

The Essential 100

A Bible overview plan for 2011-2012

The Essential 100 (E100) is a systematic approach that guides readers through the big picture of the Bible. It is a carefully selected list of short Bible passages—50 from the Old Testament and 50 from the New Testament. The passages are usually one to two chapters in length and can easily be read in 10 minutes or less.

One-page plan: Each testament is broken up into ten, five-week series. We will move from Old to New Testaments every five weeks. My goal is to teach three of the five lessons in every series.

The E100 in Sunday school: We will REAP (read, explain, apply, and personalize) one passage each week and finish a series every five weeks. Each lesson will include a key verse for memorization. At the end of two years, we will have covered the essential 100 passages in the Bible.

Additional information: To learn more about The E100 program and to obtain additional resources, visit e100challenge.com. Our Sunday school website is stuartheights.org/sundayschool.

The Schedule: The Early Years of Jesus

This series is about Jesus' life prior to the start of His earthly ministry.

Date	Lesson	Key Verse(s)	Passage	Speaker
February 6	The Word became Flesh	John 1:14	John 1:1-18	Jim Fleming
February 13	Gabriel's Message	Luke 1:30-31	Luke 1:1-80	Terry Bolden
February 20	The Birth of Jesus	Luke 2:10-11	Luke 2:1-40	Jim Fleming
February 27	John the Baptist	Luke 3:15-16	Luke 3:1-20	Jim Fleming
March 6	Baptism and Temptation	Matthew 3:16-17	Matthew 3:13-4:17	Jim Fleming

Sunday school class timeline

8:50: Breakfast ready (February 13: open, February 20: open, February 27: open—sign up to assist with breakfast at stuartheights.org/sundayschool)

9:07: Announcements (let me know prior to a Sunday if you have an announcement)

9:10: Lesson

9:40: Prayer requests at each table

9:45: Dismiss

9:50: Room cleared

The Early Years of Jesus: The Word became Flesh

Preview: In the Beginning . . . Again

In Jesus' day, most people did not understand who He really was (**John 1:5, 10**). That is still true today. Many accept him as a good man, a great moral teacher, or even a unique model of team building and leadership. However, unless you also accept Him as God (**John 1:14**), it is the same thing as rejecting Him (**John 1:11**). God desires for us to repent and "believe" on Jesus (**John 1:12**). That is how we discover the incredible blessings God wants to give us in this life and in the next life (**John 1:16-17**).

Jesus is God in the **flesh** sent for our salvation.

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): John 1:1-18 (Author = John)

1 In the beginning [do these words sound familiar? **Genesis 1:1**] **was the Word** [capitalized and is *Logos* in the Greek (not *Legos*, *logos*)], **and the Word was with** [near] **God, and the Word was God.**

David Guzik (on John 1:1):

- **There is a Being known as the Word.**
- **This Being is God, because He is eternal (In the beginning).**
- **This Being is God, because He is plainly called God (the Word was God).**
- **At the same time, this Being does not encompass all that God is. God the Father is a distinct Person from the Word (the Word was with God).**

2 He was in the beginning with God. [Jesus was there, too. Jesus has seen it all. He participated in man's creation, watched man's fall, and is the remedy for man's sin. He is my savior and there is none like Him.] **3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made** [see **Hebrews 1:2** and **Colossians 1:16**]. **4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.** [David Guzik: It isn't that the Word "contains" life and light; He *is* life and light. Therefore, without Jesus, we are **dead** and in **darkness**. We are lost. Significantly, man has an inborn fear towards both death and darkness. Only in Christ can there be no fear—He is the light that conquers the darkness and He is the life that conquers death.] **5 And the light shines** [Linear present active indicative: the light keeps on giving light—and this light will never end!] **in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend** [means to put your hand on (the darkness could not put its hand on the Light) and additionally means to overcome—we see the first hints of, 'Love Wins'] **it.**

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 This man came for a witness [*martureo* (originally meant to testify, but so many Christians died as a result of their testimony about their faith in Christ, that the meaning of the word changed in the first century from 'testify' to 'died because of what you testified about'), **to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light** [almost implies that some people thought John was the Messiah], **but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true** [means to have the form **and** the substance (some things in

life look like the real thing but are not the real thing—Coke 0 (per Julie), Cake Boss cakes (mostly filled with rice krispies), etc.]) **Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.**

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. [The world did not know its Creator? How did we miss Him? We are flawed and fallen. Do not miss the fact that we did not know Him when He was at work creating the world and we did not know Him when He was at work saving the world. I gather from this that we are ignorant beyond our own imagination.] **11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him .** [Have you ever felt excluded from something you should have been included on? How do you think Jesus felt? Jesus created the universe, gave life to humanity, and was rejected by His creation.] **12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name** [the **Gospel** in four words]: **13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God** [implies that it is not our work, but the work of God Himself that saves us].

14 And the Word became flesh [theologically, this is called the incarnation (the in-flesh-ment) and this resulted in God being susceptible to physical pain, abuse, and torture] **and dwelt** [an old word meaning to pitch your tent or tabernacle—in the Old Testament, the tabernacle was the physical resting place of the glory of God—in the New Testament, the body of Jesus Christ was the physical resting place of the glory of God (Jesus is the fleshing out of God)] **among us, and we beheld** [carefully studied] **His glory** [this was something that was not possible in the Old Testament (if you looked at God, you died—Moses looked at where God was and his face glowed)], **the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth** [What a present: getting what we do not deserve and knowing the truth].

