

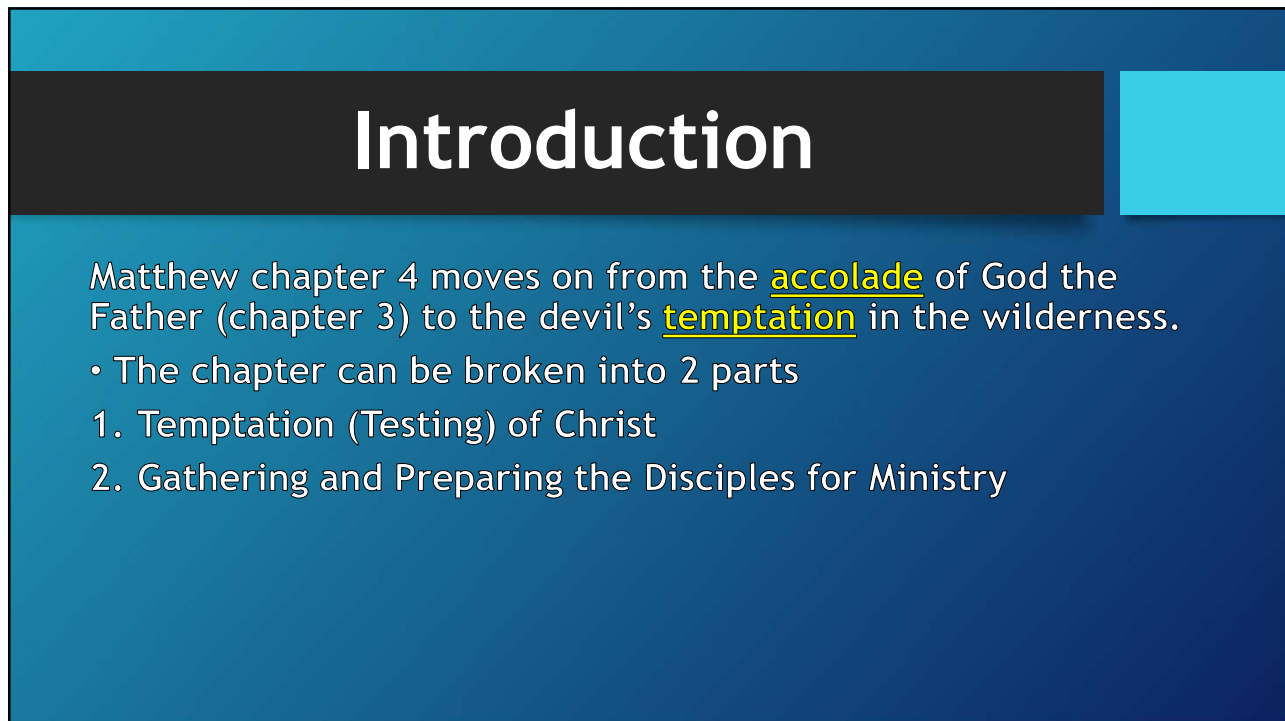
The Gospel of Matthew

Chapter 4

Message 5

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Introduction

Matthew chapter 4 moves on from the accolade of God the Father (chapter 3) to the devil's temptation in the wilderness.

- The chapter can be broken into 2 parts
 1. Temptation (Testing) of Christ
 2. Gathering and Preparing the Disciples for Ministry

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Temptation of Christ

The Lord was in the wilderness fasting for 40 days.

- In a 40 day fast, the body initially utilizes stored glycogen. Within a few days, this glycogen is used up.
- After this the body will breakdown fats and protein for energy. These fats and proteins are usually located in essential body parts, such as the heart and muscles.
- After 40 days of fasting the Lord would have been in weakened physical state.
- Rule of 3's.

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Temptation of Christ

It is in this physically weakened state of hunger that the Lord is presented with 3 tests.

- The testing of Christ, the "Last Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45), is best understood when compared to the "first man", Adam.
- Adam was tempted in a garden where he was lord of creation, with freedom to eat of all but one tree. Yet Christ was tempted in the wilderness in a state of catabolic hunger.
- The devil's one objective in the threefold temptation was to INDUCE CHRIST TO ACT FOR HIMSELF, independent of His Father's will.

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Temptation of Christ

40 in the Bible is the number of PROBATION.

- Each time we have this number presented to us there is a test applied under the circumstances that the Lord permits.
- For example, the children of Israel were 40 years in the wilderness. They were tested on many occasions and seemed to learn little. (Num. 21:4-9)
- Again, Moses was on the mount for 40 days. At the same time the people were tested. They fell into idolatry.
- But our Lord was tested by His circumstances and NO SIN was found.

