

Matthew 4:1-11

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Date: 24 November 2024

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[0:00] Please open up your Bibles again to Matthew chapter 4. We'll be looking at verses 1 to 11. To see what someone is really made of, you don't see it on a sunbed relaxing on a beach.

You don't see it in the ease of his couch with a beer. You see it when the temperature rises in the hardest of moments in the face of trial and temptation.

And you see what he does in those moments. Then you know what he's made of. Well today we are seeing what Christ is made of.

This is Christ under pressure. Under testing and temptation. And who Jesus really is, it's coming to the surface.

Last week it was declared to the world in his baptism that he is the Son of God and the Father delights in him. We've heard who he is. But now we see him in action.

[1:48] It's put to the test. And we see what it really means to be the Son of God. We see the Son of God in action.

And what is the overwhelming thing we see here? To be the true Son of God. It means obedience. Obedience. This testing and temptation.

It is showing us the true character of the Son of God. Not just telling us, but showing us what he's really made of. And what is he made of through and through? Obedience.

This is the obedient Son of God. Obedient to his Father's will. I want us to see that a key thing about being the Son of God is that it means obedience.

The Son of God loves his Father. But also, I want us to see, in this moment, in this wilderness, we aren't only seeing who Jesus is.

[2:56] We are actually seeing him doing something spectacular. In this passage, we are seeing the Son of God save us.

Saving sinners with his obedience. So, two big things today. But first, what is the Son of God really made of? Who is he? That's my first point.

Jesus is the obedient Son. Jesus is the obedient Son. After Jesus' baptism, what happens? Verse 1. Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

What do we pray for in the Lord's Prayer? What did we just confess in the Shorter Catechism? We pray, lead us not into temptation. But what is going on here?

Jesus was led into temptation. Why? Why? Well, notice the Spirit led him here.

[4:01] This isn't an accident. This isn't accidentally falling into trouble. No, the Spirit led him here. And whenever the Spirit is involved, it means salvation is happening.

This is the Spirit putting the Son of God into action for salvation. And only in the face of temptation will we see what he is really made of.

And notice the pressure he's under. He's ravenous, isn't he? Verse 2. And after 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry.

It's a bit of an understatement, isn't it? What can some of us be like if we skip breakfast? Man, we can be cranky, can't we? Hunger and tiredness, it can really affect our soul, can't it?

It is harder to resist temptation in those times. The fuse is shorter, isn't it? Resistance is weaker. And that's just when we skip one meal.

[5:07] What about two meals? What about a day, a week? How about 40 days and 40 nights? And he's in the barren wilderness as well.

It's like all comfort and support has been removed from him. And we just get to see who he really is. Under real pressure. And then there's the devil.

This is no ordinary temptation. The devil himself is one-on-one attacking Jesus. The devil plots and schemes and attacks the church.

He attacks us all the time. But rarely is it one-on-one like this. This is like the kingdom of darkness. It is bringing out the big guns for this one.

And those guns are set on something. Satan is trying to attack something in particular. He's going for Jesus' sonship.

[6:10] Did you see the devil mention that in verse 3 and 6? If you are the son of God. If you are the son of God.

Now the devil says if. Not because he doesn't know Jesus is the son of God. He's not saying, Hey, I'm genuinely not sure.

Can you please just prove yourself to me that you're the son of God? No, he says if. Because he knows full well that Jesus is the son of God.

He knows the son of God has come to save the world. He knows he's come to defeat sin. To defeat Satan. And so Satan is doing all that he can to stop him here.

He's come to break Jesus. To make the son disobedient. Because if the son is disobedient. If the saviour sins.

[7:14] The plan of salvation ends. God loses and the devil wins. But actually God has sent Jesus into this temptation.

To show he is the son of God. And he can't be broken. Just look how it all goes. Verse 3. The tempter came to him.

And said to him. If you are the son of God. Command these stones to become loaves of bread. 40 days of no food. Come on Jesus.

You're hungry. And there's an easy way out of this. Just turn these stones into bread. I know you can. You're the son of God. Go on, do it. Now we must say.

The devil isn't wrong here. Jesus could turn these stones into bread. He feeds the 5,000 by making bread appear out of nowhere, doesn't he?

[8:15] So what's the problem here? Why can't Jesus just do this? Well this is all about trusting God. God has sent Jesus into this place.

He's led by the spirit. This is God's plan. God has sent him into this hunger. Into this wilderness. And so he's going to trust God.

Trust that he will provide. Trust that he's here for a reason. And his father won't abandon him. He has a plan.

And so in Satan's attack here. He's saying. Come on Jesus. Don't trust your father. Just make some bread. You know he won't provide.

And that's why Jesus replies with words from Deuteronomy 8. Hold on Satan. No. Man shall not live by bread alone. But by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

[9:19] God has brought me into this hardship for a reason. And I'm not going to ignore his plan and take the easy way out. I trust the words that come from my father's mouth.

