



March 26, 2023

UNIT 19 SESSION 4

Jesus Was Tempted

Matthew 4; Luke 4

KEY PASSAGE:

John 1:29

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus do to save us?

Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus was tempted, but He trusted God and never sinned. Jesus is perfect and righteous. A perfect sacrifice was required to take away sin. Jesus was that perfect sacrifice. He died on the cross to free us from sin and to give us the power to say no to temptation.

LEADER Bible Study

We've all felt some degree of hunger at one time or another. We may have had a long day at work with no time for lunch and come home hungry. We may have had a hard workout and found ourselves craving a large meal shortly afterward. We may have skipped breakfast in a hurry to get to church only to hear our stomach growl as the pastor shares that he's wrapping up for the third time. Hunger reminds us that there is something we require to satisfy a physical need.

Have you ever felt a similar sense of hunger deep in your soul, a hunger for God? Have you ever found yourself longing for a moment with God, an experience of His Spirit, a message from His Word?

The temptation of Jesus teaches us how to face temptation ourselves, but it also subtly reminds us of the blessing that comes as we hunger for God.

The first experience of temptation for Jesus came in the form of the enemy, Satan, tempting Him to use His power to turn stones into bread. Jesus' response reminds us that feeding on God's Word is the ultimate source of satisfaction.

In our own lives, we may hunger for a million different things. We may deeply desire companionship, food, a feeling, money, a job, notoriety, and so on. Those things can all be very good things, but they are not what Jesus was referring to when He spoke to the tempter.

Jesus spoke to the blessing that comes in hungering and thirsting for God Himself because, as is the case in all things Jesus said and did, He is God and knows ¹¹₁₂ what's best.

What do you long for above all else? Do you find a deep longing in your soul for God? Do you recognize that nothing else in this world will satisfy that desire? And are you satisfied with Him giving you Himself to meet your greatest need? Not only does the Scripture say that there is blessing in hungering for God, but your experience will also prove that nothing will satisfy you like He can and will.

TERMS TO KNOW

Temptation: The enticement to do evil. Satan is the tempter. (Matt. 4:3; 1 Thess. 3:5) God does not tempt anyone. (James 1:13) Jesus was "tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, ask kids about their week, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY Have you ever been tempted to eat your dessert before dinner? If you gave in to the temptation, what happened?

Activity Page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete "Temptation Puzzle" on the activity page.

SAY Each of the pictures in your puzzle represent a part of our Bible story. In fact, they represent a particular way Jesus was tempted. We'll learn more when we read our Bible story.

Session Starter (10 minutes)

Option 1: Resist

Choose one kid to be *It*. Lead *It* to stand at the front of the room. Direct *It* to try to make the other kids laugh. *It* can say funny things, act goofy, make silly noises, etc. Tell kids that if they laugh, they are out. Give *It* two minutes to see how many kids she can make laugh.

Continue playing, allowing new kids to be *It*. Determine which kid was able to make the most kids laugh.

SAY Sometimes it was hard to resist the urge to laugh. It's OK to laugh when something is funny. But there are more serious temptations we do need to resist. In our Bible story, we will learn that Jesus faced some serious temptations but He trusted God and resisted every temptation.

Option 2: Sword Drill

Form the kids into teams of four. Provide each team with a Bible. Explain that each team will choose one kid to stand up with his Bible and turn as quickly as he can to the Bible verse when you say it. Call out a Bible verse of your choosing. Award a point to the team whose kid was the first to flip to the Bible verse.

Lead the teams to choose a new kid for the next round. Continue starting a new round until all team members have had a turn to play. The team with the most points is the winner. If there is a tie, allow each team to choose a kid to flip to a Bible verse the fastest to break the tie.

SAY Ephesians 6:17 says that God's Word is like a sword. The Word of God is able to cut down temptations we face by reminding us what is true and helping us remember that we have all we need in Jesus. God's Word equips us to fight temptation and faithfully rest in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Today, we will learn that Jesus was tempted, but resisted sin by trusting God and His Word.

