



LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

Matthew 4:1-11

Hebrews 2:14 - 3:2a

Session Theme:

Resistance

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Icebreaker: “No is No!”

Write the following words on the board in this order: “Jo,” “Nee,” “Hindi,” “Non,” “Nei,” and “Hapana.” Ask kids if they can guess what these words have in common. They are all “No” in different languages! (In this order: Albanian, Dutch, Filipino, French, Norwegian and Swahili). Discuss times when we may have to say “no,” especially if we are being tempted to do something wrong. What are some things we can say to resist?

In today’s Bible story, Jesus himself had to say “no,” and he said it in many different ways, over and over again. Jesus was hungry and tired and perhaps even feeling weak, and it was at this point that he was tempted. How did he handle this? Let’s begin our lesson and find out!

c. Opening Prayer

Lord God, help us to resist and to say “no” when we are tempted to do things that are wrong. Give us the strength to be faithful to you, as Jesus was in his time of trial. Keep us strong even when we are under pressure. In Jesus’ holy name we pray. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- “In the Hour of Trial” (hymn)
- “Be Bold! Be Strong!” (Bible Camp song)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today’s Lesson is from the New Testament
- Scripture Section: Beginnings

God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. John was in the wilderness baptizing people in the River Jordan when Jesus himself came and was baptized. John proclaimed Jesus to be “the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!”

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level:

Children: Read aloud the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read aloud Scripture from the Bible

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Pre-Readers: Coloring Page and Activity

Elementary: Children’s Pages (Worksheet and Drama)

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, and Questions)

Adults: Bible Study (Large or Small Group Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day’s lesson one last time. Use the Bible Rhyme as a short review, or simply ask questions to help the students recall the events of the story.

Youth/Adult: Discuss “Reflection for the Week Ahead”

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Pre-Readers: Teacher leads a simple prayer

Children: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord’s Prayer, Luther’s Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format

Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: Matthew 4:1-11

1. Just prior to today's story, Jesus' identity was established from on high by the word of the Father at his baptism. Read Matthew 3:16-17. What does the Father say about Jesus?

Jesus is the Son of the Heavenly Father. (In theological terms, this identifies Jesus as the second person of the Trinity.) The Father loves the Son and is well pleased with him.

2. According to Scripture, it was the Holy Spirit who led Jesus out into the desert to be tempted. Why would the Spirit do that? Has God ever led you through difficult circumstances? In times like that, why is it important to remember God is with us?

In order for Jesus to be our Savior, he had to face the temptations which we face. Jesus was taken to be tempted directly by the devil, as Adam and Eve had been tempted. Being true God, while Jesus experienced the temptation, he did not sin. God leads us through difficult circumstances so that we can experience his love and grow in our faith. In these times it is important to remember that he has experienced all the temptation and suffering of the world and that he now is with us giving us comfort, strength, and assurance of salvation in him.

3. What is the first thing the devil called into question (v. 3a)? Why did Jesus not feel the need to *prove* his identity? What gave him confidence and strength?

The first thing the devil called into question was Jesus' divinity: "If you are the Son of God..." Jesus did not need to prove it because the Father had just declared that he is his Son. The Holy Spirit dwelling within him gave him confidence and strength to carry out his mission.

4. On what basis do *we* believe in Jesus, even if we can't "prove" this truth to others?

We believe in Jesus because the Holy Spirit gives us the faith to trust in the truth of God's Word. Even when we do not have "proof" to show others, we know that we can trust the eyewitness accounts recorded in the Bible. We believe in Jesus because we know him, personally.

5. What were the three temptations that the devil set before Jesus?

a. This temptation is not about Jesus' physical hunger. The devil is trying to get Jesus to sin by doubting the very words of God that he is his Son, and thus needing to prove it to himself.

b. Satan here is tempting Jesus to put God to the test. He is saying, "If you really trusted God to take care of you, you would show it by making God do what he says he will do in the Psalms." The devil is pitting Scripture against Scripture to try and distract Jesus from his mission to save mankind.

c. In this temptation, the devil is offering Jesus something which is not his to give, and which Jesus already possesses. He is offering Jesus an easy way to unite the world and reign over it. But the promise is just an illusion to tempt him to sin. He cannot deliver what he promises even if Jesus sins by worshipping him.

6. What did Jesus use to respond to the devil? How can we use this same resource in times of testing?

Jesus used God's Word to respond to the devil. Even when the devil quoted Scripture, Jesus corrected his misuse of God's Word. We can use God's Word as a help when we are tempted also. The promises which we have in the Bible are a great help and comfort. This should encourage us to read and know our Bibles more.

7. In what ways does the devil attack us in our lives as followers of Jesus? What are some of the doubts and fears that the devil throws at us? How can we rely on God's strength rather than our own?

The devil attacks us by asking us the same question he asked Eve, "Did God really say?" He wants us to doubt that we are saved because of what Jesus has done for us and not by our own works. He wants us to doubt that God loves us, that God forgives us for Jesus' sake. We can rely on God's strength by trusting that his promises are true. No matter what the devil may tell us and no matter how we feel, God's Word is true and his promises are sure.

8. Read Hebrews 2:14 - 3:2a. The Bible says that Jesus experienced the same kinds of struggles and temptation that all people do. Why is this a reassuring thing to know? How does that "help those who are being tempted"?

It is reassuring to know that Jesus suffered and was tempted just like we are so that we know that he understands what we are going through. He can help us because he went through it also and can carry us through our temptations and suffering.

Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: "Bible Memory Jars"

(for all children)

Materials Needed:

- Half pint or pint sized Mason glass jars
- Mod Podge (or watered down school glue)
- Paint brushes
- Colored tissue paper
- Paper cups
- Printed scripture sheets
- Scissors



Instructions:

Before class: Type up 15-20 (or more!) favorite Bible verses on one sheet of paper. Leave several spaces between each verse. Make copies so each student will have a sheet of Bible verses.

