

“What’s going on?”

+ We're hoping the school's parking lot will be complete by Easter. If it is, please consider parking there as we're expecting a big crowd! Thanks ahead of time for your flexibility.

+ Reminder: Baptism Sunday is April 28th. Contact Chris (cwoodard@lifepointqcy.org) if you have any questions about baptism!

+ We're excited to be hosting Secret Church on Friday April 26th from 6pm-Midnight. This year's theme is *Prayer, Fasting, and the Pursuit of God*. Secret Church is a unique, one-night event. Encouraged by our persecuted brothers and sisters' example, we meet for over 6 hours for intense study of God's Word and passionate prayer for the persecuted.

+ There have been times on Sunday when we have not celebrated communion together. On most occasions, the message leads to the communion table, on other occasions the message may lead to a time of prayer, a practice of our rhythms of intimacy, or baptism. Know we are always intentional in making sure our response to the message focuses on the love and sacrifice of Jesus.

MATTHEW 4:3 – 11

ICE BREAKER

Question: If you could do anything and be really good at it, what would it be?

Question: Have you ever tried doing something and found it to be so difficult that you just gave up? Would you be willing to share what you tried, and why you gave up?

CENTERING FOCUS

In order to clear our minds from distractions, open your group time with prayer. During your prayer, spend 2-3 minutes of silence before closing.

If you need guidance, it may help to pray something along these lines:

“Father, please quiet our minds and still our hearts. Protect us from the distractions that plague our thoughts stirring anxiety within our hearts. Please, fix our eyes on Jesus as we silently come before you to listen. Draw near to us. Allow us to feel your divine presence in our midst. May we be attentive to the still, small, quiet voice of your Spirit.”

LAST WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Last week we were challenged to practice praying out loud by ourselves.

Question: If you engaged in this challenge, in what setting did you practice? How did you feel? Was it easier than expected, or more uncomfortable?

THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTION

Question: Was there a time as an adolescent that your parents specifically directed you to not do something, and you knowingly disobeyed? Would you be willing to share the experience with the group?

Question: Looking back, in what ways can you see that their direction was for your protection?

ENGAGING WITH SCRIPTURE

Matthew 3:16-17 (ESV): *And when Jesus was baptized... a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

**40 Days later...*

Matthew 4:3-4 (ESV): *And the tempter came and said to [Jesus], "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

Question: Who is "the tempter"? What are some other names used for this person in Scripture? (*Look at the bottom for names and definitions for the tempter)

Question: What kind of picture does this paint of the tempter and his motivation?

Question: What is the very first word the devil uses when he begins his dialogue with Jesus? What is the enemy asking Jesus to prove?

Question: What is the enemy trying to get Jesus to doubt?

Matthew 4:5-7 (ESV): *Then the devil took [Jesus] to [Jerusalem] and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and, 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"*

Question: What did the devil use to enhance this temptation?

Question: Have you ever seen someone twist Scripture to make it say what suited them? Have you ever been tempted to use Scripture to back up sinful behavior?

Matthew 4:8-10 (ESV): *Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."*

Question: The Father wanted to give Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, but the Father's path for Jesus was a long, difficult path. What are some of the difficult things did the Father lead Jesus to go through during his life here on earth?

Question: Whose path to glory was easier, God's or the devil's? Why do you think God doesn't lead us down the easy path?

Question: Would anyone be willing to share about a time when you were tempted to choose the easy, comfortable path?

Question: What did Jesus do to combat all of these temptations?

Question: According to the example of Jesus in this passage important is it to be familiar with what the Bible says? What are some ways that you personally can develop a greater knowledge of Scripture?

NEW CHALLENGE

Last week we focused on praying out loud by ourselves. This week our challenge will be to pray with one other person out loud.

If this is new to you, practice this with those who are “safest” to you (i.e. spouse or children).

If this is a practice you are comfortable with, try challenging yourself to pray with someone outside of your comfort zone or norm (i.e. family member, coworker, friend, etc.)

*Names and definitions for the tempter:

Satan: the adversary, the one who resists

Devil: the slanderer, the accuser

Tempter: the one who entices someone into sin or folly

Beelzebul: lord of dung, or lord of the flies

Belial: vileness

(The Father of Lies, The Deceiver of the World, The Accuser of God's People, The Serpent of Old, The Dragon)