LEARN the Bible Story

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus!

Use [The Gospel: God's Plan for Me](#) as a reference.

Key Passage Activity *(10 minutes)*

John 1:29

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 1:29 together.

SAY *For Jesus to be the perfect sacrifice for sin, He had to be sinless. Our story today reminds us that Jesus is the perfect sacrifice who takes away the sin of the world.*

Form kids into one large circle. Hold a ball and say the first word of the key passage. Then throw the ball to a kid. Challenge that kid to say the next word of the key passage and then throw the ball to another kid who will say the next word. Continue until the entire key passage has been said, including the reference. Repeat as time allows.

LOVE God by Applying the Story

Bible Skills & Review (10 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 4. Point out the wilderness of Judea (15) on the New Testament Israel Map as the possible location for where Jesus was tempted.

Consider comparing the New Testament Israel Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around the modern-day western shore of the Dead Sea.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Matthew 4:4.

SAY *In today's story, Satan tempted Jesus three times. Jesus responded each time by believing Scripture, showing that He trusted in God. Jesus never sinned and demonstrated that He loved God more than anything else—more than food, more than riches or earthly power, and more than controlling His circumstances. Jesus obediently trusted God in all things, even to the point of death on the cross.*

We will all be tempted to sin. But like Jesus, we can choose to trust God. We trust God when we read our Bibles and believe its truth. We also trust God when we turn to Jesus and remember that His Spirit gives us the power to turn away from sin.

Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY *How do Jesus' temptations comfort us in our own struggles with temptations?*

Remind kids that Jesus' humanity meant that He experienced physical weakness and struggles like hunger, tiredness, and sadness. Encourage kids to take comfort in knowing Jesus understands all the ways we are tempted and seeks to help us when we are weak. Remind kids that even though Jesus was tempted in every way, He never sinned.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Heb. 4:15.)

SAY *Are there times in your life when you feel like temptation is harder to resist? Explain.*

Discuss how Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights and was hungry. Lead kids to think about how the devil knows when we face times of weakness, whether this be something physical, like hunger or tiredness, or something spiritual, like neglecting to read God's Word. Encourage kids to trust God in all circumstances so the devil does not gain a foothold.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Heb. 4:16.)

SAY *How would you encourage someone who falls into temptation and sins?*

Remind kids that we will all sin, but Jesus lived a perfect life for us. Encourage kids to remember that Jesus offers forgiveness and gives us the power we need to live a life for Him.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 13:14)

LIVE the Mission

Activity Choice (10 minutes)

The trials of Jesus

Form kids into small groups and provide them with a Bible. Lead each group to look up the following Bible verses: Luke 4:13; Luke 4:29; Mark 10:34; Luke 22:42; John 13:21; Matthew 27:26.

Guide each group to read the Bibles verses and discuss the different trials Jesus faced. Explain that Jesus' trials were other opportunities for Jesus to trust God or be tempted to not trust God. Lead groups to share how Jesus chose to trust God in each trial and obey God's will for His life.

SAY Luke 4:13 teaches us that the devil knew there would be other times Jesus would be tempted to not trust God. Jesus was faced with rejection, mocked, spat on, beaten, betrayed, and eventually crucified. Yet, He never sinned. Jesus perfectly trusted God in every trial He faced. Jesus is able to save us because of His perfect obedience to God. **Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.**

Print a copy of the Sword Bookmark printable on cardstock. Allow time for them to color it before taking it home as a reminder of the importance of memorizing scripture so we can fight against the devil's schemes and against temptation.

Reflection and Prayer (5 minutes)

Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed below:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey?
How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Pray with your group!

Thank You, Lord, for sending Jesus to live a perfect life for us. Thank You for giving us the power through Jesus to say no to sin. Help our lives be pleasing to You. Amen.

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.