

CHAPTER 4

Overview of Luke 4

In chapter 4, Luke introduces the reader to the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Jesus initiates His ministry by being led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. Jesus spends forty days in the wilderness and successfully overcomes all temptations Satan throws at Him. Jesus then begins His ministry to a fallen world, starting in His hometown of Nazareth. There, Jesus receives a warm reception that turns quickly to great hostility resulting in a hazardous departure. That is because Jesus will clearly state in the synagogue in Nazareth that He and His message will be rejected by the Jews; God will therefore press His message of love and salvation toward the Gentiles. This message does not sit well with His countrymen in Nazareth. After Nazareth, Jesus will be well received in the next city He visits, Capernaum. There, He will heal many followers of various diseases and continue His mission to set captives free from the power of Satan. After ministering in Galilee, Jesus will then travel south and begin teaching in Judea, the home of Judaism itself.

What to look for in Luke 4

1. As you read each paragraph ask, "How is God speaking to me personally through His word?"
2. Look for the three key areas of temptation that Satan gave to Jesus.
3. Look for the difference between being "filled with the Spirit" and being "led by the Spirit."
4. Determine what Luke means when he writes that Jesus began His ministry in "the power of the Spirit."
5. Observe the reaction of the Jews in the synagogue in Nazareth when Jesus reads from the prophet Isaiah and states that God's love will be extended to the Gentiles because of the Jews disbelief and rejection of Him.
6. Observe that twice Luke will point out Jesus' power to exorcise demons, and note the significance of the demons' responses.
7. Look for the theme of prayer Luke introduces in his gospel.

1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness

2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry.

3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."

4 And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.' "

4:1 Here is yet another instance in which Luke refers to being "filled with the Spirit"; in this case, "full of the Holy Spirit." The circumstances in this case are quite unique. Here again, being filled with the Spirit has nothing to do with speaking in tongues. As in all cases of being filled with the Spirit, it refers to giving glory to God. Jesus glorified God by proclaiming God's word and overcoming the temptations presented to Him by Satan.

There is another important phrase introduced here by Luke—"led...by the Spirit." Luke's use of the phrase is probably the result of being a traveling companion of the apostle Paul. Paul uses this phrase twice in his letters: Romans 8:14 and Galatians 5:18. *These three instances are the only ones in the New Testament where the phrase "led by the Spirit" are found. In each case, the context is a choice*

concerning moral behavior. Being led by the Spirit, therefore, refers to *making moral choices* that are consistent with God's will. Those who are led by the Spirit make moral choices based on the principles of God's word, and not upon the flesh, the world or the temptations offered up by the devil.

4:2 Both Moses and Elijah fasted for forty days (Ex. 34:28; 1 King 19:8), and the Israelites wandering "in the wilderness" for forty years (Num. 14:34). Moses represents the Law and Elijah represents the Prophets. The Holy Spirit was upon them both. Therefore, Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 5:17). There is no teaching here that fasting forty days will make one more spiritual. In fact, the implication is clear that fasting forty days weakens a person to the point that he or she is more *susceptible* to temptation, especially the temptation of pride. While fasting itself is supported in Scripture (e.g., Acts 13:2), fasting for forty days as a spiritual discipline is not.

4:3-4 The first temptation Satan presents to Jesus is based upon satisfying legitimate physical needs and, more especially, using His position and power to meet His personal needs. There is nothing wrong with satisfying legitimate physical needs *unless* it takes precedent over fulfilling a spiritual principle, such as "You shall not steal." Jesus' physical need is obvious—He is literally in a state of starvation. However, the spiritual need is greater. First, He must not base His actions on suggestions by Satan. Second, He must trust that God and God alone will provide for all His needs. Third, He must make a statement that satisfying spiritual needs through the word of God is far more important than satisfying physical needs according to the world and the flesh. And fourth, He must not misuse the privilege of His position and power to satisfy personal needs.

According to the construction of the original Greek, Satan is actually saying to Jesus, "*Since* You are the Son of God..." Here we see Jesus' love overcoming the temptation to put Himself before the needs of others; that is, to satisfy even His legitimate physical needs. Behind this temptation to eat is the temptation to meet His own needs first at the expense of others—the world that is lost to sin. Jesus' love for a lost world was so great that He was willing to experience severe suffering so as not to jeopardize His mission to save mankind from sin. Jesus responds by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3 and declaring that our spiritual needs should take precedent over our physical needs. The lesson here should be obvious: true love for God means willingness to suffer on behalf of the needs of others.

