



Marshmallow Test

For this activity, parents please prepare:

2 pieces marshmallows (or any food like chocolate, bread, or candy that your child really likes) - 1 piece to be placed on the plate, the other saved as a reward

A small plate

A paper with the following written instruction: "If you eat the food AFTER Mommy/Daddy returns to the room, then you will get 1 more piece. If you eat the food BEFORE Mommy/Daddy returns to the room, then you will NOT get extra food."

Instructions: Parents, place the plate with the marshmallow on a table in front of your child. Tell your child that you need to step out of the room to do something, but will return right after. Read the instructions written on the paper together with your child and explain in a simple way that they can understand. Ask if the child understands the instructions, then place the paper beside the plate so the child can see it as a reminder and leave the room. You can also suggest that they re-read the instructions again, in case they forget.

For parents with little kids, you can time your "absence" for 5-10 minutes, while for older kids at least 10-15 minutes. You can observe your child from afar, just be sure they do not see you. When the time is up, return to the room. If your child still has the marshmallow on the plate without any bite, give them their extra piece as a reward. If otherwise, then no reward.

Discuss the activity with your child. Ask them:

If they got tempted to eat the marshmallow.

Why they chose to eat or not to eat the marshmallow.

If reading/having the paper with the instructions beside the plate helped them in avoiding the thought of eating the marshmallow.

For children who got the reward, what they did so they would not eat the marshmallow before time was up.

Temptations are a normal part of our lives. As children of God, Satan wants to harm us and be separate from God. Satan often tempts us to sin knowing that this would make us offend God, leading to our separation from Him.

Did you know that Jesus also got tempted by Satan during His time? Despite the temptations thrown by the devil at Him, Jesus was able to successfully avoid sinning against God! Do you want to know how Jesus did it? We'll find out in today's story.



Read the Word

Let us turn our Bible to Matthew 4:1-11 (NIV).

Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

In our story, Jesus was tempted by the devil three times. Three times! And these temptations were not simple. First, the devil knew Jesus was hungry after going without food for 40 days, so he tempted Him with food. Next, the devil tempted Jesus to jump off from the highest point of the temple to prove that He is the son of God. And lastly, the devil tempted Jesus with all the kingdoms in the world that would make Him powerful and rich in exchange of worshipping Satan and not God. Did you notice how Jesus avoided these temptations? Jesus did it by using the Word of God!

The Bible teaches us in Psalm 119:9-16 how we can keep our ways pure:

*"9 How can a young person stay on the path of purity? **By living according to your word.** 10 I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. 11 I **have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.** 12 Praise be to you, Lord; teach me your decrees. 13 With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. 14 I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. 15 I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. 16 I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word."*

The Word of God is our sure weapon against any temptation from the devil. It is powerful and can save us from sinning. The way we will be able to use it is if we know it in our hearts. Let us always remember to read our Bible and keep God's Word in our hearts so we don't fall into the enemy's trap!



Parent to Kid/s:

2-6 years old

- Have you been tempted to do something that is not right before God? What is it? What did you do about it?
- Would you like to find and memorize a verse from the Bible that would help you resist temptation?

7-12 years old

- Are there any recurring temptations that you struggle with? What are they?
- Would you like to find and memorize a verse from the Bible that would help you resist temptation?

Kid/s to Parent:

- What is the greatest temptation that you have encountered so far? How did you respond to it?
- Is there a Bible verse that you keep in mind and heart that you use to avoid or resist temptation? What is that verse?

Temptation is from the enemy. The Bible says in James 1:13 that God is not tempted by evil nor does he tempt anyone. Therefore, we can use God's Word to battle against it. No matter what temptation you go through, there is always a way out. When we keep God's Word in our hearts, we can draw it out from our hearts whenever we are tempted. Recite it, declare it as loudly as you can so the enemy will flee. That is how you fight temptation.

There are many verses in the Bible you can memorize. Here is a very short list to help you get started:

Philippians 4:13

1 John 4:4

Ephesians 6:10-11

James 4:7

Psalms 119:11



Dear Lord,

Thank You for the example Jesus set for us on how to resist the enemy's evil schemes. Thank You for giving us Your Word to protect us from the temptation of the enemy. Remind us to always read and abide by Your teachings and teach us to hide Your Word in our hearts so we may use it when we are tempted. Amen.



The Marshmallow Test was an actual experiment led by a psychologist named Walter Mischel. It was first conducted in 1972 at Stanford University. The initial purpose of the test is to study the effects of delayed gratification on children in areas such as resistance to temptation. There are many videos of The Marshmallow Test uploaded on YouTube. These videos are fun to watch as you can see the reactions and strategies that the kids do in order to avoid the temptation of eating the marshmallow and receiving a reward after! Check them out!