1 Kings 3:4–15

**And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 5At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.” 6And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. 7And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. 8And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. 9Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?”**

**10It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. 11And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, 12behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. 13I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. 14And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”**

**15And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.**

Ephesians 1:3–14

**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.**

**11In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.**

Luke 2:40–52

**40And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.**

**41Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. 42And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. 43And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, 44but supposing him to be in the group they went a day’s journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, 45and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. 46After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.” 49And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” 50And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. 51And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.**

**52And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.**

Jesus, our Lord, revealed His glory in the midst of the teachers of the Word in the Temple.  He did not reveal Himself in His fullness, but only a brief glimpse, like a few rays of the sun slipping through the clouds.

This little Child, only twelve years old, amazed the experts of the Law with His understanding and answers.  Wisdom beyond His years already resided in Him.  For He has the knowledge of God the Father from antiquity, the discernment of eternity, since His beginnings are from of old, from everlasting.

Yet He did not always use this great wisdom.  In His state of humiliation, He hid His glory and concealed His deity beneath the form of a lowly servant, a man in our human flesh.

His wisdom, of course, is beyond the feebleness of us lowly sinners.  The teachers of the Law, who are well versed in Scripture and ought to recognize the Messiah, nevertheless did not see that here before them was the Son of God.  Even Mary and Joseph, who had the messages of angels and Simeon to reveal who Christ is, still did not understand that He had to be about His Father's business.

We sinners are likewise befuddled.  What is the Father's business?  We like to search our feelings, of all things, to determine God's business in our life.  Even if we turn to the Word to find God's business for us, we often turn to a law-oriented view of what God wants.

And it is true that God desires for us to obey His commandments.  But that is not the main thing He is concerned about.

God's primary business is grace.  His work is righteousness given freely to men.  His desire for us is that His Holy Spirit work faith in us through His Word, so that through the work of Christ we might be saved from sin, death, and hell.

Jesus, Himself, when asked what the Father’s business or work is, answered, the work of God is that you believe in the Son of Man, (Jesus,) who will give to you eternal life.

Simply put, God is in the business of forgiveness which is given to those who have faith in the Word. “Faith in the Word,” easily said but what about doing it? Do we act like The Word is true?  Are we attending to the business of the Father?  That means not following our feelings or man-made rules, but attending to His House and Word.

For Christ gave us a great example.  Did He need to go to His Father's house and listen to the teachers of the Law?  No.  He not only knows the Law perfectly, but He wrote the Law.  He created the teachers of the Law.  He is perfect in knowledge and holiness and in every way.  These teachers of the Law, even if they were not self-righteous Pharisees, were flawed, sin-filled, and prone to error, like all of us.  Why should Christ submit to their teaching?

Yet He did, as He submitted also to His flawed, sin-filled parents.

If He can do that, why do we have so much trouble?  The Father's primary business and desire for us is to be about His business, which means to receive His grace in His Word.  This grace-filled Word is always for our benefit, whether it is combined with water or with bread and wine, whether it is spoken as readings, Bible study, preaching, or holy absolution.  These things are the Father's business for us.

This is no great burden for us.  The burden was on Christ.  He had to obey perfectly, even in submitting to corrupt sinners.  He had to submit to the same suffering and death foretold for Him in the Scriptures.  He had to labor mightily for our benefit, carrying our burdens, being crushed for our iniquities.

Because He did all this, the Father's business for us is a light burden and an easy yoke.  Christ calls out to us, "I have earned it all for you!  Here it is!" and He points us to His Word and Sacraments.

But we sinners love to complicate matters.  We find excuses and reasons to stay away.  We look at this or that and think this doesn’t make me happy or that isn’t what I like.  That's what sinners do.  We turn God's free gifts into toil and difficulty again.

Christ knew this about us.  He knew how twisted our hearts are, every one of us.  He knew it even before He came and lived among us for roughly thirty years.  He sees our corruption and sin even better than we do, since He sees even into the depths of our soul that we hide from ourselves.

But He still embraces us as His brothers and sisters.  He is not ashamed to call Mary and Joseph His parents.  He is not ashamed to call His disciples His friends.  He assumed our flesh to show that He does not regard being Man a disgraceful thing.

He lived a human life to show that He is willing to share everything that we experience.  He became a little baby, and He grew up as any normal child.  He felt the struggles and temptations that we have, except that He did not sin.  He allowed Himself to slowly grow and learn as we do, although He is the Mighty God who needs neither growth nor learning.

He even experienced sickness and pain and death, just like us.  For us twisted sinners, Christ laid down His life.  He shattered death and stepped forth from His own grave, for us.  For He desires to live with us, not just for roughly thirty years, but for all eternity.

May God grant you the grace to keep your eyes fixed upon the greatest glory of Christ, which is His crucifixion, where the grace of God performed its mightiest work. AMEN