second verse “Go and do thou likewise”
  + last try “do it quickly”
  + Try this link <https://randomwordgenerator.com/bible.php>

**2. Transition**

Looking for a “sign” is a poor strategy

* Instead, trust God without putting Him to the test.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Testing God for Your Own Purposes

Listen for misuse of Scripture.

Matthew 4:5-7 (NIV) Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. 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.'" 7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

The second temptation

* Satan and Jesus in the Holy City, Jerusalem
* Climb to the highest point of the Temple

What did the devil suggest Jesus do and how did he misuse Scripture in an effort to justify the temptation?

* so, you say you are the “Son of God”
* jump!
* the Bible says angels will rescue you
* you won’t even stub your toe

What would have been appealing to Christ about the devil’s second temptation?

* would have been a great demonstration of God’s power
* right away showed God’s power at work in Jesus’ life
* would attract a lot of positive attention
* good PR early on
* able to show God’s power, “in your face” with Satan

How did Jesus respond?

* that’s “testing” God
* like daring God to not rescue me
* foolish publicity stunt

What does this incident say about Jesus’s commitment to His messianic mission?

* realized this is just showing off
* mission was ultimately to live a perfect life and be the substitutionary sin offering for us
* minister to people’s needs
* teach the disciples about the Kingdom/Rule of God in people’s lives
* model how to live the life as God intends for us

What does this passage reveal about Satan’s tactics to entice us to temptation?

* presents something that looks good at first glance
* will end up being a trap
* will end up causing ultimate harm, not blessing

When might we be most tempted to test God?

* tired
* bored
* not on the lookout for a trap
* discouraged
* after a positive spiritual experience – think we are doing great
* when we are wondering what to do

How can we avoid being deceived by things even when they appear to be religious or have scriptural support?

* examine the scripture closely
* don’t take a promise out of context
* some promises have conditions, “if … then …”
* some promises are made to specific groups or individuals, not to everyone
* just because something sounds “religious” it may not be scriptural
* again, examine and study God’s Word closely

3.2 Trust and Obey God’s Word

Listen for the context of Jesus’ response.

Deuteronomy 6:16-19 (NIV) Do not test the LORD your God as you did at Massah. 17 Be sure to keep the commands of the LORD your God and the stipulations and decrees he has given you. 18 Do what is right and good in the LORD's sight, so that it may go well with you and you may go in and take over the good land that the LORD promised on oath to your forefathers, 19 thrusting out all your enemies before you, as the LORD said.

Note the episode from Israel’s history Moses cited as an example of a time when the people tested God rather than trusted Him.

* Events at the location called Massah during wilderness wandering
* Complained about lack of water
* What they did find was undrinkable
* Murmured against Moses, even after God fixed the water
* Complained about food, then about water again
* So mad they were ready to stone Moses

What would the people have to do to prove they were indeed God’s people? What responsibility did the people have as far as possessing the land was concerned?

* keep God’s commands
* do what is right, do what is good

What is the standard for right and good behavior?

* God’s Word, Scripture
* specific commands
* biblical standards, principles

What benefits would come their way by being diligent in keeping God’s Word?

* will go well with you
* go in and take over the good land God promised
* able to defeat all the enemies you encounter

How can we overcome a lack of faith when our faith is tested?

* talk to God about it
* tell God your faith is weak – confess your problem
* review the attributes of the God of your Salvation – omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, love, righteousness/justice

How does obedience keep us from testing God?

* obey the commands and principles you know
* demonstrate your faith and trust in God by your obedience
* trust in Who God IS and what He has promised, and watch Him provide and guide

3.3 God’s Goodness and Faithfulness

Listen for why to share your faith story.

Deuteronomy 6:20-25 (NIV) 0 In the future, when your son asks you, "What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?" 21 tell him: "We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 22 Before our eyes the LORD sent miraculous signs and wonders--great and terrible--upon Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household. 23 But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land that he promised on oath to our forefathers. 24 The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today. 25 And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness."

What would be the question raised by the children in the future?

* what do all these stipulations, decrees, and laws mean
* why did God give us all these detailed commands

How were the fathers to answer in affirming the meaning and purpose of God’s commandments to His people?

* relate the story of Egyptian slavery
* tell about how God miraculously freed their people
* enumerate the signs and wonders
* tell how the Egyptians (from Pharaoh on down to the lowest) were struck by the plagues
* tell the stories of God’s provision through the 40 years
* relate how God provided the good land they now had

How can *you* tell the *next generation* about what God has done for you?

* relate those times when God intervened
* share the verses or passages that spoke to you
* pray with them concerning their concerns
* rejoice with them when God supplies and guides

What methods can you use to *model your faith* to others, especially your children?

* daily Bible reading
* contemplation, meditation about Who God IS, what He has done/is doing
* keep a prayer journal – talk to God about your concerns
* involvement in spiritual ministries
* we all attend church together (not optional)
* spiritual conversations together with them
* personal and corporate worship is a priority in your family’s lives
* opportunities like summer church camp, mission trips – go with them, provide help

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

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Confess.

* If there are areas where you live with uncertainty and are tempted to put God to the test, confess that as wrong.
* Acknowledge that you do not need to attempt to force God to act the way you want Him to act.
* Ask God to help you simply trust Him.

Memorize.

* Choose a verse or two that emphasizes the value of trusting God and memorize them.
* Here are two passages to consider:
* “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight” (Prov. 3:5-6);
* “You will keep the mind that is dependent on you in perfect peace, for it is trusting in you” (Isa. 26:3).

Challenge.

* Do you know someone who is presuming upon God to act in a way that justifies his or her actions?
* Challenge this person to see why Jesus wouldn’t put God to such a test.
* Encourage this individual to trust God to work in His perfect way and timing.

Remember, clues and words are taken from Deuteronomy 6:16-25 and Matthew 4:5-7 (NIV) Help and other fun activities are found at <https://tinyurl.com/2f9hk3sf>

Diagram

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Crossword