

Our Solution Personified: Jesus

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Date: 29 March 2015

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[0 : 00] Good morning, Watermark. My name is Alfie, and I help out with the university ministry here. And this message today is going to be coming as the 11th part, I think, of a series that we're doing called God's Story, Our Story.

And what we're trying to figure out is, what is God's story? Because the Bible calls us to live in and be a part of God's story, but a lot of the time we find ourselves being either drifting into or being attracted by other stories around us.

If you're like me, your story the past couple of weeks has revolved around ice cream. You wake up in the morning, you think, after breakfast I will have ice cream.

When you're at work, all you can think about is ice cream. And at the end of the day, you take all your friends to your favorite ice cream shop, and you hope that they will like you because you're taking them to ice cream, and the ice cream shop owner will like you because you're bringing all these customers, and everything will be great, and everyone will love Alfie.

And I lied. The story isn't about ice cream. It's actually about me. I want everyone to like me and to love me. But there are many other stories. There's a story of your typical expat.

[1 : 13] You've come to Hong Kong, and Hong Kong isn't your home. You don't really want it to be your home. But while you're here, you think you're going to make the best of it. You're going to seek out all the entertainment and the pleasure that you can get. And so your schedule is run by which happy hour is happening at which bar, and when ladies' night is, and you're going to go and forget the world you've come from, enjoy some drinks, maybe some drugs, and, you know, maybe some casual encounters.

And you know what? It doesn't matter because none of this is going to follow you back home. Because when you go home, you're going to be rewarded because you went overseas, and you worked in a tough economic climate. And, you know, you're going to get a promotion, or if you're a student, you get special recognition on your degree, and it's all great.

Or you can be living in the Disney story. The Disney story that Eric talked about right at the beginning, that, you know, if you just follow your heart, everything will be okay.

Or, you know, maybe it's the Hong Kong story where the objective in life is to become as rich and as wealthy as possible. And when you have children, from the moment you're two years old, you do everything for them so they can become just as rich, if not richer, than you have been.

Now, the object of this series isn't to kind of shame you out of these stories, but we want to show you that God's story is beautiful. God's story is good.

[2 : 35] And we want you to live as a part of this gospel, to live in God's story. So what have we talked about so far? In the beginning, we had creation.

And we see God putting together the heavens and the earth, and he creates man specifically to be in his image and to be his representatives, that these people are going to be there, and they're going to rule over the earth in God's place.

But then the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, they do something that we all do. They reject God's rule over their lives. And they say that, actually, we're going to do things our way.

And the result of that is a curse, a curse that brings pain and childbearing, a curse that means that work becomes unfruitful. But God doesn't leave us to wallow in our misery and our suffering.

He calls a man called Abraham, and he tells Abraham, I'm going to take you to this special place, and I'm going to give you descendants, I'm going to give you children, and they're going to have a land, a country to call their own.

[3 : 39] But most importantly, I'm going to give them a blessing. And this blessing is going to be for you, for your family. It's going to be for their descendants. It's going to be for this nation. This is a blessing that is going to be for the whole world.

Abraham believes God, and God says that this makes him righteous. Through Exodus, we saw God rescuing his people, taking his nation out of slavery in Egypt, and he puts them into the promised land, and he gives them a law, and he says, this law is good.

It shows you about me. It shows you about what I want you to do, but it also shows you that you need a savior. It shows you that you need someone to come and rescue you.

We see God then putting his nation into Israel and giving them kings. We see great kings like David. We see kings like Solomon who went and built God's temple, and it all looks well for Israel, but it falls apart.

The kingdom is split in two, and they each have their bad kings and their worst kings, and God sends prophet after prophet to call his people back to them to say, stop chasing after the ways of the world.

[4 : 49] Come back to me. Last week, we saw how Hosea was a picture of God coming back to rescue his people. We saw Hosea going to the slave market to rescue his adulterous wife, and in that, we see this amazing love that God has for us.

Today, we're going to be looking at Jesus, and it's not the pictures and the images and the illustrations of Jesus that we've had the past couple of weeks, but we're going to look at who Jesus is.

