

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**1-15-25**

**Luke 4**

**Jesus Is Led By The Spirit Into The Wilderness – Verses 1-2**

<sup>1</sup> Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, <sup>2</sup> where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

**4: 1** Sometimes we feel that if the Holy Spirit leads us, it will always be “beside quiet waters” (Psalm 23: 2). But that is not necessarily true. He led Jesus into the wilderness for a long and difficult time of testing, and he may also lead us into difficult situations. When facing trials, first make sure you haven’t brought them on yourself through sin or unwise choices. If you find no sin to confess or unwise behavior to change, then ask God to strengthen you for your test. Finally, be careful to follow faithfully wherever the Holy Spirit leads.

**4:1-2** The devil, who tempted Adam and Eve in the garden, also tempted Jesus in the wilderness. Satan is a real being, a created but rebellious fallen angel, and not a symbol or an idea. He constantly fights against God and those who follow and obey God. Jesus was a prime target for the devil’s temptations. Satan had succeeded with Adam and Eve, and he hoped to succeed with Jesus as well.

**4:1-13** Knowing and obeying God’s Word is an effective weapon against temptation, the only offensive weapon provided in the Christian’s “armor” (Ephesians 6:17). Jesus used Scripture to counter Satan’s attacks, and so should we. But to use it effectively, we must have faith in God’s promises because Satan also knows Scripture and is adept at twisting it to suit his purposes. Obeying the Scriptures is more important than simply having a verse to quote, so read them daily and apply them to your life. Then your “sword” will always be sharp.

**4:2** Why was it necessary for Jesus to be tempted? First, temptation is part of the human experience. For Jesus to be fully human, for him to understand us completely, he had to face temptation (see Hebrews 4:15). Second, Jesus had to undo Adam’s work. Adam, though created perfect, gave in to temptation and passed sin on to the whole human race. Jesus, by contrast, resisted Satan. His victory offers salvation to all of Adam’s descendants (see Romans 5:12-19).

**The First Temptation: Transform Stone Into Bread For Personal Needs – Verses 3-4**

<sup>3</sup> The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’”

**4:3** Sometimes what we are tempted to do isn’t wrong in itself. Turning a stone into bread wasn’t necessarily bad. The sin was not in the act but in the reason behind it. The devil was trying to get Jesus to take a shortcut, to solve Jesus’ immediate problem at the expense of his long-range goals, to seek comfort at the sacrifice of his discipline. Satan often works that way— persuading us to take action, even right action, for the wrong reason or at the wrong time. The fact that something is not wrong in itself does not mean that it is good for you at a given time. Many people sin by attempting to fulfill legitimate desires outside of God’s will or ahead of his timetable. First ask: Is the Holy Spirit leading me to do this or is Satan trying to get me off the track?

**4:3-4** Often we are tempted not through our weaknesses, but through our strengths. The devil tempted Jesus where he was strong. Jesus had power over stones, the kingdoms of the world, and even angels, and Satan wanted him to use that power without regard for his mission. When we give in to the devil and wrongly use our strengths, we become proud and self-reliant. Trusting in our own powers, we feel little need of God. To avoid this trap, we must realize that all our strengths are God's gifts to us, and we must dedicate those strengths to his service.

### **The Second Temptation – Verses 5-8**

**<sup>5</sup>The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. <sup>6</sup>And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. <sup>7</sup>If you worship me, it will all be yours." <sup>8</sup>Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"**

**4:5-8** The devil arrogantly hoped to succeed in his rebellion against God by diverting Jesus from his mission and winning his worship. "This world is mine, not God's," he was saying, "and if you hope to do anything worthwhile here, you'll need to follow my instructions." Jesus didn't argue with Satan about who owns the world, but Jesus refused to validate Satan's claim by worshiping him. Jesus knew that he would redeem the world through giving up his life on the cross, not through making an alliance with a corrupt angel.

### **The Third Temptation: Testing God Through Signs And Wonders – Verses 9-13**

**<sup>9</sup>The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. <sup>10</sup>For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; <sup>11</sup>they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" <sup>12</sup>Jesus answered, "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" <sup>13</sup>When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.**

**4:9-11** Here the devil misinterpreted Scripture. The intention of Psalm 91 is to show God's protection of his people, not to incite them to use God's power for sensational or foolish displays.

