

# Look! He's everything you could not be (full atonement 2)

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[ 0 : 01 ] Well, do turn, if you would, to Matthew chapter 4. It would be a great help to you and to me if we have these words open in front of you. Now, last time, which was a fortnight ago now, we studied the baptism of Jesus.

And we saw that Matthew clearly portrays Jesus as being baptized for us in our place. He wasn't baptized for his sins, he was sinless.

But he was baptized for our sins. God's Son, the voice from the heaven, God's Son in whom he delights, his anointed King, is also his servant.

The one who suffers with the transgressors. The one whose life is made a guilt offering for sin in the terms of Isaiah chapter 53. We summed it up in the words of 2 Corinthians 5.21.

For our sake, he who knew no sin became sin. So that, the purpose was, so that he might baptize with the fire of cleansing and purging and renewal that John the Baptist had promised.

[ 1 : 17 ] Jesus, Matthew is telling us, is the sin bearer. He came to bear sin for his people. He came to stand in their place as a substitute.

And he did that as Jesus says himself in verse 15, to fulfill all righteousness, to accomplish it, to bring about the righteousness, the salvation of God for his people.

And that is truly wonderful. It is truly foundational in the Christian gospel. But having said that, it's not yet the full story.

There's more. And that's why the story of Jesus' temptation in chapter 4 follows on immediately after the story of Jesus' baptism. It's vitally connected. Verse 13, we have, he came to be baptized.

And then in chapter 4, verse 1, the Spirit then led him in the wilderness to be tempted. Exactly the same parallel kind of language.

[ 2 : 20 ] And so there's another side to this work of Jesus that we've got to grasp. We've got to remember, haven't we, that the Bible wants us to see that the major problem is our ruptured relationship with God.

But that the major problem is not so much on our side, but on God's side. We're so self-centered, aren't we? We're so self-focused that we tend to look at us and see the only problem is being our sin and our guilt.

And once that's dealt with, well surely that's it. That's all there is. But no, says the New Testament, that's not the whole thing fixed.

Not from God's perspective anyway. There's much, much more to real justice, to true justice than that. Let me give you an example that might help explain.

Most of you know that since we've come to Glasgow, we've had two burglaries in the house. And our friends from Edinburgh tell us it's just a part of getting used to Glasgow culture. But there we are.

[ 3 : 27 ] Now, of course, people sometimes ask, any chance of these chaps having been caught? And we all know that there's no chance at all, is there, of these guys being caught and actually convicted. It's interesting to hear all the chat on the radio about the politicians talking about what is and isn't reasonable force.

Well, I can give you this warning, anybody who comes and tries it a third time will discover the force of my reasonableness. But just suppose, just suppose in a far distant fantasy world, where the police didn't have to spend all their time filling in forms and, you know, policing real crimes, like stopping people smoking in pubs or chasing foxes or really important things like that.

Just suppose the police were out and about trying to catch burglars. And just suppose, when the police did manage to catch the burglars, they brought them to the court. And the court, instead of sending them into a five-star luxury hotel for a couple of months before they come out again, just suppose they put them into the slammer for life.

Maybe with a good flogging as well. And maybe even more. I might say justice. That's justice at last.

The penalty of the law is exacted. The guilt's paid for. There's satisfaction. But not quite, is it? Not from my point of view, because not everything is back to square one.

[ 4 : 55 ] In fact, it's far from it. Because I haven't got my computer back, for one thing. I haven't got all my documents back. I haven't got the endless hours of work, weeks, years of work that that represented.

And even the insurance company, coughing up for a lovely new computer, can't compensate for that loss. I'm still immeasurably worse off, even though the law has been satisfied and guilt has been punished.

There's been no true restoration and restitution of what's been lost. That's a very trivial example, of course.

Let me just make it a little bit more serious. If a murder has been committed, even supposing the guilty criminal is caught and charged and convicted and serves a life sentence, that can't bring your loved one back.

And that, of course, points, doesn't it, to a major failure in our justice system that's always been there. There is no restoration to match the paying of the price.

