

"What a sad world this would be--were it governed by Fate! Were its blended lights and shadows, its joys and sorrows--the result of capricious accident--or blind and wayward chance! How blessed to think that each separate circumstance which befalls me--is the fulfillment of God's own immutable purpose!" John MacDuff

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28.

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 III. How may we know that there is a God?

Answer. The works of creation and providence plainly declare that there is a God, but His Word and Spirit only do it effectually to the salvation of His people.

Job 38 & 39; Psa. 19; Jn. 16.8-14 & 17.8; 1 Cor. 2.10.

Question IV. What is the Word of God?

Answer. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, and the only certain rule of faith and obedience.

Psa. 119.140; Prov. 30.5; Isa. 40.8; 2 Tim. 3.14-17.

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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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WITH THANKSGIVING

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. Psalms 95:2-3

C. H. Spurgeon commented that the reference here to the presence of the Lord probably had a view to the presence of God in the Holy of Holies above the mercy seat. There is no doubt that there was a special consciousness, in the minds and hearts of devout believers in Old Testament Israel, of the promised and evidenced presence of the Lord with them. We are reminded of the awe-inspiring scene at the manifestation of His glory in the wilderness Tabernacle and the same with the Temple dedication under Solomon. These visible scenes displayed to the eyes of faith a far more important interest of the Lord God in the matter of the redemption of His people. This is what would be typified in both the Tabernacle and the Temple.

It is evident that the Psalmist recognized that there are times and places in which we are to approach unto God with an enhanced sense of reverence for His person and His work. The omniscience of God is a well-known attribute and the awareness of it is a reason to give thanks. But, while we live in the comfort of that knowledge we are encouraged to approach for the singular purpose of worship, adoration and praise. The absence of such an inclination in the heart of any is a reason to be suspect of either their state or their standing with God. *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? 2 Corinthians 13:5.* The redeemed

of the Lord are desirous of and long for His courts and rejoice in His presence and they worship Him who is worthy.

The state of our nation and the world is indicative of the fact that the fear of God is rare and that worship is man-made and that thanksgiving has its basis in materialism. It is amazing to hear the statistics of the vast sums of money expended in this country on things. Most of us would have to confess that we have a great attachment to our earthly possessions. Necessity has come to be defined by status and the sense of need moves well beyond the requirements for survival. So we hear of the weak attempts at thanksgiving for all the “stuff.” Many are able to look to such things as good human relationships and are thankful that they enjoy the relative peace that comes with human expressions of love. Many are conscious of these things and professors of faith in Christ feel thankful and will acknowledge Him as the source of their prosperity. But the Psalmist expresses something that can only occur where one is come truly into the presence of God.

He did not say that we should come and give thanks for all the “things” we have. It is rather an attitude that reflects first and foremost the fact that we are in His presence. We live in the midst of a people who think that they may casually “waltz” into the presence of the Lord at their own will. Reverence and Godly fear are sadly missing from many of both the “invitations” and the responses of those invited.

Our first thought of thanksgiving should be that we are in His presence at all. The assumption of many seems to be that the throne room of God is hosting a continual open house. It is true that we are bidden to come – even to “come as you are.” But, we come realizing who and what we are and that we realize above all else Who He is.

There are many things for which we would give thanks and all of them are as a result of His mercy and grace extended to poor sinners – it is not to those who think themselves to do God a favor. In the first verse of this Psalm He is addressed as the “Rock of our Salvation.” All that we have of value is tied to this fact and to this alone. He is under no obligation to prosper us in the things of this world. But, He will prosper us in the things whereunto we are called. He has purchased this blessedness unto us at the greatest of prices. It took no less than the death, burial and resurrection of Christ our Lord to obtain this audience with Him! Thus, we are raised to walk in the “newness of Life.” We have been delivered (unto Himself) from this present evil world. We have been made to sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus our Lord. He is come that we might have life and

that more abundantly. And so, with Paul we would declare that, *And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. 1 Timothy 6:8.*

The Psalmist gives the reason of thanksgiving and the making of a “joyful noise unto Him with Psalms.” It is simply and profoundly stated the “LORD is a great God and a great King above all Gods.” It is as much as to say this is the God I know and behold in all His wonderful person. As it was prophesied, *And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. Isaiah 25:9.*

