

GET INTO THE STUDY



5 minutes

DISCUSS: Draw attention to the picture on **PSG page 66** and ask **Question #1: Where do you turn when you need a fool-proof plan?**

GUIDE: Direct attention to **The Bible Meets Life** on **PSG, page 67** to the story about the Great Chicago Fire and the annual observance of National Fire Prevention Week. The purpose of this emphasis is fire prevention and what to do when a fire occurs.

SAY: “Having a plan when dealing with temptation should follow this same approach: prevention and what to do when being tempted.”

Reinforce **The Point** on **PSG page 67: We can follow Jesus’ example in defeating spiritual attacks.**

PRAY: Begin the Bible study with prayer. Ask God to help us learn from Jesus how to respond to temptation.

SESSION 6 BATTLE PLAN



The Point

We can follow Jesus’ example in defeating spiritual attacks.

The Bible Meets Life

Everybody encounters temptation, but what may be a strong temptation for one person may not tempt another person. Satan knows us well enough to know what

he can use in his attempts to get us to sin. We might assume that, because a certain temptation feels unique to us, no one knows what we’re going through. However, Jesus knows. He faced the same types of temptation we face. We can stand against temptation in the same way He did.

The Passage

Matthew 4:1-10

The Setting

After describing the events associated with Jesus’ birth (Matt. 1–2) and the ministry of John the Baptist (3:1-12), Matthew detailed how Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, where God had affirmed Jesus was His Son (vv. 13-17). Jesus was then led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit, where He was tempted three times by the devil. This episode in the life of Jesus is mentioned in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark (Mark 1:12-13), and Luke (Luke 4:1-13).

Matthew 4:1-4

- 1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
- 2 After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.
- 3 Then the tempter approached him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."
- 4 He answered, "It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Satan will tempt us through our physical appetites.

Verse 1. The setting for Jesus' temptations was the **wilderness**. While the exact location is not known, early Christian tradition identified the place in the region of Jericho at the mountain of Jebel Quarantal. "The desert stretches west for a dozen miles as it rises from the Jordan River valley to the heights of Jerusalem, a virtual no-man's-land."¹

1► Besides **Jesus**, the two key figures in this event are the **Spirit** of God, or Holy Spirit, and the **devil**. Matthew relates that Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be **tempted** by the devil. Temptation is a primary form of spiritual attack the devil uses against God's people. Although the devil does more than tempt us to sin, it is one of his key methods. "devil" translates a Greek word that means "accuser" or "opponent."

The fact that the Spirit **led** Jesus into the wilderness reminds us that the devil is not the primary actor in this episode. The devil tempted Jesus, but God allowed the temptation to occur. God is in control, not the devil. The devil can do only that which God permits him to do. He is subject to God's sovereignty. The Greek word rendered **tempted** can also mean "tested." God could test someone, but God never tempts anyone. James 1:13 clearly states that God does not tempt anyone to sin. "[W]hat the devil sees as a temptation, God may simultaneously use as a more positive test to prove Jesus' faithfulness."² ◀

Verse 2. The context for Jesus' first temptation was His hunger. Jesus had **fasted forty days and forty nights**.

STUDY THE BIBLE

Matthew 4:1-4



10 minutes

SUMMARIZE: Before reading the passage, set the context by summarizing the information in **The Bible Meets Life** and **The Setting** on page 72.

READ: Read or ask a volunteer to read Matthew 4:1-4.

SUMMARIZE: Use **Bible Commentary 1** to provide detailed facts about this episode in the life of Jesus.

- Key figures:
 1. Jesus
 2. The Spirit (Holy Spirit)
 3. Devil (accuser/opponent)
- Jesus tempted by the Devil
- The Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil

GUIDE: Refer group members to **PSG page 68** and point out that Jesus faced temptations just like we do. Ask a group member to read Hebrews 4:15.

GUIDE: Refer group members to **PSG page 69**, to the paragraph that begins with "The first temptation centered on Jesus' physical needs."

SAY: "Jesus was hungry, so the devil's point of attack was where he perceived Jesus to be vulnerable. The devil takes the same approach when tempting us."

