

Matthew 4:1-11

Daily Bread

John Jones, Sunday 20th November 2011

Opening Prayer

Father, in your mercy send your Holy Spirit now upon me and upon us all. My words cannot bring life but you and your word can create life where there was none. Help me trust in your word that it will not return empty but fulfil the purposes you have for it. Work in our hearts now and bring life and bring glory to yourself, in Jesus Name, Amen

Introduction

A couple of weeks ago now Martin began this series on the Word of God and today I want to continue looking at the bible.

Lots of people have differing views of the Bible ranging from it is dangerous to that it gives us some good ways to live or helps us know right and wrong. Some may have been taught that it is corrupted and cannot be trusted. For Christians we believe it is the very word of God breathed out by Him.

However I think most people would agree that it has had a huge impact around the world especially since the time of Jesus.

Jesus said of the scriptures

SLIDE

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, John 5:39 ESV

So my aim in this message to show that the scriptures bear witness to Jesus, that is what they are about, not just bits of it but all of it and to come away from this message treasuring Jesus more and wanting to spend more time with him in and through his life giving word, the bible.

Tyndale Biography

SLIDE

Around the time Martin asked me to preach I had just listened to a biography of William Tyndale. I really had no idea what people had gone through to give us this English bible that I take for granted. It gave me a new appreciation and thankfulness to God for His word written in a language I can understand and talk with God in. It also built my faith that God will reach all the nations, even those that don't have the bible yet.

I know many here come from countries where Christians are persecuted, not just made fun of by acquaintances or challenged at work like we may experience here, but places where they are imprisoned, tortured and killed. So my hope in sharing what God accomplished through Tyndale is to show that nothing is impossible for a man to accomplish who is faithful to God and trusts in the power truth of Gods word.

SLIDE

And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. Matthew 24:14

The Setting we find Tyndale in

Tyndale lived from 1494 to 1536 in Britain when the only translation of the original Greek and Hebrew Bible was in Latin, which the common person could not speak or understand

The establishment were viciously opposed to an English translation of the bible, for some worthy reasons such as to protect the integrity of the word of God. However there were many political reasons for keeping control over the understanding of the scriptures, which had nothing to do with proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

John Wycliffe was one of the first to translate hand written copies of the Latin texts in the late 1300's. In 1401 the British parliament passed a law "on the burning of the heretics" which made it heresy to translate the bible into English, punishable by burning alive at the stake.

In 1519 in Coventry it's recorded that 7 people, were burned for teaching their children the Lord's prayer in English.

So this was the setting that we find Tyndale living in. In 1522 Tyndale got access to the Greek New Testament which due to the development of the printing press had been distributed 6 years earlier around Europe and later became the basis for the explosion of the reformation of the church. As an Ordained Catholic priest reading the greek bible he discovered the lost nature of all people and the grace of God needed to save us, he saw the power of Gods words. When he was challenged about his passion for the bible he said one of his most famous quotes

, "I defy the Pope and all his laws. . . . If God spare my life ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plow, shall know more of the Scripture than thou

Tyndale was passionate to let the people see clearly for themselves the liberating and life giving gospel. He was certain that the power of Gods word could work in the heart and mind of anyone, in Jesus day that could be a fisherman who could barely read or a powerful tax collector or today a manual labourer or a city banker. The word of God had to be made freely available to all. So they could think about it and that God would give them understanding, as the apostle Paul writes to Timothy

SLIDE

"Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything." 2 Timothy 2:7,

Why was Tyndale Willing to die – We are saved by Faith alone

So what had Tyndale found as he read the word of God, that made him and others willing to risk their lives. What had been lost over a thousand years to the established Church? They were failing to show people that we are completely helpless and lost in our sin and saved from God's just punishment by faith alone, not by works or payments or any merit or anything we can do, but by trusting in Jesus and his work on the Cross

In 1524 Tyndale requested permission to translate the bible, as required by the law, but he had to escape for his life to Europe.

Tyndale lived in exile and translated the whole New Testament and by 1526 he published the first ever translation of the Greek New testament into English and 3,000 were distributed.

SLIDE

He continued to study the word of God and the languages and 8 years later after learning Hebrew and gaining deeper insights into Gods story through the Old Testament was able to publish a revised edition in 1534, along with several books of the Old Testament.

The revised edition of Tyndale's New Testament made up over 80% of the Authorised version that became available in 1611 which we celebrated this year, however without Tyndale's life and sacrifice and skill we would not have the crafted and faithful translations that we have today.

