

Series: Isaiah Series 2023
Title: The Saving Commandment
Text: Is 42: 1-4
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Subject: The Saving Commandment

When men hear the word “commandment” they think of Mt Sinai and the law and their works. The commandments given at Sinai are given to shut our mouths in guilt.

But there is one commandment called “the holy commandment.” This commandment comes from God in Mt Zion. When God speaks this commandment into the heart it comes in power. This is the saving commandment

My prayer to God is that he would speak this commandment into your heart today. If you are a sinner lost and undone or if you are believer burdened by your sin, by the cares of this life, by trials, this I know, if God speaks this commandment into your heart today then

The things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of his glory and grace

Concerning Christ Jesus his Son, God commands.

Isaiah 42: 1: Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. 2: He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. 3: A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. 4: He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

This is the saving commandment. God holds up his Son, Christ Jesus, and command, “Behold my servant, whom I uphold.” Salvation is in a look. Like the children of Israel bitten by the serpents in the wilderness, when they looked to the serpent lifted up on a pole, they were healed. Christ was held up on the cross. It is by beholding Christ—by looking to Christ—by believing on Christ—that God imputes the righteousness of Christ to his people. Sinners saved by grace do not work to be made righteous. We believe unto righteousness (Rom 10: 10). This is the commandment God effectual speaks to make his child believe on Christ, “Behold my servant!”

THE SERVANT OF GOD

The Son of God is God, equal with the Father. But the Son of God took sinless flesh like unto God’s elect who he came to save. Representing the elect, Christ “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” (Php 2: 7). Christ Jesus is not just “a” servant of God he is “THE” servant of God.

Christ the servant God *upholds*. God the Father upheld him, strengthened him, as he walked this earth. But God upholds him in the sense that God set him forth. God upholds him in the sense that God lifted Christ up on the cross as the substitute of his people.

Romans 3: 25: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Holy God is so well-pleased with Christ and his finished work that he raised him to his right hand. Now, God the Father holds Christ up at his right hand, commanding, “*Behold my servant, whom I uphold!*” Christ highly exalted God by accomplishing the work the Father sent him to do.

Philippians 2: 9: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

THE PREEMINENT ELECT

God declares of Christ that he is *mine elect*. God the Father is pleased for his Son to have all preeminence (Col 1: 18). Even so Christ is the Preeminent elect of God. Poor wretched sinners have no idea that when they reject the truth that God elected a people unto salvation by his grace, they reject the very first Elect, Christ Jesus, himself!

God the Father first elected Christ. He chose Christ to manifest God’s Righteousness. God elected Christ to be God’s Righteousness. He chose Christ to be the Salvation of his people. Then God elected his people in Christ. God the Father first trusted Christ to save his people from our sins. It was God who first trusted Christ.

Ephesians 1: 11: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

God declares of Christ, he is *mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth*.

Like so many in religion today, the Pharisees were going about to establish their own righteousness. All their works they did to be seen of men. They kept asking Christ questions trying to get something with which to accuse him so they could justify themselves before men for not believing on him. They were saying to all, "Behold us, we are the servants of God!"

But God declares that he has one Servant who is the delight of his soul. It is Christ. "*Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth!*" Repeatedly, God spoke from heaven declaring this. At Christ's baptism,

Luke 3:22: And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

Christ took Peter and the others into the mount and there Moses and Elijah appeared. Peter wanted to build a monument to Moses, Elijah and Christ.

Matthew 17: 5: While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. [they hit their faces. Christ touched them and said, "fear not"]...8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

For those exalting themselves as God's servants may God speak this command so that you see no man, save the Lord Jesus only—"Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth... This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him"

THE ANOINTED OF GOD

The Lord Jesus alone is God's anointed. He is the Christ. He is the Messiah. The Lord Jesus alone is salvation. He is the one God anointed with the Holy Spirit to establish judgment for God's elect. God declares, "*I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*"

God the Father chose his Son to be the Christ before the world was made. He anointed the Son the Christ in eternity. Christ has always been the one Mediator between God and his fallen elect people. But at his baptism, when God put his Spirit upon the Lord Jesus, God publicly anointed him the Christ. The Lord Jesus declares what the Father said to him and what he sent him forth to accomplish.

