

**Matthew 4:1 ¶ Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.**

**Matthew 4:2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.**

Mark's gospel makes it clear that Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil immediately after His baptism.

*Mark 1:11–13 “And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And **immediately** the Spirit drivoeth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan”*

The Greek for the word “tempt” states, “to test...scrutinize, entice...examine, go about, prove...” Thinking from a human perspective, the man Jesus needed to prove He was ready to begin His ministry; and I think that testing was for His benefit—not the Father's. There is nothing we can “prove” to the Father that He does not already know. I also think that there are many times that the Father allows things in our lives for that very same reason.

It is important to note that this time of testing involved actual temptations to sin; the devil appealed to both His flesh and His pride. Paul Van Noy notes: Jesus was tempted from without—not within. He had no sin nature.

It is also important to note that Satan personally confronted Jesus just as he confronted man in the Garden of Eden. I am sure that he hoped to be as successful with the man Jesus as he was with man in Eden. He knew that Jesus was the seed of the woman that God had prophesied would destroy him.

*Genesis 3:14–15 “And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”*

I am sure that Satan spent a period of time observing the man and the woman in the garden before determining an opportune time to tempt them with his deceit and lies. As in the garden, after watching Jesus fast for forty days and nights, Satan decided this was the opportune time to approach Him.

Matthew makes a point of the fact that Jesus was hungry, and the following verse will reveal that Satan uses this weakness as his first point of attack.

Chuck Smith provides an interesting note about fasting: “They say that after five days you lose the sense of hunger when you go on a prolonged fast. And that you do not experience hunger again until you actually start to starve to death. That usually comes between the thirty-fifth and the fortieth day that you start getting hungry. And they say that when you start getting hungry again, it's vitally important that you eat, because now you are starving to death and if you don't get some nutrition you will soon die.”

**Matthew 4:3** And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

**Matthew 4:4** But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Temptation #1 appealed to the flesh. Satan approaches with an implication that Jesus just might not be the true Son of God; just as with Adam and Eve, he tried to get Jesus to question what God had said (at His baptism). He went on to remind Jesus that this would be easy to prove, however, if He would just command the stones before Him to turn to bread to appease His hunger. Jesus did not hesitate with His answer; He quotes scripture.

*Deuteronomy 8:3* "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live."

I believe Jesus had His mind stayed on His Father and was sure of His identity in the Father. He knew that His Father would not let Him starve and that obedience to the Father's word was far more necessary in light of eternity.

**Matthew 4:5** Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

**Matthew 4:6** And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

**Matthew 4:7** Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Satan immediately continues his attack. This time he takes Jesus to the highest point on the temple in Jerusalem and urges Him to prove Himself by jumping off. Jesus had answered his first challenge with scripture, so he uses scripture too.

*Psalms 91:11-12* "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Jesus once again was ready with an answer. He recognized that Satan was using scripture for his own purposes. God's word never gives us a license to use His word for selfish purposes. If Jesus had jumped, he would not have been giving glory to His Father; He would only have been giving in to pride. He would have disqualified Himself as the sacrifice for our sin. His answer was once again from scripture, but within the right context.

*Deuteronomy 6:16* "Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah."

So, how did the people tempt God at Massah?

*Exodus 17:7 "And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?"*

After experiencing so many miraculous evidences of God's presence among them, they once again questioned His faithfulness. Jesus quoted this scripture as an affirmation of His faith in His Father to provide for Him.

**Matthew 4:8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;**

**Matthew 4:9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.**

**Matthew 4:10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.**

Satan is immediately ready with one last temptation. He takes Jesus up to a very high mountain to show Him all the kingdoms of the world in all their glory. Is there a mountain on earth from which one can see all the kingdoms of the world? No. The scripture isn't specific, however, where this mountain is; I believe probably somewhere in the heavens.

Why the point of taking Jesus to a point where he could see? Because it is much easier to refuse a temptation when rooted in what we cannot see. All video and print marketers operate on the principal of making what they have to market appealing to the eyes.

Satan offers to deliver the kingdoms of the world to Jesus now (without having to suffer the cross) if He will just fall down and worship him. Luke reminds us that Satan was offering to give what was rightfully his to give. When man (Adam and Eve) chose to sin against God and listen to Satan, he basically abdicated the position of authority over earth with which God had entrusted him.

*Luke 4:6 "And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it."*

John reiterates this truth. The following quotes are from other translations that are more clearly worded than the KJV.

*1 John 5:19 "We know that we are from God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the Evil One." (CJB)*

*1 John 5:19 "We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one." (NIV)*

*1 John 5:19 "We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." (NAS)*

Once again the Lord is ready with His answer from scripture and commands

Satan to leave Him.

*Exodus 20:3–5 “Thou shalt have no other gods before me....Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them....”*

*Deuteronomy 5:7–9 “Thou shalt have none other gods before me....Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them....”*

Jesus had no doubts about the love and faithfulness of God the Father or about His purpose in life. He was content to serve the Father in love and obedience and wait to inherit the kingdoms of this world in the Father’s time. He wasn’t tempted by Satan’s ploy to get Him to settle for something less because He was yielded to doing the Father’s will.

We live in such a culture of instant gratification. How often has the enemy or the flesh gotten us to make choices that bring gratification “now” without regard to future and/or eternal consequences?

One other note—We cannot use the word of God to fight the attacks of the enemy if we don’t know the word of God. As the psalmist declared, we need to hide it away in our hearts, to help us avoid sin.

*Psalms 119:11 “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”*

**Matthew 4:11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.**

Important to note is that the devil had to leave once commanded by Jesus who was indwelt by the Holy Spirit. We are empowered in the same way.

