

“When I understand that everything that is happening to me is to make me more Christ-like, it resolves a great deal of anxiety.” – A. W. Tozer

"Worldliness is whatever makes sin look normal and righteousness look strange." — David Wells

"I do look to be saved by no other means, but only by the mercy of God, in the blood of His only Son Jesus Christ." - Lady Jane Grey, just before being executed. Monergism

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 LXXXV. To whom is Baptism to be administered?

Answer. Baptism is to be administered to those who are blessed with and actually profess repentance towards God, and faith in, and obedience to, the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 2.37-38,41 & 8.12,36-37 & 10.47-48 & 22.16.

Question LXXXVI. Are infants proper subjects of Baptism?

Answer. There is neither command nor example in the Holy Scriptures, nor certain consequences from them, to baptize infants; therefore they ought not to be baptized. Mark 16.15-16; Acts 8.37.

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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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THE SAD CASE OF ESAU

Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Hebrews 12:16-17

The reference here to Esau is given in conjunction with an exhortation and a warning. The exhortation is to, *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Hebrews 12:14.* The warning is that presumption with regard to this leads to the worst of failures. *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Hebrews 12:15.* We are thus directed to be diligent in the pursuit of peace and holiness while being vigilant as to the danger of being discovered without the grace of God. Such was the sad end of Abraham's grandson who perished without faith and suffered bitter remorse.

The word “lest” is one that should always arrest our attention. The simple definition is “for fear that” applied to whatever the threat may be. In this case the implication is that neglect of the things of God and a pursuit of the things of the world are to be considered dangerous. The terms here are quite extreme in calling up the example of one whose reputation is well known. Esau lived a life of ungodliness and disobedience while assuming that he would be blessed in the end with great riches which would come with the birthright and the subsequent blessing.

Most are certainly familiar with the Genesis account of the Jacob and Esau. The Lord revealed before they were born that the elder would serve the younger. The Lord was not

frustrated in seeing this come to pass in both the near and distant future. It did, however, play out with some interesting twists of providence. The birthright passed from the elder to the younger when Esau came in from the field hungry and Jacob (the “supplanter”) sold him a mess of pottage for it. It seemed to be of no consequence at the time. The blessing passed from the elder to the younger through the deception of Rebecca and Jacob exacted upon Isaac who wanted to give the blessing to Esau. The result was a long and bitter struggle with Esau determined to kill his brother. That, however, was not in God's plan.

Esau had been witness to the faith of his grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac. It is unthinkable that he did not know that both this birthright and the blessing were connected to the promise of God to Abraham and which was confirmed to Isaac. This is not a mere matter of history; it had everything to do with the coming of Christ into the world. This which Esau presumed was his was very much connected to faith and Godliness and the pursuit of holiness and peace with God. The fear expressed by the writer of Hebrews is that any should ever take their relationship with God for granted or as being based on a one-time act or an abandoned commitment. Such is the case of many who see no need to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ and an ongoing life with Him and in Him. The life of Esau was not unlike that to those described in

the New Testament – *For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 2 Timothy 3:2.*

The saddest of all things with Esau was not that he lost all that he thought should come to him but rather that he could not repent. The typical analysis of his situation is that all of his regret was due to his material losses. Certainly this is confirmed by both the Old Testament narrative and this present reference. It is obvious that men are often consumed by such fleshly objectives and are embittered in their frustrations. But, this seems to run deeper. We remember that the context is one of pursuing holiness and thereby seeing God. We remember: *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matthew 5:8.* So it was that God was not in the picture with Esau. He did not see the necessity of a life with God and so his religion (if he ever had it) was superficial at best. This is not a case of “poor Esau who wanted to repent but couldn’t.” It was rather that there was no means or place to go whereby he might have a change of mind and restore anything. The tears were directed to Isaac, not to the Lord. They were about loss and not sin. How sad that even the religious thoughts of many are

materially based!

