

We sing with Thanksgiving and joy of what Jesus Christ has done for us dying on the cross and Rising again for our salvation and now it's my joy to preach and celebrate together the the good work of Jesus Christ from Isaiah chapter 54 and after the sermon we'll get a chance to sing a little more and also to come to the table and celebrate what Christ has done As We Worship the Lord and as we give thanks for what Christ has done Church let's take a moment and bow together in prayer our great God and our father in Heaven we praise you that through the resurrection of Jesus Christ we have life we sing that you might be glorified we bow in worship and utter gratitude and joy for what you have done for us we owe everything to you God for you are our creator you gave us life we praise you for that and we thank you we owe you everything again and again Lord God because you called us to Salvation And you raised us up from being dead in sin to being alive to God in Christ Jesus for that we are immeasurably grateful in Wonder and joy and praise to you and so now in prayer Lord we gladly say we are yours do with us what you will say to us what you will say to us Lord do not let us make of ourselves what we want ourselves to be do not let us tell ourselves what we want to tell ourselves we say to you God In Prayer we are yours you make of us what you would have us to be and you speak to us what you would have us to hear you know our hearts are fickle and frail you know our minds will trick us with self-will and deception and so we ask in the purity of your spirit you would send conviction truth light love and faith we need your word to correct us we need your word to feed us bless the preaching of your word now for Jesus sake amen Isaiah chapter 54 is the celebration of what happened in Isaiah chapter 53. Isaiah chapter 53 is probably the most famous chapter in all of Isaiah because it's the clearest Old Testament explanation and explication of what Jesus did on the cross and then in Isaiah 54 and 55 what Christ did on the cross is now celebrated there's an unforgettable image of a feast in Isaiah chapter 55 and there are three Unforgettable images in Isaiah 54 that all flow from what Jesus Christ has done for us on the cross you see these three images are of a Barren wife who now has a huge family of uh a uh lonely wife who was temporarily rejected but who now is loved and then third of a city that was being storm tossed and almost broken down but now is beautified with jewels even in the foundations of her highways these images show us something that starts small and grows big these images show us something that is sad and rejected for a moment but that is happy and rejoicing forever Isaiah 54 reads like this sing O Barren one who did not bear Break Forth into singing and cry aloud you who have not been in labor for the children of the desolate one will be no more and will for the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married says the Lord enlarge the place of your tent and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out do not hold back lengthen your cords and strengthen your Stakes for you will spread abroad to the right and to the left and your Offspring will possess the Nations and will people the desolate cities fear not for you will not be ashamed be not confounded for you will not be disgraced for you will forget the shame of your Youth and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more for your maker is your husband the Lord of hosts is his name and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer the god of the whole earth he is called for the Lord has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit like a wife of Youth when she is cast off says your God for a brief moment I deserted you but with great compassion I will gather you an overflowing anger for a moment I hit my face from you but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you says the Lord your Redeemer this is like the days of Noah to me as I swore that the Waters of Noah should no more go over the Earth so I have sworn that I will not

be angry with you and will not rebuke you for the mountains May depart and the hills be removed but my steadfast love shall not depart from you and my Covenant of Peace shall not be removed says the Lord who has compassion on You O afflicted ones storm tossed and not comforted behold I will set your stones in antimony and lay your foundations with sapphires I will make your Pinnacles of Agate your Gates of carbuncles and all your walls of precious stones all your children shall be taught by the Lord and great shall be the Peace of your children in righteousness you shall be established you shall be far from oppression for you shall not fear and from Terror for it shall not come near you if anyone stirs up Strife it is not for me whoever stirs up Strife with you shall fall because of you behold I have created the Smith who blows the fire of coals and produces a weapon for its purpose I have also created the ravager to destroy but no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment this is the heritage of the Servants of the Lord and their Vindication from me declares the Lord you see these beautiful images that Cascade Upon Us in this chapter and it ends at the height