And I know he will bring me through this. It's the response that we find impossible to do. When we're in need.

When we're in that hard and dark place. How do we feel? We don't trust where God has led us. We doubt him don't we?

We don't trust his purposes. Or his timings. And we just want the easy way out. Anything but what you've decided Lord. And we can so easily think God isn't good enough.

He won't provide. But that's not Jesus. Jesus trusts his father. And in the next temptation.

[10:23] The devil ramps it up. Verse 5. He takes Jesus to the top of the temple in Jerusalem. Toes at the very edge. Like hanging off a cliff edge.

And he says okay. You trust your father's word. That's fine. You know Psalm 91 don't you? He says in that Psalm. His angels will catch you. You're his son.

Come on. Jump. Obviously he won't let you fall. Now again. The devil isn't an idiot here.

He's crafty. Because again. He's not wrong. Psalm 91 does say that. We sung that earlier. But look closely at what the devil is trying to do.

He's saying. God's word isn't enough. God just saying he will catch you isn't enough. No. You need to put it to the test.

[11:22] Test your father to see if he will really catch you. And so. To jump. Would actually mean to not believe God's word.

I need further evidence. So I'll jump. Then I'll really believe Psalm 91. And so it's no wonder. He responds with Deuteronomy again.

Look at verse 7. Again. It is written. You shall not put the Lord your God to the test. It is so easy for us to doubt what God has told us isn't it?

To actually think his promises aren't good enough. To think. God. God. I don't care. That you've told me that you love me. I need you to show it.

I need you to change all these things in my life. And do something for me. Show it. Come on. Lord. If you love me. Improve my life. Catch me. I'm falling.

[12:24] Then I'll know. But Jesus never reacts like that. God's word is enough. But then Satan goes in for the kill.

We move higher up from wilderness to temple. And now verse 8. He brings Jesus to a mountain. And the stakes are higher here too. And the devil shows Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. We don't know what kind of mountain this was. But maybe it was more of a vision. But either way. Jesus peers across the horizon. At all the empires.

And kingdoms. And dynasties. All across the world. All the glory and the gold. Everything you could ever want Jesus. In fact.

It's everything you deserve Jesus. You're the son of God right? You're meant to rule these kingdoms. This fallen world is crying out for a king.

[13:29] They need you. Now come. Bow down and worship me. And it's all yours. And then the world will be made right.

Surely you want the world to be made right Jesus. Satan always promises us everything. That's how he entices us. And the devil is kind of right here.

The nations do need Jesus as a king. And the devil does have some power in this world. Over kingdoms of this world. And these kingdoms should belong to Jesus.

But bowing to Satan's will is not how he should get it. He knows he should only get these kingdoms. When he bows to the father's will. And so he knows. It is through the cross. That he will get these kingdoms.

[14:30] Satan is saying here. Skip the cross. Have the kingdoms now. Have a shortcut to glory. But what if Jesus skips the cross?

No salvation. No forgiveness. No kingdom. God loses and the devil wins. And so Jesus says no. You shall worship the Lord your God. And it is my father's will. That I should go to the cross. I will choose pain. Rather than ease and glory.

Because that is my father's will. To do what he says. And nothing else. And in all this.

There is one simple. But important thing to see. Jesus. Is perfectly. Obedient to his father. Jesus.

[15:32] Is the. Obedient son. Put him under pressure. Under starvation. In the wilderness. With no help. Under the direct temptation.

Of the devil. And what do we really see. He is made of. He is obedient. Jesus loves. His father.

Yes. The father loves the son. But. But this is so important. The son. Loves his father. And how do we know. Because he's obedient.

Does Jesus. Ever falter. Does Jesus. Ever fail. Does Jesus. Ever say no. To God. Never.

Not. Once. He is. Perfectly. Obedient. Hebrews. Tells us. Jesus is sinless.

[16:32] Well. Here's the proof. You put him under pressure. In the deepest. Hardship. And he will. Only. Obey the father. Trusting him.

Following him.

Loving him. No matter what. And this obedience. That we see here. There has never. On earth. Ever. Been anything like this.

God has had many sons. Over the centuries. Adam. Israel was his son. David. Solomon. But how did that.

How did they do. They all failed. They sinned. But this son. This is the.

Obedient son. And we know. This obedience. Is even to the point. Of death. He would. Rather. Go to the cross.

[17:30] Than skip ahead. To glory. And it's choosing. To walk this painful road. This again. This is Jesus. Identifying with us.

In these temptations. We see the son of God. It's obedient. But we also see. The son of God. Knows us. He knows.

What it's like. To be tempted. We might be familiar. With the idea. That we have a saviour. Who knows. The pain. You go through. Who knows.