When ready to begin: Give each person a sheet of Bible verses and a pair of scissors. Have kids cut out each verse. Invite kids to fold the verses into fourths and put them in the jar.

Next, give each kid a Mason jar, a paint brush, and a few pieces of tissue paper. Invite kids to tear their pieces of tissue paper into pieces, about 1" in size.

Pour a little Mod Podge (or watered down school glue) into each student's paper cup. Have kids "paint" their jar with Mod Podge. Then, stick the pieces of paper onto the jar, overlapping them a little. Finally, gently paint over any dry spots or edges with more Mod Podge. Let jars dry, and rinse off paint brushes in water.

Invite kids to bring home their Scripture jars, and to pick one slip from the jar each night before bed. Encourage them to read it, and try to remember it as they go to sleep.

How did Jesus resist the devil and his empty promises? He clearly knew and understood God's Word. Then, when he needed it, the words (and the strength to do what was right) came to him. The better we know our Bible, the more the Holy Spirit can use those words to help us when we need it too.

Activity 2: "Run from the Tempter!"

(for all children)

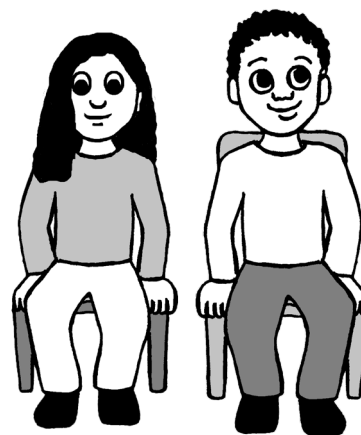
Materials Needed:

- Large open area to play a game

Instructions:

Invite all the students to sit in a circle (either in chairs or on the floor).

Choose one volunteer to be "The Tempter." This person's job is to disrupt and "tempt" people to do something.



To play, the Tempter will call out, "Everyone with *(the Tempter will name an article of clothing, or hair color, or eye color, etc.)*, get up and follow me!"

Any kid who had something named (for example, "brown hair") must stand up, but rather than going towards the Tempter, they will scramble away to "safety" by sitting in someone else's seat. The Tempter will also be trying to take any open seat, so this will be a challenge.

If the Tempter succeeds in getting a seat, the person left standing will be the Tempter for the next round. Otherwise, the Tempter will have to stay in the same role and call out something else for round two. Play this for as many rounds as you and your class would like.

In today's Bible story, the devil tempted Jesus by calling him out and trying to get Jesus to obey him. As we heard earlier, Jesus refused to do anything the devil wanted, even if some of the ideas sounded good at the time.

In our lives, we will face temptation too. Like in our game, we can walk away from those who want us to do something wrong. We can even say "no" to ourselves when it is we who want to do something wrong.

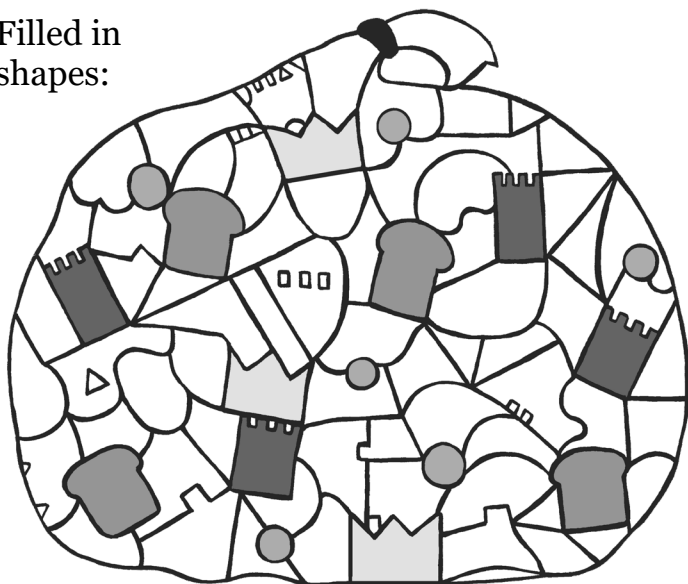
When we are confused, it's wise to turn to trustworthy adults and talk to them. But even more importantly, we can turn to God for direction. God will hear our prayers for help and give us the strength we need.

Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:

Coloring Answer:

Filled in shapes:



Use the coins as the letter "O" to fill in the missing spaces in the verse below, to see what Jesus told the devil, in Matthew 4:7:

**"YOU SHALL NOT PUT
THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST."**

Map Answers (from the youth pages)



Reflection for the Week Ahead

Everyone goes through times of temptation. It can be comforting to know that Jesus faced this too, and that he understands our experience.

How did Jesus deal with temptation? As the Son of God, he knew the Scriptures well, and could tell when they were being misused. He also stayed focused on his larger purpose. Our Lord had come to save the world from sin, death, and the devil. He wasn't going to let anything steer him away from that task.



What can we do when we are tempted in our own lives? First, we can study God's Word during the calm times. The Holy Spirit can use that and bring it to mind later, when we need it. When temptation strikes, we can notice what's happening, pray, and remind ourselves of what is more meaningful in our lives than this fleeting temptation. God will give us the strength we need to resist.

What else can we do to resist temptation when it comes? Talk about times when you have done this, and what helped you. Invite others to share their stories as well.

The Practice of Prayer

On the lines below, thank God for sending Jesus into our world. Pray that you would have courage like John and serve God in all you do. Ask that God would reveal to you his wisdom and truth.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.

A: _____

D: _____

T: _____

R: _____

C: _____