of confidence and security and peace that no weapon formed against you can hurt you that you have this peace and security that your children will have this peace from God it ends on this high note of security that's because Isaiah 54 is a celebration of the reality of what Jesus has done for us which was explained in Isaiah 53. so we see these three beautiful images first a barren woman rejoicing over her growing family he begins by saying sing o Barren one who did not bear Break Forth into singing and cry aloud who have not been in labor for the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married and then he says in larger tent you're going to need a bigger house because you're going to have so many offspring the theme of barrenness for a woman is a huge theme in Scripture you could have a Bible trivia get two blank pieces of paper and see who can write down more names of stories in the Bible where they weren't expected to have kids or they had trouble having kids there's like so many of those stories in the Bible what is this theme of barrenness well without without going too far into it I think it's somewhat obvious but I also think that it's heavily overlooked when God makes the man and the woman and that is the selfish significant he makes a man and a woman with bodies designed a particular way he says to them what be Baron no he says to them be fruitful and multiply and from that physicality we have a a spiritual trajectory even that when Israel in the Old Testament followed the ways of the Lord she was fruitful and multiplied but when Israel went after the idols and the Molex she was barren and even the children she did have perished here's an overlooked truth about scripture sin leads to barrenness the way of The Godly is the way of fruitfulness even back to the physicality of it at the level of sexual sin the Bible uniquely points out that homosexual sin is a particularly depraved and wicked sin and it is utterly and completely barren forever this shouldn't be overlooked just because it's obvious sin is fruitless that's not insignificant in the biblical argument by God's design he creates male and female by God's design he creates Israel in the old Covenant by God's design he creates the church in the New Covenant and he says to the church be fruitful and multiply he says to the church lo I Am With You Always to enable you to be fruitful and multiply by making and baptizing more and more disciples the same way that he created Humanity the man and the woman he creates the new Humanity the church which is the bride of Christ which is designed to be fruitful and multiply and so just as God could make Baron Sarah more fruitful than fertile Hagar God this is now a New Covenant language God Ephesians 2 Ephesians 3 God takes Barren dead Sinners brings them to life and makes them so fruitful in

the church that now the world and the Angelic Powers look on the church and marvel at the power of God from dead in sin to so alive that we're making and training disciples in an Unstoppable way this is the imagery from Isaiah 54 verses 1 through 3 that's picked up throughout the New Testament to describe the mission of the church and larger tent let the curtains of your habitation be stretched out go as far as you can to the right and as far as you can to the left this is why we're having a missions conference this this is this is what we do exiled Israel exiled Israel exiled for her Barren Idol worshiping was fruitless and Mourning but with the completion of the servant's work Isaiah 53 and the promise of fruitfulness now we see how God helps the church to grow the cross of Jesus Christ reminds us that God has a plan to save an innumerable multitude of people from every nation and tribe and tongue he says to us Church be fruitful and multiply one of the most beautiful themes of the New Testament is the fruitfulness of the Gospel in the church it is in every single epistle listen how it's said in Colossians I'm just reading from a little part of Colossians chapter one we always thank God the father of our Lord Jesus Christ when we pray for you since we've heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love you have for all the saints because of the Hope laid up for you in heaven of this you've heard and the word of Truth The Gospel the gospel Colossians 1:6 the gospel which has come to you as it does in the whole world and bears fruit increasingly as it also does since the day you heard of it and continues so to do the fruitfulness of the Gospel this brings us to our vision of making and training disciples that this church would not be barren but that we would enlarge our tent that more Sinners would come to know Jesus so we talk about making and training disciples what does that mean well to making trained disciples you have to be a disciple so the first step is make sure that you believe the gospel and then once you believe the gospel the second step is to actively covenantally confess the gospel as a member of the church be here every week singing The Gospel and declaring the gospel and hearing the gospel declared get deeper into ABF relationships so the gospel can color and and equip your relationships with other gospel believers and then when you exit the church's rooftop doorway and you're out in the