



## LESSON 3

# JESUS' TEMPTATION

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Was Tempted and Never Sinned

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 4; Hebrews 4

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** After Jesus fasts for 40 days and nights, Satan tempts Him three times. Each time, Jesus answers the tempter by quoting Scripture and does not sin, choosing instead to trust God.

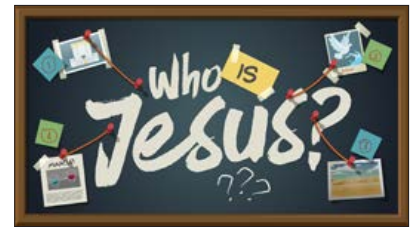
**WORD OF WONDER:** The Son is the exact likeness of God, who can't be seen. The Son is first, and he is over all creation. —Colossians 1:15

## CURIOSITY

## BELIEF

## FAITH

- Welcome Question: Have you ever believed a lie? Tell about it.
- Curiosity Questions
- Word of Wonder: Colossians 1:15
- Word of Wonder Activity
- LARGE GROUP
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Responding in Worship: Heart Map



**Notes!** Use the Notes Pages on the back of the Coloring Sheet each week to help kids stay engaged and remember what they are learning. Encourage kids to make notes, draw pictures, and write questions throughout small group and large group. This also provides parents with resources to keep the conversation going throughout the week!



[Who is Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

### INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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**WORD OF WONDER:** Colossians 1:15

“No, no, no, no, no,” I heard my toddler, Jack, muttering. Alerted, I ran and caught him just as he was about to stick his father’s keys in an outlet. Too young to understand the danger, Jack was at least old enough to associate the little holes in the wall with the forbidden—his whispered “no” saved him from calamity even if it didn’t stop the urge to disobey.

Like Jack, all of us have sometimes chosen to ignore God’s “no” and choose our own “yes.” We take shortcuts to pleasure or fulfillment, heedless of the danger.

Not Jesus. Take a moment to read Matthew 4:1–11. Notice how Satan tempts Jesus in the wilderness. He invites Jesus to take things—sustenance, protection, and power—that were already His by right. Satan’s “shortcuts” offer false promises. But Jesus knew who He is, and He saw through the lies.

In some ways, we’re all in the wilderness—the in-between time as we wait for Christ to return. Where are you tempted? What does Satan offer you as an “escape hatch” from your present circumstances? Where do you turn for comfort and satisfaction other than God? Jesus gets it. He’s been there. And He wants to remind you of who you are. When you are certain of your identity as a daughter or son of the Father, His voice becomes clear. And Jesus is waiting to show you how to listen to God’s “no” so you can experience the very best “yes.”

—Lise Caldwell

Children’s Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

The devil is a personality of evil bent on undermining God's creative purposes and redemptive plan. Satan deceives, tempts, and accuses. Scripture calls him the father of lies (John 8:44) and depicts him as a prowling lion looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8).

**WHAT?**

The Holy Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness, or desert. There, the devil tempts Jesus to abuse His status as God's Son and abandon His vocation as the Messiah. Jesus resists temptation by quoting Scripture and does not sin.

**WHERE?**

After being baptized at the Jordan River, just north of the Dead Sea, Jesus is led into the desert by the Holy Spirit. This likely means the Judean Desert located between Jerusalem and the Jordan River.

**WHEN?**

This story is wedged between Jesus' baptism, where He was affirmed as the Son of God by the Father and the presence of the Spirit, and the beginning of Jesus' public ministry in Galilee. Jesus was around 30 years old at the time (Luke 3:23).

**CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY**

During the exodus, the Israelites followed God through the sea into the wilderness. Jesus followed God through the waters of baptism into the desert. Unlike the Israelites, Jesus trusted God in the desert. Jesus, the Son of God, was proven able to fulfill God's calling.

### Small Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Was Tempted and Never Sinned

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**WORD OF WONDER:** Colossians 1:15

### Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

**RESOURCES:** Coloring Page, whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group. Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.