15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me [we find out later in John that Jesus was born after John, so this obviously refers to Jesus’ eternal existence].”

16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace [each day, we get new grace to replace the grace of the prior day]. **17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.** [The first of many, many comparisons of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament centered on the Law of Moses (commandments). The New Testament centered on the Law of Christ (**love**).] **18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him** [David Guzik: Jesus has declared the nature of the unseen God to man—He filled in the gaps of our ignorance by fleshing out God for us].

Apply (What is the point?)

1. The Logos is the **Word** of God in human flesh.
2. The Logos is the **Son** of God with the glory of God in Him.
3. The Logos shows men **who** God is and **what** God is.

Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. **Believe** in His name
2. Know: Logos = God = Life = Light = Jesus Christ

The Early Years of Jesus: Gabriel's Message

Preview: Greetings!

You may feel too old, like Elizabeth (**Luke 1:18**), or too insignificant, like Mary (**Luke 1:48**), to make a difference. However, God can do incredible things (**Luke 1:37**) through people who are faithful and dependent on him (**Luke 1:6, 13, 50**). Having faith does not mean you will understand exactly what God is doing in your life. Faith is simply believing that God has the power to do anything (**Luke 1:37**) and then committing yourself to his way, no matter what happens (**Luke 1:38**).

Overview: The Gospel of Luke

Distinctions of the **Gospel of Luke**

1. Most descriptive of all the biblical writers (266 words not used anywhere else in New Testament)
2. More detailed and obscure facts than any other gospel (many here not told in other gospels)
3. Focus:
 - a. **Luke** stresses God working in humanity and specifically individual lives
 - b. **Luke** puts special emphasis on "salvation" (never mentioned in **Matthew** or **Mark**, only once in **John**)
 - c. **Luke** focuses on details of individuals
 - d. **Luke** stresses the Holy Spirit in and on individual lives
 - e. **Luke** details Jesus' suffering and death

Key thought: God uses persons of real faith, no matter what their **stage** of life.

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Luke 1 (Author = Luke)

1 Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, **2** just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, **3** it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, **4** that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

The Birth Announcement of John (5-23)

5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. **6** And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. **7** But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. **8** So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, **9** according to the

custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. 11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

Zechariah's purpose: To burn incense

David Guzik: According to the Law of Moses, incense was offered to God on the golden altar every morning and every evening (Exodus 30:7-8). By this time, there was an established ritual for the practice.

1. There were several lots cast to determine who did what at the morning sacrifice. The first lot determined who would cleanse the altar and prepare its fire; the second lot determined who would kill the morning sacrifice and sprinkle the altar, the golden candlestick, and the altar of incense. The third lot determined who would come and offer incense. This was the most privileged duty; those who received the first and second lots would repeat their duty at the evening sacrifice, but not with the third lot. To offer the incense would be a once in a lifetime opportunity.

2. Before dawn, hundreds of worshippers gathered at the temple. The morning sacrifice began when the incense priest walked toward the temple, through the outer courts, he struck a gong-like instrument known as the *Magrephah*. At this sound, the Levites assembled and got ready to lead the gathered people in songs of worship to God.

3. The other two priests chosen by lot that morning walked up to the temple on each side of the priest chosen to offer the incense. All three entered the holy place together. One priest set burning coals on the golden altar; the other priest arranged the incense so it was ready to go. Then those two priests left the temple, and the incense priest was left all alone in the holy place.

4. In front of him was the golden altar of incense; it was 18 inches square and 3 feet high. On that small table lay the burning coals, with little wisps of smoke rising up, ready for the incense. Behind the gold altar was a huge, thick curtain, and behind that curtain was the Holy of Holies, the Most Holy Place, where no man could enter, except the high priest, and that only on the Day of Atonement. As he faced the golden altar of incense, to his right would be the table of showbread, and to his left would be the golden lampstand, which provided the only light for the holy place.

Zechariah's heart

1. Righteous
2. **Obedient**
3. Humbled (speculative): Given Luke 1:6 and the heart of Zechariah, he knew this was a once in a lifetime opportunity. It was a great privilege and honor to have this appointment—many priests never would experience it (there were an estimated 18,000-22,000 qualified priests at this time in history in the temple service).

Zechariah's experience

In this dimly lit, quiet, and small enclosure, Gabriel appears and Zechariah “**was troubled.**” Personally, my clothes would have had to be burned afterwards. This is Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God (**Luke 1:19**). God’s creations glow from His very presence (remember Moses). What an awesome and terrifying interruption to Zechariah’s quiet and holy vision of what would happen. Gabriel announces the Messiah’s precursor; the promised Elijah of **Malachi 3-4**. Moreover, guess what, “it will be your son Zechariah.” A great revival in the hearts of the nation of Israel will result from the work of Zechariah’s son.

13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. 16 And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

18 And Zacharias said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.”

19 And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. 20 But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.”