As much as I would like to look at the entirety of Jesus' life, I'm sure you guys don't want to be here for five hours. So we're going to look at one part, and in this one part, I'm going to try and answer three questions.

Let me know how I do on that. The first one is, who is Jesus? Second, what does he do? And lastly, why is it important? What does it mean for us?

Who Jesus is matters, because the way we view someone shapes the way that we respond to them. When I was about seven or eight years old, my family, money was a little bit tight, so we didn't go away for the summer holidays.

[6 : 00] We got on a bus towards Tun Mun, and we got off the Gold Coast, and we stayed at the hotel there for a week. It was great because we had the beach and the sun, and there was like a games room, and my dad could take the bus to work and come back, and as a family, we spent about a week there.

Now, on one of these days, I was out at the back of the hotel with my mother, and we were playing chess. They had this giant chess set, about 10 meters by 10 meters. It was huge. I loved it. But at some point in this game, I realized something was going wrong.

I was losing. And I was convinced that my mom was cheating. And I got very angry. I was really frustrated. I said, Mom, that's not how you move the knight. That's not how it works.

And I got really frustrated. I didn't know what to do because Mom kept insisting she was right. And I reached up, and I slapped my mother. Now, in that moment, when I looked at my mother, I didn't see the mother who carried me for nine months and cared for me all these years.

I saw a traitor who was cheating me out of my victory in this chess game. And so I went away, and my dad came home from work that evening, and he pulled me aside, and he looked at me.

[7 : 14] Now, when I used to get in trouble as a kid, my dad would always say, you know, you have to love your mother. Your mother is very nice. She cares for you. She cooks for you. But he didn't say that today. He said, my wife.

You did what to my wife? I knew I was in trouble. I was more trouble than I've ever been in my life. But I knew in that moment that the way I looked at my mother changed drastically.

You know, when I think that my mother is cheating me out of a victory in chess, I remember that it's not just my mother, but it's my dad's wife, and that changes the way that I respond and react and treat my mother.

But it's the same thing with Jesus. I think sometimes we like to put different names on Jesus. We tell him, we say that, you know, he's a good teacher, that he's a social justice pioneer, that he is, somebody once said a couple of weeks ago, I heard, that he was an alien who came.

Right? And all these different things, they change the way that we look at who Jesus is and what he does. But who Jesus is is important because that changes the way that we look at the story of the Bible.

[8 : 28] It changes the way that we look at what the people 2,000 years ago thought of when they saw Jesus. And it changes what our life means as Jesus' people, as Jesus' followers.

So how do we figure out who Jesus is? Well, we look at his life. Now, it's not been too long since Christmas. I'm sure you remember the Christmas story. Virgin Mary, Holy Spirit comes, conceives a son inside her.

The angels come and they sing, Hallelujah, there's a son. The shepherds go and visit him. The wise men go. And, you know, all these different things, they show different things about who Jesus was, who he was going to be.

But what I want to look at today is the beginning of Jesus' ministry. The passage we read was about his baptism and about his temptation in the desert. So picture this.

Jesus is about 30 years old. And he's done all the things that good Jewish boys do. So he probably would have had a bar mitzvah or something, you know, celebrate becoming a man. There's that episode where he was in the temple about 12 years old and he, you know, abandoned his parents, let them go off home without him, and he was debating with the temple scholars.

[9 : 41] At some point, maybe, his mother would have asked him, Jesus, you know, why aren't you interested in any of these nice girls? You know, and he probably would have been very faithful in going to the synagogue and, you know, being part of that Jewish culture and doing the things that good Jewish people do.

And he was probably a carpenter like his earthly father, Joseph. But one day, about 30 years old, he goes down to the Jordan River and he sees his cousin there, John the Baptist.

And John the Baptist is there wearing clothes made from camel's hair. And he's preaching and he's telling people that they need to repent because the king is coming. And people are listening and they're convicted and John the Baptist is there and he's baptizing them and he sees Jesus coming.

He sees Jesus coming and he realized something that perhaps he hadn't thought about before and he looks at Jesus and he says, Behold, look, there is a Lamb of God, the one who takes away the world's sin.

