



TEMPTATION IN THE WILDERNESS

Young Preschool • #NT6 • January 4, 2026

Concept

Jesus never made bad choices.

Goal

Children will learn that Jesus was tempted to sin, just as they are, but He never sinned. Because everyone sins and needs forgiveness, Jesus died on the cross to pay for all sin. They can say “no” to sin by accepting His forgiveness and learning God’s Word.

Passage

Luke 4:1-13, Hebrews 4:15

Key Verse: “... Jesus was tempted just as we are, but He never sinned.”
Hebrews 4:15

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small lollipops, 1/child• Carpet squares or 6 pieces of gray construction paper (to make a path) <p>Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>White bed sheet</i>• <i>2-3 small rocks</i>• <i>4-5 dry, broken sticks from the woods</i>• <i>Bible</i>	<p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bread coloring page, 1/child• Stickers of various things that God provides printed on Avery 5293 round labels, 3 pages/class• Crayons

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the shaded areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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The story of Jesus' temptation in the desert is told in Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13. More than any other story, it clearly defines the humanity of Christ. He was hungry. He was thirsty. And at this time of sorest need, He was tempted to turn away from dependence on God and fulfill His needs Himself.

After 40 days of fasting in the desert, a physically weakened Jesus was tempted by Satan in an attempt to disqualify Him as the Messiah. "There is a parallel with the temptations of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3), described as 'the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life' (1 Jn. 2:16), which suggests that the temptations were typical of those which mankind as a whole has to face."² "The significance of Jesus' temptations, especially because they occurred at the outset of his public ministry, seems best understood in terms of the kind of Messiah he was to be. He would not accomplish his mission by using his supernatural power for his own needs (stones into bread), by using his power to win a large following by miracles or magic (jump off pinnacle) or by compromising with Satan (give kingdoms of the world). Jesus had no inward desire or inclination to sin, for these in themselves are sin (Mt. 5:22, 28)...Yet Jesus' temptation was real, not merely symbolic... He was confronted by the tempter with a real opportunity to sin."³ Jesus chose not to exercise His godly power and privileges, but consciously limited Himself to live here as a man. He was tempted in all ways as we are yet was without sin (Heb. 2:18; 4:15). He used God's Word to refute Satan's scripture-twisting lies with the truth.

Jesus was subject to all the hungers, drives and needs we experience and which seek to pull us into sin, but Jesus met every one of Satan's temptations with God's Word. Rejecting the privilege that was His by virtue of His deity, Jesus cast His lot fully with man. Because of this tremendous act of self-emptying, every human being can find hope. Jesus overcame temptation—as a human being! Because Jesus met temptation as a man, you and I can find victory too, by meeting our temptations as He met His!

² The New Bible Commentary: Revised, WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO., 1970, p. 821.

³ NIV Study Bible, notes on Matt. 4:1-11, p. 1446.

⁴ Richards, Lawrence O., The Teacher's Commentary, Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois, 1987, p. 535.

Set Up

- The week before class – Read through the lesson and pray that the Spirit will give you His burden for the lesson.
- The day of class – Spread the sheet out with the rocks and sticks laying on it, as in a desert, for the LESSON. Use the carpet squares to make a path on the carpet from the location of the INTRODUCTION to the desert.

Incorporation Lg. Group

Activity Station:

Game – Who Says?[1]

- **Instructions:** Get the children warmed up and ready to listen and move by playing this game. Give the children a direction, such as, “Jump up and down.” Before moving, the children respond, “Who says?” The teacher picks out one child’s name and answers, “Amy says!” The class then proceeds to jump until the teacher gives another direction. Continue in the same way. To limit the number of activities and still use each child’s name, the teacher may want to use two or three names for each direction given.

[1] Myra K. Thompson, *Jump for Joy*, © 1993 by Parker Publishing Co., Inc., p. 151.

Introduction Lg. Group

(Have the children gather around you as you hold up the lollipops.) Boy, these lollipops look soooooooo good! Wouldn't you just love to have one? They taste so good, I bet you'd all like to have one. What if I said you could have a lollipop if you make a bad choice? What if I said you can have a lollipop, but you have to hit your friend first? Would it be okay to do a bad thing to get a special treat? NO! Do you know that the devil told Jesus He could have special things if Jesus would make bad choices? The devil tried to get Jesus to make bad choices. You all have made a good choice to be patient for a lollipop. I am going to give you a lollipop for making a good choice.

Transition

Now, let's go on a hike into the desert. Let's see how well we can follow the path to the desert.

Lesson Lg. Group

The Bible says that Jesus was in the desert for 40 days. Forty days is a very, very long time to be out here in the desert with nothing to eat and nothing to drink—it's very hot and there is nothing but sand, rocks, and dead things around. Do you think Jesus was hungry and thirsty? (Rub tummy, shake head.) Just as Jesus was thinking about how hungry He was, the devil appeared. The devil is God's enemy. The devil wanted Jesus to make a bad choice. He wants us to make bad choices, too. He knew Jesus was hungry, so he tried to get Jesus to sin. Sin is another word for bad choices. He showed Jesus a rock (pick up the rock) and said, "If you are God's Son you can do anything. You can even turn this rock into bread so you can have something to eat!" Do you know what Jesus said even though He was very, very, very hungry? He said, "No, devil! God gives me what I need!"