**4:13** Christ's defeat of the devil in the wilderness was decisive but not final. Throughout his ministry, Jesus would confront Satan in many forms. Too often we see temptation as once and for all. In reality, we need to be constantly on guard against the devil's ongoing attacks. Where are you most susceptible to temptation right now? How are you preparing to withstand it?

**4:13** What would it take for you to "sell out"? What is there in life that would cause you to compromise your faith? Whatever it is— sexual temptation, financial inducement, fear of alienating or offending someone— it will be placed in your path at some point. The enemy wants to destroy believers or at least neutralize them through sin, shame, and guilt. When that temptation rears its seductive head, do what Jesus did: rely on the Word of God and stand fast in your commitment to worship God alone, above all else. No matter the cost or the sacrifice, no matter how appealing the come-on, believers must follow Jesus' example and stand strong.

### **Jesus Comes To His Own Synagogue In Nazareth – Verses 14-17**

**<sup>14</sup>Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. <sup>15</sup>He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. <sup>16</sup>He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the**

**synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read,<sup>17</sup> and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:**

**4:14-16** Synagogues were very important in Jewish religious life. During the Exile when the Jews no longer had their temple, synagogues were established as places of worship on the Sabbath and as schools for young boys during the week. Synagogues continued to exist even after the temple was rebuilt. A synagogue could be set up in any town with at least Jewish families. It was administered by one leader and an assistant. At the synagogue, the leader often would invite a visiting rabbi to read from the Scriptures and to teach. Itinerant rabbis, like Jesus, were always welcome to speak to those gathered each Sabbath in the synagogues. The apostle Paul also took advantage of this practice (see Acts 13:5; 14:1).

**4:16-17** Jesus went to the synagogue “as was his custom.” Even though he was the perfect Son of God and his local synagogue undoubtedly left much to be desired, Jesus attended services every week. His example makes our excuses for not attending church sound weak and self-serving. Make regular worship a part of your life.

### **Jesus Reads From Isaiah 61 – Verses 18-22**

**18** “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”<sup>20</sup> Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him.<sup>21</sup> He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”<sup>22</sup> All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

**4:18-21** Jesus was quoting from Isaiah 61:1-2. Isaiah pictures the deliverance of Israel from exile in Babylon as a Year of Jubilee when all debts are cancelled, all slaves are freed, and all property is returned to original owners (Leviticus 25). But the release from Babylonian exile had not brought the expected fulfillment; they were still a conquered and oppressed people. So Isaiah must have been referring to a future messianic age. Jesus boldly announced, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” Jesus was proclaiming himself as the one who would bring this Good News to pass, but he would do so in a way that the people were not yet able to grasp.

### **Jesus Answers Their Objections – Verses 23-27**

**23** Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’”<sup>24</sup> “Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.”<sup>25</sup> I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land.<sup>26</sup> Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon.<sup>27</sup> And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

**4:23-27** Even Jesus himself was not accepted as a prophet in his hometown. Many people have a similar attitude. Don’t be surprised if your Christian life and faith are not easily understood or accepted by those who know you well. Because they know your background, your failures, and your foibles, they may not see past those to the new person you have become. Let God work in your life, pray to be a positive witness for him, and be patient.

## **Jesus Walks Away From A Murderous Mob – Verses 28-30**

**<sup>28</sup> All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. <sup>29</sup> They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. <sup>30</sup> But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.**

**4:28-30** Jesus' remarks angered the people of Nazareth because he was saying that God sometimes chose to reach Gentiles rather than Jews. Jesus implied that his hearers were as unbelieving as the citizens of the northern kingdom of Israel in the days of Elijah and Elisha, a time notorious for its great wickedness.

## **Jesus Drives Out an Impure Spirit**

**<sup>31</sup> Then he went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and on the Sabbath he taught the people. <sup>32</sup> They were amazed at his teaching, because his words had authority. <sup>33</sup> In the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon, an impure spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice, <sup>34</sup> "Go away! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" <sup>35</sup> "Be quiet!" Jesus said sternly. "Come out of him!" Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him. <sup>36</sup> All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What words these are! With authority and power he gives orders to impure spirits and they come out!" <sup>37</sup> And the news about him spread throughout the surrounding area.**

**4:31** Jesus had recently moved to Capernaum from Nazareth (Matthew 4:13). Capernaum was a thriving city with great wealth as well as great decadence. Because it was the headquarters for many Roman troops, word about Jesus could spread all over the Roman Empire from there.