And Jesus comes up to him. Presumably, they knew each other, I think, they're cousins. And Jesus says, John, I need you to baptize me. And John says, no. You should be the one baptizing me because you're the one that God's talked about.

[10 : 52] You're the one that God has said was to come. You're the one that God said would baptize people with the Holy Spirit. You should baptize me. Jesus looks back to him and says, No, you need to baptize me because I need to be obedient.

I need to fulfill the righteousness that God has set aside, has set before me. So Jesus is baptized. And in that moment, the Holy Spirit descends in the form of a dove from heaven.

The heavens open up. And everyone here gets to hear from God in a very direct and very audible way. It's something that hasn't happened since God gave the law all the way back in Exodus.

And this voice from heaven, God says, This is my son in whom I am well pleased. Now, if you're reading the Bible and you think that it's a metaphor, then you say, This is God's son, then, you know, this may not mean a lot to you.

But for me, when I look at the Bible, I think, This is God telling me something. This is God telling me something important about who Jesus is. I think that God saying that Jesus is his son is very, very important.

[12 : 06] So, this son of God, this Jesus, what does he do? Surely, if he's going to start his ministry, he would do something amazing.

Start it out with a bang. Maybe he'd do a miracle. You know, there must have been sick people there. He could have healed them. He could have walked in the water. The river is quite convenient. You know, he could have fed everyone there.

Or maybe he would have given a sermon. He'd have said, You know, this is what baptism means, you know, just to clear up all the confusion. You know, he could have given a sermon about, you know, what repentance is. He could have told them, you know, this is what I'll be doing over the next couple of years.

I'll be in these cities on these days, and I'm going to a cross. And he could have explained everything to the people there, or maybe he could have chosen his disciples. He could have brought his disciples together there, and he said, All right, now we're going to go on a special disciples training camp.

We're going to go away for a couple of weeks, and you're going to come back, and you're going to go and spread the gospel. Instead, he goes into the wilderness, and I don't know, when I looked at it the first time, it made me a little bit strange.

[13 : 10] It was a bit awkward, because it says here, Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness. So the Holy Spirit of God is taking Jesus into the wilderness, but he's taking him to be tempted by Satan.

That didn't make sense to me. That doesn't make sense to me. Why would God take his son, you know, who he loves, who he's well pleased with, and put him somewhere where it's not very nice to be.

It's a wilderness. It's a desert, and put him there to be tempted by Satan. So he goes there, and he's there for 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness, under the sun, in the cold at night, and Satan comes.

He comes to tempt him, and he says, You know, Jesus, you're hungry, but you're also the son of God. You know, if you're the son of the king, why do you have to starve? Why do you have to, you know, to sit around here preparing for your ministry in hunger?

Why don't you turn these stones into bread? You can do it. After all, you are God's son, aren't you? And Jesus says, No. He quotes scripture back to Satan and says, The Bible says that I don't live by bread, but I live by the words from God's mouth.

[14 : 31] You know, the second temptation comes along, and Satan tries another tactic. He realizes that Jesus is using the Bible, so he's going to use the Bible as well. Taking him to the top of the temple, he says, If you jump off, people will see you.

You'll become famous. That's a good thing, right? But you'll be totally safe, because I remember the psalm that says that God's going to catch you. He's going to send his angels to protect you, and your feet won't hit a stone.

Jesus returns and says, That's not how you look at the Bible. That's not how you use God's word. He says, Do not put the Lord your God to the test.

Satan tries again. He takes Jesus to the top of a mountain, and he shows him all the kingdoms of the earth, and he says, These kingdoms are mine. I get to choose who rules them.

If you'll bow down to me, I will make you the ruler of these things. And Jesus says, Be gone, Satan. I like that word. Be gone. Get away from here, because I am here to honor my Father, to love my Father, and it's only my Father that I am going to be worshiping.

[15 : 40] And so, it's a very simple story. Jesus is good. Satan is bad. Satan tempts Jesus. Jesus knows the Bible, so he resists temptation.

Yay, Jesus. So now, everyone needs to go away from here, learn your Bibles, so that you can be just like Jesus and resist temptation. Except, it's not really just about that.

