

Jesus Fulfills the Law

Lesson Plan Overview

Opening: "Come, let us worship"

Introduction: Discussion of the need to follow rules

Read Text Aloud: Have the students volunteer to read the text aloud or have the students read sections silently.

Activity Tracks:

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity (detailed on the pages that follow) to reinforce the lesson.

- *Basic:* Jesus Fulfills the Law
- *Group:* "We Follow Jesus" Charades
- *Craft:* "Thank You, Jesus" Journal

Closing: The Lord's Prayer

Icon Packets:

Come Bless the Lord:

The Encounter of Our Lord in the Temple
Packet II: Expulsion of the Demons

Teaching Pics

Objective: Students will be able to 1) explain how Jesus kept the Old Covenant perfectly, and 2) state that Jesus fulfills the Law by showing us how to respect God and each other in the New Covenant.

For the Catechist

Units 2 and 3 in this Grade 4 book stressed the idea of promises and the covenant in the Old Testament. This unit presents the New Covenant in Jesus Christ, which was introduced in Lessons 7 and 11. In lesson 13 the students recall the promise of the Messiah who would inaugurate the New Covenant. Jesus' coming in the flesh for all humanity, not just the Israelites, and the revelation of the Trinity at the Theophany (Lesson 14) are the first signs that the New Covenant has come about in Christ.

Lesson 15, this lesson, shows Jesus fulfilling the Law through His family as an infant and consciously as an adult at His temptation in the desert. Subsequent lessons show Jesus' teaching fulfills the Law in another way. Not only does He keep the Law: He transcends or stretches it to its maturity. We are to love as God loves (Lesson 17) and to be people of the Beatitudes (Lesson 18) and the New Commandment (Lesson 19). The New Commandment is illustrated and represented by two signs: the washing of the feet and the Blood of the New Covenant, the Eucharist.

Thus, the lessons in this unit address the signs of the New Covenant: 1) the coming of the Messiah; 2) the universality of the New Covenant (symbolized by the magi); 3) the revelation of the Trinity; 4) our relationship to God as Father; 5) the New Commandment; and 6) the Eucharist. Help the students discover the love God has for all of us as they learn about the New Covenant.

The Temptation of Jesus. The story of the Temptation of Jesus shows the children that even Jesus experienced the temptation from Satan. In that story we learn from Jesus how to reject Satan and all his enticements. That is a valuable lesson for all of us to learn at any age.

Background Reading

(Direct quotations from the sources noted)

Jesus Christ Restores the Divine Likeness to Humanity

"Christ repaired the damage of Adam's sin, 'For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of that one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for many' (Rom 5:15 RSV). Christ, the perfect 'image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creatures' (Col 1:15), restores the divine likeness to humanity when He became 'like his brethren in every respect... yet without sin' (Heb 2:17; 4:15 RSV).

"In the new creation ushered in by Christ, the divine image in humanity is fulfilled. While Christ is the perfect image of God, the Christian is the image of Christ. Our nature in the image of God is affirmed and we are now able to recover the divine likeness. It is now possible to return to the original harmony of life as it was before the fall. We can act from our true human nature after the image and likeness of God. We can choose to give ourselves back to God by the grace of the Spirit. Our journey of life can become, as St. Irenaeus said, a steady 'progress towards a future full of promise.' We can be truly human again because we can soar towards union with God" (*LLI* 25-26).

The Spiritual Warfare

"Those who have decided to lead a spiritual life must realize that they are only at the beginning of a life-long task. St. Paul compared the journey of theosis to a race begun, but not yet completed (cf. Philippians 3:10-15). He depicted himself as straining ahead, in his race for the finish, the prize being the resurrection. While a person may begin with a good resolve, we are all too easily led off the path by a particular sin, a lessening of commitment and even of faith. As Christ warned in the parable of the sower (cf. Matthew 13:19-22), there are many obstacles to stifle the flowering of a mature Christian life.

"Elsewhere St. Paul used the image of a spiritual battle, one which many Eastern writers have taken up as a representation of the struggle to keep the commandments:

'Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.' (Ephesians 6:11-13)

"Not only have we been clothed in the One who has overcome the prince of this world, we have also been charged to continue in our own lives His campaign against the enemy.

