

God's attributes -- (Stephen Charnock, "The Attributes of God")

Power is God's hand or arm. Omniscience is God's eye. Mercy is God's heart. Eternity is God's duration. Holiness is God's beauty.

Without holiness . . . His patience would be an indulgence to sin, His mercy would be a sentimental fondness, His wrath would be a madness, His power would be a tyranny, His wisdom would be an unworthy subtlety.

Holiness gives balance to all of God's attributes.

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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105. Q. What is prayer?

A. Prayer is an offering up our desires to God (Ps. 62:8), by the assistance of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26), for things agreeable to his will (1 Jn. 5:14; Rom. 8:27), in the name of Christ (Jn. 16:23), believing (Mt. 21:22; James 1:6), with confession of our sins (Ps. 32:5, 6; Dan. 9:4), and thankful acknowledgments of his mercies (Ph. 4:6).

106. Q. What rule hath God given for our direction in prayer?

A. The whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer (1 Jn. 5:14); but the special rule of direction is that prayer which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called the Lord's prayer (Mt. 6:9-13; with Lk. 11:2-4).

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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

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THE COMELINESS OF PRAISE

Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. Psalms 147:1

Praise is recommended to us throughout the Word of God and especially is this so in the Psalms. We could perceive of praise as a duty and we would not be in error. Like so many other things that are incumbent upon believers the exhortation to praise reaches a higher plane than mere duty in their hearts. There is no such thing as a believer who is not also a worshiper of the one True God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. It is with this in mind that we note here three reasons for praise. In that it is an inspired spiritual exhortation we may be assured that “it is good.” In the consideration of God of His own beauty and perfection, “it is pleasant.” And, in that the design of God is that we should love and enjoy Him forever, “it is comely.” By these things we understand that praise is rendered up out of a deep experience of the being of God and so we may be “caught up” in this delightful activity. It is also that which may be observed by others even if it is not understood by all.

In seeking to compliment the attire of another one may be heard to say, “I like your outfit.” To which the response may be, “Thank you. It was a gift from someone special to me. It is very comfortable.” To which may be added, “It sure looks good on you.” It was good and comfortable to the wearer and appeared “comely” to the observer. We are enjoined by the Apostle to “put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Having done so, the appearance could only be fitting if indeed, Christ is in you, the hope of glory. So it is that elsewhere, the Psalmist would declare: *Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for*

praise is comely for the upright. Psalms 33:1. In general we might conclude that Christianity should be good, should be pleasing to both God and us and it should look good on us.

What is it that makes true praise comely? We have often observed that “form of godliness that denies the power thereof.” It is a superficial religion devoid of spiritual evidence. It is suited to the pride of man and his own determination to exalt himself above God. It is the way of the hypocrite whose voice does not match well with the mask he projects before him. Missing is the humility that characterizes the people of God. Missing is the complete submission to the Lordship of Christ Jesus our Lord in both word and deed. Such are glaringly deficient in those gifts derived from the very nature of Christ. But, above all is the identity with Christ wherein it was said, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...” The humility that took Christ to the cross in perfect obedience, making Himself of no reputation is to be evident in all who would come unto God by Him. This humility is the base on which true worship stands and from which true praise emanates.

We read of the comeliness of Christ in the matter of salvation: *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Hebrews 2:10.* We would focus on the words “became Him!” We must be careful to note that the claim registered here concerning Him excludes all others from any

contribution to the matter of salvation. And so, all the assertions of men as to the things they must do just do not look good on them. It became Him to qualify and deliver up a people to God and to present Him with a Kingdom of the redeemed at last. No other could have presented with perfect righteousness, offered Himself in the stead of others, successfully bear the punishment due them and emerge in total victory over death, hell and the grave. It “became Him” alone.

The writer of Hebrews calls attention to an important aspect of praise in that he calls it a sacrifice. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. Hebrews 13:15.* While we do not understand this to be a matter of efficacy with regard to salvation, it is characteristic of the true praise of believers. The concept of believing sacrifice is the imitation of Christ wherein He was self-effacing (no reputation). In true praise there is no vestige of personal pride in the one offering

it. There is a total acknowledgement of the solitary worthiness of the object. Expressions of love, adoration and acknowledgment of all that is true about God and His salvation wrought in Christ looks good and fits well on those who have no pretensions of any self-worth.