It's more than just a call for us to know God's word. It's more than just a call for us to know what God says and know what's right and what's wrong. Jesus' actions in the wilderness here have an effect that ripples out and it affects the way that we live our lives.

And it goes back and it shows the things about who God is and the promises that he made to his people. I love the Bible because it rarely does anything once.

You know, God always uses pictures of small things to show people a bigger thing. You know, he creates man in his image and when we see other people's creativity, we can glorify God who is creative.

[16 : 48] You know, when we see the picture of marriage, we can look at that and we say, this is a beautiful relationship that God has brought two people together and we can also say that we're looking forward to the marriage of Christ and the church in eternity.

I like that the Bible lets us use small things to get a grasp of big heavenly things. For Jesus, this temptation was important because, you know, this wasn't the first time that the Son of Man was tempted by Satan.

This wasn't the first time that God's chosen one was wandering in the wilderness. I want to show you and hopefully I can do it, I want to show you that Jesus isn't this add-on to a law that didn't quite work and prophets who weren't really listened to.

Hopefully by the end of this, you know, you will see that Jesus is the fulfillment of everything that we've seen. That, you know, when we started in January looking at creation and the story of Abraham and of Exodus and of David and of Solomon, that all these stories are building up to Jesus.

That it's not plan B. That Jesus was the plan from the beginning. So let's look again at the scene in the wilderness. In Deuteronomy 8, God talks to his people.

[18 : 13] He talks to his people after he's brought them through the wilderness and he tells them several things. He says that, you know, those years in the wilderness, you were there for 40 years and I took you there to test you.

I took you there to know your hearts, to know that if you would follow my commandments, you know, I let you hunger to see how you would respond but all this time I protected you.

I kept you. I made sure that your clothes didn't wear out, that your shoes didn't wear out, that your feet didn't swell in all your wandering. You know, Jesus and Israel are very, very similar because Israel was led into the wilderness by God.

The pillar of smoke and fire went before them and they followed, Israel followed God in this pillar of smoke into the wilderness, into the desert and Jesus follows the Holy Spirit into the desert too.

But it's not to torture them. God isn't thinking, ha ha, here are my chosen ones, I'm going to give them a terrible time. But it comes out of the context of this pre-existing relationship because in removing Israel from Egypt, God says, this is my people, they're mine and I love them and I want to give them freedom, I want to show them how to live and he does the same thing with Jesus.

[19 : 31] He says when he opens the heavens that this is my son. God is taking his children out of one place into the wilderness because it says that he wants to know their hearts.

But I don't think God has any trouble knowing our hearts. I think what might have been going on is that God wanted to show Israel their own hearts and by testing Jesus to show us Jesus' heart that we would see the things that he did that we failed to do.

See the ways that he was obedient that we would not do. In the wilderness, Israel was hungry and they grumbled and they said, you know what, this whole redemption thing is useless.

Let's go back to Israel to Egypt, sorry. Let's go back to Egypt and we can become slaves there again because there we still have food. We still can eat. We're not hungry. The first thing they do when they're hungry wasn't to turn to God.

It was to turn back to the slavery that God had brought them from. I always wondered, when they were grumbling, didn't they see the pillar of smoke? Didn't they remember the Red Sea pulling apart?

[20 : 44] Why did they grumble like this? But Jesus does what Israel could not do in their testing. You know, when Jesus is told to turn bread, stones into bread, he says, no, I think that my God is enough, that my Father is enough.

I can trust his word because his word isn't just the law, but his word is love. His word creates. His word is the promise of a Savior, of a Redeemer.

You know, where Israel believes that God's word and being God's people means that they're going to be comfortable and satisfied and life is going to be easy all the time, Jesus looks and says that maybe that isn't so true, that there will be discomfort, but I know that my safety is resting in being under God's word and being connected to him.

You know, in a moment, Jesus is taken up to the temple and, you know, he points back to Israel and he says, don't put the Lord God to your test.

He says, God's faithfulness is there. Yes, God is faithful, but God isn't faithful for us to test him. God is faithful for us to rely on him.