[ 6 : 07 ] I think that's probably one reason, isn't it, why we now live in such a rampant compensation culture. Because there's something essentially right at the bottom of that. There's a desire to have restitution as well as payment in the eyes of the law.

And so we want to gain something back, to restore the situation. There's something right at the heart of that. Of course, because we're sinful, because we're selfish, we can't do it properly, and we've let that thing go completely rampant so that we abuse it, so that now we live in a culture where you look for compensation for anything at all.

Somebody sent me this week an amusing article about the Stella Awards. Anybody heard about those? Named after the woman who successfully sued McDonald's when she poured a cup of hot coffee all over her legs and sued them for a million dollars because the coffee was too hot.

You might ask the question, what was it too hot for, drinking or throwing on your legs? And these awards are given every year for the most outrageous and ridiculous awards of compensation.

The top two this year were, one of them went to a chap who successfully sued his neighbor for driving over his arms with his car. He got a million and a half dollars.

[ 7 : 24 ] The court didn't seem to think that it was important that he was under the car trying to steal his hubcaps at the time he was driven over. The second place was to a woman who got a similar sum for having tripped over a young child that was running around a mock in a shop that she was shopping in.

And the shop management were rather surprised about this because the child who she tripped over who was misbehaving was her own child. And there we are, we live in a crazy compensation culture.

But, but, the point is that at the bottom of all of that is something right and true. There's a desire for restitution, for a putting back to rights as something that's gone utterly wrong.

And the point is this, that punishing sin in the flesh of man, punishing man's guilt, doesn't get God back what he lost. It satisfies his just and righteous anger at sin and its guilt.

But still, God has lost his perfect world. He's lost his perfect image, the sun that he created to be his image of glory in the cosmos.

[ 8 : 39 ] And just paying the punishment for sin doesn't do that, doesn't bring it back. But right from the beginning of God's promise, when the world did collapse into sin, he promised just exactly that.

He promised there would be restoration. Do you remember in Genesis chapter 3, he promises a seed of the woman that her offspring would overcome the offspring of the evil one.

He promised one seed that would overcome the devil himself. So, he's promising not just punishment for rebellion, but also from the very beginning, he's promising a new creation, a restitution, a new humanity, a total reversal of the effects of the fall, a restoration of paradise.

When God chooses Abraham to be the father of the family of faith that will bring this about in the world, he says he's choosing him to be the father of a multitude of people who will be holy to the Lord.

In Genesis 18, God says he's chosen Abraham so that his descendants would, quote, keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice.

[ 9 : 56 ] He chose Israel to be, as we read in Deuteronomy, God's own son. And as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you.

So you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God by walking in his ways and fearing him. You see, God's plan is for a new humanity, a humanity restored to what it's meant to be.

The question is, but how? Well, just as it was clear in all the very nature of the sacrifices themselves that God ordained in the Old Testament, that atonement must at last, to be ultimate, to be effective, must be something that God decisively does in history.

So also the promised holiness for mankind must also be something that God does ultimately by intervening in history. Somehow, God must get his image back.

Somehow, he will get it back in the flesh of humankind. Somehow, God will build his own new humanity.

[ 11 : 07 ] He'll have a true Adam. He'll have his true, holy, chosen people. He'll have a true Israel. And only then will total justice be done.

Not just will darkness be defeated, but Eden restored, as we sang in that first hymn. That's what God's promised. And what Matthew's saying here in chapter 4 is, here it is.

Here it is at last. Here's full atonement from God's point of view. Not only, not only did Jesus come as a sin bearer to take a guilt of sin in exchange for his perfection, but also, also he came to stand as a holy and righteous and perfect son of God in our place.

To make restitution. To bring back the image that God had lost in the rebellion of Adam. John Henry Newman's hymn puts it so perfectly.

O loving wisdom of our God, when all was sin and shame, a second Adam to the fight and to the rescue came. Do you see? This is the other side of the guilt offering.

[ 12 : 17 ] Do you remember last time we saw the guilt offering in Leviticus as both a penalty and a restitution? In fact, all the Old Testament sacrifices were not only atoning for sin, but at the same time giving a sweet savour, an offering to the Lord, a sacrifice for sin and an offering in righteousness.

