

## The Temptation of Jesus



**Theme:** The Temptation of Christ (First Sunday in Lent, Yr. A)

**Object:** A large foam pointing finger or a pointing finger you made from poster board.

**Scripture:** Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Matthew 4:1 (NIV)

Have you ever been tempted to do or say something that you know is wrong? For example, you knew you had homework that needed to be done, but your favorite program was on TV, so you chose to watch TV instead of doing your homework. The next day when your teacher asked you why you didn't turn in your homework, you told the teacher, "My dog ate it" or "My baby brother tore it up." We begin to point the finger of blame at someone else.

It isn't a sin to be tempted unless we do what we are tempted to do even though we know it is wrong. Even Jesus himself was tempted. In our Gospel lesson today, we read about the temptation of Jesus.

After Jesus was baptized, he went out into the desert to pray. He stayed there a long time and got very hungry. He had not eaten anything because He was trying to listen to God and do what he said. I'm sure that his tummy must have been rumbling from hunger!

Suddenly, the devil came along and said to Jesus, "There is no reason for you to be hungry. If you are the Son of God, you could take one of these stones and turn it into bread." Jesus was hungry, it must have been tempting, but he did not listen to the devil. He knew that the devil was trying to get Him to do something wrong. Instead, Jesus answered the devil with Scripture. He said, "It is written: 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Next, the devil took Jesus to the holy city up to the highest part of the temple. "If you are the Son of God, jump off of here and God will send his angels to save you." Jesus knew that it was wrong to test God, so he answered the devil saying, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Finally, the devil took Jesus to a very high mountain. He showed Jesus all the world below. "All of this can be yours. I will give it to you if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus answered, "Go away from me Satan! It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Three times the devil tempted Jesus and tried to get him to sin. Did He? NO! Jesus did the right thing each time. He remembered what the Scriptures said and it helped him to resist the devil's temptation.

We all face temptations, don't we? What are examples of some of the temptations you face? (Give the children time to give feedback.) Here are a few ways I thought of that we may be tempted followed by a Bible verse that will help us resist that temptation.

Spreading gossip about another student in your class. (You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. Exodus 20:16)

Disobeying your parents. (Honor your father and mother. Exodus 20:12)

Taking something that does not belong to you. (You shall not steal. Exodus 20:15)

Eating too many sweets or too much junk food. (Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:19)

Remember, when Jesus was tempted, he turned to Scripture to help him resist Satan. You and I should do the same thing.

Father, we are thankful for your Holy Word. Help us to read our Bible daily and hide its words in our heart so that we might be able to resist temptations. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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

**BIBLE VERSE BOOKMARKS:** Bring strips of construction paper or let the children cut them out (depending on the age of the children) to make bookmarks. Write Psalm 119:11 on the bookmarks. The children will decorate the bookmarks using glitter, crayons, or anything you want! Make it fun. Tell the kids they can use the bookmarks as a reminder to quote Scripture verses when they are tempted. They may want to make more for friends and family members. They can also write other verses they know on them.

**TEMPTATION PANTOMIME:** A child or a group of children will perform a pantomime representing a temptation for the rest of the class to try to guess. 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 to knock it over. (Make sure the children stand back far enough so that the glass of water will not tip over.) Tell the children that the popcorn represents TEMPTATION and the glass of water represents GOD'S WORD. Explain to the children that the Word of God is stronger than any temptation we might face.

**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. Then children will draw an outline of a TEMPLE and write some words from that temptation. Then children can draw some MOUNTAINS under that STONE area, and write the words for that temptation on the mountains. Make sure the children write Jesus' answer from scripture for each temptation.

**BIBLE WALKING:** 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 echo the walking leader's words as they're shouted out as a cadence. For example: WE CAN (WE CAN) RESIST (RESIST) TEMPTATION (TEMPTATION) WITH GOD'S WORD (WITH GOD'S WORD). Make it a "beat" for children to march to. If you wish, change the leader for the BIBLE WALKIN' until everyone has had an opportunity to lead.

**MAKE ME LAUGH GAME:** One person is chosen to sit in the middle of a circle and try not to laugh while everyone else does silly things to try to make the person to laugh. No one is allowed to touch the person. If the person starts laughing, someone else is chosen to try. When you are ready to end the game, ask the children if it was difficult not to laugh even when they really wanted to. Remind students that it is difficult to resist temptation, but with God's help, we can do it.

**RESIST THE DEVIL CHALK TALK:** The teacher can write or draw a picture that represents 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 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.

# When You Are Tempted



**Theme:** The Temptation of Christ; The 1st Sunday in Lent, Year A

**Object:** A tray with several tempting "goodies" on it (cake, pie, pastries, etc.)

**Scripture:** Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Matthew 4:1

Have you ever eaten in a restaurant where, after you have finished your dinner, the waiter came to your table carrying a tray filled with tempting deserts? They look so good! The tray is filled with all kinds of cake, pie, and pastries. Even though you aren't hungry, you are tempted to eat desert because they look so good.

Temptation—we all face temptation. What is temptation? Temptation is wanting to do something which we know we should not do. For example, you have some homework that is due tomorrow, but this is the day your favorite program is on television. It is easy to convince yourself that you will have time to do your homework after your show is over.

Do you think that Jesus ever faced temptation? The Bible tells us that Jesus "was tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin." (Hebrews 4:15) In our lesson today, we will learn about a time when Jesus was tempted and what he did to overcome that temptation.

After Jesus was baptized, he went out into the desert to pray. He stayed there a long time and got very hungry. He had not eaten anything because He was trying to listen to God and do what he said. I'm sure that his tummy must have been rumbling from hunger!

Suddenly, the devil came along and said to Jesus, "There is no reason for you to be hungry. If you are the Son of God, you could take one of these stones and turn it into bread." Jesus was hungry, it must have been tempting, but he did not listen to the devil. He knew that the devil was trying to get Him to do something wrong. Instead, Jesus answered the devil with Scripture. He said, "It is written: 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

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Three times the devil tempted Jesus and tried to get him to sin. Did He? NO! Jesus did the right thing each time. He remembered what the Scriptures said and it helped him to resist the devil's temptation.

Sometimes you and I may be tempted to do the wrong thing. It will help us to do what Jesus did and call on the Scripture to help us resist temptation! Let's pray and thank God for giving us the Bible to help us live the way He wants us to live.

Our Father, we are thankful for your Holy Word. Help us to study and learn what it teaches so that we will be able to resist the temptation to do wrong that we face each day. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.