



On your marks

The three temptations faced by Jesus in the desert both define his future ministry and the way of the cross, as well as challenge us as to the best way to make a difference in this world for the better. This storytelling idea could be used for a school assembly, a Messy Church celebration, within an all-age worship service or with a children's group at the beginning of Lent.

Get set

You will need:

- a blow-up globe
- a roll of bandage

The Bible story can be found in Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13. There is a retelling of this story in The Barnabas Children's Bible (story 256).

Go!

A way to tell the story

Reveal the blow-up globe and proceed to blow it up.

Twirl it a few times and ask everyone to suggest places (countries and continents) to visit and explore globally... then find them (or pretend to) on the globe.

What an amazing world! So many places, people and things to explore and experience.

But just a minute... *at which point you need to stop, look a bit startled and then start looking more closely and actually putting your ear to the globe more closely and even feeling some parts of the globe curiously... what's this?*

- This part is melting (*the ice caps*) - it's all slippery!
- This part is getting too hot... ouch!
- I can hear babies crying for food here (*an area of famine in Africa*)
- I can hear the sound of fighting here (*perhaps in the Middle East*)
- .. it's wet here - there's flooding (*mention somewhere currently in the news*)
- This bit is very crowded and the people look very sad (*link briefly to any overseas experience you may have had*)
- This part is shaking (*make the globe shake*)... it must be an earthquake... oh no, people's homes are falling down...

What an amazing world... but - *at this point let the air out of the globe and watch it deflate slowly*



- it's not in a good condition. Perhaps there's more to do than just visit and explore it... perhaps we need to help to mend the world as well? But what could we do?

Take some suggestions - for example, send money to a charity, stop wasting food, save power and water, stop polluting the world, and so on.

It's going to be hard work to try to restore the globe to its proper shape... it will take all our breath and energy...

Blow the globe back into shape... making a meal of it and inviting everyone to pretend to blow as well, to help you. Then look exhausted... and then shocked, as you listen and look again.

Oh dear the bad stuff is still happening! Perhaps we should ask God for some good ideas of what to do. I wonder what Jesus would do.

Actually, Jesus did once face this very question about how to rescue the world. There's a story about it in the Bible... in Matthew 4 and Luke 4.

Open up your Bible and look.

Now let me see. The devil came and spoke to Jesus. Jesus was very hungry like lots of people in the world today. So, did he make huge quantities of bread to feed the hungry? Now that would be a good idea! (*Get everyone to agree.*)

WHAT? JESUS SAID 'NO' TO THAT!

Let me see. The devil took Jesus up a high tower and told him to jump off and perform a spectacular party trick. So, did he use his power to perform a big miracle? Now that would be a good idea! (*Get everyone to agree.*)

WHAT? JESUS SAID 'NO' TO THAT TOO!

Let me see. The devil showed Jesus the whole world and invited him to join forces to conquer every kingdom. So, did he get a big army together and stop all the wars by military superiority and then take over as a super king? Now that would be a good idea! (*Get everyone to agree.*)

WHAT? JESUS SAID 'NO' TO THAT TOO!

So what did Jesus do then?

What's this?

Reveal a bandage from inside the back page of the Bible and look puzzled for a moment.

Oh, I know what Jesus did.



Wrap the bandage around the world with a horizontal band around the equator and a vertical band from pole to pole to give a cross shape.

Jesus battled with all the bad stuff of the world and took it to the cross with him. But Christians believe Jesus came back to life again (*unbandage the world*). So, Jesus can help us each, one by one, make a difference in this world for the better. The Bible says God has a job for everyone to do, to mend this hurting world.

One of Jesus' friends put it this way: *God loved the world so much that he didn't want it to stay spoiled and be destroyed, so he sent Jesus - that's the way everything will be saved!* Hurray!

We aren't here just to be tourists or explorers but world-changers. And God wants you to be involved in this amazing rescue plan.

A prayer idea

Toss the globe to various people, asking them to call out a country or the names of people they know in different parts of the world. When a place or a person is named, the one who has the globe should hold it high and everyone should pause for a moment for a short prayer, asking Jesus to be close and to make a difference for the better through his people in those places.

A suggestion for a song

An obvious choice for a song would be 'He's got the whole world in his hands' - and you could include the names of local places or people in the lines of the verses.

Another choice would be John Hardwick's well-known version of 'For God so loved the world' - for more details, see his clip on [YouTube](#)