

If/Then—First Sunday in Lent

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[Deuteronomy 26:1-11](#)

[Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16](#)

[Romans 10:8b-13](#)

[Luke 4:1-13](#)

Sermon delivered at Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Hamden, CT

This Sunday I preached without notes about the temptation of Jesus in Luke's Gospel. The devil—that nagging voice in us all—tries to get us to see everything as a binary: us/them, you/me, inside/outside, blessings/suffering. Moreover, we are always tempted to see our lives as a simple and punitive "if/then formula." For example: if I am good, God will love me; if I am bad, God will judge me; if bad things happen to me, God has forgotten me. We explore how Jesus points us past this dichotomy, and points us toward a unitive belonging in God's love.