

(Doing What Jesus Did series)

- Also read Luke 4:1-13, parallel/amplified account

Chat with the Children: Ready to Start?

- Have some getting ready for school things with me?
 - which are most important?
- Jesus made sure he was ready for the task God called him to...

Introduction

- Poised on edge of diving board...
 - this is where we are in Jesus' ministry
 - point of pressure, to perform, to make an impact, to show true character of his ministry...
- Then take folk through the narrative of the temptations, referring to the Luke 4 passage
 - just heard these great affirmations, this exciting call...
 - 10 images of Jesus...
 - definite leaving behind of the carpentry... (1,2)
 - to the place of desolation... (3,4)
 - to be with God... (5)
 - and to the place of temptation... (6-10)
- So what is it that Jesus is doing as he follows the Spirit's prompting and heads out into the desert?

Retreating from Activity

- Consciously taking time to be with God, to focus on him, to hear from him
 - identity wrapped up in relationship with God, not in activity for God
- If your reaction to every situation is "I've got to do something" then you perhaps need to hear the challenge of Jesus' priority here:
 - Robert Murray M'Cheyne: "A man is what he is on his knees before God, and nothing more."
 - "If you are too busy for God, you are too busy...."

Application

- How do we create space and time for God?
 - daily?
 - weekly?
 - more occasionally?

Affirming the Will of God

- Saying yes to God and no to Satan/temptation
- Temptation to assert his rights: "I want things my way"
- Temptation to satisfy his human desires: "I want to feel good" (sex, food, pleasure, rest...)
- Temptation to short-cut God's ways towards success: "I want to achieve"

Application

- Times of temptation do seem to often come after times of great spiritual insight or encouragement
 - (so be on guard)
 - chance to embed what we have begun to learn into the way we live!

- cf James 1:23-25: "Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it - he will be blessed in what he does.
- 1 Corinthians 10:13: "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

Saturated in the Word

- Notice something important about **how** Jesus responded to the temptations:
 - always from Scripture... (**Deuteronomy 6-8**)
 - in other words when the **deceiver** applied pressure that sought to draw Jesus into disobedience or rebellion against God's ways, Jesus came back again and again to the **God's truth** in Scripture

Application

- How do we get to have a good handle on the Scriptures?
 - means knowing verses
 - means being able to navigate - eg **covenant and kingdom, story of Scripture** (OT people of God, Jesus promised Messiah, establishment of the church...)
 - means **connecting** what we **know** to how we **live** - self-assessment and in relationship, asking questions of ourselves and our living...

Facing Wild Animals

- (*Give caveats about interpretation here!*)
- Opposition and encouragement
 - Jesus faced those, rather than avoiding - both on the opposition side, and on encouragement side
 - usually actually clothed in human form - opposition and encouragement...
- If I'm honest, I don't like conflict and will often avoid challenging someone over behaviour or attitude that stands opposed to God's ways
 - as we can see throughout Jesus' later ministry, he didn't seek out conflict but neither did he avoid confronting people... rich young man, woman caught in adultery, and of course the Pharisees many times!
 - sometimes we shy away from accepting encouragement too - perhaps because we believe the lie that we should be able to cope and deal with things on our own!
 - Jesus himself, Son of God, creator of the heavens and the earth, received help and support, encouragement from the angels...
 - are we willing to let folk get close enough to us to spur us on, pray with us, gently push us to serve more faithfully?

Conclusion

- As we respond to God's call to give our whole lives to him, will we seek to...
- **Retreat from activity**
- **Affirm the will of God**
- **Saturate ourselves in the word**
- **Face wild animals**