

CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS
FEBRUARY 22 2025

it is written

Scripture Story: Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1-13.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapters 12; 13.
Key Text: Luke 4:1, 2.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

Temptation. It is the trial of every Christian's existence. Yet through the example of Jesus we learn how to meet every temptation and emerge victorious through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus faced powerful temptations throughout His sojourn on Planet Earth.

Your students must know that all who follow Christ will experience situations that will test their fidelity to God. It is in these moments that we can exercise our faith in God and trust completely in His power to deliver us. We should be encouraged by the promise that a way of escape is made for us to be victorious (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Jesus met each of Satan's temptations with a clear "It is written." Emphasize the importance of God's Word in our day-to-day struggles with Satan. Jesus overcame Satan because He had studied the writings of the prophets that were available to Him. Jesus was a disciplined follower of God. He prayed, He studied, and He fasted—the latter was His preparation for this moment of trial.

Make the point that through the Holy Spirit we can overcome any temptation, even as Jesus did.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Learn that God has made the provision for every Christian to overcome temptation through the power of His Holy Spirit. *(Know)*
- Experience the power to overcome all temptations through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. *(Feel)*
- Pray for the help of the Holy Spirit to overcome temptation and live victoriously for Jesus. *(Respond)*

III. EXPLORE

The Holy Spirit, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 5: "God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He is as much a person as are the Father and the Son. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth. (Gen. 1:1, 2; 2 Sam. 23:2; Ps. 51:11; Isa. 61:1; Luke 1:35; 4:18; John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 5:3; 10:38; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 12:7-11; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Peter 1:21.)"

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? *section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.*

Invite students to share some experiences they had when by God's grace they resisted temptations.

Many teenagers deal with serious temptations on a daily basis. After the teens have shared one or two experiences, ask them why temptation is powerful. What is it that makes it almost irresistible?

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

"Researchers at a prestigious Eastern university researched motivating factors in monkeys. Choosing a male monkey for the experiment, they placed him in a cage and began a process of carefully recorded observations. They observed the monkey's eating, sleeping, and mating patterns. They watched how this monkey cared for his young.

"They then hooked an electrode to the monkey's brain, which when stimulated could give the monkey a sensation of pleasure. The researcher taught the monkey how to push the pleasure button. The monkey now had the key to happiness—a pleasure button.

"The monkey soon became obsessed with pleasure, ignoring his young, his food, and even his mate. The highest goal for the monkey was pleasure, stimulating the nerve endings, doing what made him feel good. Finally he knocked himself out having fun. The excessive stimulation killed the monkey.

"Sin is an awful lot like the monkey's pleasure button. It does produce an illusion of pleasure. If it didn't, nobody would do it. The problem is that the pleasure is not only short-lived; it is destructive.

"Moses chose rather 'to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin' (Hebrews 11:25). Sin's pleasures pass quickly, leaving us empty. When the bubble bursts, discouragement floods the soul."

"Our Lord offers much more than a temporary, short-lived, illusionary pleasure. He offers the deep, lasting joy of His presence now and through all eternity" (Mark Finley, *Solid Ground*, pp. 249, 250).

What steps do you need to take to set Jesus as your priority and allow His Spirit to guide your choices? How can you resist temptations and live life to the fullest to fulfill God's purpose for your life?

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

No one would yield to a temptation that didn't look good, feel good, or wasn't in some other way "good." Temptations always promise something good, but they always end up hurting much more than we bargained for.

"Every temptation resisted, every trial bravely borne, gives us a new experience and advances us in the work of character building" (Ellen G. White, *God's Amazing Grace*, p. 114). In every temptation there is an opportunity to grow in Christ that will not come again. As you prepare to explore this week's lesson story, keep in mind that it was Jesus' habit of resisting Satan, of deciding to please God instead of Himself, that enabled Him to face His moment of trial.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story *section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.*

- Ask your students if they have ever read the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness before. Then ask if they know the events that preceded Jesus' temptation (His baptism and fasting in the wilderness).
- Read 1 John 2:16. Ask the class to discuss the similarities between the three areas of temptation mentioned in this verse and the temptations offered to Jesus.
- Jesus went into the wilderness filled with the Holy Spirit. What does it mean to be "filled" with the Holy Spirit?
- What is the difference between temptation and sin? While temptations come frequently, our victory over sin is determined by whether we resist them or yield to them. What are the consequences of yielding to temptation?
- What were Jesus' keys to victory over Satan in the wilderness? What were His tools of battle? (E.g., God's Word, prayer, infilling of the Holy Spirit.)
- Fasting is an often overlooked spiritual discipline. What are its benefits physically and spiritually? Make the point that when Satan approached Jesus, Jesus' spiritual powers were in

a heightened state, even though He was hungry. He was ready.

- Luke 4:13 says that after the temptation, Satan left Jesus until a more opportune time. Why is it important to always wear God's armor? (Because temptations come unexpectedly anytime.) Are you wearing God's armor today? Read Ephesians 6:13-17.

