

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 rescue sinners.

Christ Connection: 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.

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 preschoolers that the power to resist temptation comes from Jesus. Preschoolers 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 preschoolers you teach would see Jesus as their greatest treasure—more valuable than any instant gratification the world has to offer.

Finally, give preschoolers hope for when they fail. Jesus' perfect obedience is credited to those who trust in Him. Remind the preschoolers 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

After Jesus was baptized, God's Spirit led Him into the wilderness. Jesus stayed in the wilderness for many days. He prayed to God and thought about God's plan for His life. Jesus did not eat anything while He was in the wilderness, and He was very hungry.

The devil came to tempt Jesus. He tried to get Jesus to do wrong things. The devil said, "If You are really God's Son, tell these stones to become bread."

If Jesus used His power to turn the stones into bread, He could eat the bread. Then He wouldn't be hungry anymore. But Jesus said no. He trusted God to give Him what He needed. Then Jesus said, "This is what the Bible says: Man must not live only on bread, but on all the words that God says."

Jesus did not sin, so the devil tried again. He took Jesus to the top of the temple in Jerusalem. The devil said, "If You are really God's Son, prove it. Jump off the top of the temple. God will protect You."

Then the devil said, "The Bible says God will order His angels to keep You safe, and they will protect You so that You will not even trip on a stone." That is what Psalm 91 says in the Bible.

Again, Jesus said no. Jesus knew the devil was trying to trick Him by misusing God's words. The devil was being foolish. Jesus said, "The Bible also says, do not test God."

Finally, the devil took Jesus to a high mountain where they could see land stretched out far and wide. The kingdoms in the land were great. The devil said, "Look! I will give You all the money and power of these great kingdoms. All You have to do is fall down and worship me!"

Jesus said no! "Go away!" He said. "The Bible says, only worship God and only serve God."

So the devil went away. Angels came to help Jesus and serve Him. In all of these things, Jesus never sinned.

Part One: Introduce the Story

Welcome time

Play a theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

Invite preschoolers to complete the maze to lead Jesus into the wilderness.

Say • After Jesus was baptized, God's Spirit led Him into the wilderness. Jesus stayed in the wilderness for many days. He prayed to God and thought about God's plan for His life. Jesus did not eat anything while He was in the wilderness, and He was very hungry. Listen to our Bible story to hear who came to see Jesus in the wilderness.

Talk about yes and no

Write yes on a green sheet of paper and no on a red sheet. Tape the two papers on opposite walls. Point out each sign to children. Suggest situations where children should say “yes” and “no.” Suggested situations include when you want to take something that belongs to someone else, when you want to share a toy with a friend, when you want to hit your brother or sister, when you want to do what your mom or dad tell you to do, when you want to talk when your teacher is telling the Bible story, or when you want to pray to God. Encourage the children to move to the correct sign to answer. Allow preschoolers to take turns suggesting situation.

Say · Sometimes we really want to do something that we know is wrong. We call that being tempted. In our Bible story today, we will hear what Jesus did when He was tempted.

Play with Stones

Place a box of river stones on the floor. Encourage children to stack and balance the stones. Name things the stones would be good for, such as building a fireplace, putting on the road to keep it from getting muddy, and throwing in the lake to make a splash.

Say · The stones are hard! They are different colors and sizes. You named a lot of things to do with stones. Do you think they would be good to eat? [Allow preschoolers to respond.] In our Bible story today, Jesus was hungry and the devil told Jesus to turn stones into bread. Listen to hear what Jesus said.

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, turn the lights off and on, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. As the children move to Bible study, tell them your favorite Bible verse. Ask them to share their favorite Bible story.

Teach the Story

Introduce the Bible story

Place a bookmark at Luke 4 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

Say · Our Bible story today is in the Book of Luke. It is also in Matthew and Mark. Remember that those books are three of the Gospels that tell about Jesus' life. The Bible is true and teaches us about God and Jesus.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

Say · The devil tried three times to get Jesus to do wrong things, but Jesus did not do it. The devil's plan did not work! Jesus always does the right thing. Jesus was tempted and never sinned. We are sinners. We do wrong things a lot, but 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.

Practice the key passage

Place the key passage marker at John 3:30. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Form three groups. Lead the first group to say the first phrase of the key passage, the second group to finish the verse and the third group to say the reference. Change parts until all groups have said all three parts.

Say · He in our key passage is Jesus. John the Baptist said these words about Jesus. We can also say these words about Jesus and ourselves. Jesus is most important. He is the only One who ever obeyed God perfectly. We look to Him to save us, not anything we can do.

Sing the key passage song, “He Must Increase,” and the theme song, “Take It to the Lord.”

Learn the big picture question

Say · Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to rescue sinners. Jesus can rescue us from sin because He always did the right thing. Jesus was tempted and never sinned.

