

You can be sure, the Holy Spirit never enters a man and lets him live like the world. A. W. Tozer

"The only reason we don't have revival is because we are willing to live without it!" — Leonard Ravenhill

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 IX. Can God be frustrated in His purposes and designs?

Answer. No, for He works all things after the counsel of His own will, and will do all His pleasure.

Job 23.13; Isa. 43.13 & 46.10; Matt. 28.18; Eph. 1.11-12.

Question X. What are the decrees of God?

Answer. The decrees of God are His eternal purpose according to the counsel of His will, whereby, for His own glory, He has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

Isa. 46.10; Rom. 8.28-30 & 9.6-24; Eph. 1.11-12; 2 Thess. 2.13-14.

Question XI. How does God execute his decrees?

Answer. God executes his decrees in the works of creation, providence and grace.

Num. 23.19-23; Job 37.13; Psa. 107.25-30; Dan. 4.35; Rev. 4.11.

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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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FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. Hosea 4:6

Our Lord preciously characterized what it is to be saved with the words: *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.* To the child of God whose focus is ever upon their Lord, the meaning is well known. The question is often asked, “Are you saved?” Perhaps it should be “do you know the Lord” in accordance with John 17:3. The focus of contemporary methods is an outcome that meets an agreed upon definition. We rejoice in the simplicity that is in Christ, but shudder at the shallow portrayal of salvation set forth by many. There is an educational theory that basically aims to create a feeling of success in the minds of students. Often that is an illusion to both the student and the teacher and results in failure further along. To create an illusion in the minds of many concerning salvation is fatal.

To engage in religion with the assurance that participation brings a reward is to place the credit squarely on man. His knowledge is of himself and his actions, and the assuring words of those who only promote religion, conspire to bring them into a way that only “seemeth right unto a man.” This may all be accomplished apart from actually knowing God. It is this lack that is fatal. We are reminded of two passages in Proverbs. The first simply describes the antagonism of men toward such knowledge. *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: ²⁹ For that they hated knowledge,*

and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. Proverbs 1:28-31. Secondly, the wise man describes the nature of saving knowledge thusly: *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. Proverbs 9:10.*

The reference here to “My people” is to erring Israel and especially the northern kingdom. The prophet was looking to a time of devastation to come upon them as a result of their rebellion and indeed it did fall. John Gill is quick to insert a disclaimer here in that those who are truly the Lord’s cannot be destroyed since they are eternally saved by the merits of Christ Jesus our Lord. That being said, we cannot overlook the willful error of those who were pretenders to serving the Lord and even perhaps many who were being deceived by false teachers. There was much that should have been known and acknowledged. It was there in the Scripture, the true prophets, and a history that reminded of the repeated failures as they drifted into idolatry. The result was a morally bankrupt people, given to personal pleasure and thus weakened to the point that they were incapable of defending themselves against wickedness within and the enemy without.

The strength of the Lord’s people in any generation is measured by their identity with Him. Looking again to the definition of eternal

life we may conclude that it is not the result of human endeavor. It is not merely an unending existence. Neither is it a way fashioned by many no matter how well intended. It is rather to be understood by the “knowing” of the “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” by whose grace we are saved. J. I. Packer began his classic book, *Knowing God*, with this quote from Spurgeon: “It has been said by someone that ‘the proper study of mankind is man’. I will not oppose the idea, but I believe it is equally true that the proper study of God’s elect is God; the proper study of a Christian is the Godhead. The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy, which can ever engage the attention of a child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father.”