SUMMARIZE: Use **Bible Commentary 2** to give further explanation to the first temptation:

- Devil, "The tempter"
- "If you are the Son of God"
- Hunger is a legitimate human desire.
- Definition of sin: "Sin is the illegitimate expression of a legitimate desire."
- Jewish expectation that the Messiah would feed the hungry
- Jesus "the bread of life"

The forty days and forty nights, as well as Jesus being led into the wilderness by the Spirit, recall the forty years the Israelites spent in the desert. Speaking of that time in the desert, Moses told the Israelites, "Remember that the LORD your God led you on the entire journey these forty years in the wilderness, so that he might humble you and test you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands" (Deut. 8:2). Just as the Israelites were tested and failed, so too now Jesus would be tested and succeed.³ Note also that Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 8:3 in His rejection of Satan's first temptation (Matt. 4:4).

Fasting was a regular spiritual practice of the Jews. Fasting was usually associated with prayer and the development of a greater sense of contemplation and spiritual openness toward God. But Jews also associated fasting with times of repentance, mourning, and of urgent need for help from God. Some Jews apparently fasted twice a week (Luke 18:12). Jesus taught about the proper motivation for fasting in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 6:16-18).

2 ▶ Verse 3. The devil **approached** Jesus, apparently presuming His hunger had made Him vulnerable to a spiritual attack. The devil's intentions are indicated by the name he is given in this verse, **the tempter**. The devil prefaced his temptation with "**If you are the Son of God.**" Many Bible students suggest that all three of these temptations involve the devil addressing Jesus' role as Messiah. The devil was not questioning the true identity of Jesus as the Son of God. Rather, the question was how Jesus would act in His position as the Son of God. This first temptation began with Jesus' personal hunger as the point of contact, but it related to the way Jesus would be Messiah.

Hunger is a legitimate human desire. But a physical desire can often be the specific catalyst for sin. James noted that desires can lead to sin (Jas. 1:14-15). An old description of sin is that sin is the illegitimate expression of a legitimate desire. The devil proposed that Jesus use the power He had as the Son of God to turn **stones** into **bread** to satisfy His own physical hunger. Later in His ministry Jesus fed the hungry, feeding 5,000 people in one event (Matt. 14:13-21). The first-century Jews expected the Messiah to feed the hungry just as God had fed the Israelites with manna in the wilderness. Jesus clarified that He Himself was the "bread of life," which was far better than the manna their ancestors ate in the wilderness (John 6:30-35). ◀

3 ▶ Verse 4. As mentioned above, Jesus responded to the devil by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3. In that text Moses reminded the Israelites that God had provided them manna, a miraculous kind of bread. But God primarily wanted them to learn to depend on Him and be obedient to Him. **Every word that comes from the mouth of God** is more important than physical bread. Our physical needs are important, but our spiritual needs are deeper and more significant. Jesus could have satisfied His own hunger by turning rocks into bread, but Jesus came to do the will of God the Father. Jesus understood that His hunger was God's will for Him at that moment. Jesus kept His priorities straight and rejected the devil's temptation.

The temptation to turn stones into bread was unique to Jesus. However, we all deal with temptations to sin. At times we might feel we are dealing with a temptation no one else has faced. The apostle Paul dealt with the issue of temptation in his letters. He insisted that our temptations are part of our common experience as humans. God will not let us be tempted without providing the help we need (1 Cor. 10:13). But we have to trust in God and depend on Him. ◀

Matthew 4:5-7

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,

6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will give his angels orders concerning you, and they will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

7 Jesus told him, "It is also written: Do not test the Lord your God."

KEY WORDS: The pinnacle of the temple (v. 5)—The *pinnacle* was a prominent place high on the temple in Jerusalem, from which a fall would have meant death.

Satan will tempt us to question or test God.

Verse 5. The second temptation of Jesus occurred in **the holy city**, Jerusalem. The devil took Jesus to the temple complex, which included the temple building itself and the

SUMMARIZE: Use **Bible Commentary 3** to show Jesus' response to the first temptation:

- Quoted Deuteronomy 8:3
- Depending on God and being obedient to Him is more important than physical food.
- Physical needs are important, but spiritual needs are deeper and more significant
- 1 Corinthians 10:13

DISCUSS: Question #2 (PSG, p. 70): What are some ways we face temptation through our physical appetites?