Isaiah 49:3: And said unto me, Thou *art* my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified...6: And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE BELIEVER

God said, "*I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*" To *bring forth judgment* is to establish the law and justice of God in perfection. That is what Christ came to accomplish *for* his people. Not one fallen son of Adam could do that! The Lord Jesus alone is the Righteousness of God. He alone brought forth judgment to his elect. Christ alone is our Righteousness

False religion says that God's foreknowledge is God looking through time to see who would believe on him and serve him and that is who he chose. No, God declares at the end of chapter 42,

Isaiah 41: 28 For I beheld, and *there was* no man; even among them, and *there was* no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word. 29: Behold, they *are* all vanity; their works *are* nothing: their molten images *are* wind and confusion. 42: 1: Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

Christ alone accomplished judgment for his people. He did so as Man representing God's elect. Christ our Head did so by bearing the sin of his people. He established judgment by being made curse for us on the cross. Christ established judgment, manifesting the righteousness of God—how God is just and the Justifier of his people in and by Christ alone. The Lord Jesus honored the law and justified his people. That is why God is well-pleased with his servant! Look down a few verses,

Isaiah 42: 21: The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make *it* honourable.

What did it take for Christ to be the righteous servant of God with whom God is well-pleased?

Deuteronomy 10: 12: And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, 13: To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes,...

Christ declared in John 8: 29, “I do always those things that please him.” But of God’s elect, Christ says what he says of every sinner fallen in Adam. This is what God says of all whom God saves by grace, “Ye were the servants of sin” (Rom 6: 17). Holy God would not, could not, trust us to establish the law. We could not do it. He trusted all to his Son, Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 59: 16: And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

Christ accomplished the work! It is finished! He justified his people from our sins by his precious blood on the cross. “Behold God’s servant!” Behold him with the eye of faith and believe on him! Those he saves do not work to be righteous. We believe unto righteousness!

Romans 10: 1: Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2: For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3: For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4: For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. 5: For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. 6: But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*;) 7: Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8: But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11: For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

THE FAITHFUL PROPHET

But there is another work God entrusted to Christ. It is the work of preaching the gospel and establishing judgment in the heart of his elect.

God sent Christ to establish the gospel in the earth by giving his redeemed spiritual discernment in the heart. It is only by Christ establishing judgment in our heart that we behold Christ and believe on him as the only righteousness we have and the only righteousness we must have. God declares of Christ, “*He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.*”

Christ is the Perfect Preacher. He is the Prophet, Priest and King of his people. He did what he teaches his preachers to do. Christ is the righteousness of his preachers, even in our preaching. He fulfilled the office of Prophet in perfect righteousness, trusting the Father.

He did not cry, nor lift up, nor did he cause his voice to be heard in the street. This does not refer to the volume of his voice or the fact he preached publicly in the street. It means our Lord Jesus did not debate and wrangle with men. Christ did not exalt himself over others by striving and disputing and debating doctrine with men. He was not contentious. The Bishop did not boast of himself or of his doctrines and miracles to promote himself. He obeyed God his Father as the perfect righteous, faithful, holy Prophet of God. He simply proclaimed the word of God and trusted the Father to draw his elect unto him. He said,

John 7: 16: My doctrine is not mine but his that sent me...18: He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

John 6: 37: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38: For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me...44: No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45: It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

We see it when we look at where he fulfilled this prophecy. He fulfilled this prophecy throughout his public ministry. But in Matthew 12 the scripture declares he fulfilled it. After the Pharisees accused him of breaking the sabbath because he plucked corn and gave to his disciples—after he healed a man in the synagogue on the sabbath:

Matthew 12: 14: Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. 15: But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence:

He declared the word of God to them. But he did not strive with them. When he knew they took council to kill him, he withdrew.

