



## Temptation of Jesus/Temptation

### 9th Confirmation Class Lesson

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**Supplies Needed:** Notebooks; Handout; one sturdy chair without arm rests; 1 Bible per child (it helps if the Bibles are all the same translation, but they don't need to be); TV/DVD or TV/Laptop to show *Marshmallow Test* video clip

## Opening Activity: Bible Verse Race

### Explain Activity

- There's one chair (without arm rests) way over here. [note: about 10 feet, if possible, from where everyone is sitting]
- And you all are sitting way over here, each of you with a Bible.
- (Depending on size of class [9 or more], put them in teams [have at least 3 teams], otherwise, have a free-for-all)
- I'll start us off. I'll call out a book of the Bible, a chapter and a verse.
- Then you look up that book, chapter and verse in the Bible that you have.
- Once you find the passage, you run to the chair with the Bible, sit down and read it out-loud.
- Other people might be running to the chair too, so you might have to struggle a bit for the chair.
- First person to correctly read the passage with their bottom on the chair gets to call out the next book, chapter and verse.
- [If you are playing with teams, everyone still looks up the passage. Whoever finds it first gives their Bible to the designated team leader for that round, who then runs to the chair. Keep track of points for the teams. After every round, the team leader for each team changes.]

### ASK

- Did you participate in this activity? Why?
- What motivates you to participate or not in any activity that you do?
- This activity had some struggle in it, yeah? In each round, what "stopped" the struggle? (the reading of the scripture passage)
- In today's story, we'll see how scripture helps Jesus end a struggle, too.

## Opening Prayer

**Review Challenge of the Week:** What are some ways of living where you think you miss the target/destination of God?

## Review last few weeks

- Concepts we've talked about recently in class:

- Healing - unclean spirits – naming internal “stuff” that keeps us from being the truth of who we are.
- Healing – crying out – saying out loud what we need help with, what our problems are – internal or external – and then asking God to help us – like Bartimaeus asking Jesus for mercy.
- Sin – Means to miss the mark or destination (meaning God - originally used as an archery term)
- Kingdom of God - exists wherever we allow God to be king.
- Repent – Means to “turn around.” So when you sin/miss the mark, once you recognize/name that missing, then the next thing one would do if they chose to do so, would be to turn around, to do a “U-turn” or “recalculate” one’s direction (like the GPS in the car tells you to do).

## TRANSITION

- Most of this year, so far, we’ve been talking about what people experience when they are around Jesus.
- Last class, we started paying attention more specifically to Jesus’ actions regarding how his ministry started. We talked about his baptism.
- This week, we’re going to look at what Jesus does directly AFTER his baptism.

## ASK

- Before we do that, let’s do what we did last week with defining words:
  - What do you think it means to be “tempted.” (dictionary definition: to cause desire/craving)
  - Who or what do you think is the devil?

## READ LUKE 4:1-15

1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, <sup>2</sup>where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The devil said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.’ <sup>4</sup>Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, “One does not live by bread alone.” ’

5 Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. <sup>6</sup>And the devil said to him, ‘To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. <sup>7</sup>If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.’

<sup>8</sup>Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, “Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.” ’

9 Then the devil<sup>\*</sup> took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, <sup>10</sup>for it is written, “He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you”, <sup>11</sup>and

“On their hands they will bear you up,  
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.” ’

<sup>12</sup>Jesus answered him, ‘It is said, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.” ’ <sup>13</sup>When the devil had finished every test, he departed from Jesus until an opportune time.

