

This sermon comes out of some questions that were asked me by some young people after the sermon last week. They were good and intelligent questions, and it is a joy when young people are listening and weighing and considering the things of the Gospel. Last week I pointed out some of the errors of antinomianism and the fortresses that the sinful flesh hides in to escape obedience, fortresses in which we all hide until convicted by the Holy Spirit and moved to true obedience.

This sermon will be on sermon audio as soon as I can prepare it this afternoon and post it. I hope it will be a blessing to you in your walk with Jesus Christ.

A few minutes ago we read the entire 2nd Chapter of Isaiah. Isaiah is sometimes called the Gospel of the Old Testament, for there is so much that can be directly connected to the Person and work of Jesus Christ and the good news shines forth brighter than many other places in the Old Testament. This chapter is an illustration of that. I am not going to exposit the whole chapter, but only one verse: verse number 3. In order to do that, I want to set the verse in context and then say three things about it: 1. The Gospel is the fulfilling of the Law; 2. The Gospel is the teachings of Jesus and His Apostles; 3. The Gospel begins in baby steps of following the Lord Jesus Christ. Then I would make some applications.

Introduction. The verse in context.

1. This chapter is about the establishment of the kingdom of Christ.
 2. Hills and mountains are figures for kingdoms and powers—things exalted over peoples and nations and tribes.
 3. The kingdom of God is ruled from the temple in heaven: the kingdom of the Lord's house. This is the message of God in the Gospel, that Christ has ascended to the right hand of the Father and reigns from there until all his enemies become His footstool, as we have seen from our study of the book of Acts so far and will continue to see as we get back to it soon.
 4. There is no power that can withstand the claims of the Kingdom of God, as Hebrews 12 says, for the Lord will shake heaven and earth that that which cannot be shaken may remain. Every antichrist will be thrown down, and every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God. This shaking is also described in this chapter and includes the forsaking of Israel because of their idolatry and wickedness, which Christ and the apostles also affirmed, although the covenant is confirmed to the remnant who fear God and hope in His promises.
 5. These things being said, it is now time to look at verse three.
- I. The Gospel is the fulfilling of the law. Fulfilled means **at least** several things:
- A. A prophecy is fulfilled when it comes to pass. This prophecy is fulfilled in the preaching of the Gospel. Acts 1:8: turn and read. Matt. 28:18-20 See also Mt 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.
 - B. A type is fulfilled when the reality is revealed: Hebrews 8:5.13

- C. A commandment is fulfilled when it is obeyed: Ro 13:8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. Ga 5:14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

II. The Gospel is the teachings of Jesus Christ.

- A. The gospel is thus said to be a going forth of the law from Jerusalem, for it is fulfilling of what Moses and the prophets wrote: See Luke 24:25-27; 44-49
- B. All the nations of the world were to be blessed from the word going out from Jerusalem. Which is recorded in the book of Acts. See Luke 24:25-27; 44-49
- C. 1 Corinthians 10:6-11 The law of Moses was not intended to stand alone, but to be interpreted by Christ. Moses serves as a foundation so that the teachings of Christ can be understood.
- D. We do not understand Moses until we are taught of Christ.
- E. We can make no beginning in obedience to God until we have faith in Christ.
- F. What are good works? See HC. Q91: What are good works?
- G. A91: Those only which proceed from true faith,[1] and are done according to the Law of God,[2] unto His glory,[3] and not such as rest on our own opinion [4] or the commandments of men.[5]
1. There are three positives: true faith [Rom 14:23;], the law, glory of God;
 - a. Faith that your works cannot make you a child of God;
 - b. The law: God's commandments which proceed from His nature: that we love Him and His image in man.
 - c. The glory of God" not to burnish our halo among men.
 2. There are two negatives: not on your own opinion; not on the commandments of men.