Zechariah’s Response

This righteous, obedient, humble, and God-fearing man says, “Who me? I and my wife are too old.” A lapse in his faith and judgment (this NEVER happens to us) and Gabriel makes him mute—which Zechariah does not appear to know that it will be temporary. He didn’t lose his faith at all, as he continued to trust and serve out his service to God (**Luke 1:23**). How often have you seen someone, “give up,” on God when he felt God dealt him a bad hand?

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. 22 But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

23 So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. 24 Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, 25 “Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”

The Birth Announcement of Jesus (24-40)

Gabriel appears again in order to bring good news—this time of the Messiah's **birth**. My quick synopsis is, "Gabriel appeared and said, 'The Messiah is coming. Now, go visit your cousin.'" Odd connection, don't you think?

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing will be impossible."

38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Mary was humble

When referring to herself, she used the term "**maidservant**" (literally: female slave) in [Luke 1:38, 48](#)

39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

Mary was obedient

Gabriel's command was given to go serve and care for Elizabeth (much older and possible carrying/birthing complications). Mary went "with haste" ([Luke 1:39](#)) and stayed three months ([Luke 1:56](#)). This shows the servant's heart! Gabriel (and of course God) knew her servant's heart, thus the command.

Mary's stay with Elizabeth (41-56)

41 And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said,

“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”

How involved was God with the **details** of their lives?

1. John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit (**Luke 1:15, 41**) from **birth**
2. Elizabeth was filled with the Spirit (**Luke 1: 41**), recognized Mary carried the **Messiah**, encouraged her, and praised God
3. Mary was filled with the Spirit (and carrying the Lord Himself, **Luke 1:35, 44, 46-55**) and gives a beautiful **poetic** discourse of Messianic Old Testament scriptures that Jesus will fulfill

46 And Mary said:

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

48 For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;

For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

49 For He who is mighty has done great things for me,

And holy is His name.

50 And His mercy is on those who fear Him

From generation to generation.

51 He has shown strength with His arm;

He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 He has put down the mighty from their thrones,

And exalted the lowly.

53 He has filled the hungry with good things,

And the rich He has sent away empty.

54 He has helped His servant Israel,

In remembrance of His mercy,

55 As He spoke to our fathers,

To Abraham and to his seed forever.”

56 And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

The Birth and Circumcision of John (57-80)

In obedience to Gabriel's pronouncement, they call him **John**. One of the funniest verses in the Bible is **Luke 1:62**. Zechariah was mute, not deaf. Nine months of this—how frustrating! I love this though as this shows the human/real quality to Luke's writings. We do the same thing all the time. I have done this with someone who does not speak English. Zechariah is given his speech back, is filled with the Spirit, and prophecies.

57 Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. **58** When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.

59 So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. **60** His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John."

61 But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." **62** So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. **64** Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God. **65** Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. **66** And all those who heard *them* kept *them* in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

68 " Blessed *is* the Lord God of Israel,

For He has visited and redeemed His people,

69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us

In the house of His servant David,

70 As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets,

Who *have been* since the world began,

71 That we should be saved from our enemies

And from the hand of all who hate us,

72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers

And to remember His holy covenant,

73 The oath which He swore to our father Abraham:

74 To grant us that we,

Being delivered from the hand of our enemies,

Might serve Him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

76 " And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest;

For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,

77 To give knowledge of salvation to His people

By the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God,

With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us;

79 To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,

To guide our feet into the way of peace."

80 So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Take a look at whom God can use:
 - a. God used a couple who were too **old** (**Luke 1:18**)
 - b. God used a woman who was **unworthy** (**Luke 1:43**)
 - c. God used a woman who was **insignificant** (**Luke 1:48**)

Whatever excuse you prefer, it makes no difference to God. The better your excuse may seem, the greater the **glory** brought to God.

2. **Luke 1** is full of those who experienced the presence of God. What was their response?
 - a. Gabriel, the one, "who stands in the presence of God" (**Luke 1:19**) is constantly bringing good news, giving **glory** to God, and praising His name (compare **Daniel 9**)
 - b. Elizabeth, filled with the Spirit and entering the presence of the pre-born Messiah, gives **praises** to God and shares testimony of His goodness (**Luke 1:41-45**)
 - c. Mary, filled with the Spirit and carrying the pre-born Messiah, **praises** God, tells of His greatness, and gives Him glory (**Luke 1:46-55**)
 - d. Zachariah, filled with the Spirit, tells of the Messiah's coming and God uses him to prophecy regarding his own son, in turn bring the Lord **glory**

Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. Be **ready** and allow God to use you (**Luke 1:38**)
2. **Trust** Him (He knows what He is doing and is more than capable—**Luke 1:37**)
3. Tell others of His goodness, mercy, love, and greatness. Give Him all the **glory**. I know He deserves it!

Testimonies

Bri Malloy

Zeke Arter

The Early Years of Jesus: The Birth of Jesus

Preview: Learning to count to one

God intentionally chose to work his greatest miracle through “invisible people” like two overwhelmed parents and some terrified shepherds. Throw in an old man and an old woman and you get the birth of the Messiah—the greatest one ever to live.

