

# JESUS WAS TEMPTED

MATTHEW 4; MARK 1; LUKE 4



**KEY PASSAGE:** John 1:14

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Is Jesus God or a human? Jesus is fully God and fully human.

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Like us, Jesus experienced temptation. But unlike us, Jesus never sinned. When we repent and believe Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins and rose again, God credits us with Jesus' perfect life.

**STORY POINT:** Jesus was tempted and never sinned.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

### LEADER Bible Study

Jesus' temptation by Satan is a showdown with redemptive implications. Had Jesus not been able to withstand Satan's attacks, Christ would not have been the spotless lamb of God and would not have made for a sufficient sacrifice for sinners. The gospel hinged on Jesus' ability to stand firm in the face of temptation.

Thankfully, Jesus was indeed strong enough to withstand Satan's scheme. Though we as sinful humans fall daily into sin's temptations, Jesus never sinned.

Just as the Old Testament figures Moses, Elijah, and Noah spent 40 days in difficult, faith-testing circumstances, we read that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit and that the Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. This event took place just after Jesus' public baptism and demonstrates the truth of Hebrews 5:8: "Although he was the Son, he learned obedience from what he suffered." If Jesus had to learn obedience, how much more do we have to learn?

We read that Jesus was well-informed with Scripture and used it in His fight against the lies of the enemy. Though the omnipotent Jesus had the power to perform miracles and escape the wilderness, He remained in the desert to reveal His power to overcome the temptations of sin.

Likewise, though Jesus had the means to flee from the temptation He faced, He remained dependent upon His Father, showing us what it means to endure. It is in the testing of our faith and through our reliance upon His Spirit that Christians are constantly being made into the image of the Savior. It is not through our obedience and good works that we receive a righteous standing before God; rather, it is by grace through faith in the only righteous One, Jesus, that we are credited with Jesus' perfect life.

As you teach the kids in your church this week, emphasize that we cannot obey our way into salvation. Instead, we must place our faith in the only One who has been tempted yet remains sinless. Lead boys and girls to see that faith in Jesus is the only way to receive and experience everlasting life.



Scan the QR code to listen to The Gospel Project for Kids Weekly Leader Training Podcast.



#### PREPARE

##### THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



#### WELCOME

##### 10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



#### LEARN

##### 25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



#### LOVE

##### 15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



#### LIVE

##### 15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



## PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

## GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



### WELCOME

#### Activity Page

- "Hidden Temptation" activity page

#### Session Starter (Option 1)

- pool noodle
- masking tape

#### Session Starter (Option 2)

- rope
- masking tape



### LOVE

#### Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



### LIVE

#### Activity Choice (Option 1)

- hula hoop
- blindfolds

#### Activity Choice (Option 2)

- 2-piece plastic eggs
- box of tissues
- bubble wrap
- plastic container

#### Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



### LEARN

#### Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

#### Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

#### Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

#### Tell the Bible Story

- "Jesus Was Tempted" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- unleavened bread (optional)
- calendar (optional)
- Allergy Alert (optional)

#### Questions from Kids

- "Unit 20, Session 3" Questions from Kids video

#### Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "Dwelt Among Us (John 1:14)" song
- interlocking blocks
- worship song of your choice (optional)



## WELCOME Kids

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

| **SAY** “ What is your favorite meal to eat when you are super hungry? ”

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Hidden Temptation” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “ Everyone did a fantastic job picking out the bread hidden in the picture! In today’s lesson, we’ll find out what happened when Jesus was led into the wilderness for 40 days without food. ”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### OPTION 1: LAND, SEA, OVERBOARD

Make a line across the middle of the room using masking tape. Line the kids up on one end of the room. Name this end of the room Land. Choose one volunteer to be the tagger. Give the tagger a pool noodle and have him or her stand on the line in the middle of the room. Designate one corner on the other end of the room as Sea, and the other as Overboard. Explain that you will call out Land, Sea, or Overboard and the kids must run to that area. If any kid is tagged, they are out.

| **SAY** “ You had to obey my commands, while also avoiding some challenges along the way! Like us, Jesus was human and faced temptations. But in today’s story we will learn that **JESUS WAS TEMPTED AND NEVER SINNED.** ”

#### OPTION 2: TUG OF CHALLENGES

Separate the kids into two teams. Use masking tape to mark a line across the center of the room. Place the teams on either side of the line. Give each team an end of the rope. Explain that the kids will work to pull the other team onto their side, but with some challenges along the way. Play until one team pulls the other across the line. As the kids pull, consider some of the following commands:

- One person from each team, switch sides.
- One player, use only one hand for the rest of the game.
- All team members take a step back, moving their hands backward on the rope, and resume pulling.

| **SAY** “ Which challenge was the hardest to overcome? [Allow responses.] Like us, Jesus was faced with temptations to disobey God. But in today’s story we will learn that **JESUS WAS TEMPTED AND NEVER SINNED.** ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





