

## First Sunday in Lent 2025

We're introducing three questions for Lent this year: Who is God, who am I, and what does God want me to do?

This week we focus on two texts in which the devil lies about God in order to destroy humanity. It may not be obvious that thus would be the method that the devil uses to hurt us. Yet our ideas about God, and the way we live our lives, our very closely related, and by making us think badly about our Creator, and change our relationship with him, the devil exerts great pressure on us.

This week we consider our ideas of God, who the devil might be, and how we can answer our enemy when he attempts to make us think ill of God.

### Genesis 3

**3** Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden"?' <sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; <sup>3</sup>but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; <sup>5</sup>for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' <sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

1. What might the connection be between our idea of God and how we live our lives? How does our beliefs about God affect our feelings and behaviours?
2. How do you understand the devil?
3. What do you think the serpent is trying to do in this passage? What's his motivation?
4. Why do you think Adam and Eve listen to the serpent? Would you believe him?

### Luke 4:1-13

**4** Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, <sup>2</sup>where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.' <sup>4</sup>Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone."'

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. <sup>6</sup>And the devil said to him, 'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. <sup>7</sup>If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' <sup>8</sup>Jesus answered him, 'It is written,

"Worship the Lord your God,

and serve only him.”

<sup>9</sup>Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, <sup>10</sup>for it is written,

“He will command his angels concerning you,  
to protect you”,

<sup>11</sup>and

“On their hands they will bear you up,  
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.”

<sup>12</sup>Jesus answered him, ‘It is said, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”’ <sup>13</sup>When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

5. Why do you think Jesus is tempted in the *wilderness* rather than somewhere else? Do you have your own ‘wilderness’ places where you feel most vulnerable?
6. Which of the temptations Jesus faces would you be most tempted by? Why?
7. Activity. On one side of a piece of paper, write down some negative actions or responses or emotional reactions you’re prone to. Then, opposite them, think of a Bible verse, hymn lyric, or message that God would say in response to them.