Key thought: Meeting Jesus changes **everything**

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Luke 2:1-40 (Author = Luke)

Christ Born of Mary

1 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar [EasyEnglish: Caesar was the title that Roman rulers took. They were in effect the kings of Rome.] **Augustus** [David Guzik: He was born with the name Octavian, named after his father. His grandmother was the sister of Julius Caesar, and being a talented young man, Octavian came to the attention of his great uncle. Julius Caesar came to adopt Octavian as his son, and he was made his official heir in 45. BC With a year Caesar was murdered, and Octavian joined with two others – Mark Antony and Lepidus in splitting the domination of Rome three ways. . . . Octavian and Antony soon pushed Lepidus out of the picture. Even though his sister married Antony, for thirteen years Octavian and Antony existed together as rivals, until 31. BC For a year, the huge armies of Octavian and Antony assembled and positioned themselves. Antony, with the help of Cleopatra, brought 500 warships, 100,000 foot soldiers, and 12,000 cavalry. Octavian answered with 400 warships, 80,000 infantry and 12,000 horsemen. But Octavian had the better strategy and the more mobile ships, and he defeated the combined forces of Antony and Queen Cleopatra of Egypt at the battle of Actium. Now Octavius was the sole ruler of the Roman world. He changed his name to Augustus and brought peace and prosperity to the region. He was the first **emperor** of Rome.] **that all the world** [the Roman world] **should be registered** [many translations say, ‘taxed,’ but the word is really the word for registered for a **census**—once the Caesar knew how many people there were, a tax would almost certainly follow]. **2 This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.** [This verse has raised several questions to the validity and accuracy of the Scriptures as it appears to be an error. It is not. For a more thorough explanation of the timeline of Roman leaders, see Adam Clarke’s commentary.] **3 So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.** [David Guzik: It may well be that up to that point, there had never been a man with power over more lives than Caesar Augustus.]

4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem [house of bread; about six miles south of Jerusalem and **80** miles from Nazareth—it would have taken at least three or four hard days’ journey; a fulfillment of **Micah 5:2**—the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem], **because he was of the house and lineage of David,** **5 to be registered with Mary** [historians tell us that only the head of the house had to travel to participate in the census, so Mary did not have to go—perhaps she went because Joseph did not want to leave her so close to the birth], **his betrothed wife** [a strong form of a modern day **engagement**], **who was with child** [the Greek

is literally, 'big **wave**'—perhaps indicating the movement of Jesus in the womb]. **6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.** [Tradition says Jesus was born in a stable, but it is possible Jesus was born in the back of a poor home (where animals were kept). Either way, it was no entry for a king.]

Glory in the Highest

8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields [shepherds kept their sheep in the field from April to November], **keeping watch** [a specific term for a **three**-hour period in the night—there were four watches and they would rotate responsibility (draw on the board)] **over their flock by night . 9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them** [Jesus replaces darkness with **light**], **and they were greatly afraid** [*me gas phobeo*]. **10 Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. 11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”**

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

**14 “Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”**

15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” 16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. 17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known [a great description of what our job still is today—make it widely known—they were the first human evangelists of the good news of Jesus Christ] **the saying which was told them concerning this Child. 18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart** [meditated]. **20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.** [A natural response]

Circumcision of Jesus

21 And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child [**Genesis 17:12**—Jewish boys were circumcised on the eighth day], **His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb** [**Matthew 1:21**].

Jesus Presented in the Temple

22 Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed [**Leviticus 12** tells us this is 40 days after giving birth (because a woman was made unclean under the law because of the blood involved in childbirth)], **they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD”), 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”** [The rich brought a **lamb** and the poor brought birds. Joseph and Mary brought two birds, but they also brought the Lamb of God—they were rich and poor.]

Simeon Sees God's Salvation

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name *was* Simeon, and this man *was* just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit *was* upon him. **26** And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. **27** So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law [EasyEnglish: The parents had to pay money to the **Lord** for the first son when he was a month old. This was to buy back the boy [from God]. The fee was five shekels (Numbers 18:15-16)], **28** he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,

According to Your word;

30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation

31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,

32 A light to *bring* revelation to the Gentiles, [The Gentiles? Praise God for this line—this is us!]

And the glory of Your people Israel."

33 And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. **34** Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this *Child* is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against **35** (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

Anna Bears Witness to the Redeemer

36 Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; **37** and this woman *was* a widow of about eighty-four years [this was an extreme old age for this time period—the average life expectancy was only about **thirty** years], **who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.** **38** And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

The Family Returns to Nazareth

39 So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their *own* city, Nazareth. **40** And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God *was* upon Him. [This is before Jesus went into the temple to teach, so this was pre-12]

Apply (What is the point?)

1. God **speaks** to average, everyday people
2. People respond when Jesus arrives
3. God will bring about His **plans**
4. Little **kids** can have a big impact

Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. Listen for the **voice** of God
2. Respond when you **hear** it
3. Give God the glory when He works
4. Look for **Jesus** in everything

The Early Years of Jesus: John the Baptist

Preview: The world's greatest referral

John the Baptist's assignment was to prepare the way for the Messiah (**Luke 3:4**). The main elements of his message were a call to repentance and a challenge to produce fruit. In the end, John devoted his life to the higher purpose of humbly pointing people to Jesus (**Luke 3:15-17; John 3:27-36**).