"This spiritual warfare is described as a constant struggle, demanding continual watchfulness and unremitting vigilance. The person striving to live according to the Gospel is described in the literature as constantly in an arena in which the devil ceaselessly prowls like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour (cf. 1 Peter 5:8). Images like these may appear extreme, even in contemporary Christian circles, but, like the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, they point to ever-timely realities. There are forces around us and within us which—sometimes dramatically, at other times imperceptibly—can deflect us from our goal. As Christ was tempted to exchange stones for bread, we can be lured to minimize the spiritual life by infatuation with good food, drink, or sensual pleasure. As He was tempted with the wealth and power of all the kingdoms of this world, we can be tempted by the desire for wealth and power in our own worlds. The lure of inflating our own importance parallels Christ's temptation to show Himself as master of His own fate by throwing Himself from the temple" (*LLIII* 64-65).

The Lesson Plan

Opening

Today we are going to sing or say our opening prayer: "Come, let us worship . . ." [Use the prayer page at the end of this lesson. Add it to the song booklet if you are doing this activity.] Do you recognize this prayer? We pray it during the Divine Liturgy

Introduction

Does anyone belong to a baseball or soccer team? What are some other groups to which you belong? What are some of the rules you must follow? Why do you follow them? [Let the children share.] We are also a member of our Church. What Mysteries did we receive when we became a member? (Baptism and Chrismation and Holy Eucharist) As members, what are some things we are expected to do? (Go to church, pray, give alms, fast, help other people)

This year we have learned that God gave the Israelites rules to follow as part of the covenant. What are those rules called? (The Ten Commandments) God also gave them His Law that they were to follow. Today we are going to read about some of the rules that the Israelites promised to follow as a sign of the Covenant. Did Jesus have to follow those rules? (Yes) Why? (He and His family were Israelites.) Jesus and His parents, just like all the other Jewish families, had to follow God's rules.

Let's turn to our lesson to learn more.

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Jesus Fulfills the Law

Many years before Jesus and even before Moses, God had made a covenant with Abraham.



God also said to Abraham, "On your part, you and your descendants after you must keep my covenant throughout the ages. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you that you must keep: every male among you shall be circumcised. . . . that shall be the mark of the covenant between you and me." (Genesis 17:9-10)

When Jesus was a child, His family kept the Old Covenant and observed its laws. And so, when Jesus was eight days old He was circumcised as the Law required. Our Church celebrates the Feast of the Circumcision on January 1 every year to remember how Jesus' family kept this covenant.

Another law in the Old Covenant said that the first son in every family was to be dedicated to God. Mary and Joseph kept this law and brought Jesus to the temple when He was 40 days old. **Read the Gospel of Luke 2:22-24** to hear how they kept this law. We celebrate the Feast of the Encounter on February 2, forty days after the Feast of the Nativity, to remember what happened.

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Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

... Feast of the Encounter on February 2, 40 days after the Feast of the Nativity, to remember what happened. What are some laws from the Old Testament that Jesus followed? (He was circumcised and He was presented at the temple.) What does this show about Jesus and His family? (They followed the Jewish laws as they were required.) From birth Jesus showed us how to follow God's Law.

[Note: Catechists should refer any questions about circumcision to the children's parents.]

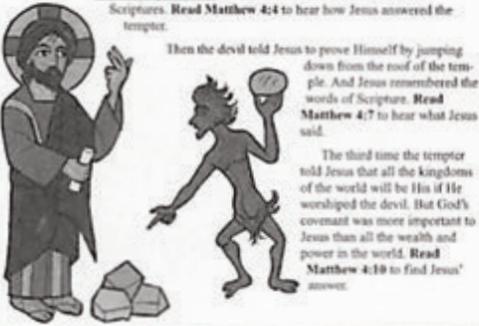
When Jesus was young, His family taught Him to read the Scriptures and to keep the Old Covenant. He came to know the Scriptures so well that His teachings were clear in His mind. After Jesus was baptized, the Gospel tells us that He was tempted to break God's Law. Let's read the story of Jesus' temptation in Matthew 4:1-11.



How long did Jesus fast in the desert? Read Matthew 4:2 to find the answer.

40 days and 40 nights

Because Jesus was hungry, the tempter told Jesus to change the stones into **bread**. But Jesus knew the covenant and the Scriptures. **Read Matthew 4:4** to hear how Jesus answered the tempter.



Then the devil told Jesus to prove Himself by jumping down from the roof of the temple. And Jesus remembered the words of Scripture. **Read Matthew 4:7** to hear what Jesus said.

