

If you desire...

a useful life, a pleasant old age, a comfortable death, a blissful immortality— believe God, trust to His grace, rely on His Son.

Rely on . . .

God alone as your Father, Christ alone as your Redeemer, the Holy Spirit alone as your Comforter. William Plumer

All of us would be wiser if we would resolve never to put people down, except on our prayer lists. D. A. Carson

## 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)*

75. Q. Which is the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery (Ex. 20:14).

76. Q. What is required in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment requireth the preservation of our own and our neighbors chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior (1 Cor. 7:2, 3, 5, 34, 36; Col. 4:6; 1 Pet. 3:2).

77. Q. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions (Mt. 15:19, 5:28; Eph. 5:3, 4).

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#### 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

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### THE UNIVERSAL COMMAND TO REPENT

*And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Acts 17:30*

The apostle Paul in his farewell to the Ephesian elders reminded them of the fact that as he had taught them in every place a central theme had always been “repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” From such precedents as this emphasis by the apostle and for that matter the emphasis of our Lord in his earthly ministry the preaching of repentance is essential. We are reminded that Jesus’ message began with “Repent ye and believe the gospel.” His final instructions to the apostles included, *And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Luke 24:47.* The ministry of the Apostles was to begin at Jerusalem but the mandate was universal. The faithful Paul would echo our Lord’s commission in the Greek city of Athens.

We would be reminded of the extensive testimony to the rebellious men that Paul encountered at Athens. It was such that Luke records that Paul’s spirit “was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.” In quoting several ancient writers John Gill related that they had an altar for Mercy, another for Shame, another for Fame, and another for Desire. He quoted one as saying that “one may more easily find a god than a man,” in Athens. While idolatry has always been a universal matter, it seemed to be most prolific there and Paul used his time to challenge the Athenian idolatry with the truth of the one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The image dedicated to the unknown god provided him

with a point from which to begin his discourse. It would end with the universal command to repent of such affronts to God.

Not only do we witness a dilution of the preaching of repentance in much of popular religion but also a failure to identify idolatry. It is clearly addressed in the first three commandments of the Decalogue and is implied in the rest of them. In that the opening declaration was, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” we should identify it as that most hated and condemned by God. In the fall we witness that Adam took the word of the god of this world over that of God and so sin originated and is manifested in submission to all sorts of idols. Our Lord characterized the state of men and their submission to idols in declaring: *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Matthew 6:24.* We note that it is not just a matter of serving God or mammon – it is that one is hated and the other is loved. The words of our Lord were powerful and emphatic in His answer to the tempter: *Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Matthew 4:10.*

It is obvious that the declaration of the universal command of God to repent was directly referenced to the prolific idolatry Paul witnessed. Such repentance entails the denial of all things that would compromise in any way full

submission to the sovereign rule of God. The fact that this ignorance was for a time “winked at” by God does not in any way lessen the seriousness of it or the culpability of those so engaged. They were responsible to God on the basis of all that He had revealed of Himself to them. It is interesting that they would personify the things that were of most importance to them and so they served. It was that God had allowed them to pursue their sinful ways without specifically calling it out as He was now doing through Paul.

Idolatry is insidious in its nature and down through the centuries men have been entrapped, entangled and enslaved by their idols. The intent has always been to place something else before God. Salvation is thus characterized in Paul's reminder to the Thessalonians: *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; 1 Thessalonians 1:9.* Everybody is serving something or someone and so repentance includes turning from that to serving God in Christ. So it is that we witness the tendency in the “old nature” and men in general to pursue the dictates of sinful pride (all pride is sinful) and so direct their lives accordingly. Covetousness is identified to the Colossians as idolatry. While the idols may not be carved out

of stone or wood they are identified as that which demands precedence over the worship and service of God. We must be assured that these things are no longer “winked at” by God. He has forcefully called it out in what He did to Christ.

