



Don't Take the Bait!

Series: Hooked

Scripture: Matthew 26:41; James 1:12-18

Temptation: the enticement or _____ to think, feel, or _____ in a way that is _____ to what is righteous, _____, or God's will.

- Every temptation _____ with a greater _____ from God.
- it's often _____
- Matthew 26:41: "Stay _____..."
- Often comes from 2 pressures:
 - to _____ (Romans 12:2)
 - to _____ (Romans 7:15)

We need to:

1. _____ what is _____.
 - _____ gets tempted.
 - Our _____ always have _____.
 - either move us closer to God or farther away
 - You are not _____.
 - Hebrews 4:15
2. _____ God's _____ in our lives.
 - God is _____ the _____.
 - James 1:13
 - God _____ a way _____.
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13
 - God wants to see you _____.
 - James 1:12
3. _____ my _____.
 - Align myself with God's _____.
 - Ecclesiastes 4:9-10
 - Align myself with God's _____.
 - Psalm 119
 - Align myself with God's _____.
 - Philippians 4:13

Start Talking.

- What's the funniest or most memorable fishing story you've ever heard or experienced?
- Have you ever been tempted by something that looked great at first but turned out to be disappointing?
- Why do you think people are drawn to things that seem exciting even when they know there may be consequences?

Start Thinking:

- Pastor Troy pointed out that temptation isn't sin, but it can lead to sin. Why is that distinction important?
- What does it mean that "every temptation competes with a greater invitation from God"?
- Why are temptations often subtle instead of obvious?
- What role does the "pressure to conform" and the "pressure to explore" play in temptation?
- Why do our choices always have consequences, even when the effects aren't immediate?
- How does knowing that Jesus was tempted help us when we face temptation?
- What stood out to you most about God's role in temptation?

Start Sharing:

- What kinds of temptations are most common in your season of life?
- Have you ever seen a small compromise lead to bigger consequences?
- What helps you recognize temptation before you "take the bait"?
- How have other believers helped you stay faithful during difficult moments?
- What habits help you stay aligned with God's Word and God's Spirit?
- Which of the three responses is hardest for you right now: accepting what is true, acknowledging God's role, or doing your part?

Start Praying:

- Ask God to help you recognize temptation before it takes hold.
- Pray for strength to choose God's invitation over the enemy's bait.
- Pray for your group to encourage and support one another in the battle against temptation.

Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week

- Identify one area where you need to stay more alert this week.
- Spend time each day in God's Word to strengthen your awareness and discernment.
- Reach out to another believer for encouragement, accountability, or prayer before and when temptation comes.