

It is contrary to the gospel to communicate to people that I am saved because I am better than you. That is a moralistic message that the church sometimes sadly falls into. It is not the gospel. The true gospel proclaims the hard truths of the law. The Spirit convicts the sinner of having woefully fallen short and, by grace, he flees to Christ as his only hope. We all are saved only because of this. Any good we now do we ascribe to God, who alone deserves the glory. – J. W. Hendryx

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 LXXVI. What is meant by the gospel in a more extensive sense?

Answer. The above things, together with the precepts and ordinances enjoined on the church by Christ and His apostles, and the things connected therewith.

Matt. 28.18-20; Jn. 13.34 & 14.15; 1 Cor. 11.23-26; Eph. 2.8-10; Col. 2.6-7; Tit. 3.8-9; 1 Jn. 2.6; 2 Jn. 6.

Question LXXVII. Is the gospel, in all its branches, a sufficient rule of life to a believer in Christ?

Answer. Yes; for through the life-giving power of the Spirit, faith lives upon Christ, the Living Head, and gospel precepts are the believer's rule in the world, in the family, in the church, and in case of personal offences.

Jn. 14.21; Rom. 6.14 & 8.9-11,14; 2 Cor. 9.8; Gal. 6.14-16; Phil. 3.16; Col. 3.1-3.

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsj@msn.com

Website: www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com

WXTH-LP 101.7 FM– In Richwood

Services:

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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AN ESSENTIAL “IF”

By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:2

Gospel claims are not left untested. The Apostle defines the Gospel in the simplest of terms in the opening verse of this chapter and in the following verses. All that he writes is consistent with all that has been declared by all from Moses and the Prophets to our Lord Himself. The Gospel is a message of substitution and accomplishment in the behalf of those who come unto God by Christ Jesus. The conditional set forth here is that a person’s claim to believing the Gospel and possession of salvation must be validated by retention. Mere mental agreement with or assent to the stated facts is not enough to assure that one has entered into a saving relationship with Christ. And so, Paul quickly qualifies the declaration of salvation.

Paul declares that the substance of what he had preached unto the Corinthians was indeed the Gospel. *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 1 Corinthians 15:1.* It is further noted that this is the message they received (we are reminded of his recounting of this, in *And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 1 Corinthians 2:4*). He further asserted that their standing was in the relationship accomplished by the Gospel. It was in that which declared the power of God, the merits of Christ and acceptance with God that assured that they could stand before God. And, it would be in the

Gospel that they would stand against the enemy of their souls and so it is with us.

Of the greatest importance is the fact that salvation is declared ultimately in the Gospel – the power of God unto salvation. All that is declared of Christ concerning His life, His suffering, His death, His resurrection and His ascension are required for salvation. It, salvation, is accomplished fully and completely in Him. It is this that is believed for salvation. It is sad that the implication is left by so many that there is merit in their believing, when their believing and adherence to the Gospel is the verification that they are saved. The “if” in this statement is huge. In witnessing to some the reply has often been heard from them, “don’t worry about me; I took care of that a long time ago.” Such a response speaks to a one-time experience that left no evidence of any lasting impression.

Perhaps the Corinthian behaviors had prompted Paul to call them to an awareness of the eternal nature of the Gospel effect. In his second epistle to them he was quite emphatic: *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.* Such self-examinations should be in order for all in that the possibility of believing in vain is expressed by the Apostle. It is a wonderful thing to be able to say, “I know I am saved.” But, the legitimacy

of that statement should be assured in clinging to Christ and the Gospel.

