

pause

Pause 3 :: Proving Ground :: Andy Stanley

INTRODUCTION

Every day people fall into the temptation of presuming on God. You see it in the young couple that spends irresponsibly and then asks God to bail them out financially. The young single who says, "I'll marry him, then pray for him." But what's wrong with that? Hasn't God promised to take care of us? In this session we'll discuss the second of Jesus' three temptations in the desert and what it teaches us about presuming on God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When in your life have you had an idea, launched that idea, and then expected God to bail you out? What were the results?
2. Read Matthew 4:5-6. What was behind the devil's request? Why would it have been a sin for Jesus to throw himself down from the top of the temple?
3. Read Psalm 91:11-12. In these verses God promised to protect His Messiah. How can a promise be turned into presumption?
4. Read Exodus 17:1-7, the story of Israel at Massah referenced in Deut 6:16. How did the Israelites put God to the test? How did they try to manipulate God?
5. Read Deuteronomy 6:16. When do you find yourself breaking this prohibition by presuming on God?
6. Read Matthew 4:7. What do we learn from Jesus' response?
7. When do you find yourself trying to get God to adopt your agenda?

8. What do you miss out on when you continue to try and manipulate God?

9. How can you begin to stop trying to manipulate God and start cooperating with Him?

THINK ABOUT IT

This week evaluate your prayers, your excuses, your explanations, your decisions, through the lens of *Are you cooperating with God, or are you trying to manipulate Him?* Is your attitude more like "If I jump, He'll catch me," or "I'm here to cooperate, not manipulate"?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

At the beginning of each day this week, pause...and say Matthew 4:7 to yourself. Surrender to God's will and choose to cooperate, not manipulate.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Matthew 4:7