And he came, chapter 3 verse 13 says, to be baptized. He came to bear sin, to bear guilt. Remember what he sang? Bearing shame and scoffing rude, in my place condemned he stood, sealed my pardon, with his blood.

He came as a guilt offering. But he also came, chapter 4 tells us, to be tested and to stand tall, to be the perfect, obedient king, the Son of God in the flesh, the true man at last.

And that was also for us. As the hymn says, guilty, vile and helpless, we spotless Lamb of God was he. Full atonement.

Can it be? Yes. You see, Jesus stands not just as a substitute for sin, but also as a representative for righteousness for us.

[ 13 : 36 ] Not just a sacrifice, a penalty for sin, but a sweet savour offering for mankind in our place, before God. And that's what Matthew's highlighting for us here, in the most graphic of ways, right at the outset of Jesus' ministry.

Not for a minute that this is the only temptation or testing of Jesus, but rather that it sets a pattern for the whole of his life, every minute from beginning to end.

It was all, his whole life, one of being tempted and tested in all points as we are. Yet he was without sin, as the Hebrews writers tell us.

And this also, as well as his death on the cross, his life was for us. And it's significant, I think, that the first thing that the Holy Spirit does after anointing him at his baptism is to lead him into the desert to test him in obedient faith.

The Spirit's ministry of power is the power for a holy life lived to God. It would save us an awful lot of nonsense, you know, if we just got that straight in our minds.

[ 14 : 47 ] People like to talk sometimes about the fullness of the Spirit. Matthew chapter 4 is teaching us about the fullness of the Holy Spirit. He's the Spirit who leads us in obedient holiness before God.

So, we summed up the baptism of Jesus using that first half of 2 Corinthians 5.21. He who knew no sin became sin for us. And we could just as easily sum up the temptation of Jesus in the second half of that verse.

In him, we might become the righteousness of God. Here's the main point in case you fall asleep. Listen to this. Jesus' temptation or his testing in the desert like his baptism heralds for us the truth about his mission.

He came, as Paul says, in the likeness of sinful flesh not only to condemn sin in the flesh in his baptism but also so that the righteous requirement of the law might be met in us.

I want to put it in terms of Isaiah 53 that we read last time that through his knowledge, his perfect relationship with his Father, many might be counted righteous.

[ 16 : 05 ] And so, says Matthew, as soon as he's anointed by the Spirit, the Spirit leads him into this testing. Look at verses 1 and 2.

They tell us two important things that explain the whole significance of this. This testing takes place, we're told, in the wilderness, in the desert, and it lasts for 40 days. Now, Matthew, we've already seen, clearly draws attention to Israel's story of the 40 years in the wilderness.

He's already noticed in chapter 2 that he quoted these words, out of Egypt I've called my son. He's already been telling us that Jesus is the true son of God, the true Israel.

And that's what he's saying again here. And as we read, God led Israel in the desert through hunger to test his son. As a man disciplines his son, so I've disciplined you.

And at the baptism, God has opened the heavens and declared to the whole world, this is my son in whom I'm well pleased. And now he's saying to the whole world, alright, look at him.

[17:11] Can anybody again say that? There's no fear here, you see. God's not on the back foot. It's a tragedy, isn't it, as Christians?

We're so often on the back foot. We think we're here to defend God, to apologize for him. And nothing could be further than the truth. God says, look at him. Look at him.

Christ doesn't need any propping up by us. Even to the devil, he's saying, try anything you can and see if my beloved son doesn't stand up to it.

Do you remember the beginning of the book of Job? Well, here it is, but a hundred times more. There's no need for us to apologize for Jesus Christ. The Bible bids us point people to him and say, look, look, you see if you can fault him.

That's what we're doing in Christianity Explored. We're saying to people, look, look at Jesus Christ. And you see, if you can come to any other conclusion that he is the perfect, holy son of God.

[18:17] Here, says Matthew, is God's true son. He's God's true Israel. He's the one that God promised he would have. And Jesus clearly understood it like that. That's why he quotes three times in each time.