The word for “keep” here is strong in that it implies “holding fast” as the KJV margin has it. Paul used similar strong terms in writing to Timothy and exhorting him to “lay hold on eternal life.” It is to cling desperately as did Jacob to the Angel. It is to treasure as implied by the wise man in Proverbs. *My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: Proverbs 3:1.* It is to be seen as the essential to life and again we note with regard to this which is the wisdom of God: *Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life. Proverbs 4:13.* And so, we are directed by the writer of Hebrews thusly: *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. Hebrews 4:14.*

Having neither righteousness nor any other thing to recommend us to the favor of God we cling desperately to deliverance by our substitute (who “died for our sins according to the scriptures.” With the Apostle Paul we experience the resurrection life of Christ in us and joyfully declare, “not I but Christ liveth in me.” It is Christ that was “buried, and He that rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” Paul’s declaration to the Colossians

was that their presentation as “holy and unblameable and inreproveable in His sight...” was assured “If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel...”

Many do not like to hear of conditionals with regard to their claims to salvation. They will boldly assert that they are “saved by grace plus nothing and minus nothing.” Certainly where salvation is truly of the Lord such statements are true. Continuance in the faith is everywhere either taught or asserted and ought to be a welcome confirmation of the Lord’s presence. After all, Paul here declares that in the absence of such “holding fast” to the Lord in faith and practice one may be discovered to have believed in vain. Paul declares in no uncertain terms that there is no “other gospel.” Vain is that which clings to anything that comes from fallen men. God has sovereignly worked in the lives of His people to “will and to do of His good pleasure.” The life which is acceptable to God is brought forth by the wonderful work of Him the Holy Spirit and is of incorruptible seed. It is characterized by holding fast to Christ Jesus and His promise in the Gospel. A faith that does not continue is not of God. The life that He gives is eternal and it continues ever. There are no exceptions. *bhs*

PRIORITIZING PRAYER

To prioritize is to rank some things higher than others. Is it possible that your prayer life suffers because something else ranks too high with you? Does your social life crowd out prayer? Is the use of electronic media such as the Internet, television, or radio hindering your prayers? Media may do so by absorbing too much precious time while your prayer life languishes. Or media might hinder your prayers by filling your mind with worldly thoughts and occupations so that your prayers become shallow, cold, self-centered, materialistic, or unmotivated—and thus infrequent. Prioritizing prayer will require putting other activities in a lower place in order to make room for communion with God. Joel Beeke

“When thou prayest, rather let thy heart be without words, than thy words without a heart – John Bunyan

Proverb 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye,
The LORD has made them both.

Hearing and sight are the two foremost senses by which the mind is enabled to understand. But man's ears and eyes are incapable of seeing or hearing spiritual truths, and therefore also incapable of understanding them. Jesus Christ explained this fact (Matthew 13:13-15): "seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah [6:9f] is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.'" It therefore should not surprise us that they do not understand Christ, His gospel, and Biblical doctrines (Romans 3:11f): "There is none who understands, there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one" (cp. Psalm 14:2-4 / 53:2-4). Consequently, they boast of their supposed freewill and meritorious works because they do not understand the bondage of their will and the evil of their works and the necessity of Christ to liberate them (John 8:31-45; Ephesians 2:1-3). They may boast of legal righteousness through keeping the law because they do not understand that this is impossible (Romans 3:19f). They scoff at doctrines such as eternal and gracious election and predestination unto salvation, accomplished redemption and atonement through Christ, and the certain glorification of all God's elect because "the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). But as surely as Jesus Christ gave hearing and sight to the physically deaf and blind so that they could understand physical things, so does He to the spiritually deaf and blind so that they may understand spiritual things. All who believe His gospel and trust in Him find that He opens their ears so that they may hear Him, and opens their eyes so that they may behold Him, and thereby enables them to understand Him. And He says to them, "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear" (Matthew 13:16). – Daniel Parks

The best of our duties –

"It is finished!" (John 19:30)

Has Christ perfected and completely finished all His work for us? How sweet a relief is this against all the defects and imperfections of all the works which are wrought by us. There is nothing finished that we do. All our duties are imperfect duties; they come off lamely and defectively from our hands. O there is much sin and vanity in the best of our duties. But Jesus Christ has finished all His work, though we can finish none of ours. And so, even though we are defective, poor, imperfect creatures in ourselves, yet we are complete in Christ. His complete obedience being imputed to us, makes us complete, and without fault before God.

--John Flavel