

"Christ is our best friend, and ere long will be our only friend. I pray God with all my heart that I may be weary of everything else but converse and communion with Him."
-John Owen

"No one else holds or has held the place in the heart of the world which Jesus holds. Other gods have been as devoutly worshipped; no other man has been so devoutly loved."
- John Knox

"Prayer is a way of life for true believers. It is how we breathe." John MacArthur

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

15. Q. What special act of providence did God exercise towards man in the estate wherein he was created?

A. When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him upon condition of perfect obedience: forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death (Gal. 3:12; Gen. 2:17).

16. Q. Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

A. Our first parents being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God (Gen. 3:6, 7, 8, 13; Eccles. 7:29).

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsj@msn.com

Website: www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com

Services:

Sunday Morning 11:00 AM

Sunday Evening 6:00 PM

Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

WCWV 92.9 FM – 8:00 AM Sunday Morning

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

Volume 8, No. 1

January 4, 2015

KNOWING THE JOYFUL SOUND

Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. Psalms 89:15

This precious beatitude is one that sweetly rings in the hearts of true believers. It is not merely that the sound is heard, but that it is known by them as to its meaning and substance. These are not infertile facts but are truly the matters pertaining to the knowledge of God and the substance conveyed therein. Indeed, Sweet are the promises, Kind is the Word, Dearer far than any message man ever heard.” Those sounds have become the cause of celebration to every regenerate heart.

The “joyful sound” that is referenced in this text seems to be pointing to the trumpets sounded at the Jewish feasts. In particular the time of Jubilee may have been in view. That was the time of release from debts and the liberating of many in Israel from various situations. *Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. Leviticus 25:9.* Many have taken this to mean the sounding forth of the Gospel. It would indicate rather that they were familiar with the occasions as well as the significance of the sounds issued forth. The challenge to be made to us is the test as to what it is that sparks joy in the hearts of believers. It was observed by Alexander MacLaren that the trumpets so referenced were announcing the presence of God in their midst. We quote him thusly, “So that this exclamation is equivalent to ‘Oh! how blessed are the people who are sure that they

have God with them!’ and who, being sure, bow before Him in loving worship. It is to be further noticed that the subsequent words of the text state the first element which it indicates of that blessedness of a devout life, ‘They shall walk, O Lord! in the light of Thy countenance.’”

There is no doubt that it is the “glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God...” that shines forth and penetrates the hearts of undeserving sinners. There is joy beyond measure experienced as one hopelessly mired in sin is raised to walk in the newness of life. Furthermore, such a person comes to the terms of eternal life and rejoices in knowing. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.* The message that was sounded forth as the only hope and a call to repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ now so becomes to them the substance confirmed by the presence of God Himself, in Christ Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is nor a mere profession of faith; it is rather the presence of the Lord in their lives and the attendant joy that confirms eternal salvation.

This joyful sound is that which resonates in the heart of a believer whenever and wherever it is heard. It is nothing less than praise unto our God. *And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. Psalms 40:3.* It is the expression of joy sounded forth by others who know it. Who can be unmoved at the

witness of one first expressing faith in Christ our Lord, knowing that the Shepherd has rescued another of His sheep? It is the sound that calls one's attention to the Lord and the wonders of His person and thus the greatness of His salvation. The Old Testament saints rejoiced at the presence of the Lord, His protection and the blessings received at His hand. Those of true faith rejoiced at the fact that "There is forgiveness with thee." They are made partakers with Christ of the "joy that was set before Him" and for which cause He "endured the cross, despising the shame." God glorified and salvation accomplished is the "joyful sound" and by it we know that truly He is "God with us!"

It is a joyful sound in that with the presence of God we may be assured that love has prevailed, mercy has been rendered and Grace reigns where once death seemed to prevail. It is most joyful in that in these things God had chosen to bring glory to His name. The joyful sound of the presence of God reminds us that there is peace, pardon and forgiveness where there was once conflict, condemnation and judgment. These things have been made effectual to those who know the "joyful sound" by the Holy Spirit and, again, it is the presence of God that heralds these things to we who

believe. Job's question about the hypocrite was: *Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God? Job 27:10.* The Psalmist declared: *I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. Psalms 40:8.* The Gospel declares the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ and it is Christ in you that is "the Hope of glory."