Key thought: Anyone can have an **impact** by pointing people to Jesus

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Luke 3:1-20 (Author = Luke)

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar [the **second** Roman emperor; **Wikipedia: Tiberius was the stepson of Augustus** [last week's Caesar], **great-uncle of Caligula, paternal uncle of Claudius, and great-great uncle of Nero**], **Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea** [the fifth Roman prefect of Judah and Samaria—and later the man that would judge Christ and allow His crucifixion], **Herod being tetrarch of Galilee** [not Herod the Great who had the Jewish boys put to death, but his son, Herod Antipas—the one who would ultimately be humanly responsible for John the Baptist's death; also not Herod Agrippa I (grandson of Herod the Great) who had James killed and Peter thrown in prison in **Acts 12**; also not Herod Agrippa II (mentioned in **Acts 25-26**)], **his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis** [Philip died five years after this story], **and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, 2 while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests** [Luke gives all of this detail to put the actors on the stage and to provide the date—most scholars feel it is 28 or 29 AD—making Jesus and John both around 30 years old], **the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness** [God spoke to Moses, Jacob, Elijah, etc., in the wilderness. The other gospels tell us that John wore camel's clothing (not popular then either), ate locusts, and lived alone. John was **weird**.].

John preaches before he ever says a word. His location, his clothes, his food, his lifestyle. He is preaching without saying a word. HOWEVER, HE DOES NOT STOP THERE. Many of us stop at lifestyle evangelism, but even if that method works, that is not what we are commanded to do. John the Baptist opens his mouth and he **refers** people to Jesus because Jesus is the only one worth being referred to.

3 And he [John] **went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission** [Luke was a what? A doctor. Remission is a medical term meaning a disease is relaxing—repentance brings about the relaxing of the impacts of sin] **of sins** [the repentance (changing of the mind) saved, not the baptism, but the baptism was new, so it was what was focused on], **4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah [Isaiah 40:3-5a] the prophet, saying:**

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the LORD;

Make His paths straight. [John's job was to **prepare** the way for the Messiah]

5 Every valley shall be filled

*And every mountain and hill brought low;
The crooked places shall be made straight
And the rough ways smooth;*

6 *And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.*” [A neat play on words with ‘flesh’ and ‘see’ since that is what Jesus is—the in-flesh-ment of God that we can see]

John Preaches to the People

7 Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, “Brood of vipers! [Have you ever heard a sermon started this way? And these were people who were being baptized!] **Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?** **8** Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. **9** And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. **Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.**” [John did not mince words or play around. He got directly to the point. He was talking to the religious and to those that thought that the faith of their **fathers** would be enough for them. Your eternal destiny is decided by **you**. John was telling them that they are not special and that God could replace them if He so desired. I do not think John’s message would be popular today either—go into a room of Americans and tell them that they are not special and that God could bless another nation like He has America if He so desired.]

10 So the people asked him [this is in the imperfect tense, meaning they asked repeatedly], **saying, “What shall we do then?”** **11** He answered and said to them, “He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.” [Paraphrased from Dan Miller’s *Blue Like Jazz: The human struggle should bother us. Something is broken in the world and we are called to hold our hands against the open, bloody wound.* Do something. John was telling them to be **engaged**.]

12 Then tax collectors [Jewish tax collectors were especially hated by the Jews—they were literally assisting in the funding of the Roman governmental rule] **also came to be baptized, and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?”** [As if **Luke 3: 11** did not apply to them!] **13** And he said to them, “**Collect no more than what is appointed for you.**” [They would collect more than they were supposed to because the over and above was pure profit. John was telling them to be **honest** in their business.]

14 Likewise the soldiers asked him, **saying, “And what shall we do?”** So he said to them, “**Do not intimidate** [literally, double-shaking (like an earthquake)] **anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.**” [The soldiers would have commoners do their work for them and they would (sometimes) be paid as if they were bounty hunters, so they would arrest more than they should. John tells them to be **content**. *Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures: Might does not make right with Jesus.* Just because we are strong enough to do a thing, does not mean we should do it.]

15 Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not [Robertson’s *New Testament Word Pictures: John wrought no miracles and was not in David’s line and yet he moved people so mightily that they began to suspect that he himself was the Messiah*], **16** John answered [they questioned in their hearts and John answered out loud],

saying to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire [Holy Spirit I am good with, but fire?]. **17 His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.**” [Again, no mincing of words John is letting them know that the Messiah (Jesus) is coming to set everything straight. He will separate you into two groups—the **true** and the **false**. John puts himself below Christ. John speaks the truth about **Christ** (and goes to heaven for it).]

18 And with many other exhortations he preached to the people [translation: he did a LOT of other stuff, but you get the idea]. **19 But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, 20 also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.** [John speaks the truth about **Herod** (and goes to prison for it).]

Luke 7:18-19, 22-23 (John’s question)

18 Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. 19 And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”

22 Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. 23 And blessed is he who is not offended [Greek = scandalized (tripped up)] **because of Me.”** [John was in prison in [Luke 7](#).]

