

Church Year Story 14

*Catechism and Memory Verse
from the Congregation at Prayer for the Week*

BIBLE STORY: THE TEMPTATION OF OUR LORD

Matthew 4:1-11

Central Thoughts

- The Son of God became man to do for us what Adam failed to do: trust in God's Word.
- Jesus defeated Satan by remaining faithful to God's Word as it led Him to suffer and die for our salvation.
- God's Word defends us against Satan's temptations and gives us Jesus' victory over the devil.

Discussion Questions

When was Jesus led up into the wilderness?

Immediately after His baptism

Who led Jesus into the wilderness?

The Holy Spirit

Why was it important for Jesus to be tempted by the devil?

Because He became man to do what Adam failed to do: trust God's Word rather than the lies of Satan

What was Jesus doing in the wilderness?

Fasting for forty days and forty nights

Other than going without food, what did His fasting include?

Prayer and meditation upon God's Word

What does God create in our hearts by His Word?

Faith

What is prayer?

Prayer is the voice of faith that calls upon God and claims the promises of His Word.

What does this tell us about Jesus?

Jesus lived from God's Word and relied upon God's Word for everything He needed and everything He did.

What is significant about "forty days and forty nights"?

It reminds us of God's judgment upon the world through the Flood and the forty years Israel wandered in the wilderness. God's judgment against a sinful world for its rebellion against God would fall upon Jesus. He bears the condemnation for our sin and the temptations that we face but remains faithful to His Father's will.

What period in the church year is patterned after Jesus' 40-day fast?

The forty days of Lent.

After these forty days, what is Jesus' condition?

He is hungry.

What does this teach us about Jesus' humiliation?

He experienced every physical need that we all experience: hunger, thirst, the need for rest, etc.

What is temptation?

Any word, will, or desire that says to a person, "You can't trust God." A temptation invites us to be our own God and to trust in ourselves rather than God and His Word.

What is the first temptation?

If you are the Son of God, turn stones into bread.

Why would it have been sin for Jesus to do this?

Like Adam and Eve, He would have turned away from trusting in His Father for daily bread and taken matters into His own hands.

How does Jesus defend Himself against the devil's temptation?

With God's Word: "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'" (Deuteronomy 8:3).

What is the second temptation?

Throw yourself down from the pinnacle of the temple

What does the devil use to convince Jesus to do this?

The devil misuses God's Word from Psalm 91:11-12

What did the devil want Jesus to believe?

That God's Word could not be relied upon to protect Him in His suffering and death

How does Jesus defend Himself against the devil's twisted use of Scripture?

Jesus faithfully quotes God's Word, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God'" (Deuteronomy 6:16).

What is Jesus confessing in this answer?

That He, as the Son of Man and Second Adam, trusts God's Word to be true and good, even though He will be made to suffer and die. God will keep His promises.

What is the third temptation?

Worship Satan in exchange for all the kingdoms of this world.

What was the devil tempting Jesus to do?

Avoid going to the cross to redeem the world.

What words of Jesus should we be reminded of when we hear this last temptation?

"For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:35-37).

How does Jesus respond to the temptation to turn away from the cross?

"Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve'" (Deuteronomy 6:13 and 10:20).

How did Jesus worship the Lord His God and serve only Him?

He willingly received the suffering and death the Father gave Him for our salvation and was faithful to the Father, even to the death of the cross.

In all the devil's temptations, what was he tempting Jesus to do?

Turn away from God's Word and rely upon Himself.

Who is our salvation from Satan, sin, and temptation?

Jesus and His Word

Meditation on the Bible Story

Jesus is our substitute. He takes our place as the Son of Man and Second Adam, doing for us what we were powerless to do for ourselves. Where Adam turned away from God's Word and thereby became a sinner and plunged the world into sin and death, Jesus remained steadfast in faith as He faced the devil's temptations to turn away from His Father. He trusted the Father's Word, even though it called Him to deny Himself, take up His cross, and lay down His life in death for our salvation. God's "good and gracious will" is good, even when it means suffering and death. Jesus used God's Word faithfully against the devil's attacks. As it was in the beginning, so it is now: God's Word is the source of our life, faith, and communion with God. Jesus' faithfulness to the Father's will in His suffering and death robs Satan of his right to separate us from God and to condemn us under the Law's judgement. By His faithfulness unto death, Jesus reconciles us to God the Father and restores our life with Him. The Word the Gospel of Jesus Christ creates and renews faith, is the source of our salvation, and defeats every attack and temptation of the evil one.

Prayer on the Bible Story

O Lord Jesus, since You defeated Satan for us by enduring every temptation and by going to the cross on our behalf, strengthen our faith in You as our Savior, so that we rely upon Your Word alone when we are attacked by the evil one; in Your holy name we pray. Amen.



The Temptation of our Lord
Matthew 4:1-11