Lesson Lg. Group Continued

Let's hear you say, "God gives me what I need!"

Who helped Jesus make a good choice? God, His Father, did. Who helps you make good choices? That's right, God does. Although Jesus was very hungry and could have turned a rock into bread, He didn't do what the devil tempted him to do. Jesus never made bad choices.

He said what to the devil? "God gives me what I need!"

The devil tempted Jesus two more times. Still Jesus never made bad choices. Jesus always said,

"No, devil! God gives me what I need."
Let's say it, "God gives me what I need!"

We are tempted to make bad choices, to sin, so we can have the things we want. But is it okay to make bad choices? No! God helped Jesus make good choices and He will also help you to make good choices if you ask Him. Jesus never made bad choices, not even one bad choice. The Bible (hold up Bible) says that we make bad choices all the time. Jesus died on the cross for OUR bad choices. If we ask God to forgive us because of what Jesus did by dying on the cross, He will do that. Then He will give us the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit helps us to make other good choices.

Let's pray and thank Jesus that even though He was tempted just as we are, He never made bad choices. Even though He never made a bad choice, He was willing to take the punishment we deserve for our bad choices. All we need to do is ask for that! Let's ask the Holy Spirit to help us make good choices.

Everyone find a seat at the table to make a picture to remind us that Jesus never made bad choices.

Craft – God Gives Me What I Need

- **Instructions:** Give each child a printed page with the bread and stickers with pictures of things that God provides. Color the picture and stick the stickers on it. As the children work, talk about the choices Jesus made to depend on the Father for everything.

Transition

Learning Activity #1 Lg. Group

Temptation Zone
Puppet Skit for Lesson #NT6

Cast: Zack, Squeaker

Props: Coat for Zach, Cookie Jar, Plunger (taped like a candy cane)

Squeaker: (talking to the audience) Good Morning (evening). Is everybody having a good time? I am so glad to see you today. Does anyone like playing in the snow? I do. In fact today's story is about a boy named Zack who also likes to play in the snow but who isn't supposed to. Do you know what it's like to want to do something you know you are NOT supposed to do? Yep, I bet you do. It's called temptation. Well, let me tell this story. Let's pretend it's Saturday morning. It's a morning not unlike any other Saturday morning except this morning we are in the Temptation Zone.

(enter Zach)

Squeaker: (pointing to Zach) Meet Zach.

Zach: (waving to the audience) Hello.

Squeaker: Saturday mornings are a lot of fun for Zach – so much to do, so little time to do it. Lots of things that can tempt Zach to do the wrong thing. Let's watch Zach and see what happens.

Zach: (walking around) I like walking and playing in the snow. Snow is cool. (to audience) Do you like playing in the snow? Hey, here's an ice patch. I don't know about you but I just love to break ice patches. I like the sound of crunching ice. I just want to jump on it so it will break, but Mom says I shouldn't because I might slip and get hurt or wet. So I'll just walk around it and not step on it. (slowly circling the ice) Not stepping, not stepping. Okay, maybe one step on the ice but not jumping, stepping not jumping. (Jump hard and slip and fall) OWW!!! (staggering to get up, holding back) Oh man, that hurts. The ice wasn't all frozen and now I'm hurt and wet. What's Mom going to say now?

(Zach exits)

Squeaker: (to audience) What do you think? What was Zach tempted to do that he wasn't supposed to do? Did Zach resist the temptation? No, and now he has to face the consequences with his Mom. Let's look at Zach later that evening.

(enter Zach)

Zach: It's almost dinner time. We're having my favorite tonight — Sloppy Joes and French Fries. I can't wait. I... (sees cookie jar) OH BOY!! COOKIES!! I'll just have one before dinner. (reaches toward jar and pulls back) But I'm not supposed to have any cookies before dinner. But it's only one. (reaches toward jar and pulls back) What would Mom and Dad say? (thinking) Eating cookies before dinner will fill me up so I won't have room for dinner. So if I eat some cookies now I won't have room for my Sloppy Joes and French Fries. But cookies are so good. (reaches toward jar and pulls back). No!! I won't eat any now and maybe I can have one for dessert. (runs off) Mom!!

Squeaker: (to audience) What do you think? What was Zach tempted to do that he wasn't supposed to do? Did Zach resist the temptation? Are any of you tempted to do things you aren't supposed to do? It seems every day is the Temptation Zone. Sometimes it isn't easy to resist those temptations. God helps us each time though so we can do the right thing. I... (smells) I... (smells) Boy! Those Sloppy Joes smell good. I'm going to see if I can have one. See you later.

(Immediately enter the "candy cane" with a sound)

Squeaker: Whoa! Look at that candy cane.

Voice: (in a gold voice) DO NO TOUCH THE CANDY CANE!

Squeaker: Do not touch the candy cane?!? I'm not going to touch it. I'm just going to stand over here and look at it. And it sure looks tasty...

(moves closer and sniff)

and it sure smells tasty. I'd better test it to be sure...

(take a quick lick)

Yep. It's very tasty.

Voice: (in a bold voice) DO NOT TOUCH THE CANDY CANE!

Squeaker: I didn't touch it. I only licked it a little.

(Raise the candy cane to reveal the plunger. Plunger Squeaker.)