**4:33** A man possessed by a demon was in the synagogue where Jesus was teaching. This man made his way into the place of worship and verbally abused Jesus. It is naive to think that we will be sheltered from evil in the church. Satan is happy to invade our presence wherever and whenever he can. But Jesus' authority is much greater than Satan's, and where Jesus is present, demons cannot stay for long.

**4:34-36** The people were amazed at Jesus' authority to drive out demons— evil spirits ruled by Satan and sent to harass people, tempt them to sin, and ultimately destroy them. Demons are fallen angels who have joined Satan in rebellion against God. Jesus faced many demons during his time on earth, and he always exerted authority over them. Not only did the evil spirit leave this man; Luke records that the man was not even injured. While we may not often see cases of demon possession today, it does still exist. We need not be fearful, however. Jesus' power is far greater than Satan's. The first step toward conquering fear of evil is to recognize Jesus' authority and power. He has overcome all evil, including Satan himself.

## **Peter's Mother-in-Law Is Healed Of A Fever – Verses 38-39**

**<sup>38</sup> Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. <sup>39</sup> So he bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them.**

**4:38-39** Jesus healed Simon's (Peter's) mother-in-law so completely that not only did the fever leave but her strength was restored, and immediately she got up and took care of others' needs. What a beautiful attitude of service she showed! God gives us health so that we may serve others.

## **Jesus Heals Many Who Are Sick And Demon Possessed – Verses 40-41**

**40 At sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them. 41 Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Messiah.**

**4:40** The people came to Jesus when the sun was setting because this was the Sabbath (4:31), their day of rest. Sabbath lasted from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. The people didn't want to break the law that prohibited travel on the Sabbath, so they waited until the sun set on the Sabbath before coming to Jesus. Then, as Luke the physician notes, they came with all kinds of diseases, and Jesus healed each one.

**4:40** When you've faced a particularly difficult time, what helped you most? While some may have said kind words, most likely it was the presence of a friend and his or her touch. A hug, an arm around your shoulder, or even just a hand laid gently on top of yours— these simple wordless gestures mean so much to those in pain. In healing the sick and the demon-possessed, Jesus had already demonstrated that he could heal with just a word (4:39). Yet here in Capernaum, Luke records that the touch of Jesus' hand healed the sick. Why not just speak a word and heal the whole crowd at once? Why go to all the trouble of treating each person individually, face-to-face? Because human touch is so very important. Does someone need a touch from you today?

**4:41** Why didn't Jesus want the demons to reveal who he was? (1) Jesus commanded them to remain silent to show his authority over them. (2) Jesus wanted his listeners to believe he was the Messiah because of his words, not because of the demons' words. (3) Jesus was going to reveal his identity according to God's timetable, and he would not be pushed by Satan's evil plans. The demons called Jesus “Son of God” or “the Holy One of God” (4:34) because they knew he was the Christ. But Jesus was going to show himself to be the suffering servant before he became the great King. To reveal his identity as King too soon would stir up the crowds with the wrong expectations of what he had come to do.

## **Jesus Continues His Preaching Ministry In Galilee – Verses 42-44**

**42 At daybreak, Jesus went out to a solitary place. The people were looking for him and when they came to where he was, they tried to keep him from leaving them. 43 But he said, “I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.” 44 And he kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.**

**4:42** Jesus had to get up very early just to get some time alone. If Jesus needed solitude for prayer and refreshment, how much more is this true for us? Don't become so busy that life turns into a flurry of activity leaving no room for quiet fellowship alone with God. No matter how much you have to do, you should always have time for prayer.

**4:43** The kingdom of God is good news! It was good news to the Jews because they had been awaiting the coming of the promised Messiah ever since the Babylonian captivity. It is good news for us also because it means freedom from slavery to sin and selfishness. The kingdom of God is here and now because the Holy Spirit lives in the hearts of believers. Yet it is also in the future because Jesus will return to reign over a perfect kingdom, where sin and evil will no longer exist.