It's from Deuteronomy chapter 6 and 8. He knows he's there as God's perfect son in place of the Israel. It could never be that.

The second thing is we're told that this testing was initiated by God. He was led by the Spirit of God. And yet, it was in the context of a direct encounter with the devil. Not only was Jesus tested and disciplined by God and found to come forth as gold, also, significantly, he's faced up with exactly the same specific areas of temptation to sin that Adam and Eve were confronted with in the Garden of Eden by the serpent.

And where they fell and where they rebelled, he, by contrast, was truthful and he triumphed. God's not just saying, you see, here's at last my true Israel.

He's saying, here at last is my true beloved image, my son, the Adam that I created and promised.

[19:38] Here at last is Eden restored. In Luke's account, that's why I think in Luke chapter 3, after Jesus' baptism and before the temptation, he inserts his genealogy, which Matthew has in chapter 1, which ends up going all the way back to Adam, the son of God.

Points being made so clearly. Look, says Matthew, here at last is God's son. He's God's king. He's come to rule and subdue the world in righteousness, as Adam ought to have done.

He's God's son who obeys and submits totally to God. He's a true Israel. He's a second Adam and he's come in the flesh to bear the guilt of sin as the sin bearer but also to meet head on the enemy to prevail and triumph in the flesh of man over the devil to restore to God the son that he lost.

Newman's hymn again, O wisest love that flesh and blood which did in Adam fail should strive aflesh against the foe should strive and should prevail. O generous love that he who smote in man for man the foe the double agony in man for man should undergo the double agony not just the death for guilt of sins but the agony of a life enduring the utmost testing and temptation for us.

It's vital to see that you see this is all for us. It was as man that Jesus suffered and was tempted by the devil as God he had no need of that he could have banished him with a word the devil is a mere creature could have extinguished him with the breath of his mouth the devil is our foe in that sense not God's foe we sing that hymn it was my sin that held him there on the cross yes that's right but it was my need for holiness for righteousness that held him there in the desert undergoing that fierce temptation it was my need for righteousness that held him in the garden of Gethsemane being obedient even to the drops of blood it was my sin that held him there on the cross his total obedience to his father it was all for us so Matthew's saying here's your king he's your servant he's the substitute bearing sin for you in the place of judgment but now also he's your representative he's marching out into battle here to fight the enemy on your behalf he's fighting for your life in his flesh remember the story of David and Goliath

[ 22 : 33 ] David goes out as the champion to fight the battle for God's people and he wins the victory for all of them that's what Matthew's saying going on here so let's look then at the grounds of the battle remember the context is a specific a graphic illustration of a pattern that went all through Jesus' life where he stands in our place as man and for man and therefore it's not surprising is it to find that the temptations he faces reflect exactly exactly the temptations and failure of Israel in the wilderness and the temptation and failure of Adam and Eve at the beginning and and the temptations and failure in every one of us has fallen and defaced images of his glory each of these three temptations that Jesus faces here strikes at the heart of what's just been revealed about him in chapter 3 at his baptism his identity what it means to be

God's beloved son and his mission what it means for him to be God's God's servant look at this first temptation in verse 3 if you're the son of God command these stones to become bread what's going on?

well clearly after 40 days of fasting Jesus is very very hungry we're not told if it was an absolute fast or whether it was just the privation of eating just the things he could find in the desert but either way he's very very hungry what's Satan saying?

well not I think not casting doubt on what it means that he's the son of God not casting doubt on his identity but rather on the implication he's saying since you're God's son surely surely you ought to act like a son of God and a king surely you should take what you want you've got the power why don't you use it?

