

Fulfiller of The Law

We are almost at the end of our Big Old Tangent sermon series dealing with how the Old Testament finds its fulfillment in Christ and His Church. Today we see that Jesus fulfilled all the Jewish feasts. He fulfills the role of the Temple as the temple was the place where the Jewish people would go to offer sacrifices and get forgiveness, Jesus is the sacrifice and we now go to Him instead of the temple for forgiveness. Last week we saw that Jesus is the fulfiller of the Sabbath. Where the sabbath offered us physical rest one day a week, Christ offers us eternal rest from our efforts to try to earn our way into heaven. He is the One who has earned that for us.

Today we are going to look at how Jesus is the fulfiller of the moral law. So far, we have been dealing with everything that is ceremonial law. The moral law is the Ten Commandments. That is what leads to the need for the atoning sacrifice. Much like we saw with the law of the Sabbath, where Paul wrote that Sabbath was but a shadow of what was to come in Christ because Christ was the substance of the shadow. We see that same terminology used in Hebrews 10:1 where the author writes: "Since the Law has but a shadow of the good things to come, instead of the true form of these realities." The law, it has a shadow of the good things to come. What is meant by that? Imagine what life would be like if every person on this world followed the Ten Commandments. If everyone honored God, respected His name, did not use His name in vain; if everyone took a sabbath day of rest and devoted it to the Lord by worshipping Him. If every person honored their father and their mother, if there was no hatred, if there was no lust, there was no lying, there was no stealing, there was no coveting; what would life be like? I think your answer would be, that would be a little heaven on earth. We don't have that, do we? That's why it's just a shadow. We can see the Law and the good of the Law and the good things could come through the Law if we all followed it. The true form is what comes through Christ. That is life in heaven. The reality of living under the kept law, where we do not have any of the covetousness, or the lying, or the stealing, or the anger, hate, lust and disrespect of both man and God. So, there is the true form.

The author continues speaking of the Law; “It can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.” Think about what he’s saying, it makes total sense. These sacrifices are continually offered, but they are not sufficient. Otherwise you would stop. If it was a sufficient offering, you pay it once and there is no need to repeat it. Many of you might understand this from the standpoint of a mortgage; or a monthly payment. That tells you that you have got to make another one the next month, and next month, and next month. It’s not done. Whereas if you buy a house and you put down cash and you pay for it. It is paid in full; it is finished. It’s done. No more payments. That is the point he is making. Since there are continual sacrifices, these can’t be complete. They are not a full payment. Why were there continual sacrifices? Two reasons, the first one is that in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sin every year. God called for the continual sacrifices to remind the people every year that they were sinners, that they fell short of the glory of God and that they needed a savior. The other reason there was continual sacrifice is as the author tells us; “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” That is simply a rule of the created order. They are animals, we are created in the image of God. The payment of sin is death. The blood of a bull or the blood of a goat could in no way make payment for that which is created in the image of God.

And then the author to the Hebrews quotes King David. He says, “Consequently when Christ came into the world, He said, (this is where he quotes Psalm 40:6-8) ‘Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’” This is a unique psalm. It’s King David speaking as the Christ. King David was saying, ‘this is what Christ will say.’ And the author to the Hebrews is saying; ‘this is what Christ said.’ Sacrifices and offerings, you have not desired. God doesn’t desire these sacrifices. He takes no pleasure in the burnt offerings or in the sin offerings. What did He do, He prepared a body for His Son, Jesus; a human body that His Son would live in. What does Jesus say about that? ‘I have come to do your will, O God.’ He submits Himself to authority and to the desire and the pleasure of what God wants. Then He adds, “as it is written of Me in the scroll of the book.” The book is written in the singular. In this scripture, Jesus is saying; ‘as it is written of Me. The prophecy points to Me. The feasts point to Me. The Temple points to Me. The sabbath points to Me. Yes, even the Law points to Me.’ He, Jesus has come to do God’s will. There is no place nor desire for what the Law

provides. God doesn't want the sacrifices. He doesn't want the blood of goats. He sends us Christ, and Christ does away with all of this to do God's will.