Use the following as more teachable passages that relate to today's story: 1 Corinthians 10:13; James 1:12-17; Romans 7; John 15.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

1. **Ready and Waiting**. Ellen G. White states: "The enticements which Christ resisted were those that we find it so difficult to withstand. They were urged upon Him in as much greater degree as His character is superior to ours. With the terrible weight of the sins of the world upon Him, Christ withstood the test upon appetite, upon the love of the world, and upon that love of display which leads to presumption. These were the temptations that overcame Adam and Eve, and that so readily overcome us" (*The Desire of Ages,* p. 116).

   Like the soldier who goes to battle without the armor they so desperately need, we are left helpless when we fail to ready ourselves through fasting, prayer, study, and service to God.

Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

The "Minutia"

Making your Sabbath School class a success can rise or fall on issues that may seem minor. Here are a few simple do's and don'ts that make for an effective learning environment.

- Remember your students' names and try to involve each in some aspect of the class activities.
- Be sure that no one has an obstructed view of you. If they do, rearrange the class.
- Try to go behind the questions that teens may ask. What are their reasons for asking that question? What is the deeper issue? When you look deeper, you'll find teachable moments in areas where other students may also need an answer.
- Do a recap of specific points that were learned in Sabbath School today. Ask students at the end what they will take away from this week's study. This helps your students focus on the lesson that is most important, and it helps you to see whether your teaching and methods are effective.

2. **This Bread.** "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4) is a scripture that many of us know but may scarcely

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Key Text**
  Invite the students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.
- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight *statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book* The Desire of Ages. *Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from* Out of the Story.
- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that speaks most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.
- **Further Insight**
  Ask them how the quotes in Further Insight *convey the point of the story in this lesson.*

understand. The Greek word for "word" mentioned by Jesus in this verse is *rhema*. It means that which is said or spoken, an utterance. This "word" is different from the term *logos*, which refers to all the words of God. Jesus is a revelation of the *logos*, as John notes in John 1. If the *logos* is the Bible, *rhema* would be one verse.

When Jesus used *rhema*, He was sending the message that we must hear and obey the specific, proceeding Word of God each day and in every situation we face. To hear God in this way will require that we listen carefully to His voice, which is revealed primarily in His Word. Yesterday's word (*rhema*) will not do. We need today's word to meet today's challenges.

3. **An Inside Job.** The prayerful study of the Holy Scriptures places us in a position to receive the infilling of God's presence through the Holy Spirit. It is this abiding presence that gives us victory. As Jesus noted: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Like Jesus, we can have the privilege of making God our constant companion. Wherever the Spirit of God is, there is liberty—and victory.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Read to the students the following quotation: "Heavenly intelligences are waiting to cooperate with human instrumentalities, that they may reveal to the world what human beings may become, and what, through union with the Divine, may be accomplished for the saving of souls that are ready to perish. There is no limit to the usefulness of one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and lives a life wholly consecrated to God" (Ellen G. White, *Maranatha*, p. 103).

Ask the students to think introspectively for this activity. Ask them to think of ways they could cooperate with God for the salvation of others.

Close with a prayer, thanking God for victory through Jesus Christ.

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

Jesus' victory over temptation shows us how we must meet the devil's sophistries. Many times we yield to temptation because we are not inviting the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It was the Holy Spirit that enabled Jesus to resist Satan's temptations and to be victorious. This episode at the beginning of Jesus' public earthly ministry reminds us that there is no substitute for the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The wilderness temptation also teaches us the importance of personal spiritual preparation for the challenges we face. During His battle with Satan, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3, Deuteronomy 6:16, and Deuteronomy 6:13. He read and studied the Holy Scriptures—the writings of Moses, Isaiah, and the other Old Testament prophets. Jesus prayed earnestly and fasted regularly. Thanks to these habits of maintaining constant communion with His heavenly Father He was always in the presence of God.

If we follow the path laid down by Jesus, we too will experience victory over the *power* of sin, through the power of the Holy Spirit, until God removes us from the *presence* of sin.



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*),* chapters 12; 13.

*A special adaptation, *Humble Hero*, has been created by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Get more info about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net.

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STUDENT LESSON

Scripture Story: Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1-13.
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keytext

"Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry."

(Luke 4:1, 2)

flashlight

"Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117).

what do you think?

From the list below, check the top five temptations that you believe most teens would struggle to overcome.

____ buying clothes you don't need
____ wasting time with useless activities on the internet
____ eating junk food
____ lying to your parents
____ procrastinating on your homework
____ cheating on a test at school
____ gossiping and spreading rumors about someone else
____ other _____

did you know?

Learning, talent, eloquence, every natural or acquired endowment, may be possessed; but, without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner won to Christ. On the other hand, if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them channels for the outflowing of the highest influence in the universe" (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 21).

