

WEEK 3
LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

I believe God is powerful.

BIBLE

Jesus In The Wilderness:
Matthew 4:1–11; Psalm 36:5–10

ABOUT THIS WEEK

While you're out camping, you might be tempted to head off trail, but that choice could get you lost and unsure how to get back. This week, we'll take a look at the story where Jesus was tempted in the wilderness and used God's words to defend against the tempter. Jesus' responses show us just how strong and powerful God is, so we can say, "**I believe God is powerful.**"

LARGE GROUP TIME

Welcome to another fun-filled day at *Camp Believe It*. You all are really earning your badges! So much teamwork, camaraderie, and wilderness know-how! I am truly impressed. You know, the wilderness isn't always easy to be in. Today, we'll learn that it can be truly challenging just to make it through a day when you're out in the wild with nothing. Let's get started on today's adventure and earn another badge!

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Cabin Cleanup

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, create teams and give each one a rectangular area marked off by tape to make a "bunk." Then, in the middle of the room, have a pile of items that you'd find at camp, like sleeping bags, pillows, Bibles, pencils, water bottles, assorted snacks (contraband!), and journals. Have at least one of each item per team. List the items on a board. Give the team 30 or 60 seconds (depending on how many kids or items you have) to collect one of each item and arrange them neatly in their bunks.*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *You can have preteens lead the younger kids through activities and act as "trail guides."*
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *Provide a picture of how kids can organize their "bunk" with the items provided.*
- Things can get messy when we're out camping for a while, but we need to keep things organized to prepare for the adventure ahead. We want to be prepped and equipped.
- Getting organized might have been a challenge to do alone, but as a team, you did it in no time. Teamwork is powerful that way. Today's Bible story reminds us that none of us are alone because the most powerful one is with us always.

ACTIVITY | Tug-Of-War

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, divide the group into two teams, doing your best to have an even mix of*

bigger and smaller kids on each. Provide a large bedsheet for the teams to tug on. Use tape to draw a line in the center, between the two groups. On "Go," each team tugs on the bedsheet, and the first team to have a member cross the center line loses.

✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Make a big slingshot using a resistive band. Reinforce the middle of the band with duct tape, which will also help the band stay firm and flat. Have two kids or leaders hold each end of the band. Help a kid to place a jumbo marshmallow in the middle of the band, pull back the band, and watch the marshmallow fly.

- Sometimes, we might feel pulled in a direction opposite to the way God wants us to go. It can be difficult to face those situations alone, but thankfully, God is always with us and gives us the power to come out stronger.

QUESTION | What's more powerful?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write some wilderness-related things on separate [name plates](#) (or regular pieces of paper cut in half, length-wise). Put up the first word on the wall or a board, and ask kids how powerful they think that item is by saying how high you should place it. Then, show the next word and ask whether it should go above or below the first word. Do this with the rest of your list until the kids have ranked the wilderness things from most to least powerful (top to bottom). Choices can include fire, water, wind, rain, eagles, bears, trees, boulders, mosquitos, poison ivy, rattlesnakes, and the like.
- **Why did you rank each item the way you did?** This list makes us think about all the different ways something could be powerful. A mosquito could be squashed instantly, but a mosquito bite could really zap our power sometimes.
- We'll see in our Bible story how God, who is the most powerful, helps us when we are in powerless situations.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 4:1–11 (Jesus In The Wilderness)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Dress up and set up your space like you did in previous weeks. Have kids sit in a circle around you as you tell today's Bible story.
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** During the teaching portion, pair the Big Idea and main characters from the Bible story with a simple gesture or sound for kids to repeat. Reinforce this throughout the day across different modules.
- All right, campers, gather around the fire for a story I would like to tell. Today's fireside story is a real nail-biter, and it's a true story out of my favorite book, the Bible.
- We have met interesting and unbelievable characters out here in the wilderness, but this next one is a bit unexpected. Did you know that even Jesus found himself in the wilderness and faced with some challenging situations?
- **Let's read about it in Matthew 4:1–2**
 - Jesus was fasting for 40 days and 40 nights. Can you imagine not eating for 40 days and nights? I don't know about you, but when I get hungry, I get *angry*. *Hangry*.
 - And not only was Jesus fasting, but he was also being tempted by the devil.
- **What did the devil tempt Jesus with? Let's read Matthew 4:3–4.**
 - The tempter knew Jesus was hungry, so he tempted Jesus to turn the rocks into food to eat.
 - **But how did Jesus respond?** Jesus said that we don't live on bread alone but on God's words. Jesus responded with a Bible verse. Jesus responded with the power of God's words.
- **Then what happened? Let's read Matthew 4:5–7.**
 - The devil tempted Jesus to test God and see if God would save him. **And how did Jesus respond?**

He responded with another Bible verse.

