Monkey See, Monkey Do
Jesus Knew the Scripture and So Should You
(Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness)

Leader Preparation

Bible Basis

Jesus faced temptations just as we do. Whatever we experience, Jesus can say, “Been there, done that.” In today’s lesson, we’ll watch the Son of God come eyeball to eyeball with the devil and stand firm on God’s word. Though tempted, Jesus did not sin.

Discovery Point

God’s Word will help you stand firm.

Bible Focus

Matthew 4:1-11

Key Verse

“So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” James 4:7
Let’s Monkey Around

Supplies: paper bags, monkey cut outs, one set per child, glue sticks, crayons

1. Each child will receive a paper bag with a monkey head glued to it. They can color the face and then attach the rest of the body and the verse to the bag.

2. Have your children glue or tape the hands and feet to the arms and legs and then tape them to the bag.

3. As soon as you finish with the bag have children come and sit on the carpet area with their monkey for the lesson.

The Lesson

Today we are learning that we should follow Jesus’ example. We should do what he did. Of course, we can’t see what he did because it already happened. But there are people who did see what he did and they wrote it all down for us. (Open your Bible to Ephesians 5:1 and read the verse.) "Follow God's example in everything you do, because you are his dear children," Ephesians 5:1, NIV. So when it comes to following Jesus’ example, we could say this verse means, “Monkey see, _____”. Hold up the poster to show them.

Today we are going to learn something that Jesus did and that we should do. Let’s read a verse in the book of Matthew to find out what Jesus did that we should copy. Listen carefully as I read and see if you can fill in the blank in this rhyme. Monkey see, Monkey do, Jesus _______ and so should you.

(Open your Bible and read Matthew 4:4, emphasizing the words “It is written”. “But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" - Matthew 4:4)

When Jesus said, “It is written” what do you think he was talking about? He was talking about the verse he quoted from the scriptures.”
So what do you think we should put in the blank? (Let your children respond.) Since Jesus knew the scriptures and used them, I am going to put “knew the scriptures” in the blank.

Our story today comes from Matthew, Chapter 4. (Open your Bible to Matthew, Chapter 4 and tell the story in your own words.)

After Jesus was baptized by John he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. That means that the devil was going to try to make Jesus do something he wasn't supposed to do. What do you think Jesus did when he knew he would be tempted by the devil? What would you do? (Let your children give their ideas.)

Jesus fasted for forty days. (Fasting means going without food.) People fast to show God how serious they are about seeking him. It makes your body weaker, but draws you closer to God. Jesus went without food for over a month. How do you think you would feel if you didn’t eat anything for a month? (Let your children respond.)

After Jesus had fasted for forty days the devil came to him and tempted him, or tried to get him to do things that were wrong.

Have you ever been tempted to do something that you knew wasn’t right? Maybe your mother told you not to do something, but you did it any ways even though you knew it was wrong. Maybe your dad or mom called you in from playing outside, but you were having so much fun that you decided to ignore them and keep playing. In that instance you were tempted to do something wrong and you did it. When we do things that we know we shouldn’t do we are giving into temptation.

Jesus was tempted three times by the devil, but each time he used scriptures to remind himself and the devil what God would want him to do.

The first thing the devil said was, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." But Jesus didn’t have to prove who he was, he knew who he was. He remembered a scripture and told it to the devil, “'It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'” The devil wanted Jesus to prove how great he was, but Jesus knew that that wasn't important, what was important was doing what his father wanted him to do.

Have you ever had someone dare you to do something to prove yourself? (Let your children respond.)

Here is an example of what that might look like. Brad is talking to his friend Conner, and Brad brags, "I'm allowed to go across the street all by myself!" When Conner hears this he is jealous because he thinks Brad is allowed to do something that he isn't allowed to do. Connor says, "I am too," just because he doesn't want Brad to think that he is better than him. Then Brad says, "Well then prove it. Go across the street and go get that ball and bring it back here."
At that moment Conner has a choice to make, "Does he do it to prove something to Brad? If he does, he would be giving into temptation because he knows he's not allowed to do it. If he doesn't do it, he looks like a fool because he just lied to Brand and told him that he was allowed to do it.

What would you do in this situation? (Let your children respond.)

What do you think Jesus would have done in this situation? (Let your children respond.)

Here are some bible verses to help us remember:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Ephesians 6:1

"Each of you must respect your mother and father," Leviticus 19:3a

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12 - You are a friend of God. You don't have to prove you are better, or as good as anyone else.

Have you ever had someone dare you to do something to prove that you were smart, not afraid, or as good as that person? For example, someone might dare you to do something dangerous or something you know you're not allowed to do just to prove that you aren't a scaredy cat. And you know if you don’t do it, that person will call you chicken or may say, "You aren't my friend unless you do it." Everyone wants to have friends and be included in the group, but if that friend or group is doing something that you know you are not allowed to do, how can you resist the temptation to do what they want you to do in order to be included? You can remember some scriptures that you have learned.

If you are afraid of them leaving you out because you didn’t do what they said to do, you can remember the verse: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10, NIV

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10

Jesus was tempted by Satan two other times, but each time he used scriptures to fight back. It is important to memorize Bible verses because they will help us when we are tempted to do something we know we shouldn't do.

Why do you think Jesus was tempted? The Bible tells us that Jesus was tempted so he would understand our own temptations. Hebrews 2:18 says, "Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."
Prayer

Dear God, help us to remember to study our Bible verse this week. We know that it is important to hide your words in our hearts so that when we are tempted we can resist the temptation. Amen

Activities

Play “Monkey See, Monkey Do!” - Have your children sit in a circle and pick one child to be the lead “monkey”. Decide which player will be the guesser. That player leaves the room. The lead monkey then does things and the other monkeys follow along. The lead monkey must do them when the monkey in the middle is not looking so that the monkey in the middle cannot tell who is the lead monkey. Tell the other children to try not to look directly at the lead monkey because they want to fool the monkey in the middle as long as possible. If the lead monkey gets caught, he then becomes the monkey in the middle.