

Lent 1A - February 22, 2026

The Snake

There's the old line about when God confronted Adam and Eve with their misbehavior and Adam pointed to Eve and said, "The woman made me do it." Eve pointed to the snake and said, "The snake made me do it." And, of course, the snake didn't have a leg to stand on!

We're Kind of Stupid That Way

In the very first Calvin and Hobbes comic strip, Calvin's dad is working on the car, when Calvin walks up in a safari hat and says, "So long, Pop! I'm off to check my tiger trap! I rigged a tuna fish sandwich yesterday, so I'm sure to have a tiger by now!" His dad replies, "They like tuna fish, huh?" As Calvin walks off, he says, "Tigers will do anything for a tuna fish sandwich!" The final frame shows Hobbes, hanging by his foot from a tree, munching on a tuna fish sandwich. He says to no one in particular, "We're kind of stupid that way."

Every day we are tempted to be less than we can be. Without giving it much thought, we choose what's easiest. We seldom consider how much more is possible. We take tuna fish when we could do better. We're kind of stupid that way. (by Brett Younger from *Disabling Temptations*)

Just have a beer:

A man took his young son to a baseball game. While they were sitting there, he asked the boy what he was going to give up for Lent. The boy replied, "I don't know, Dad. What are you going to give up?" His father said, "I've thought about this a lot and decided to give up liquor." Later in the game, the beer man came by, and the man ordered a beer. His son objected, "Hey, I thought you were giving up liquor!" His dad answered, "Hard liquor, son. I'm giving up hard liquor. This is just a beer." To which the boy replied, "Well then, I'm giving up hard candy."

Giving In

"No man knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good. A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. This is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is. You find out the strength of a wind by trying to walk against it, not by lying down. A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later. That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness. They have lived a sheltered life by always giving in. We never find out the strength of the evil impulse inside us until we try to fight it: and Christ, because he was the only man who never yielded to temptation, is also the only man who knows to the full what temptation means -- the only complete realist."

The Strong Timber Is Tested

A group of mountain hikers came across an old woodsman with an axe on his shoulder. "Where are you going?" they asked him. "I'm headed up the mountain to get some wood to repair my cabin," replied the woodsman. "But why are you going up the mountain?" they asked incredulously. "There are plenty of trees all around us here." "I know," he said, "but I need strong timber and it grows only on the highest elevations, where the trees are tested and toughened by the weather around them. The higher up you go, the stronger the timber grows."

And that is what God desires for us - that through the winds of trial and the storms of temptation we would grow strong and live on a higher level - strong to resist the devil's urging, strong to serve God, and strong as we stand together in faith and service to one another. (by Lee Griess from *Return to The Lord, Your God*, CSS Publishing Company, Inc.)