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40 Days in Scripture

40 days occurs 10 times in the Old Testament

1. Gen. 7:12 Rained for 40 days.
2. Gen. 8:6 Noah opened a window 40 days after the ark came to rest
3. Gen. 50:3 Took 40 days to embalm Israel (Jacob) in Egypt
4. Ex. 24:18 Moses fasted 40 days on Mt. Sinai, received the Law (10 Com.)
5. Ex. 34: 28 Moses fasted a 2nd 40 days, interceding for Israel's sin (10 Com.)
6. Num. 13:25 40 days to spy out the land
7. 1Sam. 17:16 40 days the Philistine came out against the Army of Israel
8. 1Kig. 19:8 Elijah went 40 days (on God's food) from wilderness to Mt. Horeb
9. Jon. 3:4 Nineveh's overthrow predicted in 40 days.
10. Ezk. 4:6 After 390 days on his left side, Ezekiel lay 40 days on his right side

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40 Days in Scripture

40 days occurs twice times in the NT

1. Matt. 4:2 Lord fasted, and was tested, for 40 days in the wilderness
2. Act. 1:3 Lord appeared, via infallible proofs, for 40 days after His resurrection

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Temptation of Christ

In all 3 temptations, the Lord responds with scripture, “*it is written...*”.

- All 3 responses come from Deuteronomy - the book of the restating of the Law for a new generation.
- This phrase is 1-part of a 3-part answer to trials:
 1. “It is written...” Matt. 3:4,7,10 - Testing of Christ - PROOF ENOUGH
 2. “It is I...” Matt. 14:27 - Christ on the water - PRESENCE ENOUGH
 3. “Is is finished...” Jn.19:30 - Christ on the cross - PROVISION ENOUGH

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Temptation of Christ

The same reason that caused the Lord to present Himself for baptism, caused Him to defy the devil - Obedience to His Father's will. "*To fulfill all righteousness*" Matt. 3:15

- 3 Temptations were placed before Him:
 1. Turn stones to bread so He may satiate His hunger.
 2. Cast Himself from the pinnacle of the Temple so all may see and believe (400 ft. drop).
 3. Fall down and worship the devil to receive the kingdoms of the world.

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Temptation of Christ

1. The Temptation of Bread:

- The hunger that the Lord must have felt in the heat of the desert without another soul by His side (save the Father) is punctuated for us when the testing was over "*angels came and ministered (attended) unto Him.*" Matt. 4:11. They fed Him.
- He resisted in a **wilderness**, **hungry** and **alone**. Unlike Adam who was in a garden, full and with a "*help meet*".
- No question of His ability to make stone into bread arises here (after all He fed 5000 and 4000 with less). All the greater a test. He could do it (as on the cross) but chose not to!

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Temptation of Christ

2. Cast from the pinnacle of the Temple:

- The devil here misquotes scripture by omission.
- He only quotes part of a verse. He says, “*for it is written, “He will command His angels concerning you,’ and ““On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”*” Matt. 4:6
- He conveniently omits “*in all Thy ways*” Ps. 91:11
- The key here being that God gave no such promise when out of His ways. Thus, the verse is not only misquoted but misapplied.

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Temptation of Christ

3. Fall down and worship the devil :

- The devil here offers up to Christ “*all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.*” Matt. 4:8
- The Greek word here for ‘world’ is where we get our word ‘cosmos’. The inference is all the worlds for all times! The glory of all kingdoms that ever were or will be in the universe.
- All these will be the Lord’s, but the devil was tempting Him with a ‘short cut’ to them .
- Not via the cross, but via an easier way. But He would not!

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Temptation of Christ



3. Fall down and worship the devil :

- Finally, Luke say all glory was shown in “*a moment of time*”. Luke 4:5
- Eternity will be required to display the Glories of the Lord Jesus Christ! In the words of John Newton’s hymn
*“WHEN WE’VE BEEN THERE TEN THOUSAND YEARS
 BRIGHT SHINING AS THE SUN,
 WE’VE NO LESS DAYS TO SING GOD’S PRAISE
 THEN WHEN WE’VE FIRST BEGUN.”*

In contrast all this world’s glory was seen in a moment of time!

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Temptation of Christ

We have already illuded to the comparison of the temptation of Adam and Eve in the garden and Christs testing in the wilderness.

- In 1 John, we read of “*all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*” 1 Jn. 2:16
- With these 3 things the devil tempted the woman and the Lord Jesus.

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Temptation of Christ

Parallels in the 3 Passages:

1 John 2:

- 1) Lust of the flesh
- 2) Lust of the eye
- 3) Pride of life

Gen 3:

- Good for food
Pleasant to the eye
Desired to make wise

Matt 4:

- Stone to bread
Jump from Pinnacle
Kingdoms of the world

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Temptation of Christ

The temptation of Christ was far more COMPLETE than it might first appear.

- That is, the devil used all he had in his arsenal.
- Nothing was held back.
- Making the Lord's victory all the more marvelous.

