



# LENT

Why observe it?

Why Does Vintage Church Observe Lent?

Matthew 4:1-11

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

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.

### Who?

- “Then Jesus” (Matthew 4:1)
  - Jesus is the new and better Israel.
  - “14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:14-16).
- Lent is for you.
  - But we are not alone!
  - “He went into the wilderness before us, and He goes there again with us. He knows that the struggle is real, that our frame is weak, and that we are dust. Because we are united to Him, His forty days become ours” (Aaron Damiani, *The Good of Giving Up*, 27).
  - Will you receive Lent?

### Where?

- “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness” (Matthew 4:1).
  - Just as Israel was in the wilderness, so too Jesus went to the wilderness.
    - “But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray” (Luke 5:16).
- Lent is your spiritual wilderness.
  - Will you receive Lent?

### When?

- “And after fasting forty days and forty nights” (Matthew 4:2).
  - Just as Israel wandered the desert for 40 years, Jesus entered the wilderness for 40 days.
- Lent is your forty days and forty nights.
  - Will you receive Lent?

### What?

- “And after fasting forty days and forty nights” (Matthew 4:2).
  - “A fast is the self-denial of normal necessities in order to intentionally attend to God in prayer” (Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 218).
- “It is written” (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10).
  - “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17).
- Lent is your opportunity to be intentional and meaningful.
  - Fasting:
    - “More than any other Discipline, fasting reveals the things that control us” (Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, 55).
    - Partial Fast: Food/drink items
    - Whole Fast: Meal(s)
    - Fasting from other things: Technology
  - Scripture
    - If fasting helps remove things that control us, Scripture adds what we want controlling us—God’s Word
    - Read consistently
    - Read to be with the Lord
    - Consider Scripture memorization
    - Will you receive Lent?

### How?

- “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil” (Matthew 4:1).
  - “Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect” (Hebrews 2:17).
  - In his humanity, Jesus relied on the power and leading of the Holy Spirit.
- Lent is your opportunity to be led by the Holy Spirit.
  - How will you listen for and follow the Holy Spirit’s leading?
  - Will you receive Lent?

### Why?

- “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil” (Matthew 4:1).
  - “A temptation in the hands of Satan becomes a test in the hands of God” (Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*, 155-156).
- Lent is your opportunity for preparation.
  - What does God want to prepare you for?
  - Will you receive Lent?

We observe Lent as an intentional and meaningful season of preparation for Easter.

What do you need to do for Lent to be an intentional and meaningful season of preparation for Easter?