Erwin McManus (in *The Barbarian Way*): Jesus was saying to him, “John, I’m not coming through for you. I’m not getting you out of this prison. I’m not sparing your life. Yes, I have done all this and more for others, but the path I choose for you is different from theirs. You’ll be blessed, John, if this does not cause you to fall away. There are no **bows**. John’s end was martyrdom (see [Matthew 14:1-12](#)). John did not preach a health/wealth gospel and his life did not end up that way.

John helps to move us from the papyrus and ink word of the Old Testament to flesh and blood Word of the New Testament. John helps us to hear what God says and to see what God intended. John moves us from the word to the way (a movement that is created through the incarnation of Jesus). The word started something that eventually took on flesh and blood. This is the story of Jesus and this is the story that John refers and redirects us to. Tomorrow does not have to be a repeat of today. Jesus can change your tomorrows for His glory.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. God uses **weird** people
2. Jesus is the One
3. Tomorrow can be **different**

Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. God wants to use me **now**
2. My story is **unique**
3. I must be obedient now

Extra

John's surface story is, 'live weird and Jesus will use you.' The sub-story, the sub-version is, 'be obedient to your calling (i.e., the will of God) and Jesus will use you.' So, what is the will of God for you?

Now, be careful, because these sub-versions are sometimes dangerous to you. However, the truth is the truth, so go for it!

God's will requires:

1. Jesus to give Himself for us ([Galatians 1:3-5](#))
2. Jesus to pray for us ([Romans 8:26-27](#))

God's will:

1. Saves ([John 1:12-13](#))
2. Allows God to hear you ([John 9:30-31](#))

God's will is for you to:

1. Be baptized ([Luke 7:29-30](#))
2. Be called ([1 Corinthians 1:1](#))
3. Sacrifice yourself ([Romans 12:1-2](#))
4. Be obedient ([Ephesians 6:5-7](#))
5. Do good ([1 Peter 2:15-16](#))
6. Be giving ([2 Corinthians 8:4-5](#))
7. Pray and give thanks ([1 Thessalonians 5:17-18](#))
8. Abstain ([1 Thessalonians 4:3-4](#))
9. Suffer ([1 Peter 3:17-18; 4:19](#))
10. Complete the work ([Colossians 4:12-13](#))

The Early Years of Jesus: Baptism and Temptation

Preview:

John the Baptist baptized Jesus—not to wash away Jesus’ sin, but so that Jesus would better be able to identify with humanity. Immediately following His baptism, the devil tempted Jesus with a variety of temptations. Jesus did not sin during His temptation, but rather used Scripture to combat the devil.

Key thought: Jesus **identifies** with us through His baptism and His temptations

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Matthew 3:13-4:17 (Author = Matthew)

John Baptizes Jesus (parallel passages of Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22, and John 1:29-33)

Jesus’ life is marked by being different and separate from those around Him. **Jamieson, Faussett, Brown: as He rode into Jerusalem upon an ass, “on which no one has ever sat” (Luke 19:30), and lay in a sepulcher, “in which no one had yet been lain” (John 19:41), so in His baptism, too. He would be “separate from sinners.”** Jesus was **different**.

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. [Baptism is not intended to wash away sin because Jesus had no sin. Some question the origin of water baptism, but **John 1:33** says that God told John the Baptist to start doing it—so John the Baptist start doing it. **Geneva Bible: Christ sanctified our baptism in himself.**] **14 And John tried to prevent** [in the imperfect sense, meaning he repeatedly did this] **Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?”** [I think we can relate to that, right? Baptizing God? No thanks. I would let God baptize me. However, if John had not protested, it would not have given Jesus an opportunity to explain Himself and His actions. **The Fourfold Gospel: It should be noted that this protest of John’s needed to be made, for it saved Jesus from being baptized without explanation, as if he were a sinner. Baptism without such explanation might have compromised our Lord’s claim as the sinless one.**]

15 But Jesus answered and said to him, “Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” [The answer to, ‘Why did Jesus have to be baptized?’ is to fulfill righteousness. Both John and Jesus had prophecies to fulfill. But why was this important? **David Guzik: The purpose was for Jesus to completely identify Himself with sinful man. This is exactly what He did in His birth, His upbringing, and His death. So here, as John allowed Him to be, here is Jesus, standing again in the place of sinful man.** I was born. Jesus was born. I was reared. Jesus was reared. I was baptized. Jesus was baptized. I will die one day. Jesus died one day. These events help me to relate to Jesus and help Jesus relate to me. God is hard enough to figure out—Jesus helps with that, ‘figuring out.’] **Then he allowed Him.** [**The Fourfold Gospel: John’s humility caused him to shrink from this duty, but did not make him willfully persist in declining it. Humility ceases to be a virtue when it keeps us from performing our allotted tasks.** At some point, just do the work!]

