

Sadly, its self-seeking and self-glorifying mentality has crept into the church, and even the gospel itself has been subjected to its influence. For example sin is often defined by how it affects man, not how it dishonors God. Salvation is often presented as a means of receiving what Christ offers, not a mandate to obey what He commands. Many modern-day evangelists have reduced the gospel to little more than a formula by which people can live a happy and more fulfilling life. The focus has shifted from God's glory to man's benefit. 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)

102. Q. What is the Lord's supper?

A. The Lord's supper is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ; wherein by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to his appointment, his death is shown forth, and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace (Mt. 26:26, 27, 28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 10:16).

103. Q. Who are the proper subjects of this ordinance?

A. They who have been baptized upon a personal profession of their faith in Jesus Christ, and repentance from dead works (Acts 2:41, 42).

104. Q. What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's supper?

A. It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body (1 Cor. 11:28, 29), of their faith to feed upon him (2 Cor. 13:5), of their repentance (1 Cor. 11:31), love (1 Cor. 10:16, 17), and new obedience (1 Cor. 5:7, 8), lest coming unworthily they eat and drink judgment to themselves (1 Cor. 11:28, 29).

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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. 40

October 4, 2015

DIVINE ABILITY DECLARED

Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.
Isaiah 59:1-2

None would dare to speak in a disparaging way in reference to the wonderful truths revealed about God. Some would complain of His actions asking such questions as “how could He allow certain things to happen.” Others might express the desire for a more preferable outcome with regard to what they have desired and even asked of God. A Babylonian King declared: *And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? Daniel 4:35.* But, it is often as is declared by the human proverb, “actions speak louder than words.”

There seems to be a clear implication here of things that would bring reproach upon God. The exhortation here declares that a lack of ability both to save and to hear was implied. It is not that this is what the people said so much as this is the analysis given to their actions. So then, the command to “Behold!” is understood as a rebuke and a refutation of that charge. It would seem that this people had continued with their religious activity and their prayers. They had questioned before a lack of response on the part of the Lord in saying: *Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. Isaiah 58:3.* The Lord would ask the question in

response, “Is this the fast that I have chosen?” In this way the Lord called out the evident miscarriage of both their ceremonies and their motives. The problem is identified here and it was not because of any lack of ability with the Lord.

We often marvel as the plan and purpose of God is unfolded down through the ages. True believers go with confidence that the “Judge of all the earth will do right” and that His glorious purposes with fully ripen and come to the intended fruition. We rejoice at the choice of God and understand that it is His to make: “The Lord has made all things for Himself: yea even the wicked for the day of evil.” Such revelation of truth was never intended to bring about resignation and acceptance with indifference in His people. How often do we hear the words “it is all according to His purpose” as a way separating from any sense of accountability? We rejoice in the knowledge of the absolute sovereignty of God. It is revealed, however, that in the matter of sin and the reaction of men that it is they who are culpable and not God. The consigning of any to hell shall never be attributed to a failure in God. While it will be according to purpose, it will be because of sinfulness, rebellion and unrepentant sin in those who perish.

The issue in this passage is twofold. First we would note that the ability lies with the Lord both to save and to hear. But, secondly it is

declared that because of their iniquities He willed not to hear. The prophet declared: *"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look on iniquity..."* Jeremiah lamented thusly: *Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through. Lamentations 3:44.* Later in this book He would be clearly identified as fully capable: *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Isaiah 63:1.* And of this precious fact we are again reminded in: *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:25.*

It is with broken hearts that we observe the decline of our nation's standing, her integrity and the collapse of her moral framework. Yet, it would seem that truly "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." There is no lack of religious fervor to be found, even in the midst of rebellion against God and a determination to forget God. We would note in the context of this passage, both before and after it, that sins and sinfulness are identified in the midst of their religious activities. We witness in our land the

proliferation of "mega-churches," a preponderance of programs and systems and yet the slide continues. True believers have resorted to desperate measures in desperate times. Jacob desperately clung to the Angel knowing that his only hope was in his grasp. Paul in writing to Timothy exhorted him to "lay hold on eternal life." The message is not one to the world at large. We know of what it is that they consist. The message here is to the Lord's people. And so, *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14.* In the book of Haggai the challenge is: *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Haggai 1:4-5.*

We cling to orthodoxy with one hand and the things of this world with the other. The warning in this text and even now is clear – it is our sins that have separated between us and God. If there is hope for this land it will be found in "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" among the Lord's people. *bhs*

A Meditation on 2 Tim. 2:10 --Dr. James White.