[22 : 05] You know, God isn't faithful so that we can jump off temples and do amazing things and get the fame of the world. God's faithfulness is that he's there with us when things are going great and when things are going badly.

You know, the last temptation that Jesus faces is the temptation of the world. He is given the option to bow before Satan and be the king of all the kingdoms at a very small cost.

All he had to do was worship Satan. You know, all he had to do was give his allegiance to God. Now, this seems like an easy test. Do you worship God or do you worship Satan?

Right? Yeah, easy answer. God. Right? But, I think that while we recognize this here, we do this a lot of the time. I think I do.

You know, I think I give up worshiping God for far lesser treasures than the whole world. You know, I think that, you know, Israel gave up God.

[23 : 13] They worshipped a golden calf, something they made with their own hands because they wanted something to celebrate. They wanted a feast. And we do the same, I think.

I think we worship, we serve our greed, we worship our money because we think that will satisfy us. I know that, you know, very often I will give up God and I'll worship myself because I want more control.

I want more control over my own life, over my circumstances. I want control over the people who are around me. You know, I think that the times that we are dissatisfied, when we're discontent, when we look and we say, I want that little bit more, we're giving up worshiping God to worship something else.

in the desert for 40 days is testing, the hunger, you know, all these things, they draw a parallel between Jesus and the wilderness and Israel with their 40 years.

You know, the desert was the beginning of God establishing his nation of Israel and in this wilderness, God begins the process of building his kingdom in Christ.

[24 : 22] He frees Israel from this bondage of slavery to the Egyptians and in Christ he makes a way for our freedom from deadness and sin. Jesus' 40 days in the desert were Israel's 40 years but where Israel fails, Jesus triumphs.

You know, where Israel kind of goes and makes a really feeble and half-hearted attempt at taking the promised land, Jesus is victorious. You know, Satan leaves him because Satan realizes that he's lost.

You know, Satan went into this temptation hoping that if I can make the Son of God sin, then I've won. I will have control over the earth and God will destroy in his judgment and I'll have won.

What is significant about this temptation is that it isn't new. Jesus is tempted in all the ways that we are. You know, to rebelliously test God, to look at God's riches and provision and to turn to something else to provide for us.

To worship God's creation instead of God. To worship God's creation instead of the God who created it. Jesus obeys and in doing that he identifies with Israel and with us.

[25 : 44] He battles Satan and he wins. He trusts in God and not bread or angels or power. By his obedience, Jesus purchased obedience for us.

His perfection makes his children perfect. His strength makes us strong. You know, I'm thinking, what does this look like for Israel?

What does it look like for these early Christians? Christians. You know, I'm imagining Pharisees going around telling people, you're doing that wrong, you're doing this wrong, you walked one mile too many, that's Sabbath breaking, you tied the wrong knot.

You know, I think Christ's righteousness bought for his people meant that this Jewish Christian could celebrate the Sabbath freely, not having to worry if he was tying the wrong knot or walking too far because he knows that there's no condemnation for him because Christ's righteousness is his.

I think when I look at Christ in the desert and I see his obedience, I see that I get to live my life without fear, without worrying about doing it wrong.

[26 : 58] You know, I think I'm a little bit like a Pharisee. My life is built up around rules. I have lots and lots of rules because rules keep me safe. They keep me out of trouble, they keep me from doing stupid things but the rules don't keep me from sinning all the time.

I know that when I mess up and, you know, the story about my mother is funny but, you know, just this past Thursday at dinner, I got really frustrated with my mother again and I was very rude to her. I didn't slap her though but, you know, I can go to my mother and ask for forgiveness for being really upset but I can go to God and I can say, thank you God for Christ's obedience.

because that is my obedience because when I'm rude to my mother, I am still perfect in Christ. You know, and when I work at killing sin, when I work at killing lust and pride and laziness, you know, I'm not manufacturing my own righteousness, I'm putting on Christ, I'm putting on the obedience that he displayed to us in the wilderness.

You know, I know that Christ's obedience is mine where my body is weak and succumbs to sin often. I know that my soul is alive because it's joined up with Jesus Christ.

Now, I don't know about you, you could be really worn out, feeling powerless. I don't know, maybe you're at work and there's a lot of pressure to conform.

