

# “Follow the Leader”

## Matthew Chapter 4

Hebrews 4:15 “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”

Mat 4:1

### 1) Jesus being Led by the Spirit vs 1-2

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

- The beginning of Jesus’ ministry was first in relative obscurity through the birth of some common simple people Mary and Joseph. The second part of His beginning is a WILDERNESS and TEMPTATION.
  - So You Want To Be In Ministry?
  - Don’t despise small beginnings. Our Lord’s journey began there.
  - Zechariah 4:10 NLT “Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin”
  - This is a remarkable contrast Jesus Baptism to Jesus Temptation:
    - Then the cool waters of the Jordan; now the barren wilderness.
    - Then the huge crowds; now solitude and silence.
    - Then the Spirit rests like a dove; now the Spirit drives Him into the wilderness.
    - Then the voice of the Father saying “Beloved Son”; now the hiss of Satan the tempter.
    - Then anointed; now attacked.
    - Then the water of baptism; now the fire of temptation.
    - First the heavens opened; now hell. (Guzek)
- Led up by the Spirit.
  - James 1:13-15 “Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for **God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.**”
  - The Spirit led Him to the wilderness. This part of Jesus’ journey is not an unfortunate happenstance but the ordained will of God. (Holy Spirit) Also notice the Holy Spirit didn’t tempt Him. The Holy Spirit led him to the battleground.
    - Mark 1:12 says that the Spirit DROVE Jesus into the Wilderness. The picture is of the strong intent. This was the place for Him to be and no other.
  - The devil tempted Him. The first mention of the devil in the New Testament and we see his primary attack. Temptation.
- Is it a Sin to be tempted?
  - James 1:12 “**Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.**”
    - We are to endure temptation, not give in to it. Enduring it and being victorious over it is the means of approval for the crown of life.
  - James 1:14-15 “**But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.**”
    - The failure to endure is the act of allowing lust to be added to the temptation.
    - The mixture of temptation and our own lust produces sin. Temptation is not sin by itself.
    - Lust - a strong emotional desire or craving; usually associated but not exclusive to sexual desire. Can also lust for power, things, attention,
  - Martin Luther speaking on temptation, “**You cannot stop a bird from flying over your head but you can stop him from making a nest in your hair.**”
  - 2 Corinthians 10:2-5 “**For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,**”
  - What is the difference between Temptation and Trial? The same Greek word is used for both. The difference is found in the source. The Lord may allow us to be tested to pass a test. The devil may tempt us to fail.
    - The passing of the test is only found by being led of the Spirit. Our flesh cannot find this victory.
- We see here in this chapter and in previous chapters that the Messiah is going through great efforts to be a King who is not aloof. He is not out of touch with you and me.

Mat 4:2

And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

- The attack of the enemy is vicious. The Lord fasting, and after 40 days, when weakness is evident. The enemy doesn’t show compassion and pull his punches when we are weak. This is when he comes and attacks the most.

Mat 4:3

1 John 2:16-17 "For all that is in the world, the *lust of the flesh* and the *lust of the eyes* and the *boastful pride of life*, is not from the Father, but is from the world. *The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.*"

## 2) The 1<sup>st</sup> Temptation Reported vs 3-4

**HUNGER - BASIC NEED**  
**Lust of the flesh**

These three temptations are not the only temptations Jesus underwent. These are the only three mentioned. (Hebrews 4:15 *One who has been **tempted in all things** as we are, yet without sin*)

And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

Mat 4:4

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

- Satan being sarcastic is asking Jesus to prove what the spiritual realm already knows. He is the Son of God. Jesus didn't have to tell him who He was.
- The Temptation - To perform miracle for selfish goal. Turning Stones Into Bread.
  - We have already learned that Jesus was hungry. The temptation was using that weak point for something more hideous. Satan was asking Jesus to use the power of God for selfishness.
- Jesus quickly establishes the pattern to not just stand in a defensive position but to take the offense in the battle. HE QUOTES THE WORD OF GOD. "*It is Written...*"
  - He doesn't stand on His own strength. The Word of God is His Firm Foundation.
  - Luke 6:47-49 "Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: *he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who has heard and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great.*"
- Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3. Jesus doesn't fall into the trap of using his ability, talents or gifts for his own purposes. We need to understand that we too will be tempted to rush to fix or accomplish something verses waiting on God.
  - But what is very important to realize is that quoting scripture doesn't grant the victory but OBEYING the scripture. (in verse 6 Satan quotes scripture)

