

PROVING GROUND

Pause, Part 3

September 11th, 2011

Temptation is irrational Why do something you know will hurt you?

Every time you are tempted three things are at stake: my future, my family, and my faith

Temptation is a test of your faith - not just your self-control

When you pause and realize temptation is really about your confidence in God, i.e. can I really trust God, it gives you leverage/power to deal with temptation

Can God be trusted in the realities and details of life, or is it true, "If I don't, it won't"

The second temptation Christ is faced with is the temptation to assume / presume on God

Matthew 4:5,6

You must not try to put God in a position where He serves us

You must not put yourself in a bad situation and expect God to bail you out

In our Christian language we say, "I'm going to step out in faith & trust God," i.e. we've come up with an idea, not well researched, doesn't make sense, got no counsel, and it probably won't work. We like to quote Philipians 4:13.

That's not faith; it is presumption

When God doesn't come through we get mad at God

When we come up with an idea, do it, and ask God to bless it, that's hope. We don't get all we hope for

Faith is responding & trusting in what God says He will do

Exodus 17:2-3; Exodus 17:7; Deuteronomy 6:16

Like the nation of Israel, we can fall to the temptation of taunting / testing God

Matthew 4:7

As Christians we are called to cooperate with God, not manipulate God

Usually the people who are the most disappointed in God have never fully surrendered to God

Some people's entire religious experience is spent trying to manipulate God, i.e. they had a plan for God's life, instead of cooperating and surrendering to God

Men & women whose primary angle is to manipulate God, set themselves up to experience deep disappointment with God

Those who try to manipulate God, don't hear from God

Each morning would we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Sometimes you don't know where a person is in relationship to God until the bottom drops out

In a moment of extreme disappointment or tragedy often the manipulation goes away in the midst of brokenness; suddenly you are positioned to hear God

When you think of your prayers, your response to negative circumstances, your attitude when tempted, are you a cooperator or manipulator

God speaks loudest to the soul most surrendered to Him

Can you say, "God, I've got plans, dreams, and goals, but the bottom line is Your will be done in my life and Your world."

If the idea of surrendering to God scares you, you can't see yourself from God's perspective
From God's perspective surrendering to God is the most rational thing you can do

My Next Step Today Is:

- My prayer, "God, help me see when I try to manipulate You."
- My prayer, "God, bring me to the point where I am willing to say, 'Thy will be done in my life and in Your world.' I want to cooperate with You, not try to manipulate You."
- I/we plan to participate in Faith in Action on Sun, Oct 16th and bless our community
- I can be a project leader for Faith in Action on Sunday, October 16th