John said in the previous chapter that God can raise up children for Abraham out of the stone so surely raising up a few loaves of bread can't be any great shakes for you you're the son of God but look at verse 4 Jesus says it's written man shall not live by bread alone but by everything every word that comes from the mouth of God he's quoting Deuteronomy 8.3 there he's clearly recognizing that his experience of hunger in the desert just like Israel's was meant to teach him the reality of what it meant to rely totally on God to trust in him completely not just in God's gifts but in God himself in everything that comes from God that that's what true obedience is about don't think the emphasis here is so much on living on God's word as being more important than bread in fact the word translated word here when he's quoting from the Greek Old Testament can actually mean thing and in the original Hebrew in Deuteronomy 8.3 as I read it the force is not just by bread alone but by all everything that comes from the mouth of God in other words the emphasis here is not on on word versus the bread the emphasis is on bread alone not that rather everything that comes from God in other words what God wants in his children is not just an appetite for the gifts that he gives us but an appetite for God himself he doesn't just want us to love him for the clothes he can give us for the food he can give us for the earthly blessings that he can give us and does give us but he wants us to love him for all of himself do you see that this temptation was the temptation to put worldly appetite above an eternal appetite for God it's a very subtle perversion of the truth you're God's son you can have all this so why not have it what's wrong with that you need it you're hungry you can have it so have it but you see what it really means is this put yourself and your needs at the centre of the world and use God and his power to serve your needs

[ 26 : 59 ] I mean after all that's what God's for isn't it but Jesus says no that's not what God's for that's the wrong way around totally man's not just here to have God's gifts his material things the good things even that he gives us no man is made and created for God to desire God to have an appetite for God to see him as transcending everything else to see his relationship with God as being more important than everything to have an appetite for God himself not just his gifts not to have just a worldly appetite and you see that was exactly Israel's sin constantly they had far more appetite for the gifts of God than for God himself he fed them with manna he fed them with quails he watered them from the rock he gave them a land flowing with milk and honey but still they grumbled constantly he tested them in the wilderness to teach them that all all that they have and all that they need comes from God and from him alone but no no no they had no appetite for him they wanted these things but as soon as he gave them well they rejected him and sought it elsewhere it's just the same it has been right from the beginning

Adam and Eve were tempted by worldly appetites tasting God's good fruit was more important than having an appetite for God himself it's a very powerful force isn't it worldly appetites been like that just since the beginning do you remember Cain he was a man of the world I'll offer to God as I see fit God said no that's not what I want you to offer I want you to offer what I ask you to offer as Abel did remember Esau he gave up his entire destiny in the promise of God for a quick fix of lentil stew but isn't that true of us isn't that true often of us as believers that we have appetites often for this world alone and not the eternal I think it is even the good and necessary things that God gives us don't we often find ourselves loving them more than we love him it's so easy for our appetites to crave God's gifts above fellowship with God himself isn't that right what are the things that fill our prayers aren't they prayers for health and healing for ourselves and loved ones for long life for comfort for alleviation of harm good things aren't they full of prayers for our children's futures for their success in the world in education and all the rest of it good gifts of God in themselves even for success in the service of God good gifts of God but isn't it true that very often these things actually supplant our appetite for God himself it's a paradox of blessing isn't it whenever Israel was so blessed by God she turned away that's why the

Proverbs writer says to God give me not riches lest I fall away and deny you John Piper in one of his books somewhere says this the Christian's greatest danger is not poison but apple pie that's true isn't it it's true good gifts of this world can lure us into worldly appetites and Satan says oh since God has so blessed you well let him serve you now when you need it that's what he's saying to Jesus in the wilderness but no says Jesus the life God desires is a life full of appetite for God for all that comes from the mouth of God not just the material not just worldly appetite that's how true humanity is to be the second temptation verse 5 is so similar isn't it a temptation to worldly attitudes again it's very subtle

God says you're his son well you've got his word of promise well why not test it out and use it throw yourself down it sounds so plausible you see it almost sounds like it's acting on your faith but actually it's a temptation away from trusting in God to unbelief and the devil uses scripture here as scripture can be misused and often is just like this there is no justification though for putting God to the test like this Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6 verse 16 you shall not test the Lord your God as you did at Massa when they grumbled and God produced water from the rock read Hebrews chapter 3 explains very clearly what that grumbling really was it was called unbelief it was called rebellion it was called hardening of hearts despite all

