

*As a follow up to Josh's sermon this weekend, we have borrowed this post from Josh Otte of Windham Baptist Church. Find the original [here](#).*

## **WWJD or WHJD**

WWJD? Would Jesus vote for Obama or McCain?

WWJD? Would Jesus buy an SUV or a hybrid?

WWJD? Would Jesus visit Starbucks or Dunkin Donuts?

For so many, the secret to living the Christian life is wrapped up in finding out “What would Jesus do? What would Jesus buy? What would Jesus drive? What would Jesus eat?” If we knew those answers, then we could simply imitate Jesus and everything would be fine and dandy. Right?

But how can we possibly think that wearing a WWJD Bracelet is God’s method of revival, an integral step in the path of sanctification, a vital ingredient in being conformed into the likeness of Jesus (Romans 8:28-30)? The WWJD phenomenon has had a much more widespread and worrisome consequence than just the continual mass-production of Jesus-junk.

By starting with the question “What would Jesus do?” we have confused Christ with Christianity. We have replaced the gospel for religion.

Before we ask WWJD, we need to first ask WHJD—“What has Jesus done?”

## **Case Study: Luke 4:1-14**

Let me show how this is true by taking a look at Luke 4:1-13—the temptation of Jesus. Here’s the play-by-play. After, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, the heavens were torn open and God said that Jesus was His beloved Son, the only son in whom God was well-pleased. Unlike Adam and all of his kids. To prove Jesus’ Sonship, God compels him through the Holy Spirit to spend 40 days in the wilderness to fast without food and to be tempted by the devil. According to plan, Jesus doesn’t eat any food and by day 40 is literally starving. Perfect timing for the devil to fire away three potent temptations in the form of insinuating questions. But, Jesus counters each attack by quoting Scripture. Jesus is victorious and overcomes temptation. The devil departs, but only for a time.

# WWJD

Let's start out by asking the infamous WWJD. And of course we ask that question so we know what we are supposed to do, right? Well that's quite obvious—when Jesus faced temptation, he quoted Scripture. That's what *he* did, therefore, that's what *we* should do. So if you want to be ready to face temptation, all you have to do is memorize the Bible. It worked for Jesus, it'll work for you, too! Seems simple enough. But is that why Luke 4:1-13 is included in Holy Scripture—to give us a “how to manual for fighting temptation?” Is it really that simple?

Notice how's there is so much more than meets the WWJD-eye:

- Jesus was prompted by the Holy Spirit to go into the wilderness: *should we?*
- Jesus fasted for 40 days: *should we?*
- Jesus encountered the devil and dialogued with him: *should we?*
- Jesus was tempted as the Well-Pleasing Son of God: *how is that different than us?*

# WHJD

By asking instead, “What has Jesus done?”, we are forced to grapple with more than the immediately practical (how we should imitate Jesus). And as a result we get to gaze at the supreme uniqueness of Jesus—God's promised Messiah, the true and better Adam, the true and better Israel who defeated Satan on behalf of God's people. Jesus' temptation in the wilderness is one of the climaxing moments in God's larger Story of Redemption. Unlike Adam and Israel, Jesus trusted God's promises and provision in the face of great temptation. Unlike Adam, he faced God's ultimate enemy and was not be deceived. Unlike Israel who wandered for 40 years in the wilderness because they doubted God's Word, Jesus wandered for 40 days because he believed God's Word.

By asking “What has Jesus done” we see Christ and ourselves rightly. What's wrong with asking WWJD, then, is that it reduces the Bible to a self-help manual, reducing Jesus to the example of our faith and missing that he is also the object of our faith.

# The Big Difference

So what difference does asking WHJD really make?

If we ask WWJD and the most important truth we go home with is “when facing temptation we need to do what Jesus did—memorize and quote Scripture to the devil.” While that is certainly an application of the passage, it’s not the main point or purpose. In fact, that advice might actually be dangerous. Don’t get me wrong, memorizing Scripture is important in fighting sin (Psalm 119:11). But memorization is only a help, a tool, a discipline. It stores God’s Word in our heads and hearts so that when faced with temptation, we are prepared to fight sin’s deceitful pleasures with the superior promises of God. Memorization is the stream; faith is the fountain. Asking WWJD confuses the too.

However, when we ask WHJD we get so much more! What Jesus has done is enormous. He did what we and every other son of Adam could never do. His obedience paved the way for our obedience, not merely as an example but rather as our representative. His faithfulness to the Father lead him all the way through the wilderness and ultimately to the cross where he purchased our forgiveness, brought us to the Father, empowered us with his Spirit.

This works both on our best days and our worst days. On our worst days, when we are overcome by temptation, we can be free from fear: “we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).

Why? **Because of what Jesus has done!** On our best days, when we overcome temptation, we can be free from pride: “it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12). Why? **Because of what Jesus has done!**

So before you ask WWJD why don’t you first ask WHJD.