How can we, by faith, look on Him who has displayed such great love and mercy to the likes of us and be cumbered with thoughts of the petty things of this present world? In our every consideration of Him, and especially coming unto Him, thanksgiving must be first and all interactions with Him and in Him must be “With Thanksgiving.” And so we sing: *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. Psalms 100:4. bhs*

Focus Your Mind

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” (Colossians 3:2)

The command of this verse is contained in the Greek word *phroneo*. The noun form has an emphasis on the emotive side of our thoughts. Its use in secular Greek literature favors what we might call our gut reactions or our intuition. Obviously, the verb is recorded in the imperative mode, making the term both intensive and authoritative. It could well be translated “direct your reactions so that they respond to” heavenly matters.

The Lord Jesus rebuked Peter because he did not “savor” the things of God (Matthew 16:23). In many other places, the translators have chosen “mind” as the term’s best rendering (e.g., Philippians 2:2, 5; 3:15-16; 4:2). But in each case, the emphasis appears to be on the way we react to our relationship to God’s Word or to each other.

And in each case, as in our text for today, the emphasis is always for us to focus on the matters of eternity, not on our earthly circumstances. Paul’s great teaching throughout Romans 6, 7, and 8 gives a wonderful comparison and contrast between the flesh and the spirit, concluding in chapter 8 that “they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit” (Romans 8:5).

Insisting that the believers in the Philippian church follow his own life's example, Paul agonizes over many among them who walk so "that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Philippians 3:18-19).

A worldly lifestyle is very dangerous for a believer. Please remember the warning "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

by Henry M. Morris III, D.Min.



How To Kill A Church

Richard Baxter (1615-1691) was a prominent English churchman of the 1600's. In his Classic work on The Pastor he wrote: "Nothing can be totally known if God be not known. Nor any study well managed, if God is not studied."

These are words / sentiments in desperate need by 21st Century Christendom. True spiritual life follows the preaching of God's Word! This truism is found in the 200 year history of Theological Liberalism, for it has killed every church and denomination it has touched.

Today, however, liberalism has morphed into several differing forms with several differing labels, resulting in the same out come: Spiritual Apostasy & Weakness!

- Remove biblical preaching & teaching from the Sunday Service
- Create alternative realities by cherry-picking biblical phrases
- Exalt the man (or woman) who 'shares,' their 'teachings.'
- Blanket the whole thing with religious entertainment & God Words

Result? You can start a Church at age 24 and 9 years later have 17,000 people in it, be a published author and popular conference speaker with your own TV show and Mansion in a Gated Community.

What you won't have, however, is God's Blessings. It will appear you do, to the world, however in God's economy you will still be a pauper. Sour Grapes? No! Biblical Reality.

The Power of God is in His Word, not in my ability to attract a crowd and generate huge offerings. The Power is in biblical shepherding, not efficient management or marketing. The Blessing is in being a pattern of godliness, a student of God's Word, a provider of spiritual nourishment, a prayer warrior.

Are we feeding God's people or entertaining the world? Are we illustrating the biblical pattern of Christian Character, Godly Servanthood and Spiritual Stability...in our Family? In the Community?

Do people outside our churches respect who and what we are, whether or not they agree with our spiritual convictions? Reality? If you aren't living up to these standards, all your teaching, encouraging, structuring and praying won't matter!

YOU are The Tool God is using to teach, encourage, strengthen and train His people [Eph. 4]. That leadership is based on what HE has done/is doing in and through you. It is not Marketing or Theatrical Staging. It is in godly character, commitment and contentment.

The worldly success their 'hirelings' achieve is clouding our vision and corrupting our hearts. The Contemporary Model is NOT biblical! As Elijah observed, the 'voice of the LORD' was not in the earthquake nor the fire, but in a 'still small voice.' [I Kgs 19].

He also discovered that he was not alone! God had 7000 in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal. May his tribe increase!

--Warren Sprouse in *Rod and Staff* The Biblical Shepherd's Newsletter

The power of God is that ability and strength whereby He is able to bring to pass whatsoever He pleases, whatsoever His infinite wisdom may direct, and whatsoever the infinite purity of His will may resolve. --Loraine Boettner