Tyndale watched a rising tide of persecution against his friends and others that shared the same devotion to distribute, read and understand the bible. He felt the pain of seeing young men burned alive who were converted by reading his translation and his books. His closest friend, John Frith, was arrested in London and burned alive in 1531, at the age of twenty-eight. Richard Bayfield ran the ships that took Tyndale's books to England. He was betrayed and arrested, it was written that Bayfield "the monk and apostate [was] well and worthily burned in Smythfelde."

Three weeks later John Tewkesbury, who had become a believer after reading one of Tyndale's books, was whipped, had his brow squeezed with small ropes till blood came out of his eyes. Then he was sent to the Tower where he was racked till he was lame. Then at last they burned him alive. {Those that killed him} "rejoiced that {their} victim was now in hell, where Tyndale 'is like to find him when they come together.'

Tyndale's Gospel

So what was the glorious Gospel, the good news that God had revealed to Tyndale through his words. Tyndale writes it like this;

SLIDE

“There is only one hope for our liberation from the bonds of sin and eternal condemnation, “Neither can any creature loose the bonds, save the blood of Christ only.”

By grace . . . we are plucked out of Adam the ground of all evil and grafted in Christ, the root of all goodness. In Christ God loved us, his elect and chosen, before the world began and reserved us unto the knowledge of his Son and of his holy gospel: and when the gospel is preached to us openeth our hearts and giveth us grace to believe, and putteth the spirit of Christ in us: and we know him as our Father most merciful, and consent to the law and love it inwardly in our heart and desire to fulfill it and sorrow because we do not.”

For Tyndale Hell and sin and atonement and sovereign grace were everything. And in the middle of these great realities was justification by faith alone. This is why the Bible had to be translated, and ultimately this is why Tyndale was martyred.

SLIDE

Tyndale was willing to give up his life to have the bible translated. He was betrayed and in 1536 he was tied to the stake and then strangled by the executioner, then afterward consumed in the fire. His last words were, “Lord! Open the King of England's eyes!”

3 years later his prayer was answered and the king Henry the 8th signed off on the translation of the bible.

Matthew 4:1-11 The Temptation of Jesus

As I said earlier and as Tyndale showed in his life and death, what must be seen in the bible is Jesus, the Good news of what He has done on our behalf. So I want to share with you part of Jesus life, which shows us what a great God we have and how essential having the word of God is in our lives, if we are to truly live.

Jesus had just been baptised by John the Baptist and the Spirit of God had descended upon him. God had affirmed his Satisfaction of Jesus

“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” Matthew 3:17.

SLIDE

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written,

"Man shall not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

SLIDE

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and 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."

SLIDE

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, 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." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan!

For it is written,

**""You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.""**

**Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were
ministering to him. Matthew 4:1-11**

So the Holy Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness, Satan comes to Jesus, after the fast when he is hungry and weak. Fasting shows us what drives us, what is buried deep in our heart. That is probably why I have not fasted much in my life, because I don't like what I see when I give up something that sustains me. It can be easy to just miss what a trial this was and think Jesus is God, of course he can go without food and water, but he was also fully man and just like us needed food and drink and rest, Jesus here was really tested.

Even so Satan knows that he cannot defeat Jesus with ridiculous claims, so he cleverly says that he should ask God for food, after all, when Gods people were in the wilderness for 40 years God gave them food. Jesus certainly deserved it, he had passed the trial of fasting and been found faithful, and humble. But just like the Israelites, satan missed the point. The manna given in the wilderness, the bread was to point to Jesus, the very bread of God.

Satan here wants to use the word of God for his own ends, to get Jesus to give in to the desires of the flesh and to turn away from the task God the Holy Spirit has given Him. However Jesus does not give in and holds fast to the word of God fully trusting in Gods will and purposes. In the same way our own flesh can want to pull us away from persevering and trusting in Gods promises to us.

So, how should we come to the word of God, if we are to overcome. Well the word should abide in us as John records for us in his gospel and here in his first letter.

SLIDE

I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of

God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. 1 John 2:14b

We need to make a place for Gods word in our life. The word should live with us and be part of us, so we build our life on truth rather than lies. Our loving Father in Heaven has given us the words of life, so we can live with Him. What we live with changes us, as we read Gods word and spend time with Him, we are seeing God Himself revealed to us. God through Jesus has removed the veil so we can see Jesus and be changed to be more and more alive by the power His word. As we spend time with the Word we will become more alive.

SLIDE

The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. John 6:63b

So how does Jesus respond to Satan's offer? By recalling the word of God spoken to the people in the wilderness?

Jesus reminds satan and us why he came to earth, Jesus has come to do what we and Gods chosen people did not. And to fulfil what God was pointing to in the wilderness. The Lord spoke to Moses, in the wilderness 40 years after He has rescued them from slavery, and this is what Jesus uses to combat the attack of the enemy.