## INTRODUCE the Bible Story

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### 1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

**SAY** “ Welcome! My name is [your name], and I’m so glad you’re here! Together we will continue to learn about Jesus’ early life, which is recorded in the Gospels. Last week, we learned how Jesus obeyed God by being baptized. Today’s story can be found in three of the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. If you brought your Bible to class, hold it up high where I can see it! **[Distribute Bibles to any kid who needs one.]** As we read, we will discover what happened when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness. Let’s pray together before we open God’s Word. ‘God, You sent Jesus to experience temptation just like we do. Humble our hearts today as we read about Jesus’ unfailing obedience to You. Amen.’ ”

### 2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

**SAY** “ Let’s review our big picture question together: **Is Jesus God or a human?** Who can share the answer we have learned? **[Allow responses.] Jesus is fully God and fully human.** When Jesus was baptized, God the Father and God the Holy Spirit confirmed Jesus’ identity as the Son of God. As John 1:14 reminds us, Jesus is the Word made flesh. God sent His Son to earth to reveal His glory and call sinners to repentance.

Let’s say the big picture question and answer one more time together. **[Guide the kids to recite the big picture question and answer.] Is Jesus God or a human? Jesus is fully God and fully human.** ”

### 3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

**SAY** “ Jesus, who is both God and human, had come to dwell with His people. John began paving the way for Jesus’ ministry on earth, recognizing Him as the Lamb of God who had come to save the people from their sins. To fulfill God’s perfect plan, Jesus came and was baptized by John. God confirmed that Jesus is His one and only Son, sent by the Father. Today, we will learn that though Jesus knew what it was like to be tempted, He never sinned. ”



## LEARN the Bible Story

### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 4. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Was Tempted.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

#### JESUS WAS TEMPTED

“After Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness for 40 days to be tempted by the devil. Jesus didn’t have anything to eat, and when the 40 days were over, He was very hungry.

The devil said to Jesus, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

But Jesus answered him by quoting the Old Testament, saying, “It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

The devil also took Jesus up on a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world. The devil said, “I will give you authority over all these kingdoms if you will bow down and worship me.”

Jesus again answered with words from the Old Testament, saying, “It is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.”

So, the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the very top of the temple. The devil said to Jesus, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here. For it is written:

“He will tell his angels  
to protect you, and  
they will support you with their hands,  
so that you will not strike  
your foot against a stone.”

Jesus again responded with Scripture, saying, “It is said: Do not test the Lord your God.”

After the devil had finished every temptation, he left Jesus for a time. Angels came and began to serve Jesus. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Spirit, and news about Him spread everywhere.

Christ Connection: Like us, Jesus experienced temptation. But unlike us, Jesus never sinned. When we repent and believe Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins and rose again, God credits us with Jesus’ perfect life.”

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Edible learning:** Allow the kids to sample some unleavened bread as you read through the story. Consult parents about any food allergies or restrictions prior to the lesson.

**Count with a calendar:** Display a monthly calendar and encourage the kids to count out 40 days along with you. Emphasize that 40 days would be more than one month!



## 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness, where He was tempted by the devil. What was the first temptation the devil presented to Jesus? [Allow responses.] The devil questioned Jesus’ sonship as he attempted to persuade Jesus to turn stones into bread. Each time Jesus was tempted, He quoted the Old Testament, specifically the book of Deuteronomy. The passage here contains the account of Moses leading the Israelites through the desert. Jesus continued to show His power by doing what the Israelites could not: He trusted and obeyed God.

In another attempt, the devil showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. While the devil does have power in this world, Jesus reminded Him that God is the ultimate authority and deserves all of our worship. Did you notice anything different about the devil’s final attempt on Jesus? [Allow responses.] The devil made one last effort by quoting God’s Word, just as Jesus had been doing. But the difference is that the devil was twisting God’s Word to mean something it does not. Jesus demonstrated that having an understanding and knowledge of God’s Word is important when fighting the temptation to sin. The devil was trying to thwart God’s plan of salvation by tempting Jesus, but God used Jesus’ perfect obedience to further display His identity as the Messiah!

Like us, Jesus experienced temptation. But unlike us, Jesus never sinned. When we repent and believe Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins and rose again, God credits us with Jesus’ perfect life. ”

## 3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

**SAY** “ Jesus became a human and experienced every temptation we do, but He did not sin. Through His perfect obedience, Jesus demonstrated that He is also God. Jesus, the sinless Son of God, died on the cross for our sins. He offers salvation when we trust Him as Lord. To learn more about what it means to trust your life to Jesus, you can see one of your parents or a leader at church. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

## 4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 20, Session 3” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why doesn’t God just get rid of the devil?
2. How does God’s Word help us when we are tempted to do wrong?



