



DATE(S)

July 23-24, 2022

SERIES AND LESSON TITLE

All In – Week 8

TAKE-HOME POINT (THP)

Don't put your trust in
substitute saviors.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Matthew 4:1-11

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Give any Campus-Specific Announcements

OPENING GAME / GROUP TIME

LARGE-GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY

Summer Insane 2.0

Summer Insane is a collection of wild questions to get students talking and laughing. A scenario slide is shown giving students the option to imagine doing insane summer activities. Have students choose their preferred scenario and share their response with their peers. Make sure you give time for them to imagine, joke, and laugh! This can be done as a whole group with students having to find a new person each time, numbering students off and then putting all those numbers together, etc. No winners – just a fun ice-breaker!

OPENING SMALL GROUP

QUESTIONS

ACTIVITIES

Take attendance and make sure to welcome anyone who is a first-time guest!

What was the highlight of your week?

When you start to feel stressed out or anxious, what is one thing you do that calms you down and brings comfort? (**Leaders Note: Examples: food, being alone, video games, hanging with family or friends, etc.**)

When you're finished (and there's time), pray for our time of worship/singing.

STUFF TO ASK TO UNIQUELY CONNECT THE LESSON TO KIDS' LIVES

STUFF TO DO SO THINGS AREN'T BORING



LARGE-GROUP SCRIPT

THE MESSAGE

"All In" – Week 8 (Jesus In The Desert – Substitute Saviors)

July 23-24, 2022

We are finishing up our "All In" series today with one of the more well-known stories in the Bible. Now some of you may be new to church or faith or the Bible...and that's ok! I want all of us to look at this event as if it's the first time we've ever read it or heard it. In chapter 4 of the Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament, we read about Jesus being tempted in the desert by the devil. Let's read it and then we can break it down a little bit afterward. Check it out!

Matthew 4:1-11 – "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "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.'" Jesus answered him, "It is also written: Do not put the Lord your God to the test." Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him."

Obviously, there's a lot that happens here in just a couple of paragraphs. There are probably a few things that stood out to you. Here's one of the main points I took away from the story: the devil knows exactly how to tempt Jesus. When Jesus was hungry, he tempted him with bread because he knew that Jesus was malnourished – he hadn't eaten for 40 days!. Then, the devil told him to do basically the equivalent of a magic trick; throw himself down from the mountain and have these amazing angels come and save him. Lastly, the devil told Jesus he would give him ultimate power, wealth, and any kingdom he wanted. The devil did this because he knew Jesus was tired and might have been in a weak state of mind.

THE MESSAGE

Except...Jesus didn't fall for ANY OF IT! He stood strong and relied on God. Wow! Jesus knew exactly what to do and how to respond to the devil in every situation. He knew that the things the devil was offering him wouldn't be better than what God could give him. Now, there's a term I want to use today to help us better understand this situation and how it applies to our lives. Here it is: Jesus knew what the devil was offering him were "substitute saviors" or "substitute gods." The Bible calls them "idols." That's what our **THP (Take Home Point)** focuses on today. Here it is!

Don't put your trust in substitute saviors.

Listen...the devil didn't tempt Jesus with things he didn't really care about. I mean, if you haven't eaten or had anything to drink for 40 days, and somebody offered you a new pair of shoes you want, I'm pretty sure you're not going to care about the shoes right then! Instead, the devil tried to tempt Jesus with things that he might actually think twice about.

Sometimes, when we read the Bible, we are in a pretty lucky spot because we know how the Bible ends. We know that ultimately Jesus wins and the devil loses. It's probably easy to read this story and think, "Man, the devil is wasting his time. Jesus is never going to fall for that!" Here's the problem, though: the devil is still very real, and he is still tempting people today. You know who he is trying to tempt now...**YOU AND ME.**

We may not be out in the desert for 40 days and nights, but all of us have weaknesses. If we struggle with our self-image and are always thinking/wishing we had that outfit or those clothes someone else at school has, he will try to make us think that if we actually had those things, we would be happy! If we're always wishing our family had more money, then he may come to us and say, "If you bow down and worship me, I will give you all the money in the world." Maybe we desperately want to be in the popular crowd...the devil may tell us, "Just do whatever they're doing! It's no big deal if they're making bad decisions. Everyone needs friends, right? You don't want to be lonely. You'll be accepted into the cool crowd!" You may gain the approval of people (which in and of itself is not a bad thing), but you might also lose your integrity in the process.

THE MESSAGE

All of these things are substitute saviors. They may not seem like a big deal, but the Bible says an idol (or a substitute savior) is something that takes the place of God or it's something we feel like we need IN ADDITION TO GOD to be happy. Idols aren't always bad things...sometimes they are. They can also be good things like money, food, family, friends, approval from other people, success.

In fact, some of you might be thinking just that: "why can't we have both?" You can have both, but it becomes a problem if you think, "God is not enough for me and therefore I need _____." Well, if you need anything in addition to God to be happy, that's like telling God, "You're not enough for me." Idols are good things that become ultimate things or the "most important" things to us...and whatever that additional thing is actually the substitute savior or "god" in your life.

Think about this – let's just imagine you were like Jesus and you were tempted in the desert for 40 days/nights. What kinds of things would the devil use to tempt you? I think it's easy for us to look at this story and go, "Oh, well I would obviously pick God every time." Are you sure? I think if we were honest with ourselves, each other, and God, there are things in all of our lives that we would think twice about.

(Teacher's Note: Describe a substitute savior in your life (past or present). Why is that tempting to you? When have you turned to this idol instead of God? What did you learn? Tie all of this into a 2-3 minute story or answer.)

If you don't learn anything else in this series, please don't miss this **THP (Take Home Point): Don't put your trust in substitute saviors. if we're going to be ALL IN with Jesus, we need to come to the realization that He is ALL WE NEED.** Have you been looking to substitute saviors and relying on them in your life? Have you realized today that all you need is God? If that's you, and you've never made the decision to be ALL IN with God and you would like to take the first step in becoming a Christian, I want to help you do that right now.

(Teacher's Note: Move into Gospel presentation)



CLOSING GROUP TIME

CLOSING SMALL GROUP

QUESTIONS

***Leader's Note: Make sure to have some Bibles for the students to use.

What was the THP (Take Home Point) today and why was that important during the message?

Who can give us a short recap of Jesus being tempted by the devil in the desert? How did Jesus respond to the temptations offered by the devil?

If you were to look at your own life, are there any possible "substitute saviors" that you turn to instead of God? If so, what is one action step you can take to change this habit?

How will the THP (Take Home Point) help you to live differently this week? Be specific.

How can this group pray for you this week?

ACTIVITIES

Celebrate any student(s) being baptized today!

This is officially the end of the 2021-2022 school year! Make sure to tell your students how much you've enjoyed being with them this year! ***All grades LEVEL UP next weekend: July 29-31!

After your group is finished with your discussion, close in prayer together!



PREP NEEDS

SMALL-GROUP SUPPLIES

Some Bibles for students to share during group discussion
Pen/paper for SOAP study (optional)

LARGE-GROUP SUPPLIES

Stupid Video of the Week
Message script
Message slides

AUDIO/VISUAL NEEDS

Pro Presenter or Playlister

