

Resisting Temptation



- Theme:** Jesus resisted the devil's temptation and so can we. 1st Sunday in Lent - Yr. C
- Object:** A bowl of candy
- Scripture:** Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. Luke 4:1-2a (NIV)

There was a bowl of candy like this one sitting on the coffee table in the living room of Mary's house. Mary's mother noticed that she was looking at the candy and said, "Now, don't you eat any candy until after dinner or you will spoil your appetite." The candy looked so good and the temptation was so great. "Surely just one little piece won't hurt — and mother will never know the difference," Mary thought to herself.

Have any of you ever had an experience like that? Here is another story which might sound familiar.

"Put away your books and take out one sheet of paper and a pencil," the teacher said. "We are going to take our weekly spelling test." Johnny had an empty feeling in the pit of his stomach. He knew that they were going to have a spelling test today, but he watched TV last night instead of studying for the spelling test and he wasn't ready for the test. As the test began, Johnny looked around the room and realized that he had a clear view of Sally's paper. "It won't hurt if I look at Sally's paper just this once," Johnny thought to himself. "I promise — I'll never do it again and nobody will ever know."

All of us have faced temptations such as these, haven't we? Did you know that Jesus was tempted just as we are? The Bible tells us that Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Do you know what Jesus did when the devil tempted him? He answered him with Scripture!

Jesus had not had anything to eat for forty days. He was hungry, and Satan knew he was hungry, so he said to him, "If you are really the Son of God, turn these stones into bread."

Jesus could have easily done what Satan suggested, but he didn't. Instead, he answered, "It is written, 'Man does not live by bread alone.'"

Then the devil took Jesus up to a high place and showed him the worldly kingdoms below. "All of this belongs to me," he said. "If you will bow down and worship me, I will give it to you."

Jesus answered, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"

Next, the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem and led him up to the highest point on the temple. He said to Jesus, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here. God will send his angels to rescue you."

Again, Jesus quoted the Scripture, "'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Do you know what the devil did? He gave up! He said, "I'll come back and try another day."

I want each of you to have a piece of candy from this bowl. I am not going to tell you not to eat it until after dinner, but as you eat it, I want you to think about what we have learned in our Bible lesson today. Satan tempted Jesus just as he tempts you and me. Jesus resisted Satan's temptation, and we can too, by answering him with Scripture.

Dear Father, help us to learn what the Bible teaches us to do so that when the devil tempts us, we can do what Jesus did—answer him with Scripture. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

TEMPTATIONS MATCH GAME: Provide a large piece of poster board with "THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS" written across the top. Write each of Satan's temptations on one sheet of construction paper and Jesus' response on another. The children will tape Satan's temptations to the poster and match it with Jesus' answer.

Satan - "Tell this stone to become bread."

Jesus - "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"

Satan - "Worship me and all the kingdoms of the world will be yours."

Jesus - "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"

Satan - "Throw yourself down from here and his angels will keep you safe."

Jesus - "It is written, 'Do not tempt the Lord your God.'"

STAY ON THE PATH GAME: The teacher will place a long rope or string to create a "path" around the class room. The children are to walk along that "path" where they will be tempted to leave the path by various things such as cookies, candy, or toys which they would have to step off of the path to reach. If they stay on the "path", it will lead them to a BIGGER PRIZE. (A prize which the teacher will choose.)

TEMPTATION BANNER: Give each child a long piece of paper and some markers. The children will first draw a STONE and write words for that temptation on or around the stone. The children will then draw some MOUNTAINS and write the words for that temptation under or on the mountains. The children will then draw an outline of a TEMPLE and write some words from that temptation. Make sure children write Jesus' answer from scripture for each temptation.

TEMPTATION PROTECTION: Designate one child (or the teacher) to hold a large poster board that is colored and decorated to look like a Bible. Let the other children take turns throwing a Nerf ball at the child or teacher who use the Bible to deflect the Nerf balls. Tell the children that the Nerf balls represent temptation and explain that we should use our knowledge of God's Word to protect us from Satan's temptations just as Jesus did.

Since February is Valentine month:

HEART MAILBOX: Bible verses about temptation (Cor. 10:13, Heb. 2:18, James 1: 2-3, James 1:12; I Peter 2:9, Rev. 3:10) should be written on small pieces of paper and handed out to children to read and discuss. The children will then place the verses in a heart-shaped envelope on the bulletin board. Discuss how much JESUS loves us and how it pleases him when we reject temptation.

For younger children, the teacher can simplify this by just having the slips of paper with a temptation that a younger child might experience and say GOD DOES NOT WANT ME TO DISOBEY, or LIE, etc.. and then place that paper in the heart.

HEART CRAFT: Give two hearts cut out of red construction paper to each child. Placed the two hearts together. and punch holes around the outer edge. The children will weave ribbon or yarn in and out of the holes to make a heart envelope to hold Bible verses. (see above activity). Heart-shaped candies could also be placed in the heart.

Theme: Satan is continually tempting us. 1st Sunday after Lent, Yr. C

Object: A DVD or a Video Tape (Does anyone have those anymore?)