world you really just have to do two things you have to speak gospel words and Bible words people that don't know the Lord yet and then you have to back up those gospel words with like real gospel actions speaking is the audio but your generosity and your kindness and your Holiness and your love is the video and the world needs both of those things they need both of those things embodied in us that's how we make and train disciples who make and trained disciples the first image of the consequences of Christ's work on the cross Isaiah 53 is that Christ's people are no longer Barren but they Rejoice to Bear much fruit then there's a second picture and it's a touching picture of a lonely wife who was temporarily extraordinarily sad and temporarily for a brief time rejected but who is compassionately comforted and restored you see in um God says in verse 7 the Lord has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit and then he says in verse six then in verse 7 he says for a brief moment I deserted you he says in verse 8 in overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you but with Everlasting Love I have compassion on you says the Lord your Redeemer and then he Compares his wrath to the Wrath in the days of Noah that when he swore that that the Wrath and the days of Noah was mighty but the Wrath in the days of Noah ended I wonder if there's a play on words there even in verse 10 when he says the mountains May depart and the hills may be removed because in the in the flood narrative all of the mountains and the hills that they they disappeared but because the wrath of God subsides we

see them come back again they were still there because God's Wrath lessened as the Waters of the flood lessened what's he saying here he's saying to Israel you faced God's anger but now all you have from God's face is compassion faced God's judgment but now all you receive from God is Mercy and love the picture is of a dramatic reversal in a marriage a marriage looked like it was going to split up forever there was anger and separation but the couple was only temporarily estranged and separated now we look at that couple and they're back together secure in everlasting love the immediate picture is God saying to Israel when you went into the Captivity that was like a wife being temporarily separated from her husband but now you're restored God's judgment was hard and painful but it is actually called momentary and brief it's called momentary and brief I don't know about you but I think it's the same as me when I feel the hand of God against me it doesn't feel temporary and brief but he says here only for a brief moment I deserted you only for a brief moment it doesn't feel like it when you're in it but if you are saved why is the wrath of God or the Judgment of God or the anger so to speak of God or the fatherly discipline of God the different words have different different nuances why is it only temporary and the reason why is Isaiah 53 Verses 4 through 6 Isaiah 53 says surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows yet we esteemed him stricken Smitten by God and Afflicted he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with his wounds were healed all we like sheep have gone astray we've turned everyone to his own way but the lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all that's why in Isaiah 54 he can use the word brief and the word momentary that's why that's why God doesn't keep his anger against his Covenant people forever no it is soon over because God's covenant includes the Covenant of redemption the Covenant of propitiatory sacrifice where the body and the blood of the great Lamb of God took away that wrath church we can rejoice that God's anger against us can be called brief Jeremiah 3 verse 12 go and Proclaim these words toward the North and say return faithless Israel declares the Lord I will not look on you in Anger for I am merciful declares the Lord I will not be angry with you forever for You Are My People Jeremiah 3 12. there's a beautiful expression of it in psalm 103. Psalm 103 verse 8 church we can celebrate that God's mercy and Grace toward us is forever and his anger was not against us forever it says in Psalm 103 verse 8 the Lord is merciful and gracious slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love he will not always chide nor will he keep his anger forever he does not deal with us according to our sins nor repay us according to our iniquities for as high as the heavens are above the Earth so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear Him as far as the East is from the West so far does he remove our transgressions from us the father shows compassion to his children so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him church we can rejoice that God's compassion toward us in Salvation is forever and his anger against us was only for a moment his anger fell on our substitute the Lord Jesus Christ when we talk about the anger of God we talk about the wrath of God we're not talking about God losing control of himself in some sort of an emotional rage the Wrath and anger of God is the perfect righteous response of God's justice and righteousness to human sin the perfect and just response of God's righteous judgment against sin God is very angry against sin because sin destroys people and it destroys the the image of God it destroys the relationship that we're to have with God and so there's this contrast between the shortness of God's Wrath and the length of his compassion you see the contrast in Isaiah 54 because there's a word we'd call the word in front of the word an adjective an adjective that describes the next word that's coming up and

