



Use Week of:

## Unit 20 • Session 2

# Jesus' Temptation

### BIBLE PASSAGE:

Matthew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4

### STORY POINT:

Jesus was tempted and never sinned.

### KEY PASSAGE:

John 3:30

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

**INTRODUCE THE STORY**  
(10–15 MINUTES)  
PAGE 118



**TEACH THE STORY**  
(25–30 MINUTES)  
PAGE 120



**APPLY THE STORY**  
(25–30 MINUTES)  
PAGE 126



Additional resources are available at [gospelproject.com](http://gospelproject.com). For free training and session-by-session help, visit [MinistryGrid.com/thegospelproject](http://MinistryGrid.com/thegospelproject).

## LEADER Bible Study

Satan wants to ruin God's plan. In Genesis 3, he tempted Adam and Eve to disobey God. Sin entered the world, and the perfect relationship between God and man was broken. But all along, God had a plan to rescue His people through His Son. So when Jesus came to earth, Satan didn't back down. After Jesus was baptized—beginning His ministry and effectively declaring war on Satan—Satan tempted Jesus.

If Satan could just get Jesus to stray from God's perfect plan—if he could just get Jesus to sin—then Jesus would be disqualified to be the sinless Savior people needed. But Satan could not stop God's plan.

Jesus' temptation is not primarily an example to be followed but more a declaration of who Jesus is. He is the answer to God's promise of a descendant who would crush the head of the snake. (Gen. 3:15) Jesus is the perfect sacrifice required to take away sin. Where Adam failed, Jesus succeeded. Adam brought guilt and death to the human race, but Jesus brings forgiveness and life to all who trust in Him.

Even today, the devil works hard “to steal and kill and destroy” (John 10:10). Teach kids that the power to resist temptation comes from Jesus. Kids may struggle to understand that following Jesus won't mean instant eradication of sin and temptation in our lives. (Sanctification is a lifelong process!) Pray that the kids you teach would see Jesus as their greatest treasure—more valuable than any instant gratification the world has to offer.

Finally, give kids hope for when they fail. Jesus' perfect obedience is credited to those who trust in Him. Remind the kids that “if we confess our sins, he [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). We can boldly approach God's throne to receive both grace and mercy when we need it. (See Heb. 4:14-16.)

# The BIBLE Story

## Jesus' Temptation

*Matthew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4*

After Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit led Him 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.

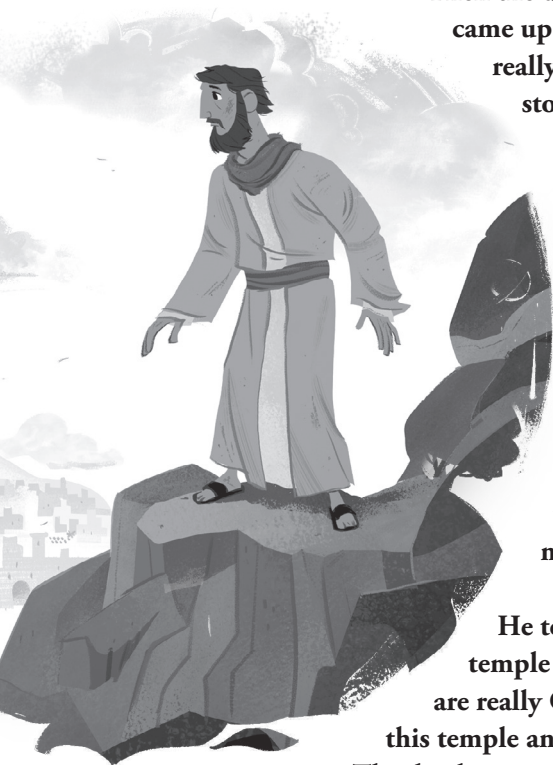
**Then the devil, who tempts people to sin, came up to Jesus. He said, "If You are really God's Son, prove it. Tell these stones to become bread."**

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 that 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 the top of the temple in Jerusalem and said, "If You are really God's Son, prove it. Jump off this temple and trust God to protect You."