16 When He had been baptized [In our church, it is customary to say, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Buried with Christ in baptism. Raised to walk in newness of life.” That language comes from (1) **Matthew 28:19** and (2) **Romans 6:4**. We have no clue what John said when he was baptizing Jesus, though. He may not have said anything. I doubt he said, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and in your name, and of the Holy Spirit. Buried with you in baptism. Raised to walk in newness of life.”], **Jesus came up immediately from the water** [quite clearly Jesus’ baptism was by immersion and was not by sprinkling; even the Scriptures say that we are ‘buried’ in baptism (**Colossians 2:12**; **Romans 6:3-4**)]; **and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw** [Matthew is not clear as to whether or not anyone else saw the Spirit. **John 1** records that John the Baptist saw it as well.] **the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him**. [The dove is a common symbol of the Holy Spirit in religious **art** and many view the dove in other places in Scripture as also representing the Holy Spirit.] **17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven** [**Barnes’ Notes: This voice, or sound, was repeated on the mount of transfiguration, Matthew 17:5; Luke 9:35-36; 2 Peter 1:17. It was also heard just before his death, and was then supposed by many to be thunder, John 12:28-30.**], **saying, “This is My beloved Son** [the Father states this is the Son], **in whom I am** [in the aorist tense, which means true all time periods—past, present, and future (the English language does not have an equivalent to the aorist tense, but it is very helpful in theology)] **well pleased.”**

David Guzik: Jesus was baptized to be identified with sinful man, but He was also baptized to be identified to sinful man. All three members of the **trinity** show up at one time to attest to the fact that Jesus is God. And, if the whole idea of God descending on God while God is talking is a little hard-to-get, that’s OK—welcome to the theology of the Trinity.

Matthew 4

Satan Tempts Jesus (parallel passages of Mark 1:12-13 and Luke 4:1-13)

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit [remember that the Spirit led Him to the wilderness—God’s Spirit led Him, but not to tempt Him because God does not tempt us to sin (**James 1:13** clearly rebuts this). Now, Jesus has just finished identifying with man in His baptism and now He is going to identify with man with His temptation.] **into the wilderness** [**Coffman: Dummelow (J. R. Dummelow, One Volume Commentary (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 632) saw in this wilderness temptation a contrast to the temptation of the first Adam. “The temptation of the first Adam took place in a garden . . . the temptation of the second Adam took place in a wilderness.” The fruits and flowers of Eden contrast with the wild beasts and the disorder of the howling wilderness. Thus, the victory of Christ was made more wonderful.** The devil essentially raises the bar of difficulty on Jesus and Jesus still passes.] **to be tempted** [tested, tried, tempted; **New Testament Word Pictures: The evil sense comes from its use for an evil purpose. Coffman: Temptation is in itself no sin. . . . It is not temptation to do wrong that constitutes sin, but YIELDING to that temptation.** The bottom line is that the Spirit meant it for **good** and the devil meant it for **bad**.] **by the devil** [the slanderer, the accuser—if you want to be like the devil, slander and accuse people]. **2 And when He had fasted** [abstaining from food and/or drink—a spiritual discipline that you should practice] **forty days and forty nights** [Moses had a 40-day fast

(Exodus 34:28-29) as did Elijah (1 Kings 19:7-9)—interesting that both showed up at Jesus' transfiguration in Matthew 17, too. **The Fourfold Gospel: Those who share Christ's sufferings shall also share his glorification (Romans 8:17).**, **afterward He was hungry** [hungry, not thirsty—implies this was a food fast—also lets us know that He was a human being (we share a need for food with Him)]. **3 Now** [when Jesus was tired and hungry—the devil will sometimes come when you are physically at your weakest] **when** [the certainty of temptation is not an, 'if,' but a, 'when'] **the tempter came to Him** [whether this was a physical manifestation or a ghostly manifestation, or a mental temptation, is not important (because the Scripture does not say)—a good rule of thumb is that if the Scripture does not address it, it is not as important as we think], **he said, "If** [first 'if'] **You are the Son of God** [the devil questions whether this is the Son—despite the fact that God the Father has just declared this to be true], **command** [literally, 'speak'—but that is all that the Word has to do to create—just like Genesis 1 (it's interesting to note that the Word (Jesus) was the one that spoke those stones into existence)] **that these stones become bread** [The lust of the **flesh**. **Barnes' Notes: He had just been declared to be the Son of God, (Matthew 3:17) and here was an opportunity to show that he was really so.** The devil is asking the Creator (Jesus) to create something that the Creator already is (Jesus is the Bread of Life). The devil gives stones (no nutritional value). Jesus gives the bread (much nutritional value) of life.]”

4 But He answered [answered, not argued] **and said, "It is written** [Jesus responds with Scripture. He is in a fight, so He picks up a sword.], **'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God** [Notice the complexity of this statement: The Word of God is talking about the word of God. The Word says the word comes from the mouth of God—but only Jesus has the literal mouth of God. Jesus quotes **Deuteronomy 8:3—Barnes' Notes: In that place the discourse is respecting manna. Moses says that the Lord humbled the people, and fed them with manna, an unusual kind of food, that they might learn that man did not live by bread only, but that there were other things to support life.** Jesus was not like the Israelites in their failure—He passes the test by using Scripture for His answer. **The Fourfold Gospel: God can support our lives independent of our body (Matthew 6:25; John 6:47-58; Acts 17:28).**].”