#### As kids arrive..

Invite them to write draw the answer to the Welcome Question: on the designated board:

**“Have you ever believed a lie? Tell about it.”** Set out sheets of paper and colored pencils.

#### While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

- **What makes the truth different from a lie?**
- **Who is someone you know who trusts and follows God? What does trusting God look like in this person’s life?**

**\*\*NEW!! Large Group leaders will now lead an opening game or activity 10 minutes before service begins. It is very important that you are with your groups and ready to participate with them!**

### Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

## Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid)

Help kids use the table of contents in their Bibles to find Matthew 4. Explain to kids Matthew is the first book of the New Testament.

Read [Matthew 4:1–11](#) (or [pages 242–247 in the Laugh and Grow Bible](#).) and [Hebrews 4:15–16](#) from an NIV Bible. Then discuss the following:

- Who led Jesus into the desert?
- How many days did Jesus go without eating food?
- Satan tempted Jesus to sin three times. What did Jesus do each time Satan tempted Him?
- Jesus knows what it's like to feel weak and hurt. Where in today's story do you see Jesus feeling weak?
- Jesus offers to help us when we are weak and tempted—He knows how we feel! When have you been tempted to do the wrong thing?
- How can Jesus help you the next time you are tempted?

After Jesus didn't eat for 40 days and nights, He was weak. Satan lied and misused Scripture to tempt Jesus, but Jesus responded with the truth of God's Word. By dying on the cross, Jesus made the way for our sins to be forgiven and for us to be God's kids! As God's kids and with Jesus' help, we too can say “no” to temptation. Let's spend some time in prayer asking Jesus for His help.

## Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Open your prayer time by thanking God for sending Jesus to live a perfect life and to make the way for us to be God's kids forever. Invite kids to share their praises—what they are thankful for—and prayer requests—who or what they want to pray for. Then pray for each kid, giving kids an opportunity to ask Jesus for His help in saying “no” to temptation and in remembering that they are God's kids!

### Make It Inclusive!

Some kids struggle to think of people to pray for. On craft sticks, write the roles of people kids can pray for, such as parent, teacher, brother, sister, neighbor, aunt, uncle, friend, and older relative. Place the sticks in a jar. Kids who aren't sure who to pray for can pull out a stick and pray for that person in their lives. Keep the jar available for kids to use every week.

**Leader Tip:** For Younger Kids. The concept of truth and lies can be hard for young kids to grasp. Consider giving a light-hearted example of a lie and corresponding truth to help kids engage with the question. For example, I can fly (lie). I've flown on an airplane (truth). I'm a kangaroo (lie). I saw a kangaroo at the zoo (truth).

## Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–10 min

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid)

Help kids use the table of contents in their Bibles to find Matthew 4. Explain to kids Matthew is the first book of the New Testament.

**Turn to Page 3 of this guide and help kids understand the context of this passage. Encourage kids to use the \*NOTES\* page to follow along as you read and complete activities.**

**Ask for three kid volunteers and one leader to read. Give the readers their specific verses ahead of time to look over: Matthew 4:1–4, 5–7, 8–11 (kid readers) and Hebrews 4:15–16 (leader). Invite all the kids to follow along as their peers read. Before the leader reads, kids can either find Hebrews 4 in their Bibles or simply listen carefully. Then discuss the following:**

- What happened just before Jesus went into the desert? Who led Jesus into the desert?
- Satan tempted Jesus to sin three times. Do you remember what Jesus said to Satan each time?
- What do each of Jesus' three responses tell us about who He is?
- Jesus is both fully God and fully human. What does He experience in this story that you can relate to?
- Jesus knows what it's like to feel weak and hurt, and He offers to help us when we are tempted to do wrong things. How does Jesus understanding your weakness make His help powerful?
- Where are you most likely to be tempted to do the wrong thing? What can you do to resist lies with truth?
- What is something you noticed about Jesus in today's part of the story? Allow them to read over Matthew 4:1-11.