Mat 4:5

## 3) The 2<sup>nd</sup> Temptation Reported vs 5-7

**SAFETY - BASIC INSTINCT**  
**Pride of Life**

Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,

Mat 4:6

and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON *their* HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"

Mat 4:7

Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

- Satan knows the scripture. He quotes it. But he will twist it and manipulate with it. In this case he quotes Psalm 91 and leaves out something very important.
- Psalm 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.*"
  - He leaves out the fact that Jesus is to be kept **in the way** of righteousness.
  - The Scripture does not say that angels will protect Him no matter what he does. He would not have been protected if He had done a foolish act to prove some selfish point.
  - Satan tempts him to have a dramatic public demonstration of the Father's approval rather than the dedicated life as a demonstration His love for the Father.
  - That same temptation is upon us. To have others see an anointing on us rather than the simplicity of a devoted life.
- This is the reason that we study the entire Scripture verse by verse. Anybody can take a verse or partial verse, remove it from the context and make it say what they want. We need to be students of the Bible so we can rightly divide the Word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)
- Jesus again quotes the Word. This time Deuteronomy 6:16.
  - Jesus knew it was wrong to test the Lord's love seeding a spectacular demonstration.
  - Same is true for us. He has already showed us a spectacular demonstration of His Love.

Mat 4:8

#### 4) The 3<sup>rd</sup> Temptation Reported vs 8-11

GLORY - BASIC LUST  
Lust of the Eyes

Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;

Mat 4:9

and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

Mat 4:10

Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

- Satan finally tempts Him with Kingdoms and Glory.
- It is interesting Satan is implying that they are his to give. Jesus doesn't argue with him.
  - Genesis 1:28-31 God made the earth and all it contained. Then he gave it to man to rule, subdue it. Man then had authority of the earth.
  - Genesis 3 Adam willingly yielded to Satan in effect giving authority to him. The evidence is man and earth now has taken the form of the authority it is under. Satan is a fallen being, thus so is man and earth. Satan gained authority over the earth.  
2 Corinthians 4:4 "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving"
- This has been Satan's goal from his fall.
  - He said in Isaiah 14:12-14 "How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'" *(highlighted)*
  - But the verse goes on to say Isaiah 14:15 "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to (hell) Sheol, to the recesses of the pit."
- But the Father had a plan to restore authority to its proper place. It is called REDEMPTION. But it involved "a perfect / unblemished" substitute to buy back all rule and authority. It involved a cross.
- The glory that Jesus would receive would come from the work done at Calvary. The temptation was to receive glory from some other means. This is a short cut to glory but it would short circuit the plan of the Father.
- The temptation upon us is the same. A lust for glory will hinder the will of God for our lives.
- Jesus quotes the Word. Deuteronomy 6:13
  - At this point as Jesus submits to the will of the Father He can dismiss Satan. Not only are the words true in the life of Jesus; His actions reflect the truth. He will only worship the Lord God

Mat 4:11

Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

- James 4:7 "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."
  - Worshipping the Lord God only will give the power and authority to resist and cause devils to flee.
- James 4:8 "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."
  - God will draw near as we commit to Him and even angels will minister.

Through this section we see:

- Temptations are lies.
- To resist temptations we need to know the Word of God.
- We do not need to call down angels for help or fire or lightning.
- Victory is realized by submission to and speaking the Word of God.
- We will be "ministered" to after the battle is won by God's Word

Mat 4:12

#### 5) Jesus Ministers in Galilee vs 12-25

Fulfillment of prophecy

Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee;

Mat 4:13

and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali.