The persecution. That you will face. Who knows. Our grief. And our suffering. And our loss. And that is all true.

But did you know. We have a saviour. Who knows. What it's like. To be tempted. Our struggle.

[18:28] With sin. And temptation. It's a real battle. Isn't it? And it can be really lonely. We can feel like. No one knows.

The battle. That I have to go through. Every day. No one knows. What it's like. To resist. Clicking that website. No one knows. What it's like. To hold back.

Those words. Or control. That anger. Or avoid. Those people. When life. Could be so much. Easier. If I just gave in. Well we have a saviour.

Who knows. Now we must say. Jesus' desires. Were never sinful. He never wanted.

To sin. He was tempted. Yet without sin. But actually. That doesn't mean.

[19:24] He doesn't know us. It means. He knows. Our temptation. Better than anyone. Because. We crumble.

Under the slightest. Bit of temptation. We give. Into sin. With just a little bit. Of pressure. Don't we? But Jesus.

Experienced. The full. Force. Of temptation. With an empty. Stomach. And the devil. Himself. Breathing. Down his neck. He never.

Gave in. Even with all. That. And so. He felt. The full. Force. Of it. He knows. Our temptations. And then.

Some. So. Just think. Who knows. A storm. Better. A ship. That sinks. Under one. Tiny storm.

[20:18] Or a ship. That never. Sank. Under a thousand. Storms. The ship. That never. Sank. That ship. Knows. Storms.

Better than anyone. Well. Jesus. Never. Sank. And he. Knows. Your storms. Better than anyone. We see. Here. What Jesus. Is really. Made of. He. Is the. Obedient. Son. Of God. But there's. Another thing. We need. To see. Here.

Jesus. Isn't. Just doing. This. For himself. He's. Not only. Proving. He's. Perfect. Just for the. Sake. Of it. But actually. Jesus.

Is. Doing. Something. Here. Jesus. Is. Achieving. Something. In the wilderness. And it's. Not just. For himself. He's. Doing. Something. For us. He's.

[21:16] Winning. Us. Salvation. And this. The second. And final. Thing. To see. Jesus. Is. The. Obedient. Son. For us. Something.

Really. Significant. In history. Is. Happening. Here. Jesus. Is. Reliving. Something. In history. And he's. Doing. It. Better.

He's. Reliving. Israel's. History. Does. All. That is. Happening. Here. Sound. Familiar. Jesus. In his. Baptism. Passes. Through. Water. Then. Enters. A. Wilderness. And. Wanders. For. Forty. Days. And. Forty. Nights. Does. That. Ring. A. Bell.

It's. Just. Like. Israel. Through. The. Waters. Of. The. Red. Sea. Into. The. Wilderness. Wandering. For. Forty. Years. Jesus. Is. Reliving. Israel's.

[22:13] History. It's. Like. He's. A. Mini. Picture. Of. Israel. In. This. Moment. But. There. Is. One. Critical. Difference. Jesus.

Is. Obedient. In. Our. Home. Groups. We've. Been. Going. Through. Exodus. Haven't we? And. What do we see. Time. And. Again. With. Israel. In. The. Wilderness.

They. Are. Disobedient. Aren't they? They. Constantly. Don't. Trust. God. And. There's. This. Underlying. Question. Will. Israel. Be. The.

Obedient. Son. And. Enjoy. The. Land. Enjoy. A. Kingdom. But. We. Know. That. Son. Fails. But. Now. Jesus.

Is. Showing. Us. He. Is. The. True. Israel. He. Is. The. Obedient. Son. Of. God. Who. Will. Establish. An. Everlasting. Kingdom. He's.

[23:08] Reliving. Israel's. History. But. He's. Doing. It. Right. This. Time. Where. Israel. Failed. Jesus. Succeeds. But.

Also. Notice. Jesus. Is. Reliving. The. Life. Of. Another. Son. Adam. Again.
Did you notice. This. Looks. A lot. Like. What. Happened. In. The. Garden. Of. Eden. So. The. Devil. Came. To. Adam. The. Devil. Came. To. Jesus. The. Devil. Tempted. Adam. With. Food. The. Devil. Tempted. Jesus. With. Food. Satan. Said. To. Adam. Did. God. Really. Say. You. Shall. Not. Eat. Of. Any. Tree. In. The. Garden. Is. God. Word. Really. True. Go. And. Test. Adam. And. Satan. Said. To. Jesus. Did. God. Really. Say. Angels. Will. Catch. You. Satan.

[24:02] Tempted. Adam. With. A. Kingdom. If. You. Listen. To. Me. And. Eat. This. Fruit. You. Be. Like. God. You. Be. Like. A. King. Over. Your. Own. Kingdom. And.