there's an adjective before the word compassion in verse 7 and there's an adjective before the word love in verse 8. you see them he says for a brief moment I deserted you but with great compassion I gather you in overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you you see it but with Everlasting Love I have compassion on you and so the emphasis in Isaiah 54 is that because of the work of the suffering servant Isaiah 53 we experience this endless compassion and love and forgiveness now let me take a moment and talk about because I talk to folks who are confused about this all the time let me take a moment and talk about the difference between God's anger judging sin and God's fatherly compassion which is discipline to his children these are two different things and we confuse them to our peril the wrath of God the anger of God the Judgment against sin for us was all poured out on our substitute the Lord Jesus Christ that's what Isaiah 53 teaches that's the fullness of atonement theology throughout the New Testament the Wrath and anger of God was fully satisfied and poured out on Jesus now there's a difference when as a person who is in Jesus when I sin the Bible says that God disciplines me for my sin or that God chastises me for my sin but it doesn't use the equivalent language exactly of anger and wrath being poured out can you you can see the difference this way I don't know if we have time to turn there and read them all if I could just summarize them and I want to do a fair summary uh Romans 1 and Hebrews 12. Romans 1 says that in God's Wrath he gives people who are not Christian over to their sin and Romans 1 says that the very demonstration of God's anger and Wrath is that he gives them over to their sin and he doesn't get between them and their sin Hebrews chapter 12. is completely different it says that for those who are Christian for those who are God's kids he uses the example of either you're a child or you're not I should pick it up and show it to you there in Hebrews 12 just listen to how he says it in verses 7 through 11. it is for discipline that you have to endure God is treating you as Sons for what son is there whom his father does not discipline if you're left without discipline in which you all have participated then you are illegitimate children and not Sons besides this we had Earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them shall we not much more be subject to the father of spirits and live for they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them but he disciplines us for our good that we may share his Holiness for the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it in Hebrews 12 precisely what he's saying there in Hebrews 12 verses 7 through 11 is that if God is your father if you're a Christian when you sin God refuses to give you over to your sin but God in his fatherly compassion disciplines corrects and re and rehabs you what Romans 1 says is that if you're not a Christian God gives you over you see the difference between these two things and so just one more pastoral word before we get to the third um picture in Isaiah 54. and I think Church we've reflected on this before when it comes to God revealing your sin and in a in his in his loving fatherly way disciplining you for your sin this is worth remembering this is worth remembering the only thing worse than God revealing your sin and dealing with it is if he does not remember that the only thing worse than God revealing your sin exposing your sin chastising disciplining correcting you for your sin that's painful that's painful the only thing worse than that is if he does not because if he never does this shows that you are not his child that's what that's what the the balance of the New Testament is teaching that's what Hebrews 12 is saying specifically so hear that if a woman who's a professing Christian and a member of the church who is given to regular drunkenness and nobody here knows about it the only thing worse than people finding out about it and helping her overcome

that is if nobody ever does a young man who says he's a Christian and he's deep into pornography but he just tells everybody everything's all right and it's no big deal it will be painful to have that exposed but but worse than that would be if it never was exposed this happens a husband who looks good on the outside but he brutally mistreats his family his kids or his wife or both of them it would be God's mercy and love to expose that and have that rebuked you see the only thing worse than God revealing your sin right now as if he doesn't if he leaves you in your sin unfronted and uncorrected that has Eternal tragedy to it if he corrects you and rebukes you then you can say like Isaiah 54 said I experienced your anger for a moment but I have your great compassion in Salvation it's a way to think about God's hand in our lives well