Scripture: When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time. Luke 4:13 (NIV)

Do you have a DVD player? A VCR? Does anyone even have a VCR anymore? At our house we love to watch movies. We watch three or four movies every week. You know, it is amazing how much movies affect our daily lives. The clothes we wear, the music we listen to, even the way we talk is often influenced by movies. A movie website, myfilms.com, asked 2000 people, "What famous phrase from the movies do you use most often in everyday conversation?" Here are some of the phrases that were used most often:

- "Life is like a box of chocolates" from the movie Forrest Gump
- "Beam me up, Scotty" from Star Trek (Even though it wasn't actually in the movie.)
- "May the force be with you" from Star Wars

Do you know what the number one movie phrase was that people said they used most often in every day conversation? It was, "I'll be back" from the movie "Terminator." I hope you haven't seen that movie, but you may have heard someone use the quote from Terminator, "I'll be back."

In our Bible lesson today, Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and he was very hungry.

The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread."

Jesus answered, "No! The Scripture says, 'People do not live by bread alone.'"

Next, the devil took Jesus up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world. "I will give you all of these kingdoms and the authority over them if you will worship me."

Jesus replied, "The Scripture says, "You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him."

Then the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem. He took him up to the highest point of the Temple and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! The Scripture says that 'God will order his angels to guard and protect you. They will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the Lord your God.'"

Do you know what the devil did? He gave up, but he would come back and try again. It is as if the devil was saying, "I'll be back."

We are tempted just as Jesus was tempted. What did Jesus do when he was tempted? He turned to Scripture to answer the devil's temptation. That is a great plan, isn't it? When we do what the Bible tells us to do, we are able to resist the devil's temptation. But be careful! Just because you resist the devil one time doesn't mean you can let your guard down. Remember, the tempter is saying, "I'll be back."

Heavenly Father, over and over again the devil tempts us to do things we should not do. Help us to study your Word so that we will know how to resist the devil when he tries to lead us astray. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 4:1-13

TEMPTATION BALLS: Give each child an empty paper towel roll and some styrofoam balls. The child will use the paper towel roll to hit the styrofoam balls into the garbage pail that has a big sign on it which will say GOD'S WORD. Count the balls after each child's turn to see how many "temptation balls" the child got taken care of by GOD's WORD!

"I'LL BE BACK" TEMPTATION RELAY: Put chocolate chip cookies or muffins or cupcakes on a table. Divide the class into teams. Let the first team member run to the treat table and tag the table and shout -- I'LL BE BACK, and run back to the next player and the relay will continue until all players have gone to the treat table and have shouted, I'LL BE BACK. Then have children run the relay once again but THIS time, the child will take one treat and run back to the team for each member to make the temptation run. As players get back to their team, they will sit down at the back of their team line, and eat their treat while the other players continue to play the game until everyone has a treat!

TEMPTATION 'HITS': Designate one child or the teacher to hold a large poster board that is colored, decorated and has written GOD'S WORD in large letters. The children will try to throw wads of paper or soft beach balls or soft/dry water balls at the child or teacher who is walking across the room with the GOD'S WORD poster board. Tell the children that the wads of paper represent temptation. Ask children if they would get hit more if they had the GOD'S WORD board in front of them or if they just walked without the board. If time allows, try the balls toward a child or teacher withOUT the GOD'S WORD in front of them!!!!

TEMPTATION PANTOMIME: Let children do a temptation pantomime for the rest of the class. When the child's pantomime is guessed correctly, the child will then hold up a sign that says, GOD'S WORD, to let children know that every temptation that is guessed can be handled by GOD's WORD every day!

POPCORN KNOCK DOWN: Fill a glass with water and give the children popcorn to throw AT the glass to try and knock it down. Tell the children that the popcorn represents TEMPTATION and the glass of water represents GOD'S WORD (tape a little sign on the glass for GOD'S WORD). Make sure children stand back far enough to not tip the glass of water over, etc.

TEMPTATION BANNER: Give each child a long piece of paper and markers. Children will first draw a STONE and write words for that temptation on or around the stone. Then children can draw some MOUNTAINS under that STONE area, and write the words for that temptation on the mountains. Then children will draw an outline of a TEMPLE and write some words from that temptation. Make sure children write Jesus' answer from scripture for each temptation.

BIBLE WALKIN': Let the children take turns leading the class in a BIBLE WALK around a designated area. Each child should be carrying a Bible up over his/her head during the WALK!! The children should repeat the walking leader's words as they're shouted out -- such as a cadence or poem for WE CAN..... RESIST TEMPTATION..... WITH GOD'S WORD - make it a "beat" for children to march to. Continue to change the leader for the BIBLE WALKIN' until everyone has had an opportunity to lead, if desired.

RESIST THE DEVIL CHALK TALK: The teacher can write or draw a temptation on the chalk board. Let a child come to the board with chalk and write what the BIBLE says about that temptation... or draw a simple picture..... OR as another option, the children can take turns drawing a temptation on the chalkboard and the teacher can tell the children what GOD's Word says about that temptation and how to RESIST THE DEVIL. Gather in a circle and pray together to resist the devil when he tries to lead us astray.