(Alternate: What have you found helpful in preparing to face physical temptations?)

TRANSITION: "In the second temptation, we will see how the devil takes the Bible out of context for his purposes."

STUDY THE BIBLE Matthew 4:5-7



10 minutes

READ: Read or ask a volunteer to read Matthew 4:5-7.

GUIDE: Use **Key Words** on page 75 (**PSG, p. 70**) to explain the phrase “the pinnacle of the temple.”

GUIDE: Refer group members to **PSG pages 71-72** to show how Satan misused Psalm 91:11-12 when tempting Jesus to jump from the pinnacle of the temple. Ask a group member to read the paragraph that starts with: “There’s a big problem with that: Satan was taking the passage out of context.” We need to:

- *Know what God’s Word says.*
- *Rest in God’s love and security.*

SUMMARIZE: Use **Bible Commentary 4** to give further explanation to the second temptation:

- *The Devil quoted Scripture*
- *The Devil misused Scripture*

courtyards that surrounded that building. The devil had Jesus stand on **the pinnacle of the temple**. Bible students have tried to identify the exact spot of the “pinnacle” of the temple building. One suggestion is that the “pinnacle” was located at the southeast corner of Solomon’s porch. Someone standing there would have seen a drop of about 450 feet into the Kidron Valley below. The main point is that the devil chose a spot that was very high. The spot would have been visible to the many people in the temple area that day, and a fall from that height would have meant death.

4 ▶ Verse 6. The devil again prefaced the temptation with “**If you are the Son of God.**” Again, the devil did not doubt who Jesus was. Rather, he appealed to Jesus’ special position as God’s Son as the basis for his temptation. Just as Jesus had quoted Scripture, the devil quoted Psalm 91:11-12. Like Jesus, he prefaced his quote with the words, “**For it is written.**” In its original context, Psalm 91:11-12 relates God’s promise of protection for His people, those who have entrusted their lives to Him. The devil wanted Jesus to literally test God’s promise of protection for Him as the Son of God. The psalm states that God would send His angels to protect Him. The devil suggested that if Jesus would do something spectacular and life-threatening, such as jumping from the pinnacle of the temple, God would protect Him! ◀

5 ▶ Verse 7. Jesus again responded to the devil by quoting from the Book of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy 6:16 says “Do not test the LORD your God as you tested him at Massah.” When the Israelites were on the verge of entering the promised land, Moses warned the new generation of Israelites to be obedient to God and not to test the Lord as their forefathers had done at Massah (Deut. 6:10-19; see Ex. 17:1-7). While they were in the wilderness, the Israelites had often complained about food and water. When the Israelites camped at Massah, there was no source of water so they demanded that Moses give them something to drink (Ex. 17:1-3). In response, Moses said to the Israelites, “Why are you complaining to me? ... Why are you testing the LORD?” (v. 2). In that instance, even though the Israelites were wrong to test God, God graciously provided them with water to drink (v. 6).

To **test** God means challenging God in a very disrespectful way. It is a sin. In the same way the Israelites demanded that God provide a miraculous provision for their need of water at Massah, the devil was telling Jesus to demand God provide

miraculous protection for Him. However, unlike at Massah where there was a genuine need for water, in this instance the devil was telling Jesus to purposefully put Himself in danger so God would have to act to protect Him.⁴ If Jesus were to have acted on the devil's words, He would have been reversing the roles of God the Father and Himself, making God the Father do His [Jesus'] will instead of Him serving the Father. However, Jesus rejected the devil's temptation to manipulate God, choosing instead to trust in God's dependability without having to put Him to the test.⁵

Probably you or I will never be tempted by the devil to jump off a tall building as Jesus was. But we might be tempted to test God. The Bible includes several accounts of faithful people asking God hard questions about the struggles in their lives. Job, for example, put many questions to God. Testing God, however, involves trying to put God in a corner. To say to God, "Do this now, or I will not believe," reflects presumption rather than the desire for a vital relationship with God. ◀

Matthew 4:8-10

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

9 And he said to him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."

10 Then Jesus told him, "Go away, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him."

Satan will tempt us to worship something other than God.