5 And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said to Him, “I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

7 “Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours.”

8 Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’ ”

4:5-8 Notice the point Luke makes by stating that Jesus was being “led around by the Spirit in the wilderness” (v. 1). Contrast Jesus being “led by the Spirit” with Jesus being “led” by the devil into temptation (v. 5). The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness, but it was Satan who led Jesus into temptation. In all three temptations, Satan *leads* Jesus into ever more tempting situations, all of which are designed to ease Jesus’ suffering and deprivation. Jesus is therefore faced with moral decisions that must be based, not upon the world’s standards or His own personal needs, but upon the will of God. The three temptations that Jesus faces represent, first of all, the supreme examples of what it means to be “led by the Spirit,” as opposed to being led by the flesh or led by the devil. But they also represent what it means to love others more than oneself, and by so doing, to love God.

There are two important points about this second temptation. First, it is a temptation to indulge oneself in the riches and pleasures of the world; that is, to love things more than people. The temptation here is also one of power and “glory”; that is, to be admired by men and desired by women. It is the use of wealth and material gain to exert power over others, therefore considering oneself more important than others. It is the very opposite of biblical love. What keeps Jesus from giving into this temptation is the same love for a lost world that is manifested by God the Father. By so loving the lost, Jesus the Son is imitating God the Father. God “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son,” and Jesus so loved the world that He gave Himself. By loving the world as God loves the world, Jesus is directly showing His love for God. The temptation Satan is presenting is ultimately to get Jesus to fail to love.

Second, this temptation is aimed directly at an attempt to get Jesus to circumvent the cross, the place where God’s greatest love is demonstrated. It is an empty temptation, however. Satan knows Scripture well enough to know that Jesus will eventually inherit the earth when He returns in glory. Therefore, the temptation is to keep Jesus from going to the cross and setting Satan’s captives free from the bondage of sin. *Any so-called church, therefore, that does not emphasize the cross of Christ in its teaching and preaching is guilty of this temptation.* To avoid the teaching of the cross because it is too uncomfortable or socially insensitive is to avoid the will of God and bow down to Satan and serve him. No one can truly experience God’s love until he or she experiences the freedom and deliverance that comes through the cross of Jesus Christ.

9 And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here;

10 for it is written, ‘HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU TO GUARD YOU,’

11 and, ‘ON *their* HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.’ ”

12 And Jesus answered and said to him, “It is said, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’ ”

4:9-12 The thought is, “*Since* You are the Son of God....” Satan tempts Jesus to exalt Himself. This is the third way that we fail to love others; that is, by exalting ourselves at others’ expense. If anyone is to be exalted, it is God who does the exalting. If Jesus is to be exalted, it is God Himself who will exalt His Son. This temptation can manifest itself in a multitude of ways: fame, ambition, pride, self-edification, self-actualization, loving the praise of others, desiring to please others rather than God, narcissistic tendencies of the flesh, and a host of other methods of bringing glory, attention, fame or notoriety to one’s self, often in the name of building one’s self-esteem. Satan knows that Jesus probably wouldn’t fall for that part of the temptation, so he throws into the mix the ultimate deception—using Scripture to justify the outcome.

Therefore, this third temptation is unique in that Satan uses Scripture to validate his temptation (Ps. 91:11-12). The problem is this: the Scripture Satan uses is indeed true factually, but it is misapplied to gain an end that God never intended. This is a particularly hideous temptation because Satan twists God’s word to serve his own agenda.

Many, many Christian preachers, evangelists and so-called faith healers have fallen to this temptation; that is, misapplying Scripture to serve a selfish purpose and impure motive, often in the name of Jesus. Most heinous are those who teach what is called the “faith and prosperity gospel.” These false teachers use primarily Old Testament Scriptures intended only for the nation of Israel under the conditional covenant made through Moses. They hold massive rallies and crusades which generate millions of dollars in offerings and donations. Because they believe they are doing God’s will, they justify their flamboyant and affluent lifestyles using Scripture itself. As if gods, they promise riches, wealth and luxury for faithful (but deceived) donors. They call upon their followers to be loyal and sacrificial, while at the same time they are ignorant and disobedient to God’s warnings about the entrapment of mammon. They even apply the teachings of Jesus, like the parable of the nobleman (Luke 19:11-27), to justify sending money to their ministry coffers, while at the same time ignoring Jesus’ teachings on greed (e.g., Luke 12:15). These men and women who preach such non-biblical behaviors love only themselves, the notoriety they receive and the wealth they amass. Their message is evil and void of biblical love. Most television evangelists and many church leaders fall into this temptation. It is a biblical approach to the unbiblical saying “the end justifies the means.” What is worse is that they do it in the name of Jesus Christ.