In the next verse, Paul would call out the assurance of the demand for repentance in that He sent His Son to the cross and then raised Him from the dead thus declaring the only means of acceptance with God. The message was rejected by them as it is by many today. But, that message is precious received, by the grace of God in the hearts of many. God has “also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” Repentance is that grace given whereby we are enabled to be grieved over sin and sinfulness and to turn from the things (idolatry) that characterized that way of life. In true repentance we are enabled to see in what was done to Christ the offensiveness of sin to God. It is further that we are turned unconditionally and exclusively to serve God and to worship Him only! Repentance precious takes us to where forgiveness and fellowship with Him in Christ is our way of life.

*Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen. 1 John 5:21.* Make no mistake, “God commandeth all men everywhere to repent. *bhs*

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Jonathan Edwards did not believe that men are made fully sensible of their misery until they see their just desert of hell. If, deep in his heart, a man does not really believe he deserves to go to hell, then he has not truly seen his sins, nor been deeply convicted of them. “Now a man cannot be said to be thoroughly sensible of his guilt, till he is sensible that he deserves hell.”

O Lord, I have heard a good word inviting me to look away to Thee and be satisfied. My heart longs to respond, but sin has clouded my vision till I see Thee but dimly. Be pleased to cleanse me in Thine own precious blood, and make me inwardly pure, so that I may with unveiled eyes gaze upon Thee all the days of my earthly pilgrimage. Then shall I be prepared to behold Thee in full splendor in the day when Thou shalt appear to be glorified in Thy saints and admired in all them that believe. Amen.

A. W. Tozer in *The Pursuit of God*

## CONTEMPORARY PULPITS

Much of what now emanates from contemporary pulpits would not have been recognized by either Alexander or Baxter or Sangster as being anywhere close to the kind of expository preaching that is Bible-based, Christ-focused, and life-changing—the kind of preaching that is marked by doctrinal clarity, a sense of gravity, and convincing argument. We have instead become far too familiar with preaching that pays scant attention to the Bible, is self-focused, and consequently is capable of only the most superficial impact upon the lives of listeners. Worse still, large sections of the church are oblivious to the fact that they are being administered a placebo rather than the medicine they need. They are satisfied with the feeling that it has done them some good, a feeling that disguises the seriousness of the situation. In the absence of bread the population grows accustomed to cake! Pulpits are for preachers. We build stages for performers. Alistair Begg

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### The Overshadowing Personal Deliverance

I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. — Jeremiah 1:8

God promised Jeremiah that He would deliver him personally – "Thy life will I give unto thee for a prey." That is all God promises His children. Wherever God sends us, He will guard our lives. Our personal property and possessions are a matter of indifference, we have to sit loosely to all those things; if we do not, there will be panic and heartbreak and distress. That is the inwardness of the overshadowing of personal deliverance.

The Sermon on the Mount indicates that when we are on Jesus Christ's errands, there is no time to stand up for ourselves. Jesus says, in effect, Do not be bothered with whether you are being justly dealt with or not. To look for justice is a sign of deflection from devotion to Him. Never look for justice in this world, but never cease to give it. If we look for justice, we will begin to grouse and to indulge in the discontent of self-pity – Why should I be treated like this? If we are devoted to Jesus Christ we have nothing to do with what we meet, whether it is just or unjust. Jesus says – Go steadily on with what I have told you to do and I will guard your life. If you try to guard it yourself, you remove yourself from My deliverance. The most devout among us become atheistic in this connection; we do not believe God, we enthrone common sense and tack the name of God on to it. We do lean to our own understanding, instead of trusting God with all our hearts. Oswald Chambers

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Only if you are willing to pray sincerely for God's will to be done and are willing to live the life apportioned to you will you see the breathtaking view of God that he wants you to have, through the windows he has placed in your life. You cannot always live on the mountaintop, but when you walk through the valley, the memory of the view from the mountain will sustain you and give you the strength to carry you through.

Ravi Zacharias in *The Grand Weaver*

It is an old truism that only the examined life is worth living. If you do not take time to examine your own heart, mind, and conscience from time to time, in the light of God's Word, and deal with what you find, you will become encrusted with the barnacles of destructive self-righteousness. D. A. Carson