6 ▶ **Verse 8.** Now the tempter took Jesus to a **very high mountain**. From that vantage point, the devil showed Jesus **all the kingdoms of the world**. Some readers will wonder how anyone could see all the nations from any one place on our round earth. One suggestion is that Jesus had a kind of supernatural vision similar to those experienced by some Old Testament prophets (see Ezek. 8:3). The phrasing "all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor" indicates that the devil was offering Jesus dominion over all the kingdoms. ◀

SUMMARIZE: Use **Bible**

Commentary 5 on page 76 and this page to show Jesus' response to the second temptation:

- Quoted Deuteronomy 6:16
- To test God means to challenge God in a disrespectful way.

DISCUSS: Question #3

(PSG, p. 72): What are some ways we are tempted to test God?

(Alternate: Why is it dangerous to put God to the test?)

TRANSITION: "In the third temptation Satan offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would worship him."

STUDY THE BIBLE Matthew 4:8-10



15 minutes

READ: Read or ask a volunteer to read Matthew 4:8-10.

SUMMARIZE: Use **Bible**

Commentary 6 to give further explanation to Satan's offer of "all of the kingdoms of the world and their splendor."

SUMMARIZE: Use BibleCommentary **7** to give

further explanation to the third temptation:

- *The devil challenged Jesus allegiance to God*
- *The devil enticed Jesus to worship him*
- *The devil offered Jesus a shortcut to the kingdoms of the world*

SUMMARIZE: Use BibleCommentary **8** on this

page and page 79 to show Jesus' response to the third temptation:

- *Quoted Deuteronomy 6:13*
- *Jesus addressed the devil as Satan*
- *He told him to go away*
- *He was faithful to the first of the Ten Commandments: there is only one God and He alone is to be worshiped.*

DISCUSS: Question #4

(PSG, p. 73): What are we often tempted to worship in place of God?

7 ▶ Verses 9. With this third temptation, the devil challenged Jesus' allegiance to God. Therefore, he did not begin this temptation as he had the previous two, "If you are the Son of God" (vv. 3,6). The devil called for Jesus to reject His position as the Son of God in exchange for what the devil offered: all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would **fall down and worship** him.

The devil presumed he had some claim over these nations (elsewhere in the New Testament he is called "the ruler of this world" [John 12:31; 16:11] and "the god of this age" [2 Cor. 4:4]). Claiming jurisdiction over the nations, Satan said, "**I will give you all these things**" in exchange for Jesus' homage. The devil offered Jesus a world-wide kingdom in exchange for His worship. He offered Jesus a kingdom without the cross.

Jesus knew that His mission was to be the suffering Messiah, not a mere political leader of nations. Jesus refused to follow the devil's sinister suggestion. He would follow the path of the suffering Messiah in obedience to His Father. Jesus warned His disciples of a similar temptation when He told them, "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will find it. For what will it benefit someone if he gains the whole world yet loses his life? Or what will anyone give in exchange for his life?" (Matt. 16:24b-26).

The devil is a limited, finite being. He is an angel created by God who rebelled against God. Here on earth the devil exercises his limited power, but he does not have final authority over the nations and kingdoms of the world. God is sovereign. Ultimately, it is Jesus who has the claim to all authority in both heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18), and that authority came through His atoning sacrifice on the cross. Jesus refused the power offered by Satan, but eventually received even greater power (all authority in *both* heaven and earth) through His obedience to God the Father's will. Jesus is the true "KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS" (Rev. 19:16), who will be acknowledged by all people at the end of time (Phil. 2:10-11). ◀

8 ▶ Verses 10. For the first time in the passage, Jesus addressed the devil as **Satan**. The term means "adversary." He bluntly told the devil to "**Go away.**" Jesus was done with these temptations. He wanted nothing to do with the devil's offer or with the devil Himself. Again, Jesus rejected the

temptation of the devil with Scripture, citing a passage from the Book of Deuteronomy for the third time. He quoted Deuteronomy 6:13, which is partially repeated in Deuteronomy 10:20. **“Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”** The Lord is the only one to whom worship is due. To worship Satan is to place the devil in the ultimate position which only belongs to God. The command to **worship** and **serve** the one true God is basic to the entire Bible. The first of the Ten Commandments highlights the reality that there is only one true God and He alone is to be worshiped and served: “Do not have other gods besides me” (Ex. 20:3). To worship the devil, even briefly, instead of the true God, would be unthinkable for God’s people. ◀

After Jesus’ successfully resisted the three temptations, Satan departed (Matt. 4:11). But this would not be the last time Jesus had to deal with Satan, as Luke noted in his account of the temptations that the devil “departed from him [Jesus] for a time ” (Luke 4:13). Then God sent angels to serve Jesus. Having refused the temptations of Satan and remained obedient to God, Jesus now received divine provision through the ministry of angels in accordance with God’s will at the appointed time.