Apart from the knowledge of God there is no knowledge of true joy. The systems today labor to create an atmosphere that will inspire the appearance of joy. We are reminded of: *Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall*

ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow. Isaiah 50:11. Our Joy is a person and our salvation is “knowing” Him. The ancient hymn writer said it so well: *Jesus, Thou Joy of loving hearts, Thou Fount of life, Thou Light of men,/ From the best bliss that earth imparts, We turn unfilled to Thee again.”*

Many are the consequences of the lack of the knowledge of God. The ultimate result is to continue in will-worship on to destruction. But, should not they, who would know God, be encouraged by this to avoid the spiritual weakness that attends when the knowledge of God is neglected. The condition of our land is described by the prophet as a famine of hearing the Word of God. Hosea, a little further on, exhorted: “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord...” Thus, the desire of every child of God is to know Him more and to know His will and to know His attributes and to ever be caught up in the joy of adoring Him who alone is worthy. All the trappings of religion are so much garbage where there is the horrible lack of knowledge of our crucified, risen and exalted Lord. *bhs*

FIVE BASIC TRUTHS about the knowledge of God

1. God has spoken to man, and the Bible is His Word, given to us to make us wise unto salvation.
2. God is Lord and King over His world; He rules all things for His own glory, displaying His perfections in all that He does, in order that men and angels may worship and adore Him.
3. God is Savior, active in sovereign love through the Lord Jesus Christ to rescue believers from the guilt and power of sin, to adopt them as His sons, and to bless them accordingly.
4. God is Triune; there are within the Godhead three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; and the work of salvation is one in which all three act together, the Father purposing redemption, the Son securing it, and the Spirit applying it.
5. Godliness means responding to God’s revelation in trust and obedience, faith and worship, prayer and praise, submission and service. Life must be seen and lived in the light of God’s Word. This, and nothing else, is true religion.

– J. I. Packer in *Knowing God*

On Spiritual Decline

God forbid I should judge the motives of those who are trying some of these 'new departures'. I believe that many are honestly actuated by a deep desire to do good. They see the unconcerned masses, absolutely in different to the gospel; and they argue, would it not be well to try 'something else', that may, perhaps, lead on to God? That 'something else' is generally a lowering or breaking down of the wall of separation which Christ prayed might ever be maintained... the awful and vital difference between being saved or unsaved disappears in a general pleasantness. Spiritual power in the church declines. Meetings for prayer grow miserably small. Fiery zeal for the glory of God burns low. Pleasing takes the place of saving. Questions of time 'crowd out' the certainties of Eternity. The 'spirit of the age' is satisfied, and the Holy Spirit is grieved. The Church of God is nothing if not supernatural.

Archibald Brown in 1890.

SOME FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS

That men are immortal and under a moral government, by which their future state will be made happy or miserable, according to their conduct in the present life, are fundamental truths of religion. Man is a religious animal; because a persuasion of his immortality and an expectation of future retribution so readily find a place in his mind. No one imagines that such thoughts were ever entertained for a moment, by any one of the innumerable brute animals that have trodden the earth. But in the human race, such thoughts have been prevalent in all nations and ages; have mingled with the cogitations of the learned and the unlearned, the wise and the unwise; and have blended religion thoroughly with the history of mankind. The considerations which have been presented, establish the claim of religious truth to our highest respect and most diligent investigation. He who disregards its claim acts contrary to his own nature, and degrades himself to the level of the beast that perishes. That men do so degrade themselves, is a fact which correct views of religious truth cannot overlook: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." [Isa. 1:3] It is a peculiar glory and excellence of the Christian revelation, that it is adapted to this fallen condition of mankind; and that it has power to effect a restoration. It is medicine for the sick, as well as food for the healthy. A healthy appetite calls for food; and the food, when received, administers needed nourishment; so that between the healthy stomach and the nutritious food, the adaptation is reciprocal. But in sickness the stomach loathes food, and rejects the medicine which is needed to effect a cure: yet the adaptation of the medicine to the condition of the sick man still remains. Just so it is with respect to the gospel of Christ. Though rejected by men, it is "worthy of all acceptation," because it is a remedy, precisely adapted to our depraved state. Thousands of thousands have experienced its restoring power, and unite in recommending its efficacy to the multitudes who are unwilling to make trial of it. John Dagg

Mark it down: Worry is like sitting in a rocking chair—it gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere. So trust God no matter what. Put God first in everything. Expect God to come alongside of you and place what you need before you. H. B. Charles *It Happens After Prayer*