*James 4:7 “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”*

Once Jesus had successfully completed His time of testing, the Father sent His angels to minister to His Son.

Although we probably are unaware, I believe He sends His angels to minister to us sometimes when we have endured temptation and/or have physical needs.

**Matthew 4:12 ¶ Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;**

**Matthew 4:13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:**

**Matthew 4:14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,**

**Matthew 4:15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;**

**Matthew 4:16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.**

Sometime after His temptation, Jesus heard that John had been put into prison; so He decided to head to the region of the Galilee (by the sea). David Guzik provides some interesting insight about the Galilee.

- “In an area of about 60 by 30 miles, Josephus says that there were some 204 villages with none having less than 15,000 people. That gives a population of more than 3 million for the region.
- Galilee was predominately Gentile in its population, but with a large number of Jewish cities and citizens. Also, Galilee was known as an incredibly fertile region. Many successful farms took advantage of the good soil.”

It seems that the end of the ministry of John prompted Jesus to begin extending the reaches of His ministry. Jesus left Nazareth to go and live in the coastal city of Capernaum that was on the border of the lands belonging to the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali. As we will hear many times throughout Matthew, this move was in fulfillment of prophecy.

*Isaiah 8:22–9:2 “And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness. Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.”*

In context, Isaiah is talking about a time when the people of these two tribes who were the first to suffer God’s judgment at the hands of the Assyrians would be the first to experience a great light that would shine hope for the future. Matthew declares that Jesus is the fulfillment of that prophecy. He is the One that will provide salvation from sins and once again revive hope for the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth.

**Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

Once He moved to Capernaum, Jesus began preaching the need to repent because the kingdom of heaven was at hand. The NIV Commentary points out that John preached this same message from an Old Testament perspective of the coming Messiah. Jesus, however, preached the same message having been identified by John as the coming Messiah who would establish the kingdom.

**Matthew 4:18 ¶ And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.**

**Matthew 4:19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.**

**Matthew 4:20 And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him.**

**Matthew 4:21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the***

**son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.**

**Matthew 4:22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.**

Mark affirms Matthew in recording the call of the first four disciples—Peter, Andrew, James and John. As Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he called out to two fishermen (Peter and Andrew) casting their net. This tells me that they must have been fairly close to the shore. All He has to say is, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” I liked this quote I found from Augustine, “They did not lay aside their nets but changed them!”

As they continued walking, Jesus saw James and John, the sons of Zebedee, mending nets with their father. As soon as Jesus invited James and John to join them, they immediately left working with their father to become His disciples as well. Mark lets us know that they didn’t leave their father without help; their business was large enough that he had hired servants.

*Mark 1:20 “And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.”*

Burton Coffman had an interesting quote comparing evangelism and fishing: “...skill is required; patience is essential; cooperation is helpful; methods vary with conditions; results cannot be accurately predicted; and, under some situations, an attractive bait is absolutely necessary.”

The fact that they immediately stopped what they were doing to come and follow Jesus causes me to think that their immediate compliance was based on their previous fellowship with Him as recorded by John.

*John 1:35–42 “Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.”*

It makes sense to me that John was most likely the other of the two disciples of John the Baptist that followed Jesus that day. I am also reminded that James and John were probably cousins of Jesus and that their father probably supported their decision if my reasoning is correct. Following is an excerpt from my journal on John.

I was listening to Jon Courson recently, and he mentioned that not only was John the Baptist Jesus' cousin, so was the Apostle John. I had never heard that before and decided to do some research as to scripture that would back up that statement. I found that a pretty convincing case could be made to support that conclusion. John seems to identify four women at the cross:

1. Mary the mother of Jesus
2. Mary's sister
3. Mary wife of Cleopas
4. Mary Magdalene

*John 19:25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.*

Mark 15:40 identifies three women: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the less and Joses, and Salome. *"There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome...."*

Matthew 4:21 Identifies Zebedee as the father of James and John. *"And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them."*

Matthews 27:56 identifies the women at the cross as Mary Magdalene, Mary wife of Cleopas, and the mother of Zebedee's children. *"Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children."* This would seem to be referencing Salome as Mary's sister when compared to John 19:25.

Though not conclusive, the evidence is pretty strong. This actually makes a lot of sense to me in understanding some other things in scripture. I would assume that there would be a close relationship between Mary and her sister's family. It might explain why John and his brother James and their friend Peter would naturally form the inner circle of disciples. Maybe John was the beloved disciple because of a special connection they formed as cousins. It especially would explain why "the mother of Zebedee's children" would think she could approach Jesus with the request that her sons be given places at His side in His kingdom (Matthew 10:21) since she was His aunt and might assume family should be given preference as to those positions. Finally, it also makes sense in light of Jesus' dying request for John to take care of His mother—John's aunt.

**Matthew 4:23 ¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.**

**Matthew 4:24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.**

**Matthew 4:25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.**

Matthew makes a summary statement of what follows. Jesus went all about the Galilee teaching in the synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom. So what is the difference in teaching and preaching? I think preaching is declaring the truth about God and His word and teaching is helping people to understand that truth and how to apply it to their lives.

Jesus also affirmed His message and provided evidence of the fact that He was the promised Messiah by miraculously healing people of all kinds of sickness and disease. These miracles evidently caused the news of Him to spread throughout all of Syria. They began bringing people from everywhere to be healed. He healed people of diseases, torments, demonic possession, those who weren't possessed of a right mind, and those that were paralyzed. It wasn't long before great multitudes of people from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the Jordan were following Him.