INTO THE STORY

"Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.

"And the devil said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.'

"But Jesus answered him, saying, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." '

"Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, 'All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.'

"And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve." '

"Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: "He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you," and, "In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone." '

"And Jesus answered and said to him, 'It has been said, "You shall not tempt the LORD your God." '

"Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

"Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

"So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.' "

(Luke 4:1-19)

OUT OF THE STORY

Why was Jesus tempted by Satan at such an important time in His earthly life, right after His baptism and before He began His public ministry?

_____
_____

Read Genesis 3:6. What three avenues did Satan use to tempt Eve in the Garden of Eden?

_____
_____

Read Matthew 4:3-10. What was similar in the temptation of Jesus and the temptation of Eve?

_____
_____

Read 1 John 2:16. In what ways are the temptations that we face today similar to the ones that Jesus overcame? How can we follow Jesus' example?

_____
_____

What was the source of strength for Jesus when He was tempted? How did He resist temptation?

_____
_____

How do you use the Bible as a source of strength when you are tempted? What specific Bible promises do you know that help you say no when you are feeling tempted?

_____
_____

punch lines

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world" **(1 Peter 5:8, 9).**

"And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God" **(Romans 6:13).**

"Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" **(Isaiah 53:12).**

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work" **(Revelation 22:12).**

further insight

"Christ withstood the test upon appetite, upon the love of the world, and upon that love of display which leads to presumption."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 116

" 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.' Proverbs 18:10. Satan trembles and flees before the weakest soul who finds refuge in that mighty name."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 130

Sabbath

Read Genesis 3:1-7.

Christ is our example in overcoming temptation. He received His power to resist temptation from the Holy Spirit. Our source of strength is also found in maintaining a strong connection with God through the Holy Spirit.

"He [the Holy Spirit] filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. [The Holy Spirit was] sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children" (The Holy Spirit, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 5).

In reading Genesis 3:1-7, did you notice any similarities between Adam and Eve's temptation in the garden, the temptations we face, and the ones aimed at Jesus? _____

_____

_____

Sunday

Read John 14:26.

After reading the *Into the Story* section, complete the *Out of the Story* questions. Satan attacked Jesus after 40 days of fasting. Why do you think Satan tempted Jesus while He was in a weakened state from fasting 40 days in the desert? Explain your answer.

_____

_____

What do you think are some of the benefits of fasting?

_____

_____

Jesus met each of Satan's temptations with a clear "It is written." What Bible passages have you memorized to reference when you face temptations and trials?

_____

_____

Jesus had a deep knowledge of the Old Testament writings of people such as Moses and Isaiah. He knew God's Word and that was why He was able to overcome.

Monday

Read John 16:13.

This week's *Key Text* states that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit when He entered into the wilderness to be tempted. What do you think it means to be full of the Holy Spirit?

_____

_____

From your reading in John 16:13, what role does the Holy Spirit play when we face temptation?

_____

_____

The Holy Spirit didn't leave Jesus when He faced a trying time; the Holy Spirit was right there with Jesus, keeping all His faculties sharp and bringing to His memory Scripture passages that helped Him overcome Satan's temptations.

Tuesday

Read James 1:13.

Now read this week's *Flashlight* quotation again.

When Jesus came to pay our penalty for humanity's sin, He had to give up some things. For instance, Jesus never called on His awesome power to get Him out of trouble, not even when He faced Satan himself.

What does the *Flashlight* quotation tell you about how much God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit love us?

_____

_____

Wednesday

Read Isaiah 53:12.

Take a look at this week's *Punch Lines*. Which one of the verses speaks to you right now?

Did you know that Isaiah wrote his verse about Jesus almost 700 years before Jesus was born? Jesus' victory over the temptations of Satan was predicted centuries before Jesus walked the earth.

Do you think Satan knew of Isaiah's prophecy about Jesus? Explain.

_____

_____

Since Satan was unable to overcome Jesus, to whom has he turned his attention (1 Peter 5:8, 9)? Choose and memorize a *Punch Line* scripture that will help you stand against Satan's temptations.

Thursday

Read James 4:7, 8.

What tips can you take from these verses to help you stand for God at all times? On the lines below, list three practical steps that can help you overcome temptation.

_____

_____

_____

Friday

Read John 14:16-18.

Is there an area of your life in which you feel powerless to resist Satan? Is there a temptation binding you? Why not pause right now and ask God to help you overcome that temptation.

On Global Youth Day, March 15, plan to participate in a community service project with other young people from your church. Some examples of how you can contribute include: visiting a nursing home, hospital, orphanage, or prison, to comfort and pray for those who are sick, needy, and destitute. The possibilities are endless. Choose a project with your Sabbath School class and plan together how you will carry out the project. Be creative!

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages (or *Humble Hero*), chapters 12; 13.

**Humble Hero* is a special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*, created by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companionbooks#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.