

“Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.” **John 5:19**

Matthew 4

Chapter 4 Jesus declares and demonstrates his faith. This is the beginning of a revelation of the Kingdom that Jesus and John were preaching.

II. The Kingdom is revealed (4:1-10:42)

A. In Principle (4:1-7:27)

1. The Messiah declares his faith. (4:1-11)

a. The Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness where he will confess his faith in the face of great temptation. (4:1)

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

- The first experience of Jesus after his ordination into ministry is a test of his ability to resist the message of this world's controlling force.

b. The devil tries to lead Jesus into worldliness.

- These temptations were probably spiritual experiences expressed in physical metaphors. They represent the three great strongholds of worldliness. More specifically, we should view them as Satan's attempt to keep Jesus from the cross as God's plan for redemption.
- The temptations progress from the most basic needs for physical survival to the more sophisticated needs for power and position.

1. The temptation to discount the Word of God. (the lust of the flesh). “I believe that the Word of God is my source of true life.” (4:2-4)

2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 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.*'"

- The temptation to reduce life to the tending of physical needs and appetites is the root of the lusts of the flesh.
- Jesus makes it clear that his life is found in an allegiance to God's Word even when it means personal physical sacrifice.

2. The temptation to discount the will of God. (the pride of life). “I believe that the will of God is His will not mine.” (4:5-7)

5 Then the devil *took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and *said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, ' *He will give His angels charge concerning You*'; and ' *On {their} hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.*'" 7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, ' *You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.*'"

- The temptation to try to direct God according to our vision and mind is the root of the pride of life. Jesus confesses that he will never presume upon his Father's will. (Matt.7:21, 10:19-20, 12:50, 26:39, Jn.15:10)

3. The temptation to discount the way of God. (the lust of the eye). "I believe that the way of God is best." (4:8-10)

8 Again, the devil *took Him to a very high mountain, and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus *said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, ' *You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.*'"

- The temptation to see things superficially and to allow good ends to justify carnal means is the root of the lust of the eye.
- Jesus confesses that both the means and the ends belong to God.

c. Angels encourage Jesus. (4:11)

11 Then the devil *left Him; and behold, angels came and {began} to minister to Him.

- Angels are messengers as is Satan. The angels ministry was probably the counterpart of what Satan was trying to do – reinforce Kingdom values in contrast to the world's values.
- Note that God's presence is seen at the beginning and at the end of this experience. First He leads Jesus into a hostile environment and afterward God ministers to Him.
- God put Christ (and us) in places where He must say "NO!"
- It was only **after** Jesus said "NO" to Satan three times, that God begins to minister to Him.

2. The Messiah demonstrates his faith. (4:12-25)

a. He fulfills God's Word by bringing life and light to dark places. (4:12-16)

12 Now when He heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; 13 and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. 14 {This was} to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, 15 "*The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles--16 The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, And to those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, Upon them a light dawned.*"

- The end of John's ministry marked the beginning of Jesus' ministry. The retreat into Galilee (a spiritual wilderness) is emphasized in the next three paragraphs and stands in contrast to "being led up" into the physical wilderness vs.1
- While Jesus resists the devil's temptation to lead him into worldliness, Jesus willingly enters the world to be a light to those low in the cultural food chain.

b. He shows God's power by distancing himself from the world's power. (4:17-22)

17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 18 And 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. 19 And He *said to them, "Follow Me,

and I will make you fishers of men." 20 And they immediately left the nets, and followed Him. 21 And 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. 22 And they immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

- The call of a few key men who would go into all the world with the Christian message reveals key values in the Kingdom of God – those who “are not”, will confound the powers that be (I Cor. 1:18-31).

c. He wins the world by dismantling Satan’s strongholds. (4:23-25)

23 And {Jesus} was going about in 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. 24 And the news about Him went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them. 25 And great multitudes followed Him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and {from} beyond the Jordan.

- Jesus’ healing was an important part of his ministry in that it reveals his ability to defeat the curse of a fallen world and give hope to those who suffer in it.

Insights and Lessons from this chapter

- The temptation of Jesus tells us a lot about Satan’s methods in our own spiritual warfare.
- We also see the life of Jesus as an integrated and coordinated life where convictions, confession, and conduct all match up. This is the pattern that we should also seek to follow.
- A question that we must answer is this – How is Satan trying to distract us from the way of the Kingdom?