

### Lesson 7.3 - Temptation: Causes of Conflict

Topic: A model for Peacemaking

Subtopic: Causes of Conflict

3B. Be Holy

4E. Leadership and power

Class: Standard VII (Grade 7)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will know that they will be tempted by Satan but can learn how to resist and keep inner peace.

**Attitude:** Students will value Jesus' model of peace and work at building it within themselves.

Materials Needed:

Blackboard and Chalk

Exercise book

*Optional:* Songs to teach the class

References: Matthew 4

Memory Verse: Matthew 4: 4b.

“Human beings cannot live on bread alone, but need every word that God speaks.”

#### Teacher Activities

**Introduction:** *Optional: Let students lead one or more songs and a brief prayer time.* Ask students what it is like to be offered power or wealth.

**Bible Story:** Matthew 4:1-11 describes three temptations Jesus endured from Satan. Ask questions listed in teacher's notes after students read the scripture for each temptation.

**Application:** Conflicts often arise over desire for Basic Needs, Power or Wealth. Discuss how these things lead to conflict and how Jesus used scripture and prayer to resist temptations. Encourage memorization of the memory verses.

**Evaluation:** Is this classroom modeling peace with others and resistance to evil? Do students give in too easily to temptation?

#### Student Activities

**Introduction:** Discuss question.

**Bible Story:** Students listen to the story of Matthew 4 and then discuss each temptation  
Matthew 4:1-4 – Basic Needs  
Matthew 4:5-7 - Power  
Matthew 4: 8-11- Wealth

**Application:** *Have student-led discussion in small groups and then write in their exercise book (journal).*

- What kinds of things might be tempting to you?
- How do you withstand temptation?
- Is there a scripture you could quote when you are tempted to do wrong?

**Evaluation:** Were students able to write and discuss the questions?

**Extension Activities:** *Worship.* Today you may be ready to allow student volunteers to lead activities. A worship leader might lead in music such as *Let There Be Peace on Earth (and let it begin with me)* or another song about peace. A prayer leader may ask for praise and prayer requests and lead the class in silent prayer or an oral prayer. If you don't have time for an extended worship time just open with the theme song and let a student lead a closing prayer. A Scripture Reader volunteer may read Matthew 2, and other students could lead the discussion questions. Do this each week rotating who leads each portion of class.

*Memory Verse.* Write the memory verse on the board and have students copy it in their exercise book. If you have time, let them have a few minutes to look at it and try to learn it and then let them say it to a partner or recite it together as a class.

*Drama.* Have students divide into groups of three or four to create the story of Jesus' temptation in a more modern setting. Instead of post Exilic Jerusalem, have the students place the story in their own village or city like it happened yesterday. Some possible ideas are presenting the story as if it were being reported on news show on TV or by a neighbor who saw everything happen. Make sure every child has a character and a part in the play. Have the students come back together and each group can then present their play.

*Scriptures.* Encourage students to find a scripture they can quote when they are tempted. Help them find appropriate scriptures and write one in their journal.

### Notes for Teacher

When we begin peace making, it is important that we face our own inner struggles; otherwise, the stress of peace ministry will heighten these issues and Satan will use this stress to pull us away from serving God. In the life of Jesus, we see modeled for us that deep prayer, fasting, and scripture break the power of temptation.

The ability of Jesus to withstand personal spiritual attack ushered in his years of ministry as a peacemaker. Peacemaking begins with finding peace within one's self. Remind students about last week's lesson -- the Holy Spirit as our helper.

Key Concept: Prayer and scripture can strengthen our resolve to withstand temptations which would lead to conflict.

Introduction: Introduce the lesson with a short worship time and a question:  
What is it like to be offered wealth or power?

Bible Story: Conflict often comes when we are tempted to get something for ourselves at the expense of someone else. Discuss the temptations of Jesus in the context of present day conflicts. Have three student Readers for the scripture today. Have each Reader read one of the passages as you discuss them.

*Basic Needs.* (Matthew 4:1-4)

After fasting for forty days and nights, we can imagine how hungry Jesus would have been. The first temptation from the Devil was to satisfy Jesus' basic need for food by tempting him to turn the stones into loaves of bread. Today we can become so concerned about getting something we want or need that we cause conflict or compromise our values to get what we want.

- **Have you ever felt as hungry as Jesus in that moment? What would you have done to get food?** Stress the fact that though Jesus did have the power to change the rocks into food, he chose not to, because his ministry was more important to him than his hunger.
- **When does the need for basic things like food and water lead to conflict? What could be more important than basic needs?** (Help them understand that harming someone else, even to meet basic needs, is not acceptable. God values everyone and He will hold us accountable if we hurt others. Jesus would not sin against God even to meet His own basic needs.)

*Power.* (Matthew 4:5-7)

A second temptation was power. Satan took Jesus to the pinnacle of the Jerusalem Temple and asked him to throw himself down before everyone. This visible witness of power would really impress the world. Jesus again quoted Scripture to refute the Devil.

- **Have you ever felt pressured to do something dangerous or impressive just for the sake of doing it or to earn the admiration of others?** What did you chose to do in the situation and why? Again, remind them that Jesus' focus was on his work for his Father and not on his own image.
- **When does the desire for recognition or power lead to conflict?**

*Wealth.* (Matthew 4:8-11)

The final temptation by the Devil was to take Jesus to a very high mountain and offer to Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. This time Jesus again quoted Scripture, but also commanded Satan to leave, "Go away, Satan!"

- **What would you do if someone offered you that kind of wealth?** Ask why they would chose that course of action and point out that Jesus would die on the cross to earn the right to rule over the whole world. He was not willing to disobey God's plan even though God's way was more difficult. As God's children, we will inherit all of these things when we have eternal life.
- **When does the desire for wealth or material things lead to conflict? Are students ever tempted to take something that is not rightfully theirs?**

Application: Need, power, recognition or wealth are often the underlying causes of conflict. We may intend to be peacemakers but there will be times we are tempted as Jesus was to abandon peacemaking in favor of something we want.

- **How did Jesus resist temptation?** (He quoted scripture)
- **What does the memory verse say? What does it mean?**
- **How does this verse help us overcome temptation?**

Notice that each time Jesus was tempted, He used scripture to resist. If we know the scriptures through regular reading and memorization, we will be able to resist the temptations that come. Otherwise, we may give in to temptation and participate in activities that lead to conflict. If we pray and read scripture regularly we will have inner peace and be spiritually strong. If we memorize scripture we can quote it when we are tempted as Jesus did to resist temptation. (Have students write the memory verse in their journal each week and encourage them to learn it.)

*Small Group Discussion.* Small group discussion encourages more participation and reflection and it encourages leadership development. Discuss the rules for small groups. You may use these rules or write your own. Suggested rules:

- Stay in your seats.
- Use quiet voices
- Everyone participates
- Respect each other.
- Listen to each other.

After reviewing the rules, break into groups of 3-4 students with one chosen to be the Discussion Leader. Remind the class that the Leaders are to make sure everyone participates and follows the

rules. Write these questions on the board for the groups to discuss or have a student Writer write these questions before class.

- What kinds of things might be tempting to you?
- How do you withstand temptation?
- Is there a scripture you could quote when you are tempted to do wrong?

After discussion, take a minute to ask how the discussion groups went. Learning to lead and be a part of a group is a process and should be reviewed regularly.

- Did the leader make sure everyone got a chance to share?
- Were group members respectful to each other?

*Journal.* Encourage students to reflect silently on what they learned today and then write a brief paragraph summarizing what they learned. Encourage a variety of answers rather than one right answer.