In 1 Timothy 2:4, we see what God desires, what He takes pleasure in. I quote. "He desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." That is why the author to the Hebrews continues and says, "And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all.**" By the will of God, that He desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, by that will, Jesus came so that we can sanctified, set apart, once for all.

Now some people again will say, 'well that is just so obnoxiously arrogant and one sided.' But, is it true? The author to the Hebrews, its like he anticipates this, and he then just points out a simple fact. I quote; "Every priest stands daily at his service." What does he mean by that? The priest is standing because he is working. He is standing before the altar of incense offering his prayers on the sabbath. He is standing before the table of bread, re-arranging or putting the new bread there and taking the old bread away. After having baked the new bread and sprinkling frankincense on it and coming out of the holy place and doing the daily sacrifice. He is standing the whole time, he is working. What he says about Jesus is; "He (Christ) sat down at the right hand of God." You are not working if you are sitting. Again, it gives a whole new meaning to what Jesus said on the cross. "It is finished." He had finished doing the work, the will of God and so He ascended into heaven and He sits at the right hand of God. That is the significance of what we say when we recite the Apostles Creed or the Nicene Creed, we are saying, "Jesus finished the work once for all." The author to the Hebrews continues and says, "By a single offering, (His life on the cross) He has perfected for all time (all eternity) those who are being sanctified."

Again, remember what sanctified means, to set apart, or to make holy. What Christ did on the cross, is two-fold. First, He bore our sin and punishment, He took that on Himself. He took off His righteousness and He gives it to us. When Christ was alive, He totally fulfilled the ceremonial law. He totally fulfilled the moral law. Those things that we have broken. The result of us breaking it, sin and death; He took the result on Himself and gave to us, His action and His righteousness.

We are sanctified, set apart, made holy for a New Covenant. This is again where the author to the Hebrews quotes something he quoted back in chapter

eight. It's from Jeremiah 31:31-34. The author to the Hebrews points out, it's the Holy Spirit who bears witness to this new covenant. He does this by saying, "After those days (the days of the Messiah) I will put My laws on their hearts and write them on their minds." The law is written on our hearts, written on our minds by the power of the Holy Spirit. The law is internalized within us and now we desire to live it to the glory of God. It reminds me of Saint Paul who says, 'That which I want to do, I don't do and that which I don't want to do, I do.' Why is he saying it? Because the law is written on his heart. It's the Holy Spirit at work in him. He knows what he should do, and he desires to do it, but he is still a sinner and he falls short of the glory of God and so, that which he would do, at times he doesn't do and he feels bad about it. It's internalized. That which he wouldn't do, at times he does it and he is convicted by it because the law is now written in his heart. It is internalized and he desires to do it because he wants to bring glory to God. He wants to be a good person, I bet if I asked you right now, that every hand in this church would go up, how many of you want to be a good person? I think you all would say yes, I do. How many of you want to bring glory to God? I think all of you would say yes, I do. If I asked, how many of you are successful in doing that all the time? I think not a hand would go up because we are all like Saint Paul. We have been set apart for this New Covenant and we have the Holy Spirit in us, and He writes those laws on our hearts and our minds and they remind us that we are sinners. He also reminds us what is written in Jeremiah 31; "I will remember their sin and their lawless deeds no more." We know we are forgiven. More than that, he continues, "where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offerings."

When Christ is our savior, He is the sacrifice. He is the fulfiller of the law both in the good and the bad. In the good, He lived the law perfectly for us. In the bad, He took our sin on for us and died. Any doctrine that calls for a new temple or calls for a sacrifice, negates the very work of Christ. Christ is everything. He is fulfiller of the ceremonial laws concerning the feasts, the temple, the sabbath. He is also the complete fulfiller of the moral law, the Ten Commandments because He is our Savior. As our Savior, He took on the punishment of the Law and He gives to us His righteousness having fulfilled the Law for us. This is why we thank and praise Him, serve and obey Him because this is most certainly true.

In our Savior's Name, Amen