God's evidence despite all the evidence of his revelation and his keeping of his people no they wouldn't trust him they wanted some special divine assurance that was exactly the temptation that came to Adam the devil doesn't change his spots test God said the serpent you won't surely die that's what he says but no you won't friends these are very great temptations to worldly attitudes the desire for a spectacular a sensual assurance from God to us something in our experience now that assures to us the spirit's power in our life it's all around us today oh we don't just want words we need the spectacular we need signs and wonders they said that too in Jesus day and Jesus had plain words to say about it he said a wicked and adulterous generation seeks for signs why did he say that because all of that is the opposite of obedience submission and trust in God's word the new testament tells us we walk by faith and not by sight otherwise it wouldn't be faith but no says Jesus the son of

[ 33 : 37 ] God will not use God for his satisfaction he'll not put God on the periphery and him at the center he'll not make God a servant to serve us seek first the kingdom of God and all these other things will be added that's the context of God's promise in Psalm 91 anyway it's not a promise for those who presume on the word of God it's a promise for those who are obedient to God and Jesus says that's how true humanity is meant to be look at verse 8 in the third temptation again it's very similar it's an assault of worldly ambition a very subtle temptation to seek the destiny that God has promised to his people but by means that are different it's an assault on the worship of God alone God did promise Adam dominion and glory over all his creation he did promise that Adam would be his image his representative his ruler over the whole cosmos but he promised that it would be so through Adam being obedient to God obeying his word he promised that it would be so by Adam being the creature and God being God and Satan says ah do it my way borderline from Frank

Sinatra do it my way says and you'll be God at once and of course that was what led to disaster wasn't it been that way ever since the Tower of Babel was just another instance of it man wanting to be gods by their own methods by their own design a quest for immortality it's been with us ever since that's why we send spaceships to Saturn that's why we spend vast amounts of money on medicines and on cosmetics that will stop us aging that's why we talk about cloning and people with more money than cents get their bodies frozen so that in the future maybe they'll be brought back to life and become gods why is there such a powerful drive to do things like that well it's because it's what we're made for we're made for glory and dominion over the cosmos we're made for immortality we're made to be like gods but not that way not by worshipping ourselves to get there not by worshipping other gods to get there no by worshipping and obeying the one true God



God says in Psalm 2 this is my son quoted at the baptism the very next words go on to say to the son ask of me says God and I will make the nations your heritage and Satan says no ask of me see it betrays the fact that Satan wants to be God he thinks he's God but Jesus says never man was made to worship God alone the reason we have such powerful urges to worldly ambition is because that is what we're made for but we cannot ever achieve it by rebellion against God Bible is clear all of us have fallen short of that glory that ambition just like Adam we've grasped at that glory but we've reaped death and Jesus said no I will be obedient even to death and in doing so he reaps for us life do you see this is all for us look

Matthew saying this is what you should be but you can never be this but he is he's triumphant and he's doing it for you but you know there's more even than that because in these temptations Christ was tested and found true to be the obedient son of God he was found to be all that Adam was not that Israel was not that we are not we see all of that wonderful positive we see God's triumphant sons but also there's a huge negative to this too because on top of all that obedience he resisted all the temptation to step aside from his job as the servant to step aside for being the sin bearing Messiah to be tempted to a Messiah that needn't have a cross as God he could have done all of these things he could have fed himself he could have appeared at the temple in glory just like the glorious son of man prophesied in

Daniel chapter 7 he could have taken his place as the rightful ruler of the cosmos that was his right but that's the whole point you see he was going through all of this not just as God but as man and for man and that's why he endured all this that's why he didn't shrink in the desert or in Gethsemane or in the cross Adam Adam was tested in the garden surrounded by paradise and all that he needed and he failed and fell and he created a desert wasteland for the cosmos but Christ the second Adam in the wilderness surrounded by wild beasts full of hunger with none of the things he needed and with the horror of the sin of all humanity already on his shoulders signified by his baptism and still he triumphed and out of that triumph the desert wilderness bloomed into the new creation into a new Eden into the glory for all who are no longer in