For this reason I endure all things for the sake of the elect, so that they also might experience the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, and with it, eternal glory. (2 Timothy 2:10 - translation by Dr. James White)

The context is important. 2 Timothy is Paul's farewell letter to Timothy. You don't waste words when writing your farewell to a dearly beloved son in the faith. He is encouraging Timothy to be strong. He calls Timothy to "share in suffering" with him (2:3), to compete, work hard, and remember Jesus Christ. Then, in verse 9, he mentions his own suffering as a criminal for the gospel. This is the context lying behind Paul's statement that he "endures." Endures what? Everything. All the opposition and attacks and beatings and imprisonment and long days of toil and labor--he endured it all for what reason? Oh, surely, we could say "the glory of God," but that isn't Paul's answer here. Instead, he says he endures all of this "for the sake of the elect." Many may wish this term did not appear in Scripture, but it is right there - "the elect," "the chosen ones." Paul uses the same term in

Romans 8:33 "Who will bring a charge against God's elect?", and significantly in Colossians 3:12: "So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Notice that Paul refers to the professing believers in Colossae as "those who have been chosen of God." Not those who chose God (they did that, but they did so as a result of being chosen by Him: the Christian gospel is God-centered, not man-centered!). It is important to see the source of the "choosing" in election here: "chosen of God." God chooses. God disposes. God is sovereign in this matter.

And so back in 2 Timothy 2:10, Paul endures the sufferings of his apostleship "for the sake of the elect," but the reason he does so should not be missed, "so that they also might experience the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, and with it, eternal glory." Paul sees his sufferings, his ministry, his tireless work, as means God has used to bring His elect to salvation. As I have said many times, God ordains the ends as well as the means. Preaching, teaching, ministering, defending the faith--all are means used by God to bring His elect to salvation. Just a few more quick notes:

1) Why preach if the identity and number of elect was fixed in eternity? Arminians ask this all the time. Because it is our glorious privilege to be used of God in His service as the means by which He brings His elect unto Himself! We who have heard the Master's call and been raised from spiritual death should long to be used of God to bring others into His kingdom, just as He used those in the faith before us to bring us the life-giving message of the gospel.

2) The interface of the divine decree ("the elect" here clearly refers to a specific people, chosen by God, not merely "foreseen down the corridors of time") with its outworking in time (seen in Paul's activity and suffering) is seen. Is God dependent upon Paul? Surely not in the eternal perspective of His decree. But we cannot "see" that decree. We have God's prescriptive will plainly revealed to us: preach the gospel to every person! Fight the good fight! Endure persecution as a slave of Jesus Christ! We know God will save His elect, and we know those who truly respond to our message do so only by grace. This gives us boldness to proclaim God's command to repent to all men everywhere.

3) The elect come to Christ. Almost every passage that speaks of the gospel's specificity in the New Testament likewise denies the concept of inclusivism or pluralism. The salvation the elect obtain is "in Christ Jesus" and in Him alone. It is simply ridiculous to think that Paul includes in this the idea of some kind of "secret, ignorant disciple who clings to falsehood but is really in Christ anyway." Such is purely wishful thinking on the part of modern neo-evangelicals who are ashamed of the exclusivity of the claims of Christ.

Uncover and Confess Sin -- He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. (Proverbs 28:13) Here is the way of mercy for a guilty and repenting sinner. He must cease from the habit of covering sin. This is attempted by falsehood, which denies sin; by hypocrisy, which conceals it; by boasting, which justifies it; and by loud profession, which tries to make amends for it. The sinner's business is to confess and forsake. The two must go together. Confession must be honestly made to the Lord Himself, and it must include within itself acknowledgment of the wrong, sense of its evil, and abhorrence of it. We must not throw the fault upon others, nor blame circumstances, nor plead natural weakness. We must make a clean breast of it and plead guilty to the indictment. There can be no mercy till this is done. Furthermore, we must forsake the evil; having owned our fault, we must disown all present and future intent to abide in it. We cannot remain in rebellion and yet dwell with the King's majesty. The habit of evil must be quitted, together with all places, companions, pursuits, and books which might lead us astray. Not for confession, nor for reformation, but in connection with them we find pardon by faith in the blood of Jesus. C. H. Spurgeon *Faith's Checkbook*