The devil even said: "God's Word says that 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.**

*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.*

## **Bible Storytelling Tips**

- **Display a prop:** Each time you tell how Jesus responded to temptation, hold up the Bible.
- **Use dramatic conversation:** During dialogue, stand in various places for each speaker—Jesus and the devil.

# INTRODUCE the Story



**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus' Temptation

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Matthew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4

**STORY POINT:** Jesus was tempted and never sinned.

**KEY PASSAGE:** John 3:30

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

## Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to talk about things they have never experienced or done before.

**SAY** • As you grow up, there are many new things you will do and see. Some of those things will be good, and some may be sad or difficult. One thing that everyone has done is sin against God. Everyone except Jesus, that is. Today we will learn about a time Jesus was tempted to sin. How do you think Jesus fought temptation?

## Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Just Like Jesus” activity page. Guide kids to recreate the picture of Jesus, using the grid to help them draw the parts of the picture.

**SAY** • Great drawings. We are born in sin and are very unlike Jesus. But if we trust in Him and worship Him as our King, we can begin to fight temptation just as Jesus did! How else can we be just like Jesus?

- “Just Like Jesus” activity page,
- 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

## Session starter (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** What is true?

Read the following sentences and instruct the kids to raise their hand if they think the sentence is true. If true, ask a kid or two to explain how they know. Consider making up your own sentences as well.

Suggested sentences:

- The United States of America was founded in 1776. (*true*)
- The Bible has 65 books. (*false, 66*)
- Plants create their own food using sunlight. (*true*)
- Saturn is the smallest planet in the solar system. (*false, Mercury*)

**SAY** • Sometimes it can be hard to know what is true. In our Bible story today, we will learn about a time Satan tried to trick Jesus so that Jesus would sin. Jesus knew the truth. How do you think Jesus defeated Satan's lies? We'll learn all about it soon.

**OPTION 2:** This or that?

Designate two sides of the room. You may hang signs that say *A* and *B*, *This* and *That*, or some other label. Ask kids about how they would act given different options, and instruct them to walk to the side of the room you assign to each option. Give kids a chance to explain their choices.

**SAY** • If we faced those situations in real life, we would probably be pretty tempted to choose the selfish, sinful option. Today we will learn about a time Jesus felt temptation. We will hear how Jesus fought back and chose to obey God.

**LOW  
PREP**

· paper, pen, tape  
(optional)

Suggested options:

- keep a lost wallet or turn it into the lost and found
- copy a friend's homework or turn yours in unfinished
- befriend a new kid at school or stick with friends you know

## Transition to teach the story

# TEACH the Story



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## Countdown

· countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

## Introduce the session (3 minutes)

· leader attire  
· reflective vest  
· hard hat

*[Leader enters wearing bluejeans and a T-shirt with a reflective vest over it and a hard hat.]*

**LEADER** • Hey, friends. I'm glad you made it here. My road work team and I have been working hard to get these roads fixed, but the hard thing is that, while the end goal is to fix some traffic issues, the work we do causes a lot of traffic issues in the meantime.

That's one of the big reasons it can be hard to start a project like road reconstruction. The temptation is to ignore the problems because, in the short term, stopping things to fix the problems makes the problems feel like bigger problems!

In a lot of situations, we face all sorts of temptations. In fact, even Jesus faced temptation to sin. The difference is, while we sometimes choose to disobey God, Jesus never did. Today, I want to share with you that story.

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.



## Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • Jesus faced temptation because Jesus is fully human. Our big picture question helps us understand the Father’s plan. ***Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.*** Because the fair payment of sin is death, the only way for sinners to be saved is through the death of a perfect sacrifice. Because Jesus is fully human but never sinned, He was able to be the perfect sacrifice we needed.

## Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

· Giant Timeline

**LEADER** • After Jesus was born as a human, He grew up. We learned a few weeks past that **Jesus obeyed God by being baptized.** Baptism is a picture of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and those who believe in Him are baptized to show the world they belong to Jesus. Last week, we specifically looked at the death and resurrection of Jesus. He was arrested and put to death even though He had never sinned, and He rose again to prove death was defeated. **Jesus’ resurrection gives us hope for eternal life.**

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus’ Temptation.”