Praise is good: *It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: Psalms 92:1.* It is pleasant: *Praise the LORD; for the LORD is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant. Psalms 135:3.* And, it is comely. John Gill wrote: “Praise is comely: is due unto the Lord, and becomes His people to give it to him; it is but their reasonable service, and a beautiful and lovely sight it is to see the chosen, redeemed and called of the Lamb, harping with their harps, and singing the song of redeeming love.”

O that the resounding refrains of praise to our God might be heard and be a source of delight to many. *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance. Psalms 89:15. bhs*

Where Is Your Treasure?

“Lay up not for yourselves treasures upon earth... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...” — Matthew 6:19-20 —

The common element of “treasures” is their value to the holder. Treasures are always subjective. “One man’s trash is another man’s treasure” holds true. One may argue that gold has objective value, for it is the standard by which most men trade goods. However, there are whole societies that do not value gold at all. To a man who is dying of thirst in a barren place, a mountain of gold before him will do him no good at all.

Natural men do not recognize the barrenness of their spiritual dwelling place. Their preoccupation with worthless artifacts while on the path to inevitable doom is as much folly as chickens fighting over a small piece of tin foil right up to the moment they’re

slaughtered. For men to work, save, beg, borrow, and steal for items that will one day be thrown into the fire is beyond unreasonable. They would rather destroy their relationships, their own welfare, and even their very souls for things that ultimately do not matter.

And the world applauds and encourages them in their endeavors. The Apostle John warns, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (I John 2:15), and then goes on to say, “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (I John 2:16).

What John speaks of are matters most would rather ignore, and do so, for the most part. But what we must remember is this of which he speaks is the antithesis of godliness, and unbecoming of Christians, for he continues, “And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever” (I John 2:17).

You either love the world, or you love the Father. Which is it? – Paul Osborne (Pastor in Lima, OH)

Life Hangs on the Word of God

He said to them, "Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law. For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess." (Deuteronomy 32:46–47)

The Word of God is not a trifle; it is a matter of life and death. If you treat the Scriptures as a trifle or as empty words, you forfeit life.

Even our physical life depends on God's Word, because by his Word we were created (Psalm 33:6; Hebrews 11:3) and "He upholds the universe by the word of his power" (Hebrews 1:3).

Our spiritual life begins by the Word of God: "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth" (James 1:18). "You have been born again . . . through the living and abiding word of God" (1 Peter 1:23).

Not only do we begin to live by God's Word, but we also go on living by God's Word: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3).

Our physical life is created and upheld by the Word of God, and our spiritual life is quickened and sustained by the Word of God. How many stories could be gathered to bear witness to the life-giving power of the Word of God!

Indeed, the Bible is "no empty word for you" — it is your life! The foundation of all joy is life. Nothing is more fundamental than sheer existence — our creation and our preservation.

All this is owing to the Word of God's power. By that same power, he has spoken in Scripture for the creation and sustenance of our spiritual life. Therefore, the Bible is no empty word, but is your very life — the kindling of your joy! — John Piper *Desiring God*



Appropriating FAITH—

I ONCE heard a father tell, that when he removed his family to a new residence, where the accommodation was much more ample, and the substance much more rich and varied than that to which they had previously been accustomed, his youngest son, yet a lisping infant, ran round every room, and scanned every article with ecstasy, calling out, in childish wonder at every new sight, "Is this ours, father? and is this ours?" The child did not say "yours," and I observed that the father while he told the story was not offended with the freedom. You could read in his glistening eye that the infant's confidence in appropriating as his own all that his father had, was an important element in his satisfaction. Such, I suppose, will be the surprise, and joy, and appropriating confidence, with which the child of our Father's family will count all his own, when he is removed from the comparatively mean condition of things present, and enters the infinite of things to come. When the glories of heaven burst upon his view, he does not stand at a distance, like a stranger, saying, "O God, these are thine." He bounds forward to touch and taste every provision which those blessed mansions contain, exclaiming, as he looks in the Father's face, "Father, this and this is ours." The dear child is glad of all the Father's riches, and the Father is gladder of his dear child.—W. Arnot. (Quoted by CHS)

"The Scriptures should be read with the aim of finding Christ in them. Whoever turns aside from this object, even though he wears himself out all his life in learning, he will never reach the knowledge of the truth." - John Calvin