

**Series:** Divine Paradox

**Sermon:** Are we supposed to test God or not?

**Primary texts:** Matthew 4:5-7 vs. Malachi 3:10

**Discussion guide:**

- Who is someone you trust and why?
- What does it look like to trust God?
- Read Matthew 4:5-7
  - What is the devil tempting Jesus to do?
    - Why is this wrong?
  - What does Jesus' response mean?
    - Read Deuteronomy 6:16 (what Jesus quotes)
      - Read Exodus 17:1-7 (what Deut. Vs. refers to)
      - Why doesn't God want the Israelites to test Him in the way they tested Him at Massah anymore?
- In the sermon we said that the wrong sort of testing is when we set conditions for God to meet to prove Himself trustworthy.
  - What is wrong with this?
  - How had He already proven Himself trustworthy to Israel before Exodus 17?
  - How has He already proven Himself trustworthy to you and I?
- Read Malachi 3:10
  - What is God calling His people out for? (see previous verses for context)
  - God says, "In this way put me to the test" – what way does He mean?
  - See Romans 12:2, Ephesians 5:8-10, Judges 6:36-40
    - What is the goal of all these tests?
      - Compare that with the goal of the devil in Matthew 4 and the Israelites in Exodus 17.
- In the sermon we said that the right sort of testing is when we seek God's will in order to obey Him.
  - How does the goal of obedience make all the difference?
  - How does obeying create more trust in God?
  - How/why does trust in God often appear to others as clarity?