A similar thought occurs with respect to Judas. The scripture tells us that he saw that he was condemned and tried to return the blood money but was refused. Not because of any semblance of faith, but because he saw himself as condemned even by those who paid him. He found no place of repentance. He had only himself and so he did the only reasonable thing to him – he killed himself. So it will be that many will say “to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne...”

What a blessed gift is true repentance! What grace and mercy is realized when we find the ability to experience true “godly sorrow” and to fall before our Holy God with no other plea than for mercy. In such a case we realize joy as we find ourselves directed to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Our place of repentance is secured by the blood of Christ and so we are ever drawn to Him.

How terrible it would be to be discovered as was Esau with no place to repent. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Hebrews 10:31.* In blessed contrast, they of faith joyfully cast themselves on the mercy of our loving redeemer God. *bhs*

AN UNSHAKABLY HAPPY GOD

“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” (John 15:11)

God is absolutely sovereign.

“Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases” (Psalm 115:3).

Therefore he is not frustrated. He rejoices in all his works when he contemplates them as colors of the magnificent mosaic of redemptive history. He is an unshakably happy God.

His happiness is the delight he has in himself. Before creation, he rejoiced in the image of his glory in the person of his Son. Then the joy of God “went public” in the works of creation and redemption.

These works delight the heart of God because they reflect his glory. He does everything he does to preserve and display that glory, for in this his soul rejoices.

All the works of God culminate in the praises of his redeemed people. The climax of his happiness is the delight he takes in the echoes of his excellence in the praises of the saints. This praise is the consummation of our own joy in God. Therefore, God's pursuit of praise from us and our pursuit of pleasure in him are the same pursuit. This is the great gospel! – John Piper

Wolfgang Musculus' a Reformed theologian of the Reformation had a commentary on 2 Thessalonians . This is his brief explanation of "obedience to the gospel" taken from his exposition of 1:8.

"And what is it to disobey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? It is not simply to not hear, nor to not believe and acquiesce therein; but rather it is to be unwilling to hear, to believe and to rest therein; and indeed to rather set oneself in opposition to it. One the other hand, to obey the gospel is to dedicate yourself to the Lord Christ with your whole heart - to hearing, believing, trusting and obeying him as your only Lord and Savior. He obeys his doctor who believes his words and happily receives the treatment which he provides, adhering to his instruction in all things. In doing this, he not only brings glory to the doctor, but also receives health for himself; likewise, he who obeys the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ believes his testimony, and eagerly receives the grace given to him, while also resting obediently in his precepts. And he who does this glorifies Christ, and also wisely looks to his own salvation purchased for him by the blood of Christ."

From Monergism

From the book *How to Cultivate Private Prayer*

"We dare not go to God on the basis of who we are or what we have done, but only on the basis of Christ and His finished work. The more you learn to pray with a mind set upon Christ as our Great High Priest, the more you will be able to take hold of God and pray with the boldness of true faith."

"Pray God's promises back to Him. John Trapp wrote, "Promises must be prayed over. God loves to be burdened with, and to be importuned [urgently pressed with requests] in his own words; to be sued upon his own bond. Prayer is a putting God's promises into suit. And it is no arrogancy nor presumption, to burden God, as it were, with his promise.... Such prayers will be nigh the Lord day and night (1 Kings 8:59); he can as little deny them, as deny himself."22 Likewise, William Gurnall wrote, "Prayer is nothing but the promise reversed, or God's Word formed into an argument, and retorted by faith upon God again."23 And what is the greatest promise of the Word and the sum of all promises but the gospel of Christ crucified for our sins? So pray in the name of Christ, pleading God's promises, knowing that "all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God" (2 Cor. 1:20)." Joel Beeke

"WE HAVE NO POWER FROM GOD UNLESS WE LIVE IN THE PERSUASION THAT WE HAVE NONE OF OUR OWN." - JOHN OWEN