

Jesus was Tempted

Bible Passage: Matthew 4:1-11

Main Point: Jesus was tempted and never sinned

Key Passage: 1 Timothy 1:15

Big Picture Questions: What makes Jesus different? Jesus is fully God and fully man.

Leader BIBLE STUDY

After Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness. Jesus fasted for 40 days, and He was hungry. There in the wilderness, the Devil, who is the agent of temptation and father of lies, appeared to Jesus. The Devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

If You are the Son of God? The Devil knew who Jesus was. He challenged Jesus to prove it. The Devil wanted to ruin God's plan of redemption which was set in motion in Genesis 3. In the garden of Eden, Satan used a seemingly innocent question to arouse doubt in Eve: "Did God really say, 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden?'" (Gen. 3:1). Adam and Eve ate the fruit God had forbidden them to eat, and sin entered the world.

Jesus came to reverse the curse, to succeed where Adam failed. The Devil's aim was to use a similar trick as in Eden to get Jesus to sin, to disqualify Him from the role of sinless Savior.

The Devil targeted Jesus in His weakness. He tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread, to put Himself in danger, and to worship him as a way to fulfill His mission without going to the cross. "Go away, Satan!" Jesus replied.

The writer of Hebrews said that Jesus, our High Priest, can sympathize with our weaknesses because He was tested in every way we are, yet He never sinned. Jesus' actions are an example for believers, but what happens when we do give in to temptation?

Emphasize to kids that we can boldly approach God's throne to receive grace to help us through temptation, and mercy and forgiveness when we sin. (See Heb. 4:14-16.) We have hope because Christ died for sinners.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Was Tempted

Matthew 4:1-22 (bolded text can be read as a shorter version of the story)

After Jesus was baptized, He was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. Jesus did not eat for 40 days and 40 nights. He prayed and thought about God's plan for His life. When those days were over, Jesus was hungry.

Then the Devil, who tempts people to sin, came up to Jesus. He said, "If You are really God's Son, prove it. Tell these stones to become bread."

If Jesus used His power to turn the stones into bread, He could eat them so He wouldn't be hungry anymore. But Jesus refused. Instead of using His own power, Jesus chose to trust God to meet His needs. Jesus said, "God's Word says: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

The Devil tempted Jesus again. He took Jesus to Jerusalem, which was called the holy city. The Devil took Jesus up to the top of the temple. Jesus stood on the roof, and the Devil said, "If You are really God's Son, prove it. Jump off this temple and trust God to protect You."

Then the Devil said: "God's Word says: God will order His angels to keep You safe, and they will protect You so that You will not even strike your foot against a stone."

The Devil had used words from Scripture, but Jesus knew the Devil's command was foolish. Jesus reminded him, "God's Word also says: Do not test the Lord your God."

Finally, the Devil took Jesus to a high mountain. He showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and how great they were. The Devil said to Jesus, "I will give You all the riches and power of these kingdoms. They belong to me, and I can give them to anyone I want. If You want them, all You have to do is fall down and worship me."

Jesus resisted temptation again. He replied, "Go away, Satan! God's Word says: Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only."

The Devil left Jesus, and angels came right away to serve Jesus. Throughout all these temptations, Jesus never sinned.

After that, Jesus began His ministry. He preached and said, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven is near!" Jesus called some fishermen to follow Him. Peter, Andrew, James, and John left their nets and followed Jesus.

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.