- The devil tried to tempt Jesus one more time.
- **Let's read about it in Matthew 4:8–11.**
 - Did you catch that? The devil tried to get Jesus to forget God was the only one to worship. Unbelievable!
 - **And how did Jesus respond?** Jesus responded with Scripture again because nothing is more powerful than God.
 - The devil tried every trick in the book to tempt Jesus. By trusting in God's words, Jesus had the power and the strength to withstand those tricks. God's power kept Jesus alive in the wilderness when he had nothing to eat and was tempted.
- Because God is powerful, Jesus had the power to overcome the most difficult situations. We can always count on God's power to be with us when we face difficult situations, too.
- *Camp Believe It?* Believe it—it's all true!

BIG IDEA | I believe God is powerful.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up the Big Idea reveal similar to how you did it in the previous weeks. Write out the word "power" or "powerful" using stickers or blacklight paint or reuse the "believe" poster from previous weeks.
- Here at *Camp Believe It*, we learn so many things from God that are true. This week's Big Idea is no exception. So what did we learn today that we can believe? Let's take a look at the stars in our pretend night sky to give us a clue.
- **I believe God is powerful.**

ACTIVITY | The S'more Test

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare graham crackers, marshmallow cream, and chocolate spread and have kids [make their own s'mores](#). But tell them they are not allowed to eat it (or even lick their fingers) until after one minute. Start a sand timer or a countdown video. Feel free to extend this time if you think your kids are up for the challenge.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** As they enjoy their snack, show this [video](#) of a fun twist on the classic Stanford Marshmallow Experiment. Talk about how the kids covering up their marshmallows with a cup is like how we can resist temptation by removing ourselves from situations where we're likely to be tempted.
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Swap out marshmallow cream and chocolate spread with a lower sugar option. Consider making [frozen yogurt sandwiches](#) that look like s'mores ahead of time. Use plain yogurt for the marshmallow cream and, optionally, make an easy chocolate yogurt using a recipe like [this](#).
- S'mores are such a tempting snack, aren't they? All the gooey chocolatey and marshmallowy goodness needs to be eaten right away—except when our instructions are not to eat it.
- We can be tempted in many ways, which means being drawn to do something we know we shouldn't do. When Jesus was hungry, the devil tempted him with food. And because Jesus was God's son, the devil tried to tempt him to turn away from God.
- Through all of it, Jesus showed us that God is powerful—much more powerful than any plot that would come between us and God. And God gives us the same power to say no to whatever might get in the way of our relationship with God.
- **I believe God is powerful**, and we can trust that God will help us overcome any temptation.

OBJECT LESSON | Leaves Of Three

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [an image](#) or a video about poison ivy (like [this one](#)).

- Being out in the wilderness can be a fun and beautiful experience, but we still need to be careful.
- **What are some of the dangers we need to be on the lookout for when we're out in the wilderness?** Wild animals, snakes, insects, slippery terrain, and, of course, poison ivy or poison oak.
- Poison ivy and poison oak are common dangers that we might find in the wilderness. We need to avoid touching these plants because they can cause a painful rash. One way to help you avoid poison ivy and poison oak is to remember this: "Leaves of three, leave it be." These poisonous plants have pointed leaves in groups of three.
 - **If you see a plant like this, with leaves of three, what should you do? Leave it be. Just don't touch it.**
- Speaking of "three," that's how many times the devil tried to tempt Jesus to disobey God. But much like we should do with poison ivy plants, Jesus did leave it be. He said no to the devil's tempting — all three times — because he knew God was more powerful.
- **I believe God is powerful, too. What about you?**

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 36:5–10

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the passage out loud or invite a volunteer to read.
- When Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness, God helped him. And when we are being tempted or going through a tough time, we can trust in God to help us, too. We can do this because of God's love.
- **What is God's love like? Let's read Psalm 36:5–6.**
 - That is amazing! God's love is so big that it reaches to the stars, higher than the mountains and deeper than the sea. Yet, God protects everything created by God.
 - We are not only protected and safe with God, but we are cared for.
- **Let's read Psalm 36:7–10.**
 - When we are in trouble, we can take refuge in God. When we are in need, we can turn to God. God's power is like a river that we can drink from.
 - God is always there, like a fountain that always has water flowing from it. We should always turn to God because God is powerful.
- **Can you believe that God—who can do anything—loves us so much?** I can. **I believe God is powerful** and helps us through any situation. *I Camp Believe It!*

VIDEO | Camp Believe It, Episode 3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