9 ▶ We may not face the exact same temptations Jesus faced. The devil tailored these temptations to Jesus as the Son of God and Messiah. But the way Jesus responded with His use of Scripture provides a helpful example for us.

In his powerful discussion of Jesus’ humanity, the writer of the Book of Hebrews noted, “For since he himself has suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted” (Heb. 2:18). As the incarnate Son of God, Jesus experienced the full range of human temptations. Jesus was “tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin” (4:15). Jesus did not sin, but He understands what it means to be tempted from firsthand experience. Jesus knows what we go through. You and I probably know people who have a lot of empathy for others. They seem to understand well what others are going through. Often compassionate people have experienced the same temptations, trials, and struggles we have. They can help us by drawing on that experience. In the same way Jesus, the sinless Savior, can help us deal with the devil’s temptations in our lives. ◀

1. Michael J. Wilkins, “Matthew” in *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Volume 1, Matthew, Mark, Luke*, gen. ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 26-27.
 2. Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22 in *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 83.
 3. *Ibid.*, 83-84.
 4. John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 165.
 5. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 133.

LEADER PACK: Point to **Item 6: Our Battle Plan**. Use as a tool to help group members create a battle plan for dealing with temptations by following the “Rally Points.”



SUMMARIZE: Use **Bible Commentary 9** to discover what we can learn from Jesus’ response to temptation.

DISCUSS: Question #5 (PSG, p. 74): What can we learn from Jesus’ example about overcoming temptation?

(Alternate: How can we prepare ourselves for the temptations that will come our way?)

DO: Encourage members to take a few minutes to complete the activity **“Resisting Temptation”** on **PSG page 74**. Invite volunteers to share responses.

LIVE IT OUT



5 minutes

GUIDE: Emphasize **The Point: We can follow Jesus' example in defeating spiritual attacks.**

REVIEW: Review **Live It Out (PSG, p. 75)**; (see text to the right). Encourage each group member to follow through this week with at least one of the applications.

WRAP IT UP

GUIDE: Emphasize that temptation is a reality for all believers. Jesus' example gives us a battle plan for how to win over temptation.

PRAY: "Father, be with us when we are tempted and help us to overcome these temptations. Help us develop a battle plan for the spiritual warfare we face."

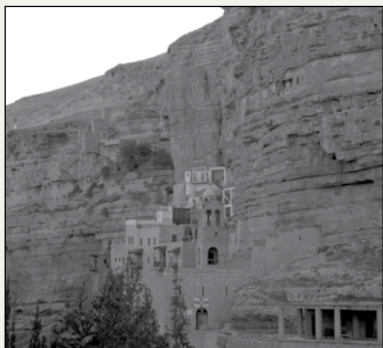
LIVE IT OUT

Expect opposition when you step forward in faith. Spiritual attacks will come. Based on our study this week, what steps will you take to defeat the attacks that come your way?

- ▶ **Look to Jesus.** Pray and keep your focus on Christ. Lean on Him for strength to stand, knowing He understands. "For since he himself has suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted" (Heb. 2:18).
- ▶ **Stay clear.** If you know of people, places, or circumstances that fuel your vulnerability to temptation and spiritual attack, resolve to avoid those things.
- ▶ **Memorize Scripture.** Make Scripture memory a weekly discipline and habit. Begin with memorizing verses that address areas where you often feel tempted or under attack.



BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATOR



A Greek Orthodox monastery on the side of Mount Quarantania, which overlooks ancient Jericho below. The mountain is named for the Latin word for “forty” in reference to the 40 days Jesus fasted on the mountain during His temptation experience. The earliest mention of a church on the site dates to AD 326. Byzantine monks built the first monastery on the site in the 6th century.

