

“We may define God’s providence as follows: God is continually involved with all created things in such a way that he (1) keeps them existing and maintaining the properties with which he created them; (2) cooperates with created things in every action, directing their distinctive properties to cause them to act as they do; and (3) directs them to fulfill his purposes.”

— Voddie T. Baucham Jr., *Joseph and the Gospel of Many Colors: Reading an Old Story in a New Way*

GADSBY’S CATECHISM

by William Gadsby (about 1800)

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

Question I. Who is the only self-existent Being?

Answer. God is the only self-existent Being.

Ex. 3. 14; Psa. 90. 2; Isa. 45. 5, 22; Jn. 8.58.

Question II. Ought everyone to believe that there is a God?

Answer. Everyone ought to believe that there is a God, and it is their great sin and folly who do not.

Psa. 9.17; Ecc. 12.13; Mark 16. 16; Jn. 8.24 & 16.8-9; 2 Thess.2. 11-12.

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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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NOT OF GOD

He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. John 8:47

The responsiveness of the Lord's people to His words is demonstrated and declared throughout the Scripture. That which is displayed is wonderful to behold. A loving Father instructing devoted children is depicted as a matter of delight to both. Our Lord noted that which is true concerning His sheep in declaring, *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: John 10:27*. Such an endearing declaration has often provided strength, consolation and assurance to those who believe on Him. Their identity as His sheep reveals the eternal devotion of a committed sovereign engaged in their salvation for His glory. The evidence to them is their irrevocable trust in Him and their undying love for Him. The summary of our Lord is this text is that such are “of God.”

The manner in which they are of God is critical. We read in the beginning of this Gospel these words: *He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:11-13*. Men are often found of the opinion that their relationship with God is at least partially of their doing. This betrays the fact that they see themselves aligned with God, even in agreement with God, but not “Of God.” John plainly declared that becoming sons was a matter of divine bestowal, along with the character of sons; realized in receiving Him and

that because they were born...”of God.” A saving relationship with God requires that we be “partakers of the divine nature.” In the absence of that new nature (you must be born again) there are logical conclusions. That of our Lord here was that since His detractors did not hear God's words they were “not of God.”

We would not miss the fact that a few verses before (v. 43) He spoke of His own speech and the fact that they could not hear. Two things are to be noted. One is that He was declaring His speech to be God's words. The second is that they were the product of a diametrically opposed culture. He was unequivocal when He told them, “Ye are of your father, the devil...” It is certain that the words of our Lord here would fail the test for “political correctness.” Was He judgmental? Of course He was. He is a discernor of the very intents of the heart. Are we judgmental if we make similar observations? Obviously we do not know what is in the heart, but we do understand the conditionals here. If they do not hear His words and do not believe His words the conclusion is drawn for us. Certainly we are not to make a final determination, but it is clear that the rejection of the Word of God is of no light matter with Him.

What is to be of God? It is to be as we have previously stated. It is to have imparted to us the very nature of Christ as result of divine regeneration. It is to be in tune with the issues of the Gospel. It is to be in the way of repentance toward God and faith toward our

Lord Jesus Christ. It is to be in the way of hating sin and loving righteousness as it is revealed in Christ. John Gill equated hearing God's words to: (hearing them) "...displayed in election, redemption, justification, pardon, adoption and eternal salvation, and His glory for the end." Dr. Gill went on to describe such as in possession of ears to hear, eyes to see and a heart to understand and so to treasure the grace and mercy that come in true salvation.

Men labor long and hard in their efforts to so simplify the divine revelation to as to be understood through natural processes. The problem is that where there is genuine truth the natural man does not and cannot receive it. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14.* When the Jews complained that what our Lord taught was "an hard saying" he replied emphatically, *It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. John 6:63.* Thus much of what is set forth today is totally lacking in both Spirit and Life and is rather the devising of men making it palatable to the unregenerate.

It is obvious that we have a commission to preach the Gospel to every creature. In so doing we press the necessity of the Gospel upon men and we apply the logic of the Word. But, except the Lord intervenes we may only expect the same response our Lord received. They denied who He was and rejected His every Word! We preach with fervor and desire for the salvation of lost souls, but we must pray as though who know that "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it..." We echo the desperate cry of Jonah, "Salvation is of the Lord." We are to pray for the Holy Spirit knowing that men apart from the "New Birth" are "not of God." Programs abound along with many explanations for the decline of spirituality in our day. In the end we are to throw ourselves on the mercy of Him who abides with the broken and contrite. We would observe that the blessings of the Lord are not conditional, but He has often been pleased to bless conditions.