5 Then the devil took Him [**Barnes' Notes: conducted Jesus, or accompanied him; but not that this was done against the will of Jesus**] **up into the holy city** [a name for Jerusalem: **The Fourfold Gospel: The inscription on Jewish coins was, "Jerusalem the Holy." Arabs today call it, "el Kuds," "the Holy."**], **set Him on the pinnacle of the temple** [The lust of the **eyes**], **6 and said to Him, "If** [second 'if'] **You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written** [the devil uses that phrase too]:

'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, [**The People's New Testament: The enemy, like a false adviser, quotes from Psalm 91:11 to justify his request, but he garbled the Scripture, leaving out "to guard you in all your ways," which follows the first clause. The promise is limited to those who walk in the way appointed to them. The devil misquotes scripture.**]

'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" [**Psalm 91:11-12.** It might shock you to know that the devil has the entire Bible memorized—he does not believe it all, but he knows it all. **The Fourfold Gospel: Satan's abuse of Scripture did not discourage Christ's use of it.**]

7 Jesus said [said, not argued] **to him, “It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt** [literally, to test, but here used as, ‘experiment, set traps for’] **the LORD your God.”** [Deuteronomy 6:16]

8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. [The **pride** of life] **9 And he** [the devil] **said to Him** [Jesus], **“All these things I will give You** [The Fourfold Gospel: It was a large offer in the sight of Satan, but a small one in the sight of him who made all the worlds. . . . Note also that this was the only temptation wherein Satan evinced any show of generosity. He is slow to give anything, and most of us sell out to him for **nothing.**] **if** [third ‘if’] **You will fall down and worship me.”** [The devil offers kingdoms through kneeling (remember **John 8:44**, too—this may just have been a lie). Jesus ushers in His kingdom through His bleeding. Jesus was required to die to save us. The devil was offering Jesus a **shortcut.**]

The Fourfold Gospel: Satan and God each seek the worship of man, but from very different motives. God is holiness and goodness, and we are invited to worship him that we may thereby be induced to grow like him. But Satan seeks worship for vanity's sake. How vast the vanity which would give so great a reward for one act of worship!

David Guzik: This is a revealing insight into Satan's heart; worship and recognition are far more precious to him than the possession of the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

10 Then Jesus said [said, not argued] **to him, “Away with you** [The Fourfold Gospel: When he tempted him in a somewhat similar matter, Jesus called Simon Peter by this name (**Matthew 16:23**), but he laid a different command upon each of them. To Satan he spoke as an enemy, saying, **“Away with you.”** He ordered Satan from his presence, for he had no proper place there. To Peter he spoke as to a presumptuous disciple, saying, **“Get behind Me.”** The disciple is a follower of his master, and his proper place is in the rear.], **Satan** [Jesus calls the devil by name]! **For it is written** [I love the consistency of Christ], **‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’** [Deuteronomy 6:13]

11 Then the devil left Him [Jesus won! Jesus is God. God is love. Love won that day. It is still winning today. It will win tomorrow. Love always **wins.**], **and behold, angels came and ministered** [Greek = *diakoneo*, meaning to serve as a waiter (and in the imperfect tense, so they did this repeatedly)] **to Him.**

Now, Jesus and the devil could have had a Hollywood-sized epic fight, but they did not. They had a war of words. The time for the devil’s demise is still in the future, and the devil still had a role to play in the God’s redemptive story—so he was allowed to continue being as he is. His day will come, though. His day will come. It is good for us to remember that Jesus could have banished the devil with a miracle, but Jesus was giving us an example to follow.

Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry

The People’s New Testament: A long period lapses between the temptation and the next event recorded. Matthew does not try to follow the order of events, and he now passes over more than a

year [because Matthew was not an eyewitness with Jesus during this time]. **This year had been actively employed. The intervening events are, (1) the return of Jesus from the wilderness to Bethabara, where the first disciples are called (John 1:15-37); (2) the return to Galilee and the miracle at Cana (John 2:1-11); (3) the first passover of the Lord's ministry in Jerusalem and the temple cleansed (John 2:14-25); (4) interview with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21); (5) ministry in Judea (John 4:3); (6) leaves for Galilee, passes through Samaria, conversation at Sychar (John 4:4-42); (7) heals nobleman's son (John 4:46-54); (8) a period of retirement in Galilee, John imprisoned (Matthew 4:12); (9) attends feast in Jerusalem, miracle at pool of Bethesda (John 5); (10) returns to Galilee, April A. D. 28. We thus see that an interval of more than a year elapsed between the temptation and the imprisonment of John.**

12 Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth [Jesus' hometown], **He came and dwelt in Capernaum** [If you look at a map, this statement looks strange because Nazareth is in Galilee. However, Galilee has two parts—Lower Galilee and Upper Galilee—Jesus was leaving Lower Galilee and heading to Upper Galilee.], **which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by 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 sat in darkness have seen a great light,
And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death
Light has dawned."** [Isaiah 8:21-9:2. Again, we see Him fulfilling prophecy]

17 From that time Jesus began to preach [publically proclaim] **and to say, "Repent** [an imperative meaning to change your **mind**], **for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."** [John Wesley: **Repentance which John taught still was, and ever will be, the necessary preparation for that inward kingdom**]

The Fourfold Gospel: When the voice of his messenger, John, was silenced, the King became his own herald.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Jesus was **submissive**
2. Jesus is God
3. The devil tempts (he takes advantage, he comes after a high point, and he uses normal things)
4. Scripture is the **answer** to the devil's temptations

Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. Follow Jesus' **example** (in baptism and in temptation)
2. Know Scripture well enough to **answer**