[28 : 29] You know, maybe, maybe you just fudge the numbers a little bit because everyone else is doing it. And you know what? If you have good numbers, then maybe you'll get a promotion. You get a promotion, you can provide for your family and that's a good thing, right?

Or maybe you don't care. You know, maybe you're just going to go through all your exams and you're going to cheat in all your exams and all your tests and all your coursework.

You're going to find every loophole and every way to get academic success without putting on the work, without doing it honestly. Or maybe you've met someone and it seems that they're not just happy with a little goodnight kiss, they want something more.

You know, they want to have sex outside of marriage. And you know that as a Christian, you probably shouldn't be doing that. That, you know, sex is a good thing for marriage. And you decide in your mind, I'm not going to do that, but your heart is still longing for sin.

You know, how do you wrestle with that? How do you deal with, you know, my heart is sinful, but I know I need to do this right thing. What do you do when your health isn't what it used to be?

[29 : 42] And you need to figure out how you're going to provide for your family. What do you do when your employees are driving you insane? What are you doing when you can't stand your parents?

What are you doing when your kids' rebelliousness goes to a whole nother level? What does this story have to say for each of us? What does this story have to say to you? What does this story have to say about your obedience?

obedience. The call of the gospel to the Christian is obedience and perfection. To be perfect.

But not to have our own perfection. Because even if our actions are pure, very often our thoughts and our hearts aren't. The call of the gospel is to lay down our efforts at holiness and to cling onto Jesus.

To hold onto him. To look at him in the wilderness and see his obedience and say, you know, I probably can't be holy like Jesus. But Jesus was holy.

[30 : 47] Jesus was obedient so that I could have his obedience. Not that we abandon, you know, our pursuit of holiness. Not that we abandon, you know, our efforts to love God and his law and to follow those things.

Because, you know, they're difficult. But in that, we can say that our holiness and righteousness isn't built on my ability to be perfect. You know, my holiness and righteousness isn't depending on my ability to follow every single rule that I've set for myself.

Because I don't. But that my righteousness is based on Jesus. On Jesus, who in the wilderness faced off against Satan. And who said, I'm not going to worship Satan.

I'm not going to worship anything else that is not God. Who said, I'm going to be trusting God for my provision, for my sustenance. This means that when we obey, we can thank God because our obedience is his.

It means that when we're struggling to obey, when we can't figure out what is right or wrong, when we don't know if we're obeying or if we're sitting, that we can look to Christ's obedience. It means that when we wake up and we find ourselves waist-deep in sin, that we can repent, that we can trust God, that we can sing that line from before the throne where, you know, Satan is going to tempt me to despair at my sin, but I'm going to look.

[32 : 18] I'm going to look up and I'm going to see Christ. I'm going to see Jesus who is perfect and holiness, who through his temptation, through his struggles in the desert, through his ultimate sacrifice on the cross, has made me right with God.

Jesus' coming was on an accident. You know, when God created the earth, when God gave Israel their law, he created it knowing that these people would need a savior, that they would need a Christ.

Christ's coming wasn't out of the blue. All the things that God does through the Bible, all the things that Jesus does are intentional. You know, they're there to show us about him, about us, about our need of him.

They show us that he was God's son. They show us that Jesus going to meet Satan in the desert was not an accident, that God took him there, that Jesus followed him there.

Jesus was to be the true Israel, to do the things that Israel could not do. Where Israel failed, where Israel rebelled, where Israel did not trust in God's faithfulness, Jesus does all those things and Jesus obeys where we cannot.

[33 : 51] This morning, I got on the MTR and I got on Tin How and I got on the train and I went all the way to Sian Poon Station which opened this morning and it's fantastic. I'm so excited.

My commute will be 12 minutes shorter. But, you know, Sian Poon Station opened but Sian Poon Station is not an afterthought. Yes, you know, Kennedy Town and HKU stations, you know, they opened back in December but Sian Poon Station is not an afterthought.

Sian Poon Station is part of a plan all along. And I think we forget that Jesus is a part of the plan all along. I think sometimes we live and we look at the Bible as if, you know, Jesus was this thing that God did at the last minute to save us because we realized that everything wasn't going according to plan.