That untoward generation of vipers in our Lord's day could not and would not hear His words because they were not of God. Is anything different as to the character of this present generation? Our only hope is mercy – not methods. *bhs*

Pray Without Ceasing

Never give up praying, not even though Satan should suggest to you that it is in vain for you to cry unto God. Pray in his teeth; "pray without ceasing." If for awhile the heavens are as brass and your prayer only echoes in thunder above your head, pray on; if month after month your prayer appears to have miscarried, and no reply has been vouchsafed to you, yet still continue to draw nigh unto the Lord. Do not abandon the mercy-seat for any reason whatever. If it be a good thing that you have been asking for, and you are sure it is according to the divine will, if the vision tarry wait for it, pray, weep, entreat, wrestle, agonise till you get that which you are praying for. If your heart be cold in prayer, do not restrain prayer until your heart warms, but pray your soul unto heat by the help of the everblessed Spirit who helpeth our infirmities. If the iron be hot then hammer it, and if it be cold hammer it till you heat it. Never cease prayer for any sort of reason or argument. If the philosopher should tell you that every event is fixed, and, therefore, prayer cannot possibly change anything, and, consequently, must be folly; still, if you cannot answer him and are somewhat puzzled, go on with your supplications notwithstanding all. No difficult problem concerning digestion would prevent your eating, for the result justifies the practice, and so no quibble should make us cease prayer, for the assured success of it commends it to us. You know what your God has told you, and if you cannot reply to every difficulty which man can suggest, resolve to be obedient to the divine will, and still "Pray without ceasing." Never, never, never renounce the habit of prayer, or your confidence in its power. Spurgeon

The Definition and Nature of Filial (godly) Fear -- by Wilhelmus A'Brakel

Filial fear is a holy inclination of the heart, generated by God in the hearts of His children, whereby they, out of reverence for God, take careful pains not to displease God, and earnestly endeavor to please Him in all things. It is a motion of the heart. The noble soul is gifted with emotions, and dependent upon what the objects are, is moved to either joy or sorrow, love or hatred, fear or fearlessness. As far as the fear of God is concerned, man is insensitive, hard, and without emotion. "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3:18). In regeneration, however, the heart of stone is removed and a heart of flesh is received, which is soft and pliable, and is very readily moved upon beholding God, dependent upon the measure in which God reveals Himself to the soul. If God is perceived as being majestic, a motion immediately arises within their soul—a motion which is befitting to the creature, in respect to God.

It is a holy motion. Since an unconverted person is in essence nothing but sin, also all that proceeds from him is distorted. The ability to fear is directed toward an erroneous object and is exercised in a disorderly fashion. Believers, however, having been sanctified in principle, are also sanctified as far as their inner motions are concerned. Their fear has a proper object and consequently functions in a holy manner, that is, in faith and love. They are devout and fear God (Act 10:2).

God generates this holy motion. By nature man is totally unfit for any good work. He finds no delight in God and has no desire to fear the Lord. He may be terrified of God, but he cannot fear Him rightly. However, God enables His own people to fear Him. "I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me" (Jer. 32:40).

The Holy Spirit is therefore called "the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:2).

This filial fear is found in the hearts of God's children. The heart is the seat of all motions—evil as well as good. God has enclosed this precious gift in the hearts of His children, and all the motions relative to fear proceed from the heart. Their fear neither consists in talk, refraining from evil and doing good, nor in the appearance of fear—but rather in truth. The heart, intellect, will, and affections are involved here, and the heart brings forth various deeds which manifest the fear of God. Only God's children truly fear the Lord, and therefore those who have this virtue are called God-fearing people. "...the same man was just and devout" (Luke 2:25); "...devout men" (Acts 2:5); "And devout men carried Stephen to his burial" (Act 8:2).

Filial fear is engendered by reverence for God. God is the object of this fear. "O fear the Lord, you His saints" (Psalm 34:9). God is eminent, glorious, and majestic within Himself—even if there were no creatures. "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty" (1 Chr. 29:11). Hereby God is awe-inspiring in and of Himself. With the advent of intelligent creatures who observe the brilliance of His glory, it cannot but be that they have reverence for Him, who is both infinite and majestic.

A natural man does not know God. Therefore he may be fearful of His judgments, for calamities, and sometimes may acknowledge God to be solemn (although he generally does not progress this far), but he cannot have reverence for Him. That is the privilege and blessedness of believers. A sinful person cannot tolerate God's majesty. He would flee in terror from God, for He is to him a consuming fire. However, in Christ—God is a reconciled Father to His children, and therefore they simultaneously love and revere Him. "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling" (Psalm 2:11).

"I will not violate the teaching of the text in order to somehow sound more appropriate for the culture. I am a herald of the truth of the Gospel, and my job is to teach the Gospel according to what the authors have said, not according to what I think the Culture wants to hear." Voddie Baucham