The third time the tempter told Jesus that all the kingdoms of the world will be His if He worshiped the devil. But God's covenant was more important to Jesus than all the wealth and power in the world. **Read Matthew 4:10** to find Jesus' answer.

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...Read Matthew 4:10 to find Jesus' answer.

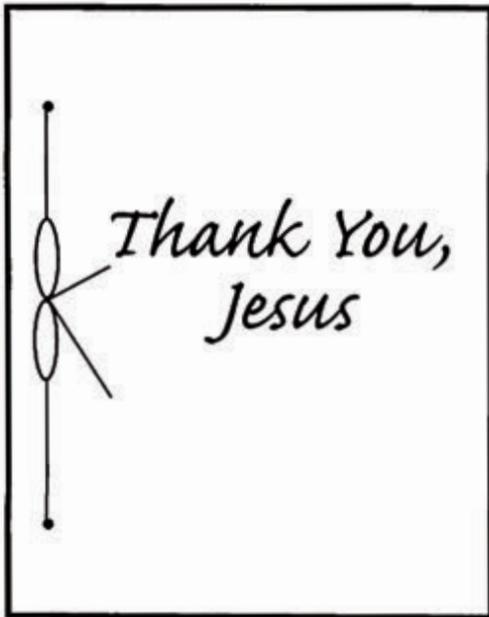
What do you think some people would say if they were promised the kingdoms of the world? Why? Does Satan tempt us too? What are some things he might offer us to keep us away from God? [Let the children share. This could lead to an interesting discussion.]

[Tempter, devil, and Satan are the three names used in the Scripture to identify the one who is tempting Jesus.]

Group: "We Follow Jesus" Charades

Materials: "We Follow Jesus" worksheet duplicated on heavier paper or put on note cards.

Has anyone ever played charades? Today we are going to try to get each other to guess what we are saying "No" to in our charade. We are showing how we are following Jesus by saying "No" just as He did to Satan. Pick a card that has a phrase on it. Act out a scene or action that will let someone guess your phrase. After they guess the words, all of us are going to say, "We say 'No' to _____."



Craft: "Thank You, Jesus" Journal

Materials: Construction paper, white lined paper (10 sheets per student), hole punch, yarn or ribbon (30"), stickers, markers

[Have sample ready to show children.] *We are going to make a personal notebook to write in as if we are sending letters to Jesus. We are adding ten pages for ten letters that we will write. We might not write all of them this year, but you can take them home and continue to write to Jesus even during the summer. Let's make the cover by putting two sheets of construction paper on the top and the bottom of our pile of ten sheets. With the hole punch, put in two holes on the left of the 11" side. Write "Thank You, Jesus" on the front cover and write your name on the back cover. You may decorate it however you want.*

*Let's turn to the first white page. At the top of the page, write the following Scripture: "**But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven**" (Matthew 5:19). Under the Scripture, write what you think Jesus is saying to you and write a prayer in your own words thanking Jesus for telling you that.*

Closing:

Let's pray for our closing prayer the words Jesus taught us to say to Our Father.

Circumcision

Encounter

Temptation

*Tempter,
devil, Satan*

A meeting. When the child Jesus was brought to the Temple, He encountered Simeon and Anna. We remember this meeting on February 2.

The sign of the covenant God made with Abraham and all his descendants. We celebrate Jesus' circumcision on January 1.

The source of evil who tried to get Jesus to worship him instead of God.

A test during which someone tries to convince another person to do something that he or she should not do.

Come, let us worship

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ.
O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who
sing to You. Alleluia.

Melkite
Greek
Catholic
Church

Come, let us worship

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ.
O Son of God, Thou who didst arise from the dead,
save us who sing to Thee. Alleluia.

Romanian
Greek
Catholic
Diocese of
Canton

Come, let us worship

Come, let us worship and bow before Christ. O Son of
from the dead, save us who sing to You.
Alleluia.

Ruthenian
Byzantine
Catholic
Metropolitan
Province

Come, let us worship

Come, let us worship and bow before Christ. O Son of
God, risen from the dead, save us who sing to You.
Alleluia.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Diocese of
St. Josaphat

Come, let us worship

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ. Son of
God, risen from the dead, save us who sing to You.
Alleluia.

Ukrainian
Catholic
Synod

Gossiping

*Yelling at
Anyone*

Shoplifting

Being Lazy

*Cheating
at school*

*Using foul
language*