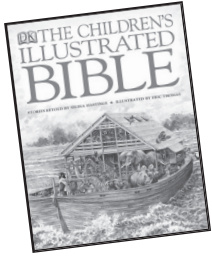


First Sunday in Lent



The Children's Illustrated Bible
pages 204–205

Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted. Jesus answered, "Away with you, Satan! The scriptures say, 'Worship and serve the Lord your God, only.'" Then the devil left Jesus and suddenly angels came and cared for him.

—Matthew 4:1, 10, 11 adapted

Love surrounds me
when I trust God.

—Psalm 32:10 adapted

☐ Jesus Prepares for Ministry

Share the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness from Matthew 4:1-11 and *The Children's Illustrated Bible*, pages 204-205. Find the wilderness on the map on pages 180-181. Write notes on newsprint as you discuss what three things tempted Jesus:

1. To be selfish (taking care of our own needs before those of others, by turning stones to bread).

Put peanuts, sunflower seeds, or some other healthy snack on the table (be aware of your kids' allergies), but don't instruct kids to take them. Wait and see if they take any, while continuing to discuss the story. If kids ask, tell them to listen to the story about what they should do (share with others first).

2. To show off (using his powers for attention). Jesus refused to be a show-off (throwing himself off the temple roof).
3. To be king of the world, to get things. (The tempter offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world.)

Today is the first Sunday of Lent. Lent comes from the Latin word *len cten* meaning springtime and new beginnings. In the Christian church, Lent means the forty days of fasting and prayer in preparation for Easter. Some equate the forty days to those Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing for his ministry. Often people "give up" something for Lent, foods or meals or behaviors. They then take any extra time they may have to pray and spiritually prepare themselves. Lent can also be a time of giving and making commitments. Kids can start a Lenten calendar on their KidsPage. Have them think of ways to help others and fill in an idea for every week of Lent.

☐ Give It Up

Can you resist the temptations Jesus did? Yes, you can! But try three things that are impossible to do:

1. Hum a favorite song. Now pinch your nose shut and cover your mouth. Try again. Can you do it?
2. Sit straight up in a chair, feet flat on the floor, with arms folded across your chest. Try standing up without leaning forward. Can you do it?
3. Hold your right hand out in front of you, with your elbow bent slightly. Turn your hand clockwise. Now hold your right foot off the floor and rotate it clockwise. Easy? Now reverse the direction of your hand only, not your foot. Can you do it?

These may be impossible. But to resist temptation, remember God's message of hope. Read Psalm 32:10 again.

☐ Meditation

Jesus repeated scripture to help him resist temptation. We can use scripture to keep us strong too! Psalm 32:10 can be a soothing prayer when we are tempted or troubled. Have kids repeat these phrases after you: "Love surrounds me" and then "when I trust God." Repeat several times. To help kids remember the words "surrounding me," have them wrap their arms around themselves.

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—Matthew 4:1, 10, 11 adapted



LENTEN CALENDAR

Write an idea on each week of Lent of ways to get ready to follow Jesus.

1
2
3
4
5
6

Maze

Help Jesus get through the maze of temptations to be cared for by angels at the end. Stay on the lines.

