



## Discussion Guide — tempted+tried (week 2)

**Date:** March 1, 2026

**Series:** tempted+tried

**Message:** To be Fed or Fooled

**Scripture:** Matthew 4:1-4; Deuteronomy 8:2-3 (New Revised Standard Version updated edition)

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### Opening Prayer

God of manna and wilderness,

You know our hunger. You know what we crave, what we chase, and what we think will satisfy us.

As we gather, open our hearts to Your Word. Reveal what is shaping our desires. Teach us to hunger for what truly gives life.

Feed us not only with bread, but with Your living presence.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

### Introduction & Context

In Matthew 4, Jesus is led into the wilderness where He fasts for forty days. He is hungry—deeply hungry. That is when the tempter arrives.

The temptation is simple: “Turn these stones into bread.”

On the surface, this seems reasonable. Jesus is famished. What’s wrong with bread?

But Jesus responds by quoting Deuteronomy 8, recalling Israel’s wilderness journey. God allowed Israel to hunger—not to harm them, but to teach them dependence. Hunger revealed their hearts. Hunger revealed what truly fed them.

This week we wrestle with a powerful truth: Real hunger reveals our hungers.

Lent invites us to examine what feeds us—and what fools us.





## **Discussion Questions**

### **1. Hunger and Testing**

In Matthew 4:1–4, Jesus is tempted at the point of physical hunger. Why do you think temptation often strikes when we feel depleted or vulnerable?

What kinds of “hunger” (emotional, spiritual, relational, achievement-driven) make you most susceptible to being misled?

How have you seen hunger clarify what really matters?

### **2. Bread or Word?**

Jesus says, “One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

What does it mean to live by God’s Word rather than by “bread alone”?

Where in our culture are we encouraged to satisfy immediate cravings instead of cultivating deeper dependence?

What are some examples of “bread” that promises life but leaves us empty?

### **3. Formed or Fooled**

The sermon suggested that hunger doesn’t create desire—it reveals it.

When you feel stress, loneliness, exhaustion, or boredom, where do you instinctively turn?

Are those responses forming you into someone more loving and free—or subtly shaping you in another direction?

How does spiritual formation happen in small, repeated choices?

### **4. Israel’s Wilderness and Our Own**

Deuteronomy 8 reminds Israel that God led them into hunger in order to humble and teach them.



How do you respond to the idea that God may use seasons of lack to deepen dependence?

Have you experienced a wilderness season that reshaped your understanding of what truly sustains you?

What did you learn about your heart in that season?

### **5. The Only Approval That Matters**

Temptation often whispers: “Prove yourself.” “Perform.” “Provide.” “Be impressive.”

How does remembering that our identity rests in God change how we respond to hunger or pressure?

Where are you most tempted to prove yourself rather than trust God?

What would it look like to rest in being fed by God instead of scrambling to feed yourself?



## Next Step — P.A.R.

### Pray:

Ask God: “What am I really hungry for?” Invite the Spirit to reveal what is shaping your desires.

### Act:

Engage in Practicing the Way — Week 2: Formation (Part 1).

Choose one daily rhythm (silence, Scripture, fasting, gratitude) and practice it consistently this week.

### Reflect:

At week’s end, ask:

- When did I feel hunger most strongly?
- What did I turn toward?
- Did it feed me—or fool me?
- How did God meet me in that space?

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## Closing Prayer

God who meets us in the wilderness,  
we confess how easily we reach for quick bread that cannot satisfy.  
When hunger rises in us—of body, mind, or spirit—teach us to listen for Your voice,  
to trust Your provision, and to receive Your Word as life.

Form us through the small choices of this week:  
to turn toward You, to rest in Your love, and to live from Your abundance.  
Feed us with Christ, the Bread of Heaven,  
so we may live steady, grateful, and free.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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