

Counterpunch
Lessons from the Corner- Session #1
Small Group Notes

Introduction:

Can you think of any famous boxers? What made them so popular or memorable? How much of their popularity is based upon how they punched?

When you hear the words counterpunch, what comes to mind?

For this series, we are looking at how the Bible provides us with truth for any lie or temptation that comes our way to distrust God's way. In our world, we go to our feelings that can change in a moment to be our basis of truth, yet when it comes to dealing with temptation, doubts, or fears, we need the faithful Word of God to help us see truth!

Read Luke 4:1-13

Discuss:

1. Realize that temptation is not sin!

- Read Hebrews 4:15
- God's plan for us is not immunity from temptation but victory over temptation through dependency on Christ
- Read 1 Peter 1:6-7

Explain: A part of having the best counterpunch is to realize that no one can avoid temptation. It will always be there in front us, pulling at our desires, trying to get us to choose our selfish desires over God's will and purpose. However, just being tempted does not mean that we have sinned, it is what we do when temptation comes. Do we flee? Or allow temptation to remain? Ultimately, we can look at Jesus' example, both in Luke 4 and as our Great High Priest (Hebrews 4:15) to see that we have been given victory over temptation that demonstrates our faithfulness to the Lord (1 Peter 1:6-7).

Ask:

What impact does it make to know that being tempted is not a sin? Are there ways that you have allowed temptation to remain around you instead of fleeing from it?

Why can it feel that we live in defeat rather than victory when it comes to temptation? What difference does it make in knowing that because of Jesus, you can have victory over temptation and not defeat?

What action steps can you take today to help flee from temptation? How can your group members help?

2. We have the same punch sequence as Jesus

- Read 1 Corinthians 10:13
- Jesus' victory in the wilderness avenges Adam's loss in the garden
- Jesus' victory over Satan leaves us a blueprint for winning our daily battles.
- Jesus used the Word and the Spirit to overcome the enemy.
- Read Philippians 2:13; Psalm 119:11
- We must have an "it is written" for each "I know I shouldn't"

Explain: The answer to temptation according to Jesus is God's Word. And when we are rooted in God's Word, we stay away from allowing sin into our lives. Paul warned the church in Corinth (1 Cor 10:13) that even the chosen nation of Israel experienced giving into temptation and their pride led to their fall. Yet, as followers of Christ, we can have victory to either endure or escape temptation when we begin to see its influence in our lives. Once again, we are not promised that we will not face temptation as believers, we have been promised victory through temptation, and the victory comes in hiding God's Word in our hearts consistently (Psalm 119:11).

Ask:

Why was it important for Jesus to answer the temptation with what the Bible already said? Why can be the result when we try to use our own feelings or experiences to overcome temptation?

Do you have a gameplan or strategy for handling temptation? What does it look like? What are verses of Scripture that you have found that help you during times of temptation or struggle?

What does it mean that you are meant to overcome the enemy? How is God's Word and prayer both offensive weapons in spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:17-20)?

3. When you get knocked down, get to your corner

- Confession to the Lord and a trusted friend starts the process of bringing your sin into the light!
- Read Psalm 32:1-5; James 5:16; Ephesians 2:3-5

Explain: David's Psalm 32 shows us the value of understanding both the availability of confession, the forgiveness of sin that is provided, and the security we have in Christ. In today's culture, especially from shows or movies, forgiveness is equated with the removal of consequences. However, this is not true. There can still be consequences for our sin, even though they are forgiven under the blood of Christ. However, confession really means agreeing with God that we have sinned and are in desperate

need to restore our fellowship with Him. Therefore, confession is a recognition that we have given into temptation in some way, and once we repent, we seek restoration with God our Father. The question then comes, not whether or not we are going to sin, instead, how do we respond in our sin? Do we confess, repent, and seek restoration? Or do we allow sin to linger that can even lead to thinking we are ok to continue in our sinful choices?

Ask:

In what area might the devil be tempting you to doubt whether God truly forgives us of our sin?

How can being accountable to one another in a group help us when we get knocked down? How can it even help us prevent getting knocked down?

Something NEW:

Below we are providing you with some ways that you can pray for upcoming needs and opportunities that we have occurring in the church that involve serving. We have even provided an unreached people group that we can begin to pray for by name. Please take a moment at the beginning or end of your time and share these prayer needs. You may also check out a way to serve at these opportunities.

- **Local**
 - **Portico** Pray for protection over crisis pregnancy center all over America.
- **National**
 - **Grace City Church Boston** Pray for the Father to send more workers into His harvest to join these missionaries.
- **International**
 - **YAWO OF NORTHERN MOZAMBIQUE** Pray that many of the students at the boarding school will be saved and that the Lord will advance the gospel among the nations through these young people.