<sup>14</sup> Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. <sup>15</sup>He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

## ASK

- What do you make of the first verse that tells us that the Holy Spirit/God led Jesus into temptation?
- Why do you think God would do that to Jesus?
- What do you think the devil is trying to do and why's he trying to do it?
- Let's say, for the moment, that temptation causes craving/desire. What cravings/desires do you think were caused by the three temptations that Jesus faced?
  - 1<sup>st</sup> temptation is at verse 2 & 3 (Hunger/survive)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> temptation is at verse 6 (putting someone/something else before God; to get power by making a trade instead of receiving it from God)
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> temptation is at verse 9 (to be passive/to quit/to let whatever happen; to do your thing and expect God to back-up your plan)
- With each temptation, Jesus used a tool to combat the temptations. What was that tool? (He quoted scripture)

## TELL

- The word “devil” parallels the Greek word diabolis, which means “divider.” It is often used in scripture interchangeably with “Satan.”
- The word, “Satan” is an untranslated word. It comes directly from Hebrew. It means: An adversary.
- In the story with Adam and Eve, Satan/the devil takes a physical form (the serpent). In this story, even though the devil speaks and leads Jesus, the story never says the devil has a physical form. But, it could be true -- Satan could be a physical entity. Another possibility, though, is that these physical representations are a storytelling device to help portray the “voices of separation (sin) from God” that are in our heads.
- The word “temptation” is interchangeable in scripture with the word “test.” A helpful way to think of temptation is to think of it as motivation(s) that makes the choice to *not* choose God seem attractive.
- Last week, we said uppercase Sin is separation from God (to miss the mark)
- The voice of the devil, then, makes Sin look like an attractive choice.

## THOUGHT EXPERIMENT

- Close your eyes. Imagine you are in the woods/forest. Imagine that you don't know how you got there, that all you know is that you are not where you want to be.
- Now, look to your left and imagine that you see a path. Give that path a name, like streets have names. Call it "A good looking way."

- Now, look to your right, and imagine that you see another path. Give that path a name, too. Call it "God's Way."
- Now, how are you going to choose what path to take? What motivates you to go down one path rather than the other path? Hunger? Power? Fear? Peer pressure? Maybe you might talk to someone about the choice? Lots of people? But they aren't there, so you imagine what in your mind what they might say. A whole discussion is taking place, then, in your head about what path to take.
- OK, open your eyes.

## **TELL**

- This is what Jesus is facing in this story.
- He's having to determine what path to take.
- In the end, he chooses God's Way.
- The way Jesus is able to make this choice is by using words from scripture. Scripture is not magical - it doesn't just make the temptation go away. Instead, the scripture is a "voice" in Jesus' head that he uses to help him choose what path to take. And Jesus trusts that voice more than the other voice he's hearing: The voice of temptation and separation.
- We're going to watch some kids face temptation (by evil marshmallows) to see how they deal with temptation. But first...
- Let's eat.

## **SNACK**

## **TELL**

- As we watch this clip, look for the ways the kids entertain the temptation and the ways that they avoid temptation.

## **Watch video clip of the Marshmallow Test**

## **ASK**

- In this clip, why "should" the kids try to avoid temptation? (they get an extra marshmallow for doing so)
- Did you notice how the successful ones avoided temptation? (they talked to each other, or stared at the wall - they did something other than fixate on the temptation itself)
- In the clip, the kids get a second marshmallow if they don't eat the first one. What kind of "reward" did Jesus get for passing the temptation test? (he was filled with the power of the Spirit and, seemingly, a whole lot of confidence)

## **TELL**

- In the video, the kids that say no to temptation, do so by paying attention to something else.
- In the temptation story, the temptation for Jesus is to not pay attention to God.
- Jesus uses the same technique as some of the kids, instead of focusing on the temptation, he instead focuses scripture.

## **THE GOOD NEWS**

- Sometimes we can feel imprisoned by temptation
- Jesus shows us that through paying attention to God, we can be free of and overcome our temptations.
- It isn't easy (40 days without food; see the kids in the video clip)
- But if we continue to choose God's way, then we can help others be free from their temptations.

## **CHALLENGE of the Week**

What are some things that you have trouble saying "no" to, even though you want to or think you should say no to?

## **Closing Prayer**