Mat 4:14

This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet:

Mat 4:15

"THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI, BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES—

Mat 4:16

"THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT LIGHT, AND

## THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED."

- The Gospel of John indicates ministry done by Jesus in the south baptizing in the Jordan. (John 1:19; 3:22 and 4:1-2)
- It was the event of John, the Baptist's arrest that prompted Jesus to enter Galilee where truly began ministering as a preacher and teacher.
- The Land of Galilee was rich fertile land and densely populated. Josephus says that there were 204 villages with no less than 15000 people in each. More importantly it was an area that was mostly gentile.
- Jesus left his home of Nazareth in Galilee and settled in Capernaum in Galilee
  - Both Peter and Matthew had homes in Capernaum (Mark 1:21+29; Matthew 9:1 +9-10)
- Jesus ministered in this area rather than in Jerusalem... You would think the Messiah would minister in the City of God. No, He ministered where the people were. Jesus went to the people. He didn't expect the people to come to him.
- This fulfilled the scripture **Isaiah 9:1-2** Due to the Gentile influence it was in darkness compared to Jerusalem. Jesus brought light to those who were sitting in darkness.

Mat 4:17

### Jesus' Message

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

- Jesus first message was not original. This was John, the Baptist's message.
- Jesus first message was simple.
  - **Preached** - Proclaimed Announced. It wasn't a discussion time
  - **Repent** - what was proclaimed was a need to turn, a detour from the current path
    - \*\*\* A consistent message from John and Jesus
  - **Kingdom of Heaven** - some try to make a difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. But this was a simple use of synonymous terms due to the Jewish custom of not writing or speaking the most holy name of God.
- It is interesting that John preached this message. Herod tried to stop the gospel and another comes with the same message. **The Gospel Will Not Be Stopped From Being Preached.**
- Look at the Beginning of Jesus' Ministry
  - **Obscurity** - born in a stable, raised in Nazareth, Not really heard of for 30 years (except once at 12)
  - **Tempted by the Devil** - after a great confirmation moment (baptism and God's voice) he is tempted in a wilderness.
  - **Waiting** - Some believe it was close to a year between the baptism and the Galilean ministry.
  - **Walking in Others Footsteps** - His message and ministry wasn't original.Eventually Jesus will be more than one of a kind. He will be the One and Only.

Mat 4:18

### Calling of Simon (Peter), Andrew, James and John

Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.

Mat 4:19

And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Mat 4:20

Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.

Mat 4:21

Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.

Mat 4:22

Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

- According to John 1:35-42 (after Jesus' baptism) and Luke 5:3 Jesus had met some of these men before. But this is the calling to follow full time.
- Fishermen could be prosperous men. In Zebedee's case they had boats and hired servants
  - Mark 1:20 "Immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him."
- **There are five important lessons in this calling**
  1. God calls Workers not Idlers - These men were busy doing something.
  2. God wants IMMEDIATE response - Immediately they left to follow (Matthew 8:21-22)
  3. God knows it will cost something - 2 left their nets, and 2 left their boats
  4. God calls them to be followers not leaders - our indoctrination compels most of us to be

- leaders not followers
5. God changes them for His purpose - from fishers of fish to fishers of men

Mat 4:23

**Description of His Ministry**

Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

Mat 4:24

The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them.

Mat 4:25

Large crowds followed Him from Galilee and *the* Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and *from* beyond the Jordan.

- From following in John the Baptist's footsteps with a simple ministry and simple message, Jesus' ministry expands.
- From preaching to teaching in the synagogue.
  - Notice that He did not leave the preaching the kingdom when He got better gigs in the synagogues.
- From baptizing to healing.
  - All manner of diseases as well as demonic deliverance
- From calling a few to follow to large crowds following
- From Nazareth to all Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the Jordan.
  - John 1:46 "*Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."*
  - It sure can!

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