You know, I'm convinced when I look at the Bible that from creation, Jesus was God's plan for salvation. I think that's why John the Baptist, when he saw his cousin Jesus coming, he looked at him and said, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

He says, look, look at Christ because this isn't just, you know, a man from Nazareth here today. This is a picture of everything that we've been waiting for.

[35 : 17] He is the new Passover Lamb. He is the new sacrificial Lamb that is going to free us from our slavery to sin because this is the same God who was there in the beginning of creation because look, this is a man who, unlike Adam, when facing off against Satan, will not sin but will obey.

This is the man who is the answer to the promise of Abraham. This is the man who is going to be the blessing to the whole world. You know, this is a king, a king who's better than David because, you know, he doesn't just kill the giants of our sin but he is a king that lives a good and perfect legacy for his children, a legacy that means that when we're not perfect, we inherit his righteousness.

This is the one who builds a temple in the hearts of his people, a temple that cannot be destroyed. This is Jesus like Hosea who comes back time and time again for his people who wander time and time again back into adulterous sin.

John the Baptist says, behold the Lamb of God. Look, this is our obedience and our righteousness, not self-made but from God, a gift to his people.

I think it's far too easy to see Christ as something other than the fountain from our obedience, the fountain from which our obedience comes and the source of our ability to be good and to obey God's law.

[37 : 20] John the Baptist calls the people here to look to Christ and not at anything else. Though when we're trying to figure out how we're going to provide for our family or how we're going to pass this exam or when we're looking for significance or value, God wants to show us another way.

He wants to show us that we don't have to be the pilots of our own destiny, that our obedience today, that our security in eternity is tied up together with Jesus.

You know, I wish this was something that I didn't forget so easily. You know, I think a lot of the time I think I need to make my own righteousness. I need to succeed on my own.

Sometimes I even forget God's faithfulness altogether and I say, actually, that's going to be a lot easier if I just sin, if I just do things my way.

I think God knows this. I think God knows that we forget easily. I think he gives us the Bible. I think he gives us the Old Testament. I think he gives us the New Testament.

[38 : 32] I think he gives us Christ to remind us of these things, to remind us that our obedience isn't self-manufactured, but it comes from God.

Today, we're going to be celebrating the communion meal together. And for this communion meal, it does many things. For a Christian, it's a reminder of the cross. It's a reminder of Christ's sacrifice for our salvation.

Today, I hope it's a reminder that Jesus is not our backup plan. It isn't the plan B to God's righteousness for his people.

You know, in the Passover meal, in the communion, we see parallels. We see that Jesus is the Passover lamb, that instead of freedom from slavery, he offers us freedom from sin and death.

That in communion, the bread is his body broken for us, and that his blood pays the price for our righteousness, righteousness, just like the blood protected Israel from God's judgment.

[39 : 46] Passover is about God saving his people from slavery. And communion is about what Christ does to secure our salvation.

It's what Christ does to enable us to be obedient and faithful. So I'm going to ask the communion stewards to come forward this morning.

I want us to think about a couple of things. I want us to think about our obedience. Where does our righteousness come from? How is it that we are made right with God?

Do we earn it by being good, by keeping the laws? Or do we wake up each day and put on Christ's righteousness?

Who is our savior? Who is our king? You know, like these kids, are we saying, Hosanna, Jesus is our king? Or are we our own king? Is there something else that we're worshipping?

[41 : 00] Now, in this communion meal, this is a sacrament that as Christians, we do that says that our trust is in God. It's something that we do as a family.

And so if you're here today and you, and Jesus isn't your king, we ask that you don't take part in this. But watch and observe.

Ask the person sitting next to you. Come talk to me afterwards. Ask me or ask Eric what it's about. But for those who are Christ's, for those of us who say that we're going to put on Christ's righteousness, we're going to look at Christ's obedience in the desert and say, yes, that is our obedience.

I want to invite you guys to, as you feel led, come forward and collect the communion elements. And once you've done that, return to your seats and afterwards we'll take the communion meal together. here.

Let's go.