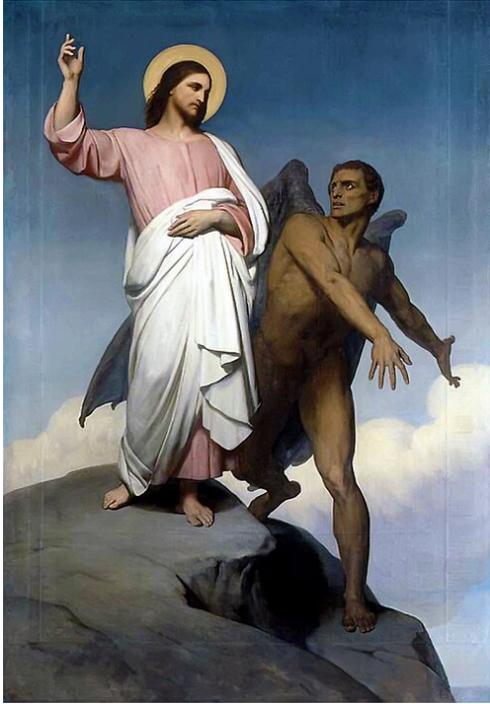


FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Jesus' Righteous Obedience to the Father Leads to the Justification of All



Background: Last Wednesday, we began the season of Lent. As we begin our weekly worship through lent, we start with the temptations of Christ. After giving up food for 40 days and nights, Satan came to visit and tempt Christ to give up His earthly mission of saving all of us, and do something to make his earthly life more comfortable, or maybe even more powerful. Christ resisted these temptations, by using scripture and maintaining commitment to His Father's will. So as we consider our actions this Lenten season, we are often faced with the question "What are you giving up for lent?" First we must understand giving up things is not what earns God's favor. Rather it is the blood of Jesus Christ that makes us right with God. Thus if we give up anything, it should be that sin that we constantly repeat and which makes our repentance meaningless. Of course this is not done with our own reason or strength, but by the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Like Christ we search the scriptures to understand the sanctified life

The Temptation of Christ Ary Scheffer 1854 and live by the guidance and strength of the Holy Spirit. Let us praise God that He sent His Son to fulfill His plan of Salvation for us and sends the Holy Spirit to lead us to faith. Let's share this message broadly and live joyfully in God's peace.

The Lessons: Genesis 3:1–21, Romans 5:12–19, & Matthew 4:1–11

Following His Baptism, Jesus is "*led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil*" (Matt. 4:1). As He takes upon Himself the curse of our sin and sets Himself against our enemy, He trusts His Father's voice and waits upon His Father's hand for all things. The devil questions His sonship, but the beloved and well-pleasing Son remains faithful and lives "*by every word that comes from the mouth of God*" (Matt. 4:4). Jesus patiently suffers hunger in His mortal flesh and returns to the dust whence man was taken, and by His pain He brings forth food for all the children of men (Gen. 3:18–19). By the sweat of His brow, we eat the fruit of His cross, even as our nakedness is covered by His righteousness. Although all people live in bondage to death through the trespass of the first man, Adam, all the more "*have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many*" (Rom. 5:15). His righteous obedience "*leads to justification and life for all men*" (Rom. 5:18).