Matthew 12: 15...and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; 16: And charged them that they should not make him known: 17: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 18: Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. 19: He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. 20:

A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. 21: And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

When he speaks of not breaking the bruised reed, not quenching the smoking flax, of course this applies to his longsuffering and tender dealing with his weak disciples. But Mr. Spurgeon applied it to the scribes and Pharisee's too. Christ could have broken them and snuffed them out in an instant. But he trusted the Father. So he withdrew from them and ministered to his elect who are the true bruised reeds and smoking flax who he came to seek and to save.

This was Christ's humility and meekness as the faithful Prophet sent of God. He trusted the Father in perfection representing his people. So he preached only the word of God. He prayed to the Father to bless the word. And he waited on the Father to draw his sheep to him in faith.

By this, Christ set judgment—discernment—in the hearts of his people. “*A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth*”—Matthew 12: 20 says “till he send forth judgment unto victory”; faith is the victory. “*And the isles shall wait for his law*”—Matthew 12: 21 says “And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.” This speaks of Christ setting judgment in the hearts of his people through the preaching of the gospel.

While he walked this earth, Christ preached the gospel in perfect righteous obedience to the Father. He dealt tenderly with his elect and accomplished setting judgment in the hearts of his people in truth. Now he is risen and all power is given to him in heaven and in earth. He sent Paul into the Gentile world and Christ continues to send his preachers. Christ's preachers follow his pattern. Our doctrine is not our own but we preach Christ as he commands. We pray to him to send the Spirit and bless the word. We wait on Christ to establish judgment in the heart through God-given faith. And Christ is our Righteousness even in our preaching because we have much sin mixed with our preaching. But Christ put it away. The same as Christ is the Perfection of all his people, so Christ is the righteousness of his preachers, even in our preaching.

Christ sends the Holy Spirit and sets judgment in the hearts of each one he redeemed. He sets true discernment in our heart by his mighty power. Christ said he would pray the Father and the Father would send the Holy Spirit. Christ declared that when the Comforter is come,

John 16: 18...he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9: Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10: Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11: Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

The Spirit of Christ convinces each one Christ redeemed that Christ is our Salvation. Christ sets judgment in our heart this way.

One, the Spirit convinces us *of sin*. He convinces us we believe not on Christ. The only way a sinner has no sin is in Christ. Only those who believe on Christ have the righteousness of Christ imputed to them.

Two, the Holy Spirit convinces those Christ redeemed *of righteousness*. He convinces us Christ is our Righteousness because God the Father raised Christ for our justification, declaring he is the Righteousness of his people. Christ's ascension to God's right hand where Christ sat down is the declaration that God is satisfied. The work is finished. Righteousness is established for his people only in and by Christ.

Three, the Holy Spirit convinces Christ's redeemed *of judgment*. He convinces us Christ settled our judgment on the cross. Christ crushed the devil's head on the cross. He did so by putting away our sins. He did so by making us the righteousness of God in him. The devil has nothing with which to accuse us to God. The judgment of God's elect was settled by Christ on the cross.

THE UNFAILING SERVANT

Be sure to get this word, “*He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.*” It means Christ did not fail to establish righteousness of his people on the cross and Christ does not fail to establish judgment in the hearts of each one he redeemed through the preaching of the gospel.

Each one Christ redeemed shall be brought to faith in Christ. It is certain because Christ did not fail in his work *for us*. On the cross, he declared God just and Justified each of his elect. Therefore, Christ shall not fail to send the gospel in truth and to call each and every one of his blood-bought children to faith in him.

Oh, may God speak this saving command into your heart now, “*Behold my Servant!*” Christ satisfied God's justice honoring his law in perfection. He justified his people. God is well-pleased with the person and work of Christ Jesus his Righteous Servant. “It pleased the LORD to bruise him...the pleasure of the LORD [prospered] in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities*” (Is 53: 10-11) Beholding, believing on Christ, God imputes Christ's righteousness unto us. Then what God says of Christ he says of every believer made righteous in him, “*Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him.*”

Amen!