Jesus was weak after fasting—or going without food—for 40 days and nights. Satan tried to tempt Jesus with lies and partial truths, but Jesus resisted Satan's lies with the truth of God's Word. By dying on the cross, Jesus made the way for our sins to be forgiven and for us to be God's kids! And Jesus offers to help us when we feel weak and are tempted. Let's spend some time praying and thanking God for Jesus!

## Prayer Time: Older Kids

Invite kids into a time of prayer. Allow them to share their requests about how they need God to help them this week and to share praises for the ways God already has helped them. Ask volunteers to pray for these requests and to thank God for sending Jesus to live a perfect life and to make the way for us to be God's kids forever!

### Make It Inclusive!

Some kids struggle to think of people to pray for. On craft sticks, write the roles of people kids can pray for, such as parent, teacher, brother, sister, neighbor, aunt, uncle, friend, and older relative. Place the sticks in a jar. Kids who aren't sure who to pray for can pull out a stick and pray for that person in their lives. Keep the jar available for kids to use every week.

## WORD OF WONDER

The Son is the exact likeness of God, who can't be seen.

The Son is first, and he is over all creation.

—Colossians 1:15 (NirV)

### Word of Wonder

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid)

The **Word of Wonder for the Who Is Jesus?** series is **Colossians 1:15**. Today we learned that **Jesus did not give into temptation and never sinned. This verse tells us how Jesus rules over all creation and shows us what God is like. Let's read the Word of Wonder together!**

Invite kids to open their Bibles to Colossians 1:15. Tell kids you're going to read a portion of the Word of Wonder, and then they'll repeat that portion back to you. Read the first 3–4 words, then pause for kids to repeat. Continue this call and repeat until kids have said the whole verse. Then do it two more times, increasing in speed each time.

Talk about these questions:

- **What do you think it means that Jesus is the first** (or firstborn) **over all creation?**
- **What do you think it looks like to put Jesus first in your life?**

### Word of Wonder Activity

**SUPPLIES:** soft foam balls (1 per small group)

Grab the foam ball and have kids form a circle around you. Toss the ball up into the air and call out the name of one kid to be "It." The kid who is It scrambles to grab the ball while the rest of the kids spread out. When the kid who is It gets the ball, he yells, "Freeze!" All kids freeze.

The kid who is It rolls the ball toward any kid in the group. Whomever the ball hits says the Word of Wonder. If needed, that kid can ask one other kid to help him. If that kid says the Word of Wonder correctly, he is now It. If that kid (even with help) misses the verse, everyone will say the Word of Wonder together before that kid becomes It. Then everyone forms a circle again, you toss the ball in the air, and the new It scrambles to grab the ball while all the other kids spread out. Play several rounds or until every kid gets a chance to be It.

#### Make It Inclusive!

If needed, modify the activity so kids with physical restrictions can participate. One alternative is to have kids sit in chairs in a circle. Pass the ball around the circle from person to person while music plays (like Hot Potato). When the music stops, the person holding the ball will say the verse, with help from others if needed. Make it more challenging by adding a second ball, with each ball moving in opposite directions.

**Leader Tip:** For Younger Kids. Simplify the activity by gathering kids in a standing circle. Invite kids to walk in a circle. Call out, "Freeze!" and roll a ball across the circle toward a kid. The kid who gets the ball will say the Word of Wonder, with help from the group if needed. Then she will return the ball to you, and a new round can begin.

## PAUSE for Large Group time, then continue...

### Responding in Worship: Heart Map

**SUPPLIES:** paper, coloring utensils, clipboards (1 per kid, optional) or tables

**RESOURCES:** [Heart Map Pages \(1/SG\)](#), [Who Is Jesus? Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Before the activity, print a copy of the Heart Map Pages and cut each picture out. Have clipboards available for kids to turn over their Truths Sheet form LG and draw on the back.