The Spirit led Jesus into the desert (Matt. 4:1). Tradition locates His temptation experience on Quarantania, a mountain reaching 1,500 feet above the Jordan River Valley. This mountain stands six to eight miles from the traditional place of Jesus’ baptism and lies west of Jericho. Jesus sat alone in the wilderness. No crowds pressed against Him. No voices

shouted to Him. Then, Satan arrived to disturb Jesus’ quiet. English Bibles employ the words “desert” or “wilderness” some 300 times. The Hebrew terms utilized for “wilderness” generally refer to areas south, east, and southwest of the cultivated and populated land of Canaan. It covered the Negev, Transjordan, and Sinai. Normally “desert” refers to rocks instead of sand dunes. The wilderness of Israel is almost treeless. Rains are so light that little to no vegetation grows. At times, though, enough rain provides pasturage for the flocks.

Midbar, the most prominent Hebrew term, describes the land where domesticated animals graze and wild animals live. *Midbar* is called the “pastures of the wilderness” (Joel 1:19-20). It can point to grassy lands suitable for grazing sheep and livestock (Ex. 3:1; Ps. 65:12; Joel 2:22) as well as wasteland of rock and sand (Deut. 32:10; Job 38:26-27).

The excerpt above is from the article “The Judean Wilderness” (Winter 2015-2016), which relates to this session. More *Biblical Illustrator* articles are available that relate to this session. See page 7 about *Biblical Illustrator*.

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Our enemy is crafty, but our Lord is greater. If we have repented of sin and trusted in Jesus, we can follow the same strategy He did for overcoming the evil one.

Each week, make yourself available either before or after the session to speak privately with anyone in your group who wants to know more about becoming a Christian. See the article, “Leading Someone to the Greatest Decision of All,” on page 2 for guidance in leading a person to Christ.

Remind group members that **page 2** in the **PSG** offers guidance in how to become a Christian. Encourage believers to consider using this article as they have opportunities to lead others to Christ.



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4 ACTIONS TO IMPROVE YOURSELF AS A TEACHER

BY DWAYNE MCCRARY

Teaching requires years of practice to master. Even an accomplished teacher can improve. The great teachers are the ones who continue to work at fine tuning and developing the skill of teaching. Here are some practical things you can do to continue to grow as a teacher.

1. Keep a teaching journal.

Many college coaches require their athletes to carry a notebook. The athletes are encouraged to record experiences, quotes, and actions to take that will make them a better player and teammate. In the same way, you may find it helpful to create a teaching notebook. After a Bible study group meeting, take some time to record what went well and what did not. Look for things you could have done better. Were the directions you gave clear? How did the questions you asked lead

the group toward a point of action? Did the group chase any rabbits that should have been avoided? How could you have avoided that rabbit?

2. Use different teaching methods.

Most of us get into ruts, using the methods that we like or that feel most comfortable. Chart the teaching methods you use over a three- or four-week time period. List all the methods, organizing them by learning style (verbal, logical/mathematical, visual, kinesthetic/body actions, music, relational, reflection, nature). Note the categories that have been given the least attention over the three to four weeks and look for a way of using a method from that category in the near future.

You may also want to note the number of times you used a particular method during the charted time. Try to create a teaching plan that avoids using that method for one week. This will challenge you to teach in a different way as well.

3. Read at least one book a year on teaching.

Ask school teachers about the books they are being asked to read as a part of their personal development. Review the syllabi from education classes taught at a local college. Scan online booksellers for top sellers in their education section.

Enlist other teachers to read the book with you. Come together and discuss what you learned, what you questioned, and ways the ideas discovered could be used in your groups.

4. Teach a group that makes you uncomfortable.

How would you finish this sentence: “I could never teach _____”? Now you know who to teach in order to grow as a teacher! Teaching preschoolers intimidated me. A couple of years ago, I had the opportunity to help teach a four-year-old class in our church. I was scared to death, but this has been a rewarding experience for me as a teacher. They still intimate me some, but I am getting better at it every week.



The best teachers are those who are always seeking to get better at the craft of teaching. They also realize that the better they become, the more they have to master. God gifts people to teach, but those He gifts have a responsibility to develop the skills that will make them great teachers.

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