



LENT

Why observe it?

Why Does Vintage Church Observe Lent?

Matthew 4:1-11

"I thought Lent was something that only Roman Catholics observe?" That's a statement you might have thought or heard. But Lent isn't a Roman Catholic tradition; it's a Christian tradition. From the Old to the New Testaments, seasons have always been important for the people of God. This season of 40 days often corresponds with Jesus' fasting in the wilderness for 40 days. Lent has its origins in the 4th century church when people preparing for baptism on Easter Sunday would prepare by fasting and praying. As we prepare to enter into this season of Lent we should want to know why we still observe this ancient season.

Vintage Church observes Lent as an intentional and meaningful season of preparation for Easter.

- As you reflect on the message, what stood out to you? What is something you are still thinking about?
- What is something from the message that challenged you? How are you wrestling with that challenge?
- What question(s) do you have from the message?
- What is at least one practical takeaway from the message?

Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. **3** And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” **4** But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.””

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple
6 and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

“He will command his angels concerning you,’

and

“On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.””

7 Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” **8** Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. **9** And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” **10** Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

“You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.””

11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

- What has been your experience of Lent in the past?
- How can intentional and meaningful seasons, like Lent, serve as seasons of preparation for Christians?
- After Jesus’ baptism, the first thing he does to begin his ministry is go into the wilderness to fast and be tempted by Satan. How was this preparatory for Jesus’ ministry?
- Why is the “wilderness” a place of spiritual preparation and potential growth? Think about the various ways in which the wilderness is used in Scripture to answer your question.

- Jesus utilizes two important spiritual habits in the wilderness—fasting and Scripture. How did these two spiritual habits strengthen him for Satan's temptation?
- In Matthew 4:1 it says that "Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil." How does it make you feel to know that the Holy Spirit led Jesus to be tempted? How should we understand this action?
- Since it's inception, fasting has always been an important part of Lent. And yet, fasting is one of those spiritual habits few Christians practice. What has been your experience with fasting? How do you feel about fasting this Lent?
- How does Jesus' model for us what the season of Lent can look like for us?
- Do you plan to fast from any meals or food, or intentionally practice any other spiritual habits during Lent? Share those plans with your group and ask them to hold you accountable.
- How might the Lord want to use the season of Lent to prepare you?