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Temptation of Christ

The Completeness of Christ's Temptation:

3 Temptations:

1. Stone to bread
2. Jump from Pinnacle
3. Kingdoms of the world

What was Tempted:

1. BODY
2. MIND
3. SOUL

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Temptation of Christ

The Completeness of Christ's Temptation:

3 Temptations:

1. Stone to bread
2. Jump from Pinnacle
3. Kingdoms of the world

Context of the Temptation:

1. PERSONALLY
2. NATIONALLY
3. INTERNATIONALLY

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Temptation of Christ

The Completeness of Christ's Temptation:

3 Temptations:

1. Stone to bread
2. Jump from Pinnacle
3. Kingdoms of the world

With What was He Tempted:

1. With **FOOD**
2. With **FAME**
3. With **FORTUNE**

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Temptation of Christ

The Completeness of Christ's Temptation:

3 Temptations:

1. Stone to bread
2. Jump from Pinnacle
3. Kingdoms of the world

Progression of Temptation:

1. You **NEED** this!
2. You **ARE** this!
3. You **DESERVE** this!

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Temptation of Christ

The Completeness of Christ's Temptation:

“For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who, IN EVERY RESPECT HAS BEEN TEMPTED as we are, yet without sin.” Heb. 4:15

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Temptation of Christ

A quick word about HOW the Lord was tempted.

- “Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.” Matt. 4:1
- Note the Spirit led the Lord UP.
- In stark contrast the devil points Him down 3 times:
 1. “If you are the Son of God, command these stones (below) to become loaves of bread.” Matt. 4:3
 2. “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down.” Matt. 4:6
 3. “All these I will give you, if You will fall down and worship me.” Matt. 4:9

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Temptation of Christ

Under no circumstance would our Lord go DOWN to where the devil wanted Him to go.

- In all 3 temptations, He never denies His ability to:
 1. Turn stone to bread
 2. Jump safely from the pinnacle of the Temple.
 3. Receive the kingdoms of the world.
- The ability to do these things was never in question, rather it was the method - this was not God's way.
- The ends do not justify the means, God not only has His plans but also His ways.

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Temptation of Christ

The order of the Temptations is different in Matthew vs. Luke:

As we have seen, MATTHEW orders the 3 temptations this way

1. Stone to bread
2. Jump from Pinnacle
3. Kingdoms of the world

LUKE, however, places the temptation of the kingdoms before the proposed jump from the pinnacle of the temple.

1. Stone to bread
2. Kingdoms of the world
3. Jump from Pinnacle

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Temptation of Christ

Why do these 2 Gospelists record the events in a different order?

- Matthew records the events in chronological order.
- We see this by the language he uses.
- “Then” in verse 5 connects the 1st and 2nd temptation.
- “Again” in verse 8 connects the 2nd and 3rd temptation.
- These are temporal connections, i.e., the one follows the other.
- Luke uses no such connections. His accounting of events is likely NOT chronological.

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Temptation of Christ

The question then arises - Why did Luke relay the events out of chronological order?

- The answer may lay in the PURPOSE for which each gospel was written.
- Matthew wrote his gospel to portray Christ as King. Hence, he ends Christ’s temptation with the kingdoms of this world.
- Luke wrote his gospel to portray Christ as the True Son of Man. Hence, he ends Christ’s temptation in the temple where, as a Man, Christ is our High Priest to God.

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Gathering and Preparing Disciples

Before John was cast into prison (Matt. 4:12) many other events had taken place which Matthew does not record but John does.

- Events such as:
 1. Miracle at the wedding in Cana. (John 2)
 2. Jesus cleansing the Temple. (John 2)
 3. Meeting with Nicodemus. (John 3)
- *“for John had not yet been put in prison.”* John 3:24
- However as soon as the Lord came to prominence, John steps off the scene.

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Gathering and Preparing Disciples

God would not have 2 focal points of interest. It could not be that there was Christ and...

- Only He could be prominent. Even the greatest of all prophets can not stand beside the Lord Jesus.
- A good lesson for any who would preach. **Christ must have the preeminence.**
- This key lesson introduces the gathering of the initial disciples.

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Gathering and Preparing Disciples

From here, the Lord calls Peter and Andrew.

- Interestingly, the very first and last words the Lord is recorded as saying to Peter are...
- “Follow Me” Matt. 4:18 & John 21:22
- Peter was never called to lead the Church, as some may say.
- Rather he was called to follow the Lord.

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Gathering and Preparing Disciples

Finally, a word about the Lord’s miracles.

- “He went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.... they brought Him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and HE HEALED THEM ALL.” Matt. 4:23-24
- Simply put, the sickness ran out before the healing did.
- It is said of no other Man in scripture that His power to heal was infinite. “Surely this was the Son of God.” Matt 27:54

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