The other point to remember about this temptation is that Satan is saying in essence, “Okay, since you are the Son of God, prove it by jumping off the temple. If the people, especially the priests, see that You live through it, surely they will believe that You are indeed the Son of God.” (The “pinnacle” mentioned here was on the southeast corner of the temple overlooking the Kidron Valley. It was the highest point of the temple.) The deception attempted here is very subtle: “If they see, surely they will believe.” But nothing could be further from the truth. People will see Jesus do amazing miracles, yet still will not believe. The point here is that seeing miracles alone does not always cause someone to believe. A person doesn’t believe that Jesus is the Son of God unless their heart has been changed. And as we continue on in Luke’s gospel, we discover that not only do the Pharisees and scribes fail to believe, but some actually attribute Jesus’ exorcisms to Satan himself.

13 When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.

14 And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district.

15 And He *began* teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all.

4:13 In all three temptations, Jesus is tempted to love the world, please the flesh and acquiesce to the devil. He is tempted to love Himself more than to love God or the lost world He came to save. Jesus overcame all temptation because He chose to love lost mankind over personal needs, power, pleasure, personal edification and exaltation. And He based all His responses on Scripture, rightly applied.

4:14-15 Luke introduces us to yet another ministry of the Spirit, “the power of the Spirit.” As opposed to being “filled with the Spirit” and being “led by the Spirit,” the power of the Spirit is related directly to miracles, healings and exorcisms. Jesus begins demonstrating His power in Galilee, the northernmost portion of Israel. (Judea is located to the south, with its capital of Jerusalem; Samaria, for the most part, is located in the middle; Galilee is in the north). Upper Galilee was also known as “Galilee of the Gentiles” due to the large number of Gentiles that lived alongside the Jews. The area was distinct enough to have its own dialect and accent that could be recognized even in Judea. (A modern-day comparison would be a Southern accent with a New Jersey accent.) Jews in Judea tended to look down on Jews from Galilee as being less than orthodox, particularly because the Galileans could also speak Greek. Nazareth, Jesus’ home, was in lower Galilee, and all of Jesus’ disciples came from that region. Luke, the Gentile, would take particular notice of this fact.

Notice, too, that when Jesus teaches, He is “praised by all.” This praise will continue until He preaches at His own synagogue in Nazareth.

16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.

17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

18 “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,

19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.”

20 And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

21 And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

22 And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, “Is this not Joseph’s son?”

23 And He said to them, “No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.’ ”

24 And He said, “Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown.

25 “But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land;

26 and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, *in the land* of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.

27 “And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”

4:16-30 Why Luke chooses to cite this incident instead of His initial preaching and healings in Capernaum—south of Nazareth and His first major stop—is because of Jesus’ statements at the end of the reading. Follow the logic here: Jesus reads a well-known messianic prophecy from Isaiah; He declares that He is the fulfillment of that prophecy; He then declares He will be rejected; finally, He states that He, the Messiah, will take His blessings to the Gentiles just as God had Elijah and Elisha take their blessings to Gentiles. As a result of Jesus’ statement at the end of the reading, He will find Himself no longer “praised by all,” but instantly rejected and threatened with death. This incident foreshadows the cross as well as the fact that eventually, the gospel will be taken to the Gentiles.

4:18-19 The “poor” are those who are financially poor as well as “poor in spirit”; that is, depressed and hopeless. The “captives” are those who have been imprisoned by the Romans as well as those being held captive by the devil to do his will. The “blind” are those who can’t see physically as well as those who are spiritually blind. The “oppressed” are those who are oppressed by the Romans, as well as those who are oppressed by the religious leaders under the guise of the “traditions of the elders.” Jesus wants all these to experience God’s love and learn to share His love with others. If God’s love ruled the world, few of these ills would be present. The term “favorable year of the Lord” could be translated “the receiving year of the Lord” in the sense that now is the time God’s love and blessings can be received and experienced. The blessings Isaiah prophesied over 800 years earlier are now about to be received.

4:21 The phrase “has been fulfilled” means the blessings have already started in the past (Jesus’ birth), are presently being fulfilled (“Today”), and will have consequences into the future. The extension of God’s love is not a singular event.

