

And according to the New Testament letters of both Romans and Galatians, another of the supernatural heart changes the Spirit creates in all Christians is to cause them to cry, “Abba! Father!” (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6).¹ Thus when someone is born again, the Holy Spirit gives that person new Fatherward desires, a new heavenward orientation whereby we cry, “Abba, Father!” In other words, all those indwelt by the Holy Spirit really want to pray. The Holy Spirit causes all the children of God to believe that God is their Father and fills them with an undying desire to talk to Him. – Donald S. Whitney *Praying the Bible*

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 XCV. Ought all men to pray?

Answer. All men ought to pray for the things which they feel they need, and which God, in His Word, has promised to give; and it is their sin if they do not.

Isa. 55.6-7; Ezek. 36.37; Luke 18.1; Rom. 12.12; 1 Thess. 5.17; 1 Tim. 2.8.

Question XCVI. What shall be done to the wicked at their death?

Answer. The souls of the wicked shall, at their death, be cast into the torments of hell and their bodies shall be in their graves till the resurrection, and the judgment of the great day.

Psa. 9.17; Matt. 3.12 & 24.51; Luke 16.23-26; 2 Cor. 5.10; Heb. 6.2 & 9.27; Jude 7.

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsi@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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OUR INCOMPARABLE GOD

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. Micah 7:18

The question posed here might first be asked regarding the various aspects of our God’s might and power as witnessed in all His creative accomplishments. It is further the realization of all who know Him that is He who sustains it all. Add to that the fact that no enemy ever has or ever will prevail against Him and we easily conclude that there is none like Him.

Questions are often crafted by a writer so that the answers would communicate his desired message. This question is not unlike that, in that Micah would call attention to the fact that in very special ways God is infinitely higher than all others. He had professed personal faith in the will and ability of God to raise him up with the outcome that Micah would behold His righteousness. See vv. 8-9. In concluding the prophet brings to bear the matters of pardon, passing over and the removal of divine anger. Only with God in Christ is there the means of addressing these things. Only of God can it be said “there is forgiveness with thee.”

Throughout scripture we find an essential emphasis on mercy. We treasure the fact that it is true of God that He is merciful. It is of such importance that it is specifically included in the matter of His revealed will in salvation. See Rom 9:18 *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* Mercy is the manner in which He deals with His people: *Mat 9:13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for*

I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Mercy is a matter of abundance with the Lord and is sufficient to accomplish all that is needed for all who come to Him without hope. *Psa 103:8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.* But, for all the emphasis the scripture lays on mercy, it is given little attention by vast numbers and seems to be downplayed in much of contemporary religion.

Ours is a society that senses little, if any, need of mercy beyond the immediate moment. We hear the term used often in regard to a convicted criminal who faces a harsh sentence. The term may be life with or without mercy. To the ordinary law-abiding citizen this only serves to distract from any need of mercy for any others. To such a person, the preaching of the Gospel would not have the same impact as those who have come to realize the universal and personal hopelessness of fallen and depraved men before our Holy God. The further effect is that even when men acknowledge God they have a greatly diminished view of God. Thus, sin is not as sinful and mercy is no big deal. The scriptural declarations concerning the grace of God give way to a “form of godliness that denies the power thereof.”

Therefore, Micah’s question is inconsequential to many. They are given over to matters of personal appeal and are recruited on that basis. The leaders find out what works to accomplish their purposes (not God’s) and build

their organizations accordingly. The leaders claim to be blessed of God and their followers are proud of what they do and the Gospel is nowhere to be found. To them, "who needs mercy?"

It seems to be with a sense of the purpose of God that the prophet writes. It is the express desire of Christ our Lord and God the Father that we by the operations of the Holy Spirit be brought into full fellowship with God. Furthermore, by virtue of the regenerating work of the Spirit, such possess the intense desire for acceptability with God. Men are found in the same condition before all religions and their false gods. Only in the Lord then do we see that He is able to maintain His integrity, fully uphold His holiness, divert His anger (or the appearance of it) and bring undone sinners to a state of acceptance with Him. The question takes on great force to the reader here in that not only is a great work done, our God delights in the process. In every human attempt at redemption man is seen as the prime mover while our God is able to pardon our iniquity. The thought is that He takes it away or lifts it up from us. Of course we understand that in lifting it from us He placed it on Christ our Lord. And, again, the Old Testament prophet preaches the Gospel of the grace of God and none other can compare. He goes on to acknowledge to God his awareness

of the ability to, and the fact of, His passing over our transgressions. That is to say, He acts as though they did not exist. Of course, we know that they do and God in His omniscience knows; but, in that He saw them on Christ and effectually dealt with them there He no longer sees them on us. *Psa 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*

While many are led along by the deceptive "feel good" element in religion and others are proudly pursuing their course of servile obedience in their own works, true believers celebrate the fact of that which is accomplished by our God with such a wondrous display of grace, power and love that we cry out with the prophet, "Who is a God like unto thee."

The consequence of sin has often resulted in a sense that God is angry with us and rightfully so. But, He does not deal with us in that way for the simple reason that "He delighted in mercy."

This begs the question as to our thoughts on the great work that He has done in Christ to bring us to Himself. Have we become so tolerant of the "anything goes" attitude toward religion that we fail to raise the cry of our text as we bear witness to the pure Gospel of our Blessed Lord? "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised..." *bhs*

Perfect Willingness

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. (Psalm 110:3)

Blessed be the God of grace that it is so! He has a people whom He has chosen from of old to be His peculiar portion. These by nature have wills as stubborn as the rest of the froward sons of Adam; but when the day of His power comes and grace displays its omnipotence, they become willing to repent and to believe in Jesus. None are saved unwillingly, but the will is made sweetly to yield itself. What a wondrous power is this, which never violates the will and yet rules it! God does not break the lock, but He opens it by a master key which He alone can handle. Now are we willing to be, to do, or to suffer as the Lord wills. If at any time we grow rebellious, He has but to come to us with power, and straightway we run in the way of His commands with all our hearts. May

this be a day of power with me as to some noble effort for the glory of God and the good of my fellowmen! Lord, I am willing; may I not hope that this is a day of Thy power? I am wholly at Thy disposal; willing, yea, eager, to be used of Thee for Thy holy purposes. O Lord, let me not have to cry, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which I would, I find not"; but give me power as Thou givest me will.

--C. H. Spurgeon *Faith's Checkbook*

God's instruction to the prophet was, "Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezek. 33:9). The responsibility of the prophet is not to come up with his own message but to faithfully deliver the message, the warning that is coming from God. If the people hear and turn from their wicked ways, then God will bless them. If they do not listen, do not turn from their wicked ways, it is not the responsibility of the prophet. He has done his job, and the rest is up to God. We must give warning concerning the false prophets that are gaining such ground among the people of God. We must warn the people about those who are turning them away from the true God. If they hear us, we can praise God. If they do not hear us, we can mourn for them but know that we have done our job. Our heavenly Father, how grateful