there's a third and final picture and then we'll sing some more and we'll celebrate the table of the Lord but the third picture is of a poor City it says in verse 11 oh Afflicted and storm tossed there's a storm raging against this city and it seems like maybe even her walls are getting wobbly but what happens is she becomes beautified and she becomes secure forever so the picture changes from the first picture of a Barren wife to a family so big that we got to make a bigger tent and then the picture is of a wife who is momentarily and painfully cast out but then who's restored to her husband and the third picture is of a city that's Afflicted and storm tossed but soon that city is made beautiful and that city is made secure and we end with these wonderful promises that no weapon against that City will succeed and the heritage of that City will be secure forever he says in verse 11 I will behold I will set your stones in antimony it's an interesting Hebrew feature here it's antimony is a deep deep black powder and they would use it setting stones that were the most brilliant White and the the uh the contrast there in that mortar that antimony that was black and the sparkling white stones would showcase the beauty of the construction and the security of the construction and then he says in uh also in verse 11 all lay your foundations with sapphires the I don't like the translation Sapphire the the literal Hebrew is the uh I will lay your foundations with the lapis lazuli which is still a gem that you can purchase when we were on our winter holiday and we're at a like a outdoor craft fair in Florida and I and I I bought Amy a little a little um earring or jewelry that had lapis lazuli and at least the at least the lady who made it told me it was lapis instantly that's what she said that's what I paid for it's a it's a it's a gorgeous gorgeous blue purple color and you see how he says I'm gonna lay your foundations with that look we could see like we spent money on that stained glass up there because you all are gonna see it how many of you are impressed by the foundation of this building you didn't go see it God's like God's like when I save people I'm putting the jewels in the fat if he's putting the jewels in the foundation what do you think he's going to put in the stained glass and the steeple and what we see see Isaiah 54 is almost like the ultimate celebration of the fruit of what the suffering and the sorrow and The Grieving of the servant has done the depth of his grief is the depth of our joy the depth of the way he was marred beyond recognition is the height of the beauty of the city that God is building what a glorious vision of our future when you read Revelation 21 and the description of the Heavenly City there are huge swaths of it that are just cut and paste out of Isaiah 54 and other passages in Isaiah this was the the blueprints that were used in John's apocalyptic vision of that new city and notice that he says in verse 11 Church you'll be a little bit afflicted and a little bit storm tossed now but you will be secure forever you'll be a little bit storm tossed now but you will be at peace forever and perhaps the last word for our meditation is that word peace even if you don't know Hebrew you probably know the Hebrew word for peace right shalom verse 10. the

mountains May depart and the hills may be removed but my steadfast love shall not depart from you and my Covenant of peace shall not be removed Jesus says that the table is the New Covenant I believe that's the Covenant of Peace the Covenant of God's Shalom where God has said there is a way for sinful men and women to have eternal peace with God and that way is the body and the blood of the Lamb of God peace means peace with God not only that we're no longer at War but peace means back to the first image peace means fruitfulness peace doesn't just mean that we're no longer fighting but you could no longer be fighting and be Barren that's not what it means peace means fruitfulness Joy it is Isaiah who gives Jesus the title Prince of Peace this comes from Isaiah chapter 9 verse 6. listen again to Isaiah 53. and verse 5. Isaiah 53 and verse 5 but he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace that brought us peace this table the table of the Lord is the table where we celebrate that when his body was broken and his blood was shed this has brought us peace peace and security in God's Great compassion and God's great love let's pray Lord God let the Declaration of the gospel of peace Resound and heart searching present holy spirit of God let that gospel of peace take root in every heart that is yours and in every heart that gladly confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and holy spirit if there are hearts consciences Minds persons men and women here who have not confessed the lordship of Christ who have not received Jesus Christ as Lord and savior we pray that you would convert them soon even today we pray that those who are not in Christ would not take the body in the blood but would watch how those who are truly your children worship the savior Lord Jesus be glorified in the worship the faith and the Thanksgiving that we your church give you for the peace that you have brought us be glorified in the worship of your church amen