SLIDE

Deuteronomy 8:1-6

"The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know,

SLIDE

nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. Your clothing did not wear out

on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him.

So we see that God humbles his people that they will obey him, trust him. It's through tough times, through the trials that we see what is our true refuge and foundation, what we turn to in trials and hardships displays where our heart is. We see that man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. When God speaks life happens, when God speaks, where there was nothing, things are created, life comes by the power of Gods Word.

Jesus Recalls the exodus

Jesus was recalling the events of the Exodus of Gods people from slavery. God Came to Moses whilst he was in hiding and promised to take his people, who were crying out for rescue out of slavery into the land of milk and honey. Moses through the plagues brings the people out of Egypt and after crossing the red sea and seeing their enemy defeated. They enter the wilderness and quickly start to question God. God again provides miraculously for them with water and bread from Heaven. When they send the spies into the Promised Land, it was as God had told them, flowing with milk and honey, but they again did not trust God to be faithful to his promise to give them the land because of the giants that lived there. So their lack of belief in God and His word would mean that they would spend 40 years in the wilderness

God had freed His people from the oppressors in Egypt. Miraculously rescued them and provided food for them in the wilderness, but they grumbled and wanted more, God had brought them into a place where they could worship Him and see Him and be with Him but they went after the things of this world, rather than taking hold of Gods promise and entering into the life that God had for them with Him.

So Jesus response to satan is clear, food, even miraculous provision from heaven is nothing, if you don't trust and feed on God himself, we can never live.

SLIDE

But he answered, "It is written,

"Man shall not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4

Here we see the word *rhéma in greek* used, it carries with it in its meaning a life giving power, a power to create life and faith. Without it you are not alive without hearing the word of God we shall not live. The essence of this word is seen in Jesus himself who is the very word of God the logos, the purest expression of everything God could possibly say. Jesus is the very thought of and the final word of God. There is no way of knowing God and his thoughts and ways and character without receiving and seeing Jesus the very word of God. Just as with physical food we need to eat spiritual food whenever we are hungry, daily, constantly receiving from His word that will satisfy and give life. You cannot live without the word of God. This verse says "not by bread alone live the man". The appetite and hunger that we feel for food, was given by God to remind us that it is only in him we have lasting satisfaction. Enjoying and eating food like any other part of life is meant to give glory to God, not be an end in itself.

We see here that we need to love every word, that comes from the mouth of God, it comes to us from our father, not from men, but from our father who wants to make us sons, and his word has the power to give us faith so we can be accepted into His family.

SLIDE

Isaiah 55

¹ "Come, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and he who has no money,
come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.

² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.

In this world there is no water that will satisfy. Whenever we seek satisfaction and fulfilment and meaning and purpose from the things of this world, it is never enough to satisfy a thirst and a hunger that is made to be satisfied in God alone. Our souls are made for more than this world can offer, and God offers for free what we need through His word, which shows us Jesus.

When we have our satisfaction in Jesus then we are freed to live like Jesus, when we no longer seek satisfaction in what the world has to offer, just like Jesus we can lay aside our rights. Jesus loved and trusted God with all His heart, soul, mind and strength, which freed him to lay aside His rights for us. In the same way when we trust in God and delight ourselves in Him, we are freed to love others as Jesus does.

But for the Israelites in the wilderness, having God with them was not enough, so for us often we come to God because of what we want Him to do for us, whereas the greatest gift He gives us is Himself. God freed His people from slavery in Egypt so he could make a way for His people to be in a relationship with Him. We just like the Israelites, we have sinned, have fallen short of the glory of God, turned to created things rather than the creator, but thanks be to God we have a saviour who not only paid the price for our sin, but is the manna from heaven that gives us life and sustains us in the wilderness, the wilderness of this world, where we are aliens, until we are brought home to the promised land, our ultimate life with Jesus

⁵ Then 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."**

Again Satan who knows scripture better than almost any being and tests Jesus using the word of God, but as we've seen already without the heart or will of God, with only his own purposes for the word not God's intentions. Satan wants Jesus to put himself at the centre.

That is one way to help us test your reading and understanding of the scriptures, who is the centre of the texts who is the focus, if it is ourselves, our purposes, our desires, rather than God and what He wants to show us of Himself and His will then probably we are going to get it wrong.

Jesus again could have got the angels to come and minister to him now, but this was not the will of God, again Jesus continues to persevere, despite hunger and thirst, Jesus chooses to remain in the testing and trust God.