Gather kids together. Hand out coloring utensils. Encourage kids to flip their Temptations and Truths Sheet form LG over to the back and draw a large heart.

Practice saying the Wonder Truth together:

#### **JESUS WAS TEMPTED AND NEVER SINNED.**

**"Before Jesus went into the desert, John baptized, or dipped, Him in the Jordan River. When Jesus came out of the water, God the Father declared the truth about who He is—Jesus is God's Son (Matthew 3:17)!"**

**When Satan tempted Jesus in the desert, Jesus didn't listen to Satan's lies.**

**Instead, Jesus remembered the truth about who He is. When we follow Jesus, we become God's kids too! When we are tempted to do wrong things, Jesus understands how we feel. He's been there! Like Jesus, and with His help, we can remember we are God's kids, recognize the enemy's lies, and fight against temptation!**

**When we read the Bible and learn God's big story, it helps us walk boldly and rightly as His kids.**

**Ask kids to draw a Bible in the middle of their Heart Map. God's Word has a lot to say about who we are. Let's read some Bible verses now that help us understand what it means to be God's kids!**

Display the first Heart Map Slide. **I am God's kid.** Invite kids to write or draw this truth somewhere inside their hearts. If kids need an idea for what to draw, suggest they draw a big stick figure and a little stick figure to represent a loving Father and a kid. As kids write and draw, read the Bible verse referenced on the slide from the Bible translation of your

choice. The NIV is quoted here: **Some people did accept [Jesus] and did believe in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God (John 1:12).**

**Leader Tip:** For Younger Kids. Draw an example of each illustration on a whiteboard. This way kids who aren't sure what to draw can copy your examples. Just keep your drawing very simple!

**I am God's kid  
(John 1:12).**

**I find help when  
I need it  
(Hebrews 4:16).**



Display slide 2. **I find help when I need it.** Invite kids to write or draw this truth somewhere inside their hearts. If kids need an idea for what to draw, suggest they draw a hand. As kids write and draw, read the Bible verse referenced on the slide, included here from the NIV: **So let us boldly approach God's throne of grace. Then we will receive mercy. We will find grace to help us when we need it** (Hebrews 4:16).

Display slide 3. **I am chosen.** Invite kids to write or draw this truth somewhere inside their hearts. If kids need an idea for what to draw, suggest they write their name (or draw a picture of themselves) and circle it. As kids write and draw, read the Bible verse referenced on the slide, included here from the NIV: **You did not choose me. Instead, I chose you. I appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit that will last** (John 15:16a).

Display slide 4. **I am never alone.** Invite kids to write or draw this truth somewhere inside their hearts. If kids need an idea for what to draw, suggest they draw several stick figure people standing together. As kids write and draw, read the Bible verse referenced on the slide, included here from the NIV: **You will pass through deep waters. But I will be with you. You will pass through the rivers. But their waters will not sweep over you. You will walk through fire. But you will not be burned. The flames will not harm you** (Isaiah 43:2).

Display slide 5. **I am forgiven.** Invite kids to write or draw this truth somewhere inside their hearts. If kids need an idea for what to draw, suggest they draw a cross. As kids write and draw, read the Bible verse referenced on the slide, included here from the NIV: **Because of what the Son has done, we have been set free. Because of him, all our sins have been forgiven** (Colossians 1:14).

Display slide 6. **I am loved.** Invite kids to write or draw this truth somewhere inside their hearts. If kids need an idea for what to draw, suggest they draw a heart. As kids write and draw, read the Bible verse referenced on the slide, included here from the NIV: **The LORD your God is with you. He is the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you. In his love he will no longer punish you. Instead, he will sing for joy because of you** (Zephaniah 3:17)."

As time allows, play music from the [Who Is Jesus? Elementary Spotify playlist](#) and let kids finish their drawings and color their hearts.

Close this worship response time in prayer, thanking Jesus for making the way for us to become God's kids and helping us to fight temptation with His truth.