Satan. Tempted. Jesus. Bow. To. Me. And. All. These. Kingdoms. Will. Be. Yours. Jesus. Is. Reliving. What. Adam. Went. Through. In. The. Garden. But. There. Is. One. Critical. Difference. Jesus. Is. Obedient. We're. Seeing. Here. Jesus. Is. A. Second. Adam. He. Is. The. Start. Of. A. New. Creation. Achieving. All. That. Adam. Should. Have. Done. Adam. Could.

Have. Had. Eternal. Life. If. He. Was. Obedience. True. Obedience. It. Leads. To. A. Kingdom. And. So. In. This. Wilderness. Jesus. Is. Overcoming. All. The. Mess.

[24:56] Adam. Has. Caused. And. Now. With. His. Obedience. He. Is. Winning. Eternal. Life. For. All. His. People. He's.

Acting. As. A. Head. Of. A. New. People. A. New. Israel. Us. His. Church. He's. Acting. For. Us. And. With. His. Obedience. He's. Winning. Eternal. Life. For. Us. That's. Why. He's. Here. Alone. There's. No. Help. For. Him. Here. Because. He. Has. To. Do. This. He. Is. The. Only. Obedient. Son. Of. God. And. He's. Being. Obedient. For. Us. I. Hope. You. Did. Understand. That. And. So. We. Need. To. Realize. Something. Here. We.

[25:49] Don't. Only. Need. The. Cross. We. Do. Need. The. Cross. But. Don't. Get. me. Wrong. Here. But. We. Don't. Only. Need. The. Cross. We. Also. Need. An. Obedient.

Son. Someone. To. Be. Righteous. Enough. And. Perfect. Enough. And. Obedient. Enough. To. Win. For. Us. Eternal. Life. And.

This. Is. The. Son. Kids. When you open up the suitcase of salvation. What does the letter O stand for? Obedience.

This is why. Jesus' obedience saves us. So actually. Christ is achieving something in this moment. He's saving us. This. Is. Our. Victory. Over. Sin. And. Satan. This. Is. A. Turning. Point. In. History. Finally.

[26:46] Someone. Who. Loves. God. Perfectly. Finally. Someone. To. Win. Us. Eternal. Life. And. When. Christ. Pours. Out. His. Spirit.

On. You. You. You. Get. That. You. Get. All. His. Obedience. You're. Clothed. In. His. Righteousness.

God. Looks. At. You. And. He. Doesn't. See. Your. Sin. He. Doesn't. See. Your. Failure. He. Doesn't. See. You. Giving. Into. Temptation. No. He. Looks. At. You. And. He. Sees. The. Obedience.

Of. His. Son. And. This. Is. Why. You. Never. Need. To. Be. Good. Enough. For. God. If. You. Think. I. Can't. Come. To. God. I. Know. What. I've. Done. I'm. Not. Good. Enough. Or. Maybe. You. Think. I've. Given. Into. Temptation. Too. Many.

[27:38] Times. I. Fail. Too. Much. I. Can't. Go. Back. To. God. If. We. Think. That. We've. Completely. Missed. What. Jesus. Is. Doing.

Here. Jesus. Knows. We. Have. Given. Into. Temptation. Too. Much. Jesus. Knows. We're. Not. Good. Enough. That. Is. All. Of. Us. But.

Jesus. Is. Good. Enough. And. He. Enters. This. Wilderness. To. Be. Obedient. For. You. And. So. You. Don't. Need. To. Think. I'm. Not. Good. Enough. No. You. Need. To. Think. Jesus. Is. Good. Enough. And.

This. Is. Why. The. Lord's. Prayer. Works. Christ. Was. Led. Into. Temptation. Went. Through. Temptation. And. He. Victoriously. Came. Out. The. Other. Side.

[28:32] And. He. Is. Now. Paved. A. Way. Out. Of. Temptation. For. Us.
So. We. Won't. Be. Consumed. By. It. And. So. When. We. Pray. Lead.
Us. Not. Into. Temptation. That. Prayer. Has. Power. It. Has. Real. Power. For. You. Because.
Jesus. Has. Overcome. Temptation. For. Us. And. So. In. His. Power. Whatever. Temptations.
There. Are. In. Your. Life. Whatever. Sin. Or. Struggle.
You. Face. In. The. Darkest. Moments. Where. You. Feel. You. Cannot. Trust. God. And. You. Just.
Want. The. Easy. Way. Out. In. Those. Moments. Jesus. Is. Good. Enough. To. Help. When.
You. Belong. To. Him. He. Will. Deliver. You. From. Evil. Because. He. Was. Led. Into. Temptation.
First. So. You.
[29:26] Are. Not. Alone. There. Is. Someone. Who. Knows. Someone. Who.
Can. There. Is. Someone. Who. Can. Help. Someone.
Who. Will. Never. Buckle. Under. Pressure. It's. Jesus. Christ. The. Obedient. Son. Of. God. Let's.
Pray.