4:22 Again, “all were speaking well of Him” and considered His words “gracious” because He was declaring that Isaiah’s messianic prophecy was being fulfilled. On the other hand, He had just claimed *Himself* to be the Messiah. Therefore, the question arises about whether He was the son of Joseph or the Son of God.

4:23 This proverb, probably well known by the populace of Jesus’ day, is a prelude to what will be said of Him at the crucifixion: “He saved others; let Him save Himself....”

4:25 Biblical truth is a double-edged sword for exposing the hearts of men and their unbiblical and unloving beliefs. Suddenly His gracious words turn into a challenge to the Jew’s disbelief that God would

28 And all *the people* in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things;

29 and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff.

30 But passing through their midst, He went His way.

31 And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath;

32 and they were amazed at His teaching, for His message was with authority.

33 In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice,

34 “Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”

35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst *of the people*, he came out of him without doing him any harm.

36 And amazement came upon them all, and they *began* talking with one another saying, “What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out.”

37 And the report about Him was spreading into every locality in the surrounding district.

care about Gentiles. Their inability (or unwillingness) to extend love to Gentiles makes it impossible for them to interpret correctly Isaiah’s prophecy that the Messiah would be a “light to the nations (Gentiles).” Jesus gives two examples, therefore, of Israel’s failure to repent and accept the words of Israel’s hometown prophets Elijah and Elisha—God passes over Israel and extends His love to Gentiles. As a prophet who is about to be rejected in His own hometown, Jesus is prophesying of what is about to take place in the very near future.

4:28-30 People do not like it when their sin and failure to love is exposed with biblical truth. Being confronted and offended turns into anger which turns into rage which eventually turns into murderous intent. How exactly Jesus passes “through their midst” isn’t stated, but one can assume that it is tied into the power of the Spirit.

4:31 He “came down.” Nazareth is in the hills of lower Galilee and Capernaum is on the northwest shores of the Sea of Galilee; thus down in elevation. It was the major town and fishing port of the region, the home of Peter and Andrew, and the city that Jesus will use as His headquarters. Once again, He is teaching in the synagogue. Capernaum is a part of Galilee, not Judea, and therefore Herod had no jurisdiction over the city.

4:32 One who teaches biblical truth boldly, confidently and knowledgeably, speaks with authority. His teaching will be contrasted with the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees who only taught by rote and according to the letter of the law. They taught the law like it was a hammer over men’s heads, emphasizing the negative and minimizing the positive; that is, maximizing God’s judgment and minimizing God’s love and grace. Jesus’ words, on the other hand, offered hope, and the words of Scripture that brought life encouraged people rather than threatened them. Jesus taught with perfect love, and later, the Apostle John will write in his letters, “Perfect love casts out fear.”

4:33 It is not certain what Luke means by “an unclean spirit,” but most likely it has to do with mental illness resulting in behaviors that are inconsistent with the Jewish laws of what makes a person clean or unclean.

4:33-37 That Jesus spoke with authority is proven in the incident of the man possessed with the unclean spirit. To have authority means just that: Jesus is in control. But there is a difference between authority and power. A policeman expresses his authority when he holds up his hand and blows his whistle in a traffic intersection. He does not have the physical power to stop a moving car, but he does have the authority. Jesus has both the authority *and* the power.

Had the man not been exorcised, Jesus might have said that God gave Him the authority, but how could he prove it if He didn't also have the power? That is why the audience observes that Jesus had both authority *and* power.

Note, too, that the demons know long before the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah—"the Holy One of God." Only God is holy. Therefore, if Jesus is holy, He must also be God. Note, too, that demons have rank. "Let *us* alone" but "*I* know who you are." Exorcisms can result in physical harm to the one being exorcised; thus, Jesus' instruction to the demons to do no harm, a double act of love on Jesus' part. Also, demons are obliged to heed the words of Jesus, but mankind, sadly enough, has free will to accept or reject the words of the Holy One of Israel.

38 Then He got up and *left* the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him to help her.

39 And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately got up and waited on them.

4:38-39 That Jesus "rebuked" the fever of Peter's mother-in-law leads one to speculate that the fever was the result of Satan's attempt to make Jesus pay for having cast out the demons in the man with the unclean spirit. There is no indication of sin here on the mother-in-law's part. Also, note that the physician Luke describes the fever as a "high fever." A high fever implies an illness that could have been life-threatening, such as pneumonia or sepsis. Jesus certainly did not heal Peter's mother-in-law for the purpose of enabling her to prepare a meal for them. Peter's mother-in-law waited on them as an act of gratitude, and was honored to wait on Jesus.