REFLECTION | Campfire Chat

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use the campfire setup from the Bible story or display a video of a campfire ([like this](#)) on a screen. Have kids take turns responding to each question in pairs or groups of three. Have time in between each question to allow kids who want to share with the whole group to do so. Afterward, invite kids to stand up and say the Big Idea together, earning their Week 3 "Big Idea Badge." You can prepare these badges by printing them on [one-and-a-half-inch labels](#) or on regular paper to insert into a [button badge kit](#). You could instead use a [button maker](#) if available.
- At the end of a long camping day, some campers like to sit around and chat by the campfire. Let's gather around and talk about everything we experienced today.
 - **Why do you think the devil tempted Jesus with those three things: turning stones into bread, testing God's rescue, and worshipping the devil?**

- Do you think Jesus could have beaten the devil any other way? Why do you think he chose to use God's words?
- Have you ever been tempted to disobey God? How did you handle it?
- Now it's time to collect our Big Idea badge of the day. **What's our Big Idea? I believe God is powerful.**

RESPONSE | Wilderness Survival Kit

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out a copy of the Wilderness Survival Guide to each kid along with a pencil. On the inside, have kids write or draw their responses. On the outside, have them write their name and fold the paper in half to create their own "survival kit."
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have preteens search the Bible for verses that might help them when they're facing certain temptations.
- You can't go out into the wilderness without a survival kit unless you're a nature expert and know how to set traps and what berries to eat. But for the rest of us, we would need supplies to help us make it in the wild.
- The same is true for everyday life. We need help making the right decisions, overcoming obstacles, and staying connected to God.
- Jesus didn't exactly have a survival kit, but he was always ready. Even after 40 days in the wilderness, he resisted every temptation. That was possible because of the power of God. Jesus really lived out our Big Idea: **I believe God is powerful.**
- Write or draw about some of the things that might tempt you on one side of your survival kit. For example:
 - **Are you ever tempted to take something you're not supposed to?**
 - **To cheat in a game or on a test?**
 - **To say something untruthful to a friend or family member?**
- On the other side, write or draw ways God can help you overcome that temptation. Some ways you can depend on God's power could be:
 - Memorize God's words and repeat them when you face a difficult situation.
 - Pray for God's Spirit to guide you to make the right decisions.
 - Talk to a trusted adult or friend God has placed in your life.
- Draw a line between the two words or pictures to help you remember to depend on God's power the next time you feel tempted to go against God's words.

MEMORY VERSE | John 6:69 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Learn the memory verse together using any combination of the resources provided: [memory verse coloring page](#), [sign language motions](#), or choose from [this list](#) of our favorite memorization techniques!
- **"We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."**

PRAYER

- God, even though you are so powerful, you let us come to you whenever we want. Thank you for loving us and giving us power when we feel like we have none. Help us resist anything that tries to hurt our relationship with you. We believe you—and your words—are powerful. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS**
 - **What did the devil use to tempt Jesus first? What did Jesus say?** Jesus was hungry, so the devil tempted Jesus to turn the stones into bread. Jesus said, Scripture says that we don't just live on

food but on God's words.

- **How was Jesus tempted a second time? What did Jesus say?** *The devil tempted Jesus to jump from the temple and see if God would save him. Jesus quoted Scripture: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."*
- **What was the last thing Jesus was tempted to do? What did Jesus say?** *Bow down and worship the devil. Jesus quoted Scripture again: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only."*
- **Read Psalm 36:7–8. How do you think this relates to the story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness?** *Even though Jesus was in the wilderness, he took refuge in God, and even though Jesus was hungry and thirsty, he trusted and obeyed God.*
- **APPLICATION QUESTIONS**
 - **What are some stories from the Bible that remind you of God's power?**
 - **When is a time when you have felt powerless?**
 - **What are some temptations kids like you might face today? How can you trust God's power to overcome them?**

ACTIVITY | Campfire Power

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give each kid two popsicle sticks that they can design or color to make them look like logs. Then glue them on black construction paper. Add scraps of orange, red, and yellow tissue paper above the sticks to make a fire. Provide metallic star stickers to create the night sky, and have kids write the Big Idea in metallic marker or white crayon. See a worked example [here](#).*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Level this up for preteens by having them go outside to find sticks and rocks to use for a 3D campfire, like [this](#), instead. You can also provide sticks and rocks ahead of time if going outside is not an option. Provide a small, study round plate for them to arrange and glue their materials on, adding tissue paper for the fire.*
- On a chilly camp night, being around the campfire is the best. Fire gives both heat and light, so not only are we warm, we can see in the dark.
- Let's make our own campfires to help us remember that God, who is more powerful than fire, is always there for us, whether we're feeling lonely or being tempted. **I believe God is powerful.**