

If the grace you have received does not make you love Christ and His commands, you have not received grace.

Our pilgrimage through this age is transitory. Let us not put our hope in its fading riches or in its broken politics, but rather, let us fix our hope on Jesus and on the age to come. –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 LXXXI. Can you give a proof of the gospel as a rule in case of personal offences?

Answer. Yes; as it is written, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church, but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

Matt. 18.15-17.

Question LXXXII. Does the gospel require anything of believers towards God?

Answer. Believers are not their own, but are bought with a price. God, in the gospel, requires them to glorify Him in their body and their spirit, which are His, and to worship Him in spirit and in truth; and His grace enables them so to do.

Jn. 4.23-24; 1 Cor. 6.19-20; 2 Cor. 9.8; Tit. 3.8.

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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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AN APOSTOLIC COMMENDATION

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. Acts 20:32

The account of Paul’s meeting with the Ephesian Elders relates to us a most tender example of Christ-like love and affection among brethren. The care and concern of the Apostle is evident in the manner in which he recounts the time he had spent with them and the warnings he issues with regard to their future challenges. In an age in which many have lost touch with reality, the essential depth of affection for those whom the Lord loves and the existence of a relentless enemy are important topics. This account is graciously preserved for us that we might be reminded of our Lord’s instruction that “ye love one another as I have loved you.”

Paul had reminded them of the essential nature of the message he had emphasized for three years and that was of “repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” He had charged them with their great responsibility and so urged them: *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts 20:28.* The Gospel was ever in view in Paul’s encouragements to them as both the message to be delivered and as the ultimate source of personal comfort. Both of these gospel functions would continue to come under attack from every corner. (See v. 29). Perhaps the most disturbing of these warnings was that many would arise from the midst of those claiming to be ministers of the Gospel after the manner of those of whom Jude gave

warning: *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Jude 1:4.* This certainly came to pass and it continues to this day and the warning is to us as it was to them.

The existence of such enmity toward the Gospel has been well documented in both scripture and history. We rejoice, however, at the success of that which has been commended to us even as it was to these brokenhearted men long ago. The thought of commending them to “God and the word of His grace” was more than mere well-wishing on Paul’s part. We must believe that as an Apostle of Christ he was given certain intercessory capacity as to bring it to us as a matter of promise inspired by the Holy Spirit. He had no more confidence in their flesh than he did in his own. He had every confidence and assurance as to the ability of God to see them through the task before them. Thus, they were to be built up, provided with an inheritance and were to discover a possession that was as sure as divine sanctification. (We note that the word sanctified is applied in the present tense – they had been set apart and secured by the will of God).

The Greek scholar A. T. Robertson gave a most precious connotation to the word “commend” here. He cited it as an “old verb to place beside...to deposit with one to interest...”

We are reminded of a similar reference to the Holy Spirit as comforter or as one who comes alongside to help. Paul had and was placing them beside God Himself in Christ knowing that their care and comfort as well as their ability would thus be provided. Like others, of whom Paul wrote, it was his desire to present them holy and without blame unto the Lord. His confidence was like that of Peter: *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: 1 Peter 3:18.*

More than one commentator on this passage made the observation that while Paul was addressing himself to the church elders the application of what was said was to all the body of Christ and so we would urge all to lay claim to what is here presented. In particular, we should attend to the matter of being built up both in the matter of individual faith and as a spiritual body: *In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Ephesians 2:22.* It is evident that the ability must come from the Lord. Only He is able to build and to build up. The instrumental aspect of this is here commended along with the builder. It is

the “Word of His Grace.” John Gill would have this to be a distinct reference to Christ. Certainly, Christ is the essence of the Word of God. And, it is the engrafted Word to which we respond. It is the living word appropriated to our hearts that bears the fruit of righteousness and so it is divinely applied. It is that Word that makes us “wise unto salvation.”

That the Lord is able and has given us an inheritance is a most precious commendation and verification of the earnest of it. Peter declares it be reserved for us and we kept for it as we look to the future. What does not wait is the present reality of: *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Galatians 4:6.* And so our place is eternity is not only secured, we also begin now to experience that which is our possession in Christ. *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Hebrews 10:14.*

It is given to us who know and love the Lord to know that we have been commended (placed alongside) to the only One who “is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy...” and to “the Word of His grace!” *bhs*

“Paul foresaw a time when it would become even harder to preach boldly, when congregations would not tolerate sound doctrine or fearless preaching, when people would deliberately turn from the truth (2 Tim. 4:3-4). If Timothy was struggling under mild opposition, what would he do when he faced real persecution? What would he do when called upon to minister to people with no appetite for the Word and no tolerance for bold preaching? Would he accommodate his hearers’ preferences or be faithful to his calling? He could not do both. Paul’s advice left no room for compromise: “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching” (2 Tim. 4:2).

Clearly, “seeker sensitivity” was the furthest thing from Paul’s mind. He urged Timothy to preach the Word boldly, even if that is not what the crowds are clamoring for. People’s ears may be itching for anything but sound doctrine, but the faithful pastor will defy the spirit of the age, confront his own fear, and boldly preach the truth anyway. Paul longed to see that kind of boldness in his young disciple.”

--John MacArthur in *Pulpit Aflame*

A Preacher's Necessary Grace – Dr. Ron Rumburg

There is a spirit that characterizes God's people as well as His preachers. Yes, there is "the fruit of the Spirit" which is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23). These are some of the Christian graces. Our God loves a joyful servant such as a "cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

Joy is a necessary grace that should characterize our preaching. Perhaps preachers should make use of Isaiah's words, which I would like to apply to the ministry, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isa. 12:3). Before the servant of the Lord can dispense the elixir of salvation it must be drawn from the wells of salvation. However, drawing this essential must be done with a right spirit. This water of salvation must be drawn "with joy." Oh, to be able to dispense it in the same fashion.

The preacher needs to be able to minister with joy—"Obey them (your minister in the things of God) that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17). The Lord's sheep are to be submissive to the ministry of the under-shepherd who watches for their souls. Why? So they may practice their calling "with joy." Is that important? The Scripture says it is important. When the minister has to serve the Lord in your behalf and give an account, what if he must do so with grief and not joy? If it is not with joy but grief it will be "unprofitable for you."

Let us join with Nehemiah as he pleads, "Think upon me, my God, for good..." (Neh. 5:19).



"I fall asleep quietly confident that I will be a believer in the morning not because of my free will but God's free grace." John Piper

"Remember the Value of Prayer. The disciples wanted to learn to pray because they saw the place that prayer had in the life of our Lord (Luke 11:1). We should always remember these five truths: (1) prayer is essential for the well-being of your own soul; (2) prayer is essential for you to fulfill your calling in your family, church, and nation; (3) prayer is one of the most Christlike activities you can engage in; (4) prayer is God's appointed means of distributing the blessings of His kingdom and the gifts of Christ to His people; (5) and unoffered prayer, not unanswered prayer, is our greatest problem—for they who ask not, have not (James 4:2)." Joel Beeke

"Though the absolute sovereignty of God over our lives is consistently taught throughout Scripture, it is not the uncaring sovereignty of a despot but of a God who is just as loving and caring as He is sovereign. But we have to by faith believe that truth when His ways are different from that which we desire." Jerry Bridges