This incident also proves that Peter was married.

40 While the sun was setting, all those who had any *who were* sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them.

41 Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.

4:40 The text doesn't say, "those who were sick came to Him." Read carefully. The text says, "all those who had any who were sick...brought them to Him." This is a picture of the church in action. Those who care about the spiritual condition of others bring them to Jesus. Note, too, that Jesus was "laying His hands on each of them." This demonstrates that Jesus loves the individual as well as the whole world; that this was not a mass healing, such as proclaimed by many TV evangelists.

4:41 Once again, the demons know full well who Jesus is. Jesus did not allow them to speak because, as John tells us, "His hour had not yet come."

42 When day came, Jesus left and went to a secluded place; and the crowds were searching for Him, and came to Him and tried to keep Him from going away from them.

4:42a Luke will write more than once that Jesus tries to get alone by Himself. The purpose was prayer, and it was often done before anyone else was awake. Prayer will be a major theme throughout Luke's gospel.

4:42b-43 The theme of people searching for Jesus and Him "going away from them" is another theme that alludes to His ascension after the resurrection. In this case, His going away is to "preach the kingdom

43 But He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.”

44 So He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

of God to the other cities.” In the case of the ascension, it is to intercede on behalf of the church and be a mediator between His church and God (Rom. 8:34).

4:44 The thought here is, “He kept on preaching, and now began preaching in the synagogues in Judea,” the southern one-third of Israel. In doing so, Jesus has moved His message from Galilee into the heart of Judaism.

Questions for Your Personal or Group Reflection

1. In the previous chapters, we have learned what it means to be “filled with the Spirit.” Now Luke introduces a new concept: being “led by the Spirit.” How does being “led by the Spirit” differ from being “filled with the Spirit”? How often have you heard someone say, “God led me to (buy this house / attend this school / date this person / *fill in the blank*)”? Was this person using the phrase biblically, or was this what is called “Christian-ese”?
2. Each of the gospels will list only three temptations. Why do these three temptations stand out? What is it about each of them that is characteristic of human nature? How does each of these three temptations apply to your own life and experience? What temptations are you dealing with today that fit into any of these categories? And, where does sexual temptation fit into these three?
3. How did Jesus overcome each temptation, and what was the compelling motive that resulted in His doing so?
4. When Jesus begins His teaching, healing and exorcism ministry, Luke informs us that He was “in the power of the Spirit.” What does this phrase mean, and how does it differ from the other two ministries of the Holy Spirit that were pointed out previously? Is it possible that any or all Christians can minister “in the power of the Spirit”?
5. Why do you think that a prophet is not welcome in his hometown? How does this apply to your life in terms of ministry with your family or neighbors?
6. The Jews in Nazareth did not like hearing that God’s love and blessings would be extended to the Gentiles. Is there any type of person in your life that you have a hard time believing that God can extend His love to them? How about someone with a different political viewpoint? How about a homosexual? How about a rapist or pedophile? How does the offer of God’s love extend to anyone who is “held captive,” “oppressed,” “poor” and “blind”? In other words, what’s the real problem with people’s lives these days? What will set them free? Are you free?
7. How much is gratitude a part of your prayer life? What can you do to change that?

The Discip1er's Commentary
Fill-in Outline for the Disciple
Luke 4

4:1-13 – The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness:

4:3-4 – The temptation to _____

4:5-8 – The temptation to _____

4:9-12 – The temptation to _____

4:14-44 – The teaching and healing ministry of Jesus begins: it takes place mostly in _____

4:16-30 – Jesus' teaching at the synagogue in _____

4:31-37 – Jesus' teaching and healing at the synagogue in _____

4:38-44 – Jesus' ministry in _____

The Discipler's Commentary
Answer Outline for the Discipler
Luke 4

4:1-13 – The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness:

3-4 – The temptation to place His personal physical needs before God's spiritual plan