**LEADER** • Here is a tricky question for you: Why would it have been sin to make bread? [*Allow responses.*]

· Bibles  
· “Jesus’ Temptation” video  
· Big Picture Question Poster  
· Bible Story Picture Poster  
· Story Point Poster



It is not usually sin to make bread, but the devil wanted Jesus to stop obeying God. Jesus was in the wilderness without food because that is what God's Spirit told Jesus to do. If Jesus had chosen to use His power to make stones into bread, He would have been disobeying God. Jesus never used His power to satisfy His human desires. He used His power only to glorify God.

Each time Jesus obeyed God, He used a Bible passage to resist the devil's tricks. But did you notice what the devil did the second time he tried to make Jesus sin? The devil tried to twist Scripture to make it seem like something sinful was not sinful. Thankfully, Jesus is more powerful than all the forces of evil. God's plans never fail, and Jesus saw right through the devil's lie.

Jesus resisted all three of the devil's attempts. **Jesus was tempted and never sinned.** He remained perfect, just like He had always been and always will be. So when the time came for Jesus to obey God by dying on the cross, He was the perfect sacrifice just as God planned. Because Jesus died on the cross for us and rose again, we can gain the power we need to resist the devil too.

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

## Christ connection

**LEADER** • Everyone who trusts in Jesus is a new creation.

God forgives our sin and gives us new hearts that love and want to obey God. God also sends the Holy Spirit to live in us and fill us with His power. We will still be tempted to sin, but with the Holy Spirit we can choose to obey God.

The devil tried to get Jesus to sin, but Jesus never sinned. Jesus always did the right thing. Jesus died on the cross to rescue us from sin. When we are tempted to sin, we can ask Jesus to help us say no to sin.

### Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 20, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about times they have been tempted. Guide them to discuss ways we can obey God even when we feel tempted to sin.

· “Unit 20, Session 2”  
Questions from Kids  
video



### Missions moment (3 minutes)

Ask a volunteer to read the “Betty Greene Story” printable, or read it yourself if your group lacks strong readers. Display the “Betty Greene Photos” printable or pass them around so kids have a chance to look at them.

· “Betty Greene  
Photos” printable  
· “Betty Greene Story”  
printable

**LEADER** • Betty Greene was the first female missionary pilot. She helped to start the Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) that uses small airplanes to reach people in remote villages. The MAF helps people and shares the stories of Jesus, like the one we’re learning:  
**Jesus was tempted and never sinned.**

Pray, thanking God for missionaries like Betty Greene and for any missionaries your church supports.

### Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 3:30. Then sing “He Must Increase but I Must Decrease (John 3:30).”

· Key Passage Poster  
· “He Must Increase,  
but I Must Decrease  
(John 3:30)” song

**LEADER** • John the Baptist knew that Jesus is the most important. John wanted his life to glorify Jesus, not himself. That’s why he said the words of this verse.

• “Jesus Messiah” song

## Sing (4 minutes)

**LEADER** • Jesus is our Lord and Savior. Though fully God, Jesus became fully human. *Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.* All glory belongs to Him because He is the Messiah.

Sing together “Jesus Messiah.”

## Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

**LEADER** • Father, thank You that **Jesus was tempted and never sinned.** We know that He perfectly understands our suffering and pain but also perfectly obeyed You at all times. Help us love You more and obey You as Jesus did. Give us the wisdom to seek You when we face temptation. Amen.

## Dismiss to apply the story

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

# APPLY the Story



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## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- sticky notes

Read the key passage with the kids. Use sticky notes to cover the a word or two of the key passage. Challenge the kids to say it again, adding in the missing words. Repeat this process until the whole passage is covered and kids say it from memory.

