

OBEDIENCE

THE LESSON: MATTHEW 3-4

...by thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation, Good Lord, deliver us.

St. Paul wrote, “The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven” (1 Corinthians 15:47). *What was he talking about?* He was contrasting Adam with Jesus. Scripture tells us that God made Adam from the earth and breathed life into him. Then Adam sinned, plunging all of humanity into a separation from God. But God had a solution. It involved sending his son Jesus to be “a second man”, whose obedience would be as far-reaching in impact as Adam’s disobedience. “For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous” (Romans 5:19).

Last week we looked at Jesus’ obedience in humbling himself to take on human flesh and become one of us (“the incarnation”). But his obedience didn’t stop there. It was continuous and perfect. It characterized everything he did. Throughout the Gospels the writers pause often to note that what Jesus did or where he went was not just chance, but was actually in obedience to God’s law, the direction of the Holy Spirit, or in fulfillment of prophecy.

What does Jesus’ total obedience to God have to do with *us*? Everything. Because it was *for* us. He fulfilled every requirement so that he could be the perfect sinless, sacrifice, suffering “once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18).

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER))

Scripture is filled with prayers and praises in the form of poetry and songs. During this unit, try your hand at song-writing; drawing inspiration from the love God has for you, made evident in the work of Jesus Christ.

Spend some time this week writing your own song of praise inspired by Christ’s obedience.

(Stuck? Spend some time instead reflecting on the words of this hymn translated from a 15th century Latin hymn in 1854 by Benjamin Webb: “For us baptized, for us he bore his holy fast and hungered sore, for us temptation sharp he knew; for us the tempter overthrew... To him whose boundless love has won salvation for us through his Son, to God the Father, glory be both now and through eternity”.)

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect.

Lord, we beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(THE COLLECT FOR THE 18TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, BCP PAGE 247)

OBEDIENCE

MATTHEW 3-4: **RADICAL OBEDIENCE**

3¹In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ²“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”... ¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” ¹⁵But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.” Then he consented. ¹⁶And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

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

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶and 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.” ⁷Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.””

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