[ 39 : 27 ] Adam but through faith are in Jesus Christ and inherit us of all that is his that's Matthew's message couldn't be clearer he's saying look he's everything you ought to be but could never ever be he's God's victorious king he's God's obedient son he's the perfect image that God created and repent because the kingdom of heaven is upon you the day of judgment is coming but you say what good is that I'm undone everything must be lost surely if that's the case Matthew says no look again look again he's in your place he's bearing all your sin he's bearing the wrath of God and the penalty upon your sin he came to be baptized and he's standing victorious and vindicated in your place he's being all that you could never be he's the perfect man the perfect human with a perfect appetite for

God with a perfect attitude to trust in God's plan and purpose for his life with a perfect ambition for God's glory but only through love for God and love for his brothers Matthew is saying to us he was all of that by the power of the Holy Spirit in the desert so that he might be the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit who pours out his spirit upon all who believe and into all who believe that's what it means when Matthew says he came to save his people from their sins and when the risen triumphant exalted Lord Jesus ascended to triumph in heaven he was declared to be the son of God with power Eden restored God God's got his image back his image in the flesh all that was lost is now restored and when he ascended he poured out the

Holy Spirit of this perfect humanity upon all his redeemed people baptizing them flooding them clothing them in all that he was and is Jesus said of the Spirit to his disciples he will clothe you with power from on high what does that mean for you and me this morning it means this if you're a believer not only is all that is yours the guilt the penalty of sin done away with in the death of Christ not only that but also all that is lacking all that you can't be all that God made you for to be his child with power all of that is truly yours through his Spirit in you Jesus has given you his victory over sins his victory over sins guilt but also his victory over sins power his victory over sins perpetrator the devil he's given that to you when he poured his

Holy Spirit upon you it's the spirit of glorious obedient victorious human flesh poured out into your heart he came that in him we might become the righteousness of God that's full atonement that's the gospel of Jesus Christ friends don't you often look at yourself in the mirror in absolute despair don't you often say to yourself I'm not what I should be I'm not even what I want to be don't you constantly see yourself as being what you should not be what you don't want to be you're different from me if you don't do that but Matthew says look look at him see his baptism for sins see his triumphant life overcoming the evil one that's what

God sees when he sees you he doesn't see what you see in your mirror he sees in you my beloved son my beloved daughter in whom I delight that's what the gospel means he took your place once and for all and it's been accomplished for your justification forever to fulfill all righteousness for you and so it's certain that you will at the coming of the Lord Jesus you will be in his place because he was in you will be his holy his perfect his righteous his victorious child you will be but why is my life such a struggle now maybe that's what you're asking well look at verse 11 then the devil left him you see the rest and the peace of victory only comes after the battle Jesus resurrection and his declaration of power and victory as the son of

[ 44 : 52 ] God came only after the cross so it is for us there's a not yet about our whole Christian experience we're still awaiting our full and final salvation when we too will be delivered totally from the power of sin but meantime it's his spirit the spirit of the Lord Jesus that's planted in us he's the spirit who leads us out through the tempting and testing of life he's the spirit who empowers us to walk in the way of our savior to walk in the way of the cross that's what the spirit filled life is it's the life of the battle for holiness friends the reason that the devil attacks you and the reason you're tempted and the reason you're tested and the reason the spirit of the Lord Jesus is in you it's the evidence that your faith is real and so we fight but because of

Jesus victory in the desert because of Jesus victory throughout his whole life we have the victory we fight not for the victory but from it you have to be freed before you can fight because if we're a believer his spirit is in us he's poured it out on us he's drenched us with the Holy Spirit and power he's flooded us with the power for obedience and holiness and faithfulness that's why James says resist the devil and he'll flee from you he must because he fled from Jesus and the spirit of the victorious Jesus lives in your heart so when you face temptations and testings in this world as you will temptations to worldly appetites in place of a hunger for God temptations to worldly attitudes of unbelief in place of simple trust in his word and his promise temptations to worldly ambitions for glory other than the glory that only comes through the cross of

Christ and the message of Matthew and the message of the whole gospel is this look to Jesus our substitute and our representative and think whose spirit dwells within you and follow him that's the message of Jesus temptation for us