**SAY** • John wanted his life to bring Jesus glory. John knew that Jesus is the most important person of all. We can also give Jesus glory when we love and obey Him. **Jesus was tempted and never sinned**, so when we are tempted we can ask Jesus for help to obey Him. That's a great way to glorify Jesus.

## Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help them find Mathew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4. Ask a kid to tell you which division those books are in. (*New Testament, Gospels*) Ask another kid to tell you which other book is part of that same division. (*John*) Then ask a third kid to briefly explain what that division contains. (*the stories of Jesus' life and ministry, as well as His death and resurrection*) Consider showing Jerusalem on the New Testament Israel Map. (*H5*)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Why was Jesus in the wilderness? (*The Spirit sent Him there to pray, fast, and be tempted by Satan; Mark 1:13; Matt. 4:1-2*)
2. What did Satan tempt Jesus to do? (*turn stones to bread, jump off the temple, and worship Satan to get riches and power; Matt. 4:3,6,9*)
3. How did Jesus fight against temptation? (*Jesus quoted Scripture to remember what is true; Matt. 4:4,7,10*)
4. Why do we face temptations? *Guide kids to think about why Satan wants people to sin. Remind them that Satan wants to prevent people from glorifying God and keep Christians from living the way God has commanded us to live. We also have sin natures that desire sin and selfishness. We are tempted when we dwell on sinfulness and when Satan tries to get us to disobey.*
5. Can we resist temptation? *Discuss the difference between people who trust in Jesus and people who do not. Help kids see without Jesus, we cannot avoid sin. Remind them, though, that everyone who trusts in Jesus has the Holy Spirit living inside. Christians can use the power of the Spirit and the Word of God to fight temptation and obey God.*
6. Why is it important to resist temptation? *Help kids see that Christians cannot lose their salvation when they choose sin, but sin still dishonors God, hurts us, and hurts those around us. We resist temptation not to earn God's love, but because we love and trust God that His commands are good for us.*

**SAY • Jesus was tempted and never sinned.** When we face temptation, we can resist it through the Holy Spirit's power and the Word of God.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.



## LOW PREP

• chairs, 1 per kid

### Activity choice (10 minutes)



**OPTION 1:** Now boarding

Arrange chairs into columns with an aisle between. Ensure you have enough chairs for each kid to have a seat. Instruct the kids to sit in the chairs and imagine they are flying in a plane. Stand at the front of the group and call out commands. Kids will react differently depending on which command you give. Use the suggested commands and actions below, or make up your own.

Suggested commands:

- Nose dive: All the kids lean forward.
- Gaining altitude: All the kids lean back.
- Seatbelts fastened: Kids pretend to buckle a lap belt.
- Move about the cabin: Each kid gets up and swaps seats with another kid.
- Turbulence: Kids shake their body around.
- Crash landing: Kids hug their knees and pretend to fall from their chairs.

**SAY** • That was a fun game. Real pilots may have to deal with all kinds of situations similar to the ones we acted out. Pray for missionary pilots like the ones with MAF. They can reach people in mountain villages, deep jungles, or remote islands that no one else can get to. Their willingness to serve God means that people will be helped and will hear about Jesus. The next time we fly a paper airplane, see an airplane in the sky, or fly in an airplane ourselves, let's say a prayer for missionary pilots.

Pray for the MAF pilots and for any missionaries your church supports. Ask parents or church members to donate travel-size toiletry items for a mission project included in Session 3 of Unit 20.

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.

## OPTION 2: Remembrance rocks

Provide each kid a medium-sized rock. Allow the kids to take turns using permanent markers to write the story point or a favorite Bible verse reference on the stones. You may provide decoupage paste and foam brushes for kids to coat their rocks to protect the writing.

- medium-sized rocks
- permanent markers
- decoupage paste and foam brushes (optional)

**SAY** • The devil tried to convince Jesus to put His human needs before His obedience to God. **Jesus was tempted and never sinned.** Instead of turning stones into bread to eat, Jesus used God's Word to defeat the devil. These remembrance rocks can help us remember to fight temptation so we can glorify Jesus with our lives.

## Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- pencils and crayons
- paper
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.