

Making the Most of Lent

Make the Lenten season special for you and for your family by setting aside time for daily devotions. The devotions offered in this book begin with Ash Wednesday and continue through Easter Sunday. Each one takes about fifteen minutes and is divided into five simple parts—prayer, Bible readings, discussion, singing, and hands-on service to God.

Take a few minutes to prepare by reading the devotions ahead of time. A list of materials for the suggested activities is given at the beginning of each week. Planning ahead and gathering the necessary items before they're needed will help prevent last-minute hassle that may distract from devotional time.

Remember, these are family devotions. Gather in a favorite room where everyone is comfortable. Every member of your family can participate in the praying, singing, reading, and serving. As each person participates, God's message becomes more meaningful to them. Give everyone a chance to lead a devotion. You'll be surprised how quickly a fidgety child can become an excited leader. We can all express praise and thankfulness to God for all He does through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ash Wednesday

Let's Pray

Dear Lord God, open our hearts and minds today as we learn together from Your Holy Word. In the name of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

Reading

Matthew 4:1–11

Think about It

Temptation is a big word; what does it mean? If someone is being tempted, they are faced with a choice between doing something wrong and resisting the urge. They could be tempted to say something that is hurtful or untrue. They could be tempted to do something wrong, like pushing all their toys under the bed when Mom has asked them to clean their room. Or they could be tempted to not do something good, like taking out the trash without being asked to.

Right after John baptized Jesus, Jesus went into the wilderness by Himself. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit led Him away to be alone with God so

He could get ready to begin His public ministry. While Jesus was alone, Satan came and tempted Him three times.

What were the ways Jesus was tempted? First Jesus was fasting, so He was very hungry. Satan tempted Him with food. He said that since Jesus was the Son of God, He could turn rocks into bread. Second, the devil tempted Jesus with physical safety. He took Jesus to the top of a mountain and told Him to test God by jumping off. Then Satan offered Jesus an easy way to be very rich and powerful and be king of the world. Jesus didn't listen to Satan. He knew that God's way is always best. Although going without food and turning down riches was the harder path, He chose to obey God and resist temptation.

Why did God allow Jesus to be tempted? Jesus was tempted so He could understand us and the temptations we face each day. Whether you are a student who faces the problems of classmates, homework, and obeying your parents, or you're a parent who faces the working world, managing a home, and raising a godly family, Jesus understands your problems and He cares about you.

How did Jesus resist the temptations? Jesus fought against those temptations with God's Holy Word, the Bible. That is where we turn for the answers to our struggles as well. God gave us His Word to show us what sin is and to help us fight against it. The Bible says God will never let us be tempted by more than we can resist (1 Corinthians 10:13). Jesus is ready, willing, and able to help any time we ask—day or night. With Jesus, we can face anything!

Let's Pray

Dear Lord Jesus, we are tempted every day in many ways. We can choose to follow You or to give in to temptations. It is so good to know that You understand our temptations and how hard it is to resist. Help us to choose Your way. Thank You for always being there to help us. In Your name. Amen.

Activity Time

Think of a temptation you have. Share it with one another and talk about ways you can stand against it. The Bible says to stand firm and resist Satan (1 Peter 5:9). Can you find other verses that help your situation? Encourage one another.