- *This is an excellent time to discuss “the 40s” in the Old Testament. Show how Moses was on the mount for 40 days, Elijah fasted 40 days, and the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. The discipler might also want to discuss the wisdom of attempting to fast 40 days. Make sure the disciple understands how Moses and Elijah represent “the Law and the Prophets.”*
- *This is also an excellent place to bring up the concept of being “led by the Spirit.” Separate for the disciple how Scripture uses the phrase and how Christians tend to use the phrase casually. Ask the question, “How does one know when he or she is being led by the Spirit,” and in what context would this take place? Bring in the concept of being led by the Spirit as opposed to be led by the flesh or by the devil.*
- *Make sure to mention that part of this temptation was for Jesus to use His position (the Son of God) and power (divine) to meet His personal needs. Have the disciple apply this temptation to the workplace.*
- *Another point to make is that God did not overcome Jesus' temptations for Him. It was up to Jesus Himself to overcome temptation. God has done His part by giving us the strength through the Holy Spirit to recognize temptation and overcome it. It is up to each of us to do the overcoming.*
- *And lastly, help the disciple to see and articulate how Jesus exhibited love by overcoming this temptation.*

5-8 – The temptation to achieve power & glory from the world rather than through trusting God

- *Help the disciple discern the issues here, especially in regard to the lure of the world concerning things, wealth, prosperity, power and fame.*
- *Help the disciple discern the temptation to love things more than people. How does this relate to the desire of men to be admired by other men and desired by women? How does this temptation fit into that scenario?*
- *Make sure the disciple understands who it is that is offering to Jesus the things of the world. Does God offer the “things of the world”?*
- *Ensure that the disciple understands clearly that there are many false teachers in the world of Christendom who acquiesce to this temptation, and teach their followers to do likewise.*
- *Show the disciple how Satan is trying to get Jesus to bypass the cross, and how alluring that temptation might be in light of the fact that Jesus knows very clearly what it will be like to suffer on the cross.*
- *Show the disciple how Jesus' love for the lost helped Him overcome the temptation to bypass the cross. Make sure the disciple understands that there is no such thing as experiencing the glory of God without the suffering, sacrifice and shame that goes before it.*

9-12 – The temptation to misapply Scripture in order to justify an outcome

- *Make sure the disciple understands the subtleties of Satan's inappropriate use of Scripture. Did Satan quote the Scripture accurately and completely? More importantly, did Satan apply the Scripture correctly? (Have the disciple look up Psalm 91:11-12.) Did Satan take the Scripture out of context? The point here is to help the disciple learn discernment when it comes to applying the word of God.*
- *Show the disciple how subtle this temptation is, especially the part that miracles play in changing a person's heart. Help the disciple determine how Jesus overcame this temptation by properly applying the word of God.*
- *Perhaps one of the most important concepts in this temptation is the Scripture Jesus uses to overcome the temptation. What does it mean to “put the Lord your God to the test”? Help the disciple discern the difference between putting God to the test and trusting God for the outcome? Is motive a factor here?*

- *Help the disciple see how love played a role in all the three temptations. How strong was Jesus' love for a lost world that would enable Him to fast for 40 days and then overcome all the temptations to alleviate His suffering? What's the lesson for Christians here?*

4:14-44 – The teaching and healing ministry of Jesus begins: it takes place mostly in Galilee

4:16-30 – Jesus' teaching at the synagogue in Nazareth, His home town

- *The disciple needs to know what a pivotal point this occasion is concerning Jesus' ministry. It's always helpful to have the disciple look up for himself the Scripture Jesus is quoting. Introduce the disciple to the concept of "messianic prophecies"; that is, Psalms or prophecies that point directly to the Messiah. Include in that context the incidences with Elijah and Elisha who ministered in the apostate Northern Kingdom of Israel. (Having the disciple find the passages in the OT helps them become familiar with it.)*
- *Make sure the disciple understands why Jesus' listeners were so enraged at His teaching, and why "no prophet is welcome in his hometown."*

4:31-37 – Jesus' teaching and healing at the synagogue in Capernaum, His headquarters

- *The key words in this incident are "authority" and "power." Help the disciple understand the difference. Help the disciple see why Jesus' teachings were rejected in Nazareth but accepted in Capernaum.*
- *Point out to the disciple the words that came out of the possessed man. What is significant about them, and who is speaking them? Why are these words so ironic? Ask what is significant about the name "the Holy One of God"? Ask the disciple why Jesus told the spirit to "Be quiet...."*

4:38-44 – Jesus' ministry in Simon Peter's home

- *Ask the disciple what we learn about Peter from the experience in Peter's home?*
- *Have the disciple read verse 40. How does this verse apply to the church?*
- *Impress upon the disciple the need go to "a secluded place." Why did Jesus need to go there and what did He do?*