

# GRACEPOINT CHURCH

## Weekly Devotional

**Spirit-led living  
More than a Sunday Experience**

**When the Spirit leads us into the desert – Ian France – 31.5.2026**

### **Scripture**

Luke 4:1-13

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God's word to you.

Spend some time in worship.

### **Observation**

Luke begins his account of Jesus' time in the desert by being quite clear that Jesus was led there by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit had descended on Jesus during His baptism and He now led Him into the desert. Jesus had identified with humankind by being baptised, and He continued that identification by experiencing temptation in the desert. Luke tells us that Jesus was tempted for forty days, but only a few examples are recorded in his gospel. Jesus would have been hungry having fasted for forty days – in fact He was beginning to starve to death.

Satan knew exactly who Jesus was and how to attack Him at this point in time. He made a suggestion – why not do something for Yourself after all this time and have some bread. This temptation had worked well with Adam – so Satan tried it again with the sinless Son of God. This time, it did not work, for Jesus immediately responded. He did not call down divine power but replied as any other person could reply to temptation by using Scripture to shine the light of God's truth on Satan's words.

So, Satan tried again. He showed Him the whole world (perhaps in a dream or vision) and offered it to Him if He would worship Satan, rather than going to the cross. Jesus immediately responded, resisting him by telling him to get behind Him, again demonstrating the way people can resist their own temptations (James 4:7). Once again Jesus used Scripture by reminding Satan that the command to worship only God is far greater than any supposed advantage of giving reverence to Satan.

Satan now took Jesus to the highest point of the temple. He urged Him to throw Himself down in what would be a spectacular event. There was an ancient Jewish tradition that said the

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Tel: 011 702 4600 Emergency no.: 076 498 2088 WhatsApp Connect: 071 892 9382 E-mail: info@gracepoint.co.za

P.O. Box 1408, Lonehill 2062. 125 Duncan Road, Glenferness, 2191

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Messiah would show Himself to Israel standing on the roof of the temple. So, such action would have fulfilled the Messianic hope the Jews held at that time. This time, Satan himself quoted Scripture using a promise found in Psalm 91:11-12. He is an expert at twisting Bible passages out of context. Jesus responded with the proper use of Scripture. This time, Satan had no answer and realised that he was not making any progress, so he left Jesus for a while until he could find another time when he might be more successful. He is always on the prowl.

### *Icebreaker:*

- Where is your favourite place to go on holiday?
- Why is it so special to you?

### **Application**

- How do you draw aside and spend time with God? How often do you do this? What does it mean to you? Do you sense a greater closeness to God and a deeper alignment with His plans for you as a result? How does it help you in a world that is becoming increasingly challenging in so many ways?
- Do you sense the guidance of the Holy Spirit at times? How does this become real to you? What is your response – especially if His guidance will lead you into places outside your comfort zone?
- Are you aware of times when you felt you were in a spiritual desert and could not get through to God, or were facing strong temptations? How did you cope with such a time? How did you emerge from it? Has it helped you to face and deal with similar times since?
- How do you deal with temptation? It was suggested that we listen. Do you listen to the temptations you face? Do you understand your potential weaknesses? Are you willing to allow the Holy Spirit to guide you in these times? Why/why not?
- During this discussion, have you become aware of any changes you may need to make to overcome the temptations you face on a day-to-day basis? How would listening for the Holy Spirit help you in this regard? Are you prepared to put aside a regular period of time to just 'be' in God's presence and listen for His voice?

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- Are you willing to set aside time as a family every now and again to do the same? What example would that set to your family members – children, spouse, parents, siblings etc? How can you do this?
- How do you feel about going onto the church property to spend an hour or two alone with God? Is that something you would like to do? When can you do it? (You could agree to be accountable to each other in the group for such an activity – but do it as individuals rather than a group activity.)
- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

### Prayer

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time, and in regard to other needs of the group.

### Service

Listen. How is God calling you today to spend time with Him, to follow Him, to be part of His plan for the world? Then follow in whatever area of service He is calling you to do.

### Bibliography

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/luke-4/>

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