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

**5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)**

**SAY** “ The need for more churches for Hispanic people in Kansas City, Missouri, is great. Primera Iglesia Bautista Church, led by Pastor Luis Sanchez, in Independence, Missouri, partnered with another church to begin another Hispanic congregation called Northland Baptist en Español.

The two churches want to tell more people about Jesus. One way they are doing that is by offering English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. They can help the people learn English as they also have opportunities to tell them about Jesus. They also plan to have volunteer translators who can help Spanish-speaking parents communicate with their children’s English-speaking teachers and administrators at school. Providing this assistance will help the Hispanic community know the people in the church care about them and want to help them. Plus, it will build relationships with the people so they can tell them about Jesus. The churches have already seen two families trust in Jesus and two other families renew their decisions as followers of Jesus through devotions they heard at the end of the ESL classes. ”

Churches working together are helping meet the needs of Hispanics in Kansas City and beyond. Pray for more churches to support the work so more churches can be started.

**6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)**

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 1:14 together.

**SAY** “ Jesus came to earth and experienced the temptations we do, but He did not sin. He is God’s only Son, just like our key passage reminds us! ”

Stack interlocking blocks together to make a tower. Place tape on each block. Divide and write each word or phrase of the key passage on the blocks. Take the tower apart and scramble the blocks. Invite the kids to work as a team to reassemble the tower by putting together the key passage. Once finished, instruct the kids to recite the key passage aloud as a class.

Lead kids to sing “Dwelt Among Us (John 1:14).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

**7 PRAY (2 minutes)**

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

**SAY** “ God, thank You for working out your perfect plan for redemption through Your Son, Jesus. Give us the strength to fight back against sin through the power of Your Word. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





## LOVE God by Applying the Story

### 1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Luke 4. Explain that today's story can be found in three of the four Gospels. Luke was not an eyewitness to Jesus' ministry, but His account shares most of the stories and patterns of Matthew's and Mark's Gospels.

Consider pointing out the location of Galilee (C6) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 4:9-13 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

**SAY** “ Consider a time when you’ve been tempted to do something you knew was wrong. Jesus, like us, knew how it felt to be tempted. But unlike you and me, Jesus never gave into temptation. He walked in sinless obedience to God, all the way to death on the cross. By His example, Jesus demonstrated that our greatest weapon against the enemy is God’s Word! Think of your favorite TV show. Often when we watch or read something we love, we remember what happened or what was said. By spending time in our Bibles and memorizing Scripture, we are able to better understand who God is. And when we know God and His Word, it becomes easier to recognize and resist the lies of the enemy. ”

### 2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

**SAY** “ What does it mean to test the Lord? ”

Explain to kids that testing God means questioning His authority and lordship by failing to trust what He has said in His Word. Share that the Bible specifically commands us not to test God, just as Jesus reminded the devil. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Deuteronomy 6:16-17.)

**SAY** “ Why did the devil offer Jesus all the kingdoms of the world? Don’t they belong to God? ”

Remind the kids that the devil was lying by offering Jesus a shortcut to His reign in God’s kingdom. While the devil has some rule over the world, His power is confined to what God allows, and the devil was ultimately defeated by Christ’s death and resurrection. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Colossians 1:16.)

**SAY** “ How can we know God’s Word better? ”

Share that knowing God’s Word starts with reading it every day. Encourage kids to start reading their Bibles with the help of their parents and leaders. Invite them to ask questions and seek help when they come across passages or verses they don’t understand. God promises to give wisdom when we seek it. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read James 1:5.)





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LIVE the Mission

#### 1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

##### OPTION 1: HULA TOSS

Instruct the kids to line up. Place a chair or a small trashcan about 10 feet in front of the group. Select a volunteer to be the guide. Provide all the other kids with a blindfold. Explain that, while blindfolded, the kids must take turns trying to toss the hula hoop around the item. However, he or she must do so by listening to the instructions of the guide. If any of the kids successfully toss the hula hoop around the item, he or she may then take a turn as the guide. Continue until all the kids have landed the hoop, or as time allows.

**SAY** “ No matter how hard we try to obey God, we are blinded by sin. Jesus faced temptations like we do, but He never sinned. Because of Jesus’ perfect obedience, we are offered forgiveness when we trust in Him. ”

##### OPTION 2: EGG-CELLENT FUN!

Gather the kids in a circle. Hold up the three 2-piece, plastic eggs. Allow the kids to help you place the first egg down in a box of tissues. Using tape, secure bubble wrap around the second egg. Place the third egg in a plastic container. Go around the circle and ask each kid which item he or she thinks will best protect the eggs from cracking. Choose three volunteers. Let these volunteers drop the three items onto the floor. Check to see which eggs are intact.

**SAY** “ Though some of the objects protected the eggs and others didn’t, God’s Word can protect each of us! Jesus was tempted, but He never sinned. Jesus’ example reminds us that we can rely on God’s Word to resist temptation. ”

#### 2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.