⁷ Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Jesus uses the weapon of the word of God by the power of the spirit to defeat the lies and half truths he faced. When we are in trials we have an endless resource to draw from, the Holy Spirit working through the words of eternal life, because we do not live by bread alone, but by the word of God, without the word it we are dead. Since Adam and Eve sought satisfaction of the fruit of this world and died we have needed to have our relationship to God reconciled so we can again have life as God meant us to.

God promises to supply all our needs in Christ and give us life through his word, God does this in the wilderness with his people receiving their bread daily, so they could live with Him. Jesus teaches us to ask for our daily bread when he teaches us to pray. God loves to give us good gifts but provision of everything is meant to turn us to Him in thankfulness in trust. Everything is made by God for his glory, whether we eat or drink or whatever we do we can do it all for the glory of God, when we trust His provision and his timing and His ways.

God brought the people out of Egypt to be with Him, the people missed that, they missed that they had been freed from slavery to be with God and enjoy Him, they wanted the things of this world, comfort, food, security, their own desires met, and they refused to trust God's word, and have the life that God wanted them to have in the land of milk and honey with Him. Jesus taught us to pray "give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses", we need God to provide for physical bread, more importantly we need him to provide spiritual bread in his word to sustain us.

As I read the word I have seen where I fall short of his loving and right requirements of me, where I have believed the lies and false promises of this world rather than Gods unfailing, life giving truth. So in the Word I've seen my need of Jesus and my unworthiness. However I also see more of Jesus and His mercy and grace and see that He came not for the righteous but for the unrighteous and the broken, as I see how God was faithful to his promises to the people in the wilderness and I see Jesus patience and love for those closest to Him, even the disciples who also failed Him. I see that we also need his body, the bread broken and resurrected for us to bring forgiveness daily.

Conclusion

Just as the people rebelled against God in the wilderness we all have put our trust in the things of this world that can never satisfy. We have hoped in things that God gave us to use for his glory rather than trust in God and enjoy and worship Him. Just as in the wilderness there is a penalty for not trusting in God. Moses went back up the mountain to meet with God when the people sinned but his attempt at Atonement, reconciliation and repairing the relationship with God was not sufficient.

Jesus went into the wilderness and he did not give in to the temptation to seek His own desires but submitted, trusted and humbled himself before God. By the power of the word of God he defeated the enemy. Through passing the test in the wilderness and Jesus going up the mount and dying on the cross, for our sin, which Moses or no man could do. He has fully satisfied the wrath of God and honoured His father so there has been made a way for us to have life with God

SLIDE

- Through Gods word we can have the **faith** to trust Him. Rom 10:17
- Through Gods word we see Jesus, and are **satisfied** by water that never runs dry and the bread never runs out. John 6:35
- Through Gods word we can receive this great **salvation** through Christ crucified. 1 Cor 1:23
- Through Gods word we can **hope** and trust in trials knowing that they are not punishment, but Gods love for His children, helping us see our need for Him and His amazing grace, and he promises to be with us. Deut 8:5, Heb 12:6
- Through Gods word we can truly **live**. Matthew 4:4, John 6:63

I guess I am the same as many people here, I turn to other things for satisfaction and for life other than God. But because I can see that Jesus went into the testing for me, on my behalf I can trust Him and His obedience and his sacrifice and death. I know that by trusting and hoping in Him I can live in Him and be His child. Even though now

through His word we can live and we can become more like Him as we see him more and more, we know that until we see him fully just as we are fully known by him, we will not be perfect, but trusting in Christ's sacrifice for us cleans us and makes us acceptable to God now, and if we repent of our failure to trust God and believe on Jesus our eternal life, our true life, starts now.

My hope in this message was for you to see that Jesus is worthy of our life and our trust, He humbled himself to raise us up with him. I hope that God has been revealing himself and His truth to you, His love for you and his worth and that spending time with Him is the only thing that will satisfy. What I have learnt in my walk with God is that He loves to speak to me in his word but often I don't want to listen and trust, so I want to finish by praying that God would soften our hearts and make us more like Him as we live our lives with Him.

SLIDE

So, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts
as you did in the rebellion,
during the time of testing in the wilderness, Hebrews 3:7-8

Closing Prayer

Father I thank you that you don't care how much we know, you just want us to trust you, the course of history is changed by just one word of yours. Thank you that the more we see of you, the more trustworthy you become. Father open our hearts to you now by your Spirit. Help us turn to you when we are thirsty and find our satisfaction and life in you alone, the only source of life. Father I thank you it is a gift that you want to reveal yourself in your word to us. It is a gift that you sent your son to die in our place. Thank you for John Tyndale and the many hundreds of thousands that have died to proclaim your word to all the nations. I thank you that they have entered into the fullest life possible which is found only in you. For Your Glory. In Jesus Name.