

ULC Sermon Study Resource

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality - Knowing Yourself and Knowing God

Pastor Marcus Lane

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Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: If you could be famous for something, what would you want it to be?

Reading: Luke 4:1-13

Outline:

- I. The Temptations (v. 1-3, 5-7, 9-11)
 - a. The temptations we often face are to prove our identity through what we do, what we have, and/or what others think of us.
 - b. Not only are these false identities idolatrous, but they also do not deliver, leaving us broken.
Q: *Why is it so tempting to prove our identity in this way?*
- II. The Response (v. 4, 8, 12)
 - a. Jesus continually roots his identity and sense of self in his relationship with the Father.
 - b. We were made to enjoy our relationship with God and to have our identity rest in Him.
Q: *How does Jesus respond to the false identities presented by the devil?*
- III. The Wilderness (v. 1, Numbers 14:32-34)
 - a. The wilderness represents punishment and discipline for sinful grumbling against God.
 - b. Jesus identifies with our wandering in the wilderness so he can carry our sin and false identities to the cross.
Q: *What does wandering in the wilderness look like for us today?*

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) How have these temptations shown up in various ways in your life?
- 2) How do these false identities, based on our image in the eyes of others, damage us both spiritually and emotionally?
- 3) How can we be truly honest with ourselves when considering how these temptations affect us?
- 4) What does it mean to root your identity in your relationship with God? What are some practices that could support this?
- 5) How could you help someone that is struggling in the wilderness to find a lasting identity?

Suggestions for further study:

- Numbers 14:32-34 **Q: *Why are the Israelites in the wilderness? How does this connect to Jesus's temptation?***
- Hebrews 4:14-16 **Q: *Why can we feel confident in bringing our failures to God?***
- 1 Corinthians 10:12-13 **Q: *What hope do we have in facing these temptations?***

Closing Prayer: Gracious God, you made us to love you and to enjoy a relationship with you, but so often we fall prey to the temptation to find our worth in everything but you. We try to find it in our work, the stuff we have, and in what others think of us, but this inevitably leads us to wandering and loss. Lord God, you have come to rescue us. You have come to heal us and make us whole through Jesus. We ask in Jesus' name that you would pour out your Spirit to strengthen our faith, that we would trust in the only identity that matters. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.