

forgotten by others, surpassed by the latest success story. Jesus didn't want to be a slave to his achievements, only being remembered and valued for what he did.

Jesus was blunt with the Devil; "Beat it Satan!... 'Worship the Lord your God, and only him. Serve him with absolute single-heartedness.'" (Matt.4:10) In no way was Jesus going to sell out his Father. The Father's love was more precious than any fleeting, hollow success.

Jesus certainly comes across as someone who is secure within himself, confident. Confident of the Father's love, and the place he holds in the Father's heart. Jesus comes across as loyal,

trustworthy, and one who knows how to make sound judgements. Judgements that don't have a momentary glow, but end in tears. Jesus always ends in the Father's loving embrace, and that's where life in all its fullness is lived.

Let us pray.  
Jesus fill us with your mind and heart that we too might see through the devil's lies and remain true to you. That we might live with you single-heartedly, enjoying life with you in the Father's care. Daily grow our character to be just like yours. Amen.

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## Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am  
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' Disciples, who grow disciples, who grow disciples, who grow disciples...

13 March 2011

## WHO IS THIS MAN: JESUS—1

Matthew 4:1-11



What do we discover about Jesus through this encounter? What do we find out about his personality about his character?

I find it interesting that the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness, to be tempted. If that had been me I might have complained or at least questioned, why? Why the wilderness? It's a place of danger with poor TV reception. Why to be tempted? I don't like the stress that comes from this wrestle. Couldn't there have been an easier way? Isn't easier always better!

Jesus trusts his Father, so he goes out into the wilderness, the place of uncertainty. The place where you can't look after yourself. Now that's a place that will test your character. And

Jesus' character is tested.

What do we find Jesus doing? Taking control of the situation, trying to find enough to eat, making some sort of shelter for himself. No, that's not what Jesus does; rather he uses the place with fewer distractions to spend quality time with his Father. Jesus had plenty of options; he chose to use this quiet place to grow close to his Father. Where do I find the time to be close to my Father, my Heavenly Father?

Jesus character was tested, would he seek to meet his felt needs at the expense of his Father, or would he trust his Father in spite of his gnawing hunger?

When faced with your felt needs what is your

first instinct? After all if you're hungry, why not eat? What's wrong with being comfortable, with turning stone into bread if you can? When have your felt needs shaped your action, shaped your character?

If something is shaping my character, guess what it has just become? My god! How easy it is to worship my felt needs? How easy it is to justify myself, after all I need them. I really do need a bigger flat screen TV, and while we're at it, I really need a better antenna, and something to record the shows on late at night so I can get a goodnight's sleep. I need my sleep.

Jesus character is tested and I see that he is shaped by his trust in his Father, even when everything seems out of

his control. Jesus knows his Father loves him. Jesus knows that none of his felt needs love him, let alone have the capacity for love. Jesus trusts his life in the hands of the Father who loves him, and not in some felt need that will be gone as quick as it came. A need incapable of loving Jesus. Incapable of growing Jesus' character to be loving. All Jesus' felt needs have the capacity to do is to grow him into a needy person. We always have more needs!

Next Jesus character is tested to see if he's shaped by his insecurities or his Father's love.

Have you noticed that at the heart of every dare is a need to prove yourself? To prove you're not scared, when often the sensible thing is to be scared. But to prove myself I'll take the risk and make

someone else look stupid. But to prove that I'm right I'll attack another person's credibility, cause I'd never had done that. After all I'm a hard working person. I'm no bludger. Have you ever noticed that when you have to prove yourself you're letting what scares you make you?

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### Every dare is a need to prove yourself

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If Jesus had jumped off the temple to prove himself, all he would have shown was a huge sense of insecurity. Jesus doesn't jump. He's got nothing to prove. He is the Father's son, whom he loves and is well pleased with. Jesus' character grows as he walks away from this dare, knowing his Father's words can be trusted. Jesus has nothing to prove. The

Devil's the one with the problem.

By the way have you noticed that the person daring you to do something to prove yourself is the one with the problem? As the Father's loved child with whom he is well pleased, in Jesus, you've got nothing to prove. Just lots to discover and enjoy, with the Father who loves you, and your Brother who also loves you more than his own life.

With your Father and your brother Jesus, you've got nothing to prove, and everything to discover and enjoy in their company.

Thankfully Jesus didn't live like a sucker and try and prove himself. He let his Father shape his character, and grew as a trustworthy and loving person. What do you become when you're always having to prove yourself?

Then Jesus' character is tested by the seductress; success. Instant success, without the hard work. He could have it all; power, wealth, popularity, his own world. All offered to Jesus on a platter, there for the taking. No pain and all the gain. No blood, sweat and tears. Does that sound attractive?

Does the word success sound attractive? Who likes to be seen as a success? A successful farmer. A successful, astute business person. Respected by others. Who wouldn't like the trappings of success? A beautiful home, with a tennis court, swimming pool and someone to look after all those mundane chores. You can have it all. Whatever you've dreamed of can be yours, and it won't take the majority of your life. You can have it now. The seductress, success has enticed

many people to sell their souls. Or at least the best part of their children's childhood.

We all have a craving desire to live a life of substance. A life that matters, that counts for something. Nobody wants to come to nothing.

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### Jesus has nothing to prove; he's loved

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The Good News is that Jesus doesn't come to nothing, he comes to his Father. Jesus doesn't try and make more of his life, he simply upholds the relationship he has with his Father. Jesus doesn't need any success to make his life worthwhile; he's loved by the Father. That surpasses any success you want to point to as giving your life worth.

Again the Devil tries to get us to invest

ourselves in a dead inanimate object that doesn't even know you exist, and is gone in the blink of an eye.

What did Jesus achieve with his life? He wasn't married, and had no kids. When he died he was unemployed. He didn't own anything, let alone his own home.

Jesus didn't have any degrees to point to. None of his furniture is around today. He didn't even make the Nazareth eleven. If he did the records have long since been lost, so who cares.

The Father cares. Jesus is his son. The son he loves. The son he is well pleased with, the focus of his delight. The Father cares.

The Devil tried to entice Jesus to believe he had to have it all to be a success. Jesus didn't want to be a success, a puffed up trophy cabinet moulding away,