

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Sunday Sermon

Date: September 20, 2020

Text: Matthew 4:12-25

Scripture Reading: Matthew 4:12-25

Subject: Jesus begins his public ministry

In the preceding message from Matthew 4:1-11, we considered the temptation of Jesus by the devil after fasting for forty days and forty nights. We were blessed to consider that our Lord was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He faced every one of Satan's temptations to evil with an answer from the Holy Scriptures. What an example he provided for us when we are tempted of the wicked one! Let us hide God's word in our hearts that we might not sin against God!

Now we continue in the fourth chapter which records the beginning of the public ministry of our Lord after his baptism, his receiving of the Holy Ghost, and his being tested of the devil.

Matthew 4:12 (KJV) *Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;*

That is, Jesus departed from the wilderness where he was tempted of the devil. The wilderness was somewhat near Jordan where John had been baptizing, so he left this place and went to Galilee to his home in Nazareth 88 road miles from Jericho (the area of the temptation and baptism).

Matthew 4:13-16 (KJV) *And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: 14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; 16 The people which sat in darkness saw*

great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, -- So, our Lord left his home town of Nazareth to dwell in Capernaum which is located on the north-west coast of the Sea of Galilee (sometimes called Gennesaret; and the sea of Tiberias). In the city of Capernaum he would do many wonderful works during his ministry including - the nobleman's son, ([Joh 4:47](#)) Peter's wife's mother, ([Mt 8:14](#)) the centurion's servant, ([Mt 8:5](#)) and the ruler's daughter, ([Mt 9:28-25](#).)

Luke gives us the account of his being in Nazareth. Let's read it so we can see one of the reasons for Jesus' leaving Nazareth.

Luke 4:14-30 (KJV) *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. 15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. 16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. 17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. 20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. 22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words*

*which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? **23** And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. **24** And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. **25** But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; **26** But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. **27** And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. **28** And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, **29** And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. **30** But he passing through the midst of them went his way,*

he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: 14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; 16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. – As we study through the book of Matthew, we shall see many instances of the fulfilment of prophetic scripture. This is one of them. Jesus' coming to dwell in this area fulfilled this prophecy from the Prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 9:1-2 (KJV) *Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly*

afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. 2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

The people which sat in darkness, -- The inhabitants of Galilee, who sat or "walked", as in Isaiah's time; that is, continued in spiritual darkness, in ignorance, blindness, error, and infidelity, "saw great light". How was that? They saw Christ himself, who came a light into the world; he talked with them, preached unto them, and opened the eyes of their understandings to behold his glory, and to know him, and salvation by him.

And to them which sat in the region and shadow of death: the same persons who sit in darkness, sit also in the region of death; for such are dead in trespasses and sins: where there is no spiritual light, there is no spiritual life, and such are in danger of the second death; but the happiness of these people was, that to them "light is sprung up", like the rising sun, something they did not seek or ask for. Christ, the sun of righteousness, arose upon them in a sovereign way with healing in his wings; and cured them of their darkness and deadness, turned them from darkness to light, and caused them to pass from death to life.

Matthew 4:17 (KJV) From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

From that time Jesus began to preach, -- that is from the time he came to dwell in Capernaum. Jesus began to preach – to proclaim as a herald would proclaim.

And to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. –

These are the very same words which John the Baptist had preached before the baptism of Jesus.

Matthew 3:2 (KJV) *And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Let us notice the account given us by Mark:

Mark 1:14-15 (KJV) *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

Considering the account of Matthew and Mark, I must conclude that the terms kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God are one and the same thing. Kingdom of heaven is used by Matthew only. What does the term “at hand” mean? Consider these uses of that term:

Matthew 26:46 (KJV) *Rise, let us be going: behold, he is **at hand** that doth betray me.*

Luke 21:30 (KJV) *When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh **at hand**.*

This term means now or immediately – just ready to appear – it is at the door. The gospel had its beginning with the preaching of John the Baptist according to the account of Mark.

Mark 1:1-2 (KJV) *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; 2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.*

Concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is the “gospel of the kingdom.” That gospel was preached by John the Baptist, by Jesus himself, by the apostles, by the apostle Paul. It is the same gospel

which the Lord's church has preached through the ages and which we still are preaching in this day. Jesus said it would be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, then the end shall come.

Matthew 24:14 (KJV) *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

Concerning the kingdom, we, his disciples are taught of the LORD to pray for His Kingdom to come. You and I continue to pray for that to this day and shall until it appears, therefore, it is yet future.

Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV) *After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. **10 Thy kingdom come.** Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. **11** Give us this day our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. **13** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For **thine is the kingdom**, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*

Jesus said it is the pleasure of the Father to give the little flock (his church) the kingdom:

Luke 12:32 (KJV) *Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

The only person or group of persons promised the kingdom and to reign with Christ in it is His church.

Revelation 2:26-27 (KJV) *[Spoken of our Lord to the church at Thyratira] And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: **27** And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.*

No person has the ability to perceive the kingdom of God nor can he enter into it except he is born from above.