Missions moment

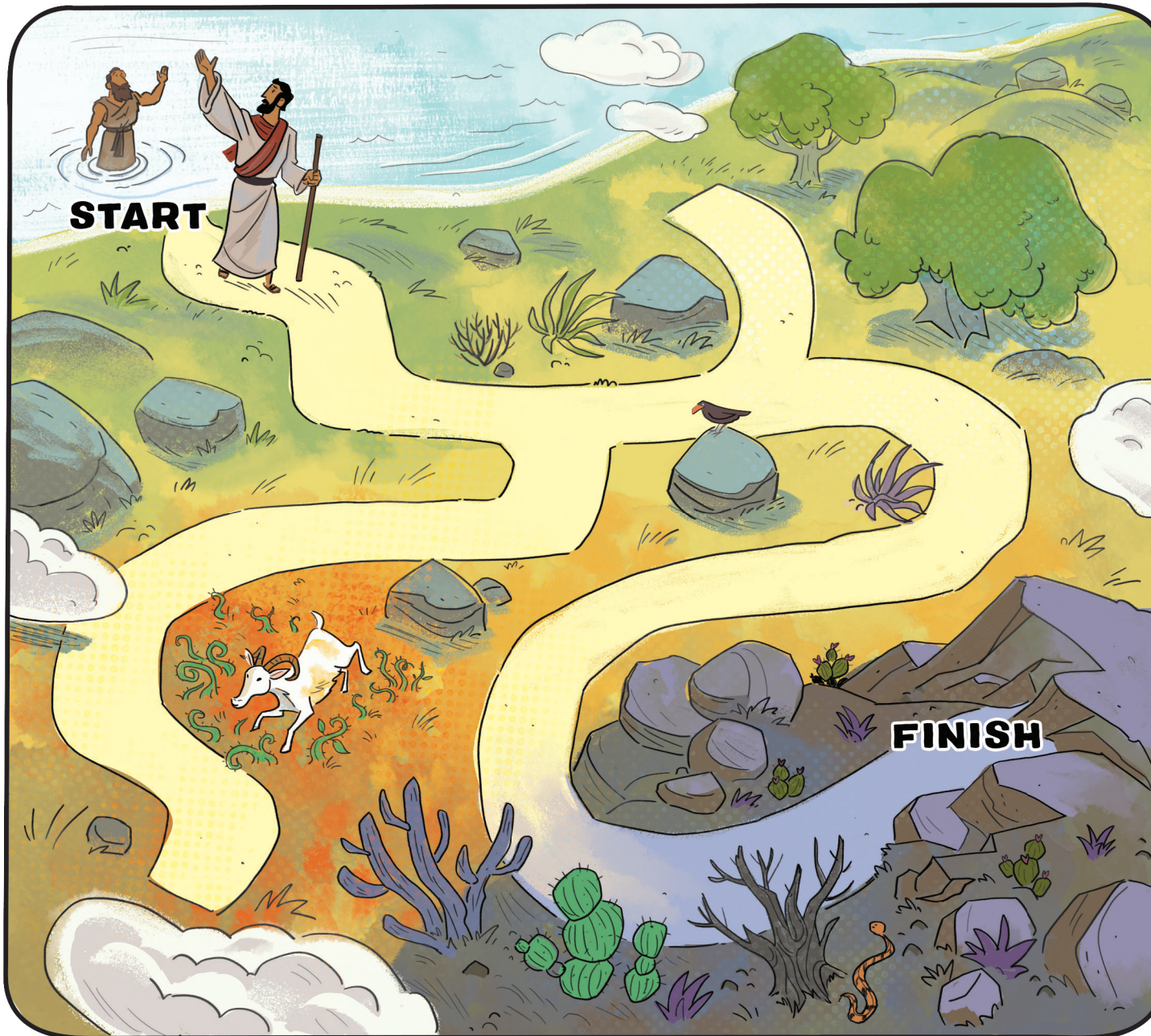
Say · Let me tell you a story about Betty Greene, the very first woman missionary pilot. She helped start the Mission Aviation Fellowship. MAF uses small airplanes to go to people who live in hard to reach places, like islands or small mountain villages. Betty Greene wanted people to know about Jesus.

Show preschoolers the pictures of Betty Greene. Read the story aloud. Thank God for missionaries who love Him.

Dismiss to apply the story

Into the Wilderness

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete the maze to lead Jesus into the wilderness.



Preschool Activity Pages

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Jesus' Temptation

BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- God's Spirit led Jesus to the wilderness.
- The devil came and tempted Jesus three times.
- Jesus was tempted and never sinned.

KEY PASSAGE: John 3:30

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

- Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to rescue sinners.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Name a time you were tempted to sin.
- How did Jesus use God's Word to fight temptation? How does God's Word help us fight sin?
- Whom can we ask to help us say no to sin?

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

- Choose a Bible verse for each family member to memorize to use in the fight against sin.
- Collect food to donate to people who are hungry. Talk about how making good decisions is hard when you are hungry, but Jesus was hungry and did not sin.



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