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Written by Nathanael Vissia

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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for March 9, 2025

First Sunday in Lent

Lectionary Year C

Scripture: [Luke 4:1-13](#) [**Summary:** *Jesus Is Tempted*]

Supplies Needed: You'll need two rubber bands (aka elastic bands). Preferably, you'll want the larger post-office type rubber bands for a better visual, but since you'll be stretching one until it breaks, you don't want it to be too big/strong because then it'll sting even more when it snaps.

ASK (a.k.a. [The On-Ramp](#))

- Good morning!
- Do you know what the word, "stress" means?
- That's right! It means the weight or "pressure" of one thing is placed on or "applied to" another thing.
- For example, have you ever taken a rubber band and stretched it and stretched it and stretched it until it broke? [*stretch the rubber band as you are talking. Time it so that you stretch it enough that it'll break right when you say, "broke."*]
- This is an example of stress being applied (by me) to another object (the rubber band).
- Did you notice that when too much stress was applied, the rubber band snapped?
- This can happen to us as humans, too.
- When we feel too much stress, we then say and do things we wouldn't normally say and do.
 - We get impatient and annoyed.
 - We might even *snap*, where one moment we seem ok and then the next moment for no real reason we're just really angry.

TELL (a.k.a. [The Freeway](#))

- In today's scripture story about Jesus, we hear that Jesus is experiencing quite a bit of stress.

- First, he's really hungry. The story says he didn't eat for 40 days and nights. That's a long time to not eat, isn't it? As kids, do not EVER do that, ok?
- Second, there's a voice that Jesus is hearing that's telling him to do things.
- And even though this voice is not God's voice, some of the things sound pretty attractive for Jesus; especially the idea of eating some bread.
- So Jesus is feeling a lot like a rubber band that's being stretched.
- There's a lot of stress being pressed against him to act differently than he usually would act.
- But Jesus did *not* snap. He did *not* listen to the other voice.
- And here's why [*stretch the second rubber band to the breaking point without actually breaking it and then reduce your stretching of it while you are saying the following line*]: Jesus lessened the stress by using scripture as a reminder to pay attention to God and receive what God offers.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- When stress happens, it's easy to forget who we really are – we forget that we are God's gift – and, instead, we snap.
- But we don't *have* to snap.
- Today's story reminds us that we can do the same thing Jesus did when he felt stress – that we can use scripture and the faith stories as a way to remember to pay attention to God and receive God's patience, wisdom, and forgiveness which can often reduce the stress we're feeling.
- We also have each other and our parents, Sunday school teachers, and members of this congregation who remind us to pay attention to God and receive God's gifts.
- Together, then, when one of us is feeling stress, we can help each other remember to pay attention to God and receive God's gifts instead of snapping.
- And that's the good news for today. Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,
Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus...

Thank you for Jesus...

...who reminds us...

...who reminds us...

...to pay attention to you...

...to pay attention to you...

...and receive your gifts...

...and receive your gifts...

...of patience, wisdom, and forgiveness...

...of patience, wisdom, and forgiveness...

...even when we're stressed out.

...even when we're stressed out.

Thank you and Amen