John 3:1-7 (KJV) *There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

The New birth allows a person to understand and see the gospel of the kingdom and gives him the capability to enter into the kingdom. The kingdom seen in the Lord's churches was initially seen in the church which was at Jerusalem, which was, at that time, the one and only church. Churches which have come into existence since Jerusalem are patterned after that church. The gospel (the good news) of the kingdom is a marvelous, wonderful announcement that Jesus Christ shall set up a visible kingdom on this earth with his saints in which he will be king over all the earth and reign from Jerusalem. At this point in time, all the wicked and those who offend shall be gathered out of his kingdom and cast into a furnace of fire – there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The whole earth shall be at peace – and nations shall not war anymore, nor shall they learn war. Men shall beat their swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Jerusalem shall be the center of

earth's worship and all shall come there to observe the feast of tabernacles and worship the king every year. Israel shall be the chief nation on earth and the third temple shall be built and used by them.

Isaiah 2:2-4 (KJV) *And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

Isaiah 11:6-9 (KJV) *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*

O, the blessedness of the kingdom of heaven! And the gospel which sets it forth!

Matthew 4:18-20 (KJV) *And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.*

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, -

- There is no doubt in my mind that Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee purposely because he knew these men would be there. Jesus had doubtless already determined to name these same men as Apostles.

Simon called Peter, -- This is Simon, son of Jonas who Jesus named Cephas. Cephas is a Syriac name for Peter in Greek – and means the same thing, a stone.

and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. – Andrew was the one who first heard Jesus and sought out his brother, Simon.

John 1:39-42 (KJV) *He (Jesus) saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. 40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.*

These two men, Simon and Andrew were fishers. When Jesus found them, they were doing what fishermen do – casting a net into the sea hoping to catch fish. Of this lowly kind of employment were the very first persons Christ was pleased to call to the work of the ministry. These were men of no education. They were of the “lower crust” in life and were

despicable and contemptible. Why did our Lord choose such men to follow him?

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 (KJV) *For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: **27** But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; **28** And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: **29** That no flesh should glory in his presence.*

Matthew 4:19-20 *And he saith unto them, **Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20** And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.*

And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. – These men had been baptized with the baptism of John the Baptists just as Jesus himself had been. We know this from reading the first chapter of Acts which sets forth the requirement for an apostle.

Acts 1:21-23 (KJV) *Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, **22** Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. **23** And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.*

So, the LORD called them to follow him – to be with him and he would make them fishers of men. As they had cast their net into

the sea seeking fishes, they would hence cast the gospel net indiscriminately among mankind to catch men and women.

And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. --

That is, as soon as he had called them, they left their worldly employment, and followed him. They gave up themselves to his service, and became his disciples – his followers. They not only left their nets, but their fishing boats, and fishing trade, and all that belonged to it, even all their substance. They also left their relations, friends, and acquaintance, see [Mt 19:27](#) which shows what a mighty power went along with the words and call of Christ; and what a ready, cheerful, and voluntary subjection this produces, wherever it takes place. If we for a moment think they did not forsake all to follow Christ, let us review Peter’s words later to his Lord:

Matthew 19:27 (KJV) *Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?*

Matthew 4:21 (KJV) *And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.*

As the LORD went on further on the shore of the sea of Galilee, he encountered James and John, the sons of Zebedee who were with their father mending their nets. Jesus called them evidently in the same way that he had called Andrew and Simon. Jesus would later name these two men, James and John, apostles as he would Simon Peter and Andrew. These four men would have a prominent place with Jesus in his ministry. You will recall that it was these three of these four which were with Jesus when he begin to be heavy, sorrowful and pray in the Garden of Gethsemane before his

crucifixion. He had told the other disciples to tarry and pray – and took these three with him.

Matthew 4:22 (KJV) *And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.*

We do not see any “if’s, ands, and buts” here, but an immediate positive response to Jesus’ call. They left the ship and their father to follow Jesus. James and John now had a new life just as Simon and Andrew did. They had a higher calling.

Matthew 4:23 (KJV) *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.*

Jesus, evidently now accompanied by Simon, Andrew, James, and John went about "all" this country, both upper and lower Galilee. This must have been a very populous area. The historian Josephus says, there were two hundred and four cities and towns in it; he means, which were places of note, besides villages. Jesus went about, not like Satan, seeking the destruction of men; but as Peter that went along with him later says, at the house of Cornelius - "doing good", [Ac 10:38](#), both to the bodies and souls of men.

Matthew 4:24 (KJV) *And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.*

As Jesus went about doing good and healing the sick and possessed, his fame went throughout all Syria, a country north of Galilee. They brought their sick and diseased – those possessed with devils and those which were lunatic and had palsy. Jesus healed them all. This is amazing. He did not discriminate or have a mood set to heal these people. No matter their malady, Jesus healed them all.

Matthew 4:25 (KJV) *And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.*

Great multitudes: Means great numbers of people; hosts. The fame of Jesus spread over the whole area. Great multitudes followed him from many areas of the entire nation. As we find in the narratives of the gospels, some followed Jesus for one reason, and some for another; some out of good will, others out of ill will; some for the healing of their bodies, others for the good of their souls; some to see his miracles, others to hear his doctrine; and what with one and another, the concourse of people that followed him was greater than that which followed John.

How about you? Will you be his disciple? Will you believe him and be saved from your sins? If it is your desire to follow him and be his disciple to learn of him consider what Jesus said to the multitudes that followed him in Luke's gospel:

Luke 14:25-27 (KJV) *And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, 26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. 27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*

And these words from the Gospel according to Mark:

Mark 10:29-30 (KJV) *And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, **30** But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*

Jesus words to those who thirst and who are heavy laden.

John 7:37-38 (KJV) *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. **38** He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

Matthew 11:28-30 (KJV) *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. **29** Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*