There is no joy to be had apart from the presence of God. In the presence of God all is joy and there is absolute recognition to all that declares Him. To walk in the light of His countenance is to know. This is not the mere assimilation of facts about the Lord. It is that which announces and confirms His presence to our minds and especially our hearts. The world cannot abide the presence of the Lord for they are "weighed in the balances and found wanting." Those who "know the joyful sound" are happy (blessed) indeed and in truth. His sheep hear His voice and it is truly a joyful sound. They respond to His voice in that they follow Him. They delight to be led "in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

O that we might with the Psalmist declare: *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Psalms 16:11. bh*

PEACE

—Matthew 5:9—

Several years ago I heard a woman testify about her relationship with her husband. She told of several years of conflict which eventually turned to silence. There came the point where neither party communicated anymore. They didn't yell, they didn't fight, they didn't talk; they just didn't care. She described the marriage as being dead.

To any who would define "peace" as the absence of conflict, I would say, "Read the first paragraph I just wrote up there."

Absence of conflict is not peace. Absence of conflict can often mean nothing more than a Cold War. Anyone over the age of fifty knows exactly what I'm talking about. Peace is aggressive. It is that which seeks restoration, communication, and fellowship. It seeks good will toward men and makes great effort to initiate a relationship that was once severed. It appeases anger and condemnation. True peace comes only from God.

Unfortunately for mankind, peace left the building long ago. From the moment Adam fell, his posterity has been at war with God. As a result of sin, mankind is rebellious and God is angered. The mere fact that a man can go into his bedroom on a quiet afternoon in the safety of his own home to take a nap does not mean in any sense that he is at peace with God. Just because he can reflect on his thoughts in a solitary moment does nothing to help his situation, either. In truth it only worsens his estate, for the natural man gives no thought, no reflection, no effort whatsoever toward gratefulness to the God who made him. To the contrary, any contemplation at all concerning the God of the universe is either misguided or utterly abhorrent.

If someone's going to make peace, it will be God, and all those in Christ are thankful He has. – Paul Osborne, Pastor in Lima, Ohio



"The happiness of the creature consists in rejoicing in God, by which also God is magnified and exalted" -- Jonathan Edwards

The Happiest People in the World

"The happiest people in this world are those who make the Bible the rule of their lives. They read their Bibles often. They believe what the Bible says. They love that Savior, Jesus Christ, of whom the Bible speaks. They try to obey what the Bible commands. None are so happy as these people. They cannot prevent sickness and trouble from coming to them at times. But they learn from the Bible to bear them patiently. Children, if you would get through this world happily, make the Bible your best friend."

~ J.C. Ryle

Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.—1 Thessalonians 1:4.

MANY persons want to know their election before they look to Christ, but they cannot learn it thus, it is only to be discovered by "looking unto Jesus." If you desire to ascertain your own election;—after the following manner, shall you assure your heart before God. Do you feel yourself to be a lost, guilty sinner? go straightway to the cross of Christ, and tell Jesus so, and tell Him that you have read in the Bible, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Tell Him that He has said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Look to Jesus and believe on Him, and you shall make proof of your election directly, for so surely as thou believest, thou art elect. If you will give yourself wholly up to Christ and trust Him, then you are one of God's chosen ones; but if you stop and say, "I want to know first whether I am elect," you ask you know not what. Go to Jesus, be you never so guilty, just as you are. Leave all curious inquiry about election alone. Go straight to Christ and hide in His wounds, and you shall know your election. The assurance of the Holy Spirit shall be given to you, so that you shall be able to say, "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to Him." Christ was at the everlasting council: He can tell you whether you were chosen or not; but you cannot find it out in any other way. Go and put your trust in Him, and His answer will be—"I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." There will be no doubt about His having chosen you, when you have chosen Him.

"Sons we are through God's election, Who in Jesus Christ believe." C. H. Spurgeon