III. We begin the Gospel as little children, taking baby steps in the kingdom of God. He carries us in His bosom and teaches us to walk; He teaches us His law, which is another way of saying His truth. This is where we begin. In Christ we begin a new life, and reject the life of Adam, and begin the life of faith. I would outline these baby step in the kingdom of God. I would reference the H. C. 88-90 and especially 114 which appears after a consideration of the Ten Commandments.

A. Baby Steps

1. First Commandment. We worship the true God. This begins with faith in Jesus Christ as the only way to Him. This is the beginning of the Christian Faith, the turning from idols to serve the true and living God, existing in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We are not ashamed of Jesus Christ but confess Him before men. If you have not done this, then you are not yet a Christian
2. Second Commandment. We worship God in the inner man, truly from the heart, and not with vain show. We reject all images and idolatries which are vain show. Empty and vain. God is a spirit and those that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.
3. Third Commandment: We begin to put value on our words. We live in the presence of God, and are not to take His Name or Him lightly or in vain. Our promises

mean something and we begin to take them seriously. People learn that they can depend on what we say. This is the meaning of the Third Commandment.

4. Fourth Commandment. This first baby step is to attend church regularly and order your life so that you can attend faithfully, to hear the preaching of the word, keep the sacraments, give tithes and offerings and publicly call upon the Lord. This isn't all, but it is a start. This is a baby step in the Fourth Commandment. You will not do this until you get your time and your money in order and not just drift through life.
5. Fifth Commandment: Make up with your Mother and Father, if it is possible for you to do so, and begin to respect and obey those who have authority over you, in church and state.
6. Sixth Commandment: love your own and your neighbor's life. Do nothing to harm your own life or that of another. Develop a kindly attitude toward others.
7. Seventh Commandment: Do not join your body to anyone but your lawful spouse. Prepare yourself by marriage by living chastely.
8. Eighth Commandment: Do not steal your neighbor's goods or services. This is a baby step; then you can go on to not denying your goods and services to others.
9. Ninth Commandment: Protect your neighbor's reputation. Do not lie about him or for him. Be faithful and true. Do not expose him but build up his reputation. This is also to be considered in terms of the 3rd commandment. Speak evil of no man.
10. Tenth Commandment: Keep your heart. Do not meditate on sinful desires. Put them away from you.

B. There are many other things, and you will not walk perfectly even after many years, for God's commandments are exceeding broad. But these are beginnings, baby steps in a life of holiness and dedication to the kingdom of Christ.

Applications

But even these beginnings are blessed and true, and will build your morale in the kingdom of God and give you joy in Christ.

Two great errors:

1. To think that you cannot even begin; for you can, as the catechism confirms and confesses. You can begin, even though they be but stumbling steps. Remember that your steps are ordered of the Lord, though you fall you will not be utterly cast down; trust Him and begin to follow Him.
2. To think that because you take baby steps you have perfectly satisfied the Law; no we have only a beginning: "After you have done all that is commanded, say 'We are unprofitable servants, for we have done only that which we were commanded to do.'" God gets all the glory, we get all the blame for coming short.
3. We walk in faith, know that our works are not accepted in themselves, but through the blood and merit of Jesus Christ, our Savior. But they ARE accepted in Him, imperfect though they be. But we do not bury our talent with the excuse that what we do is not good enough. We delight in baby steps in our Children, and so does God in His.

I want to close with a reading from John Calvin, commenting on the marriage of Cana, when Christ performed the miracle of turning the water to wine, and John says that "11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." Calvin says:

"If they were *disciples*, they must already have possessed some faith; but as they had hitherto followed him with a faith which was not distinct and firm, they began at that time to devote themselves to him, so as to acknowledge him to be the Messiah, such as he had already been announced to them. The forbearance of Christ is great in reckoning as disciples those whose faith is so small. And indeed this doctrine extends generally to us all; for the faith which is now full grown had at first its infancy, nor is it so perfect in any as not to make it necessary that all to a man should make progress in *believing*. Thus, they who now *believed* may be said to begin to *believe*, so far as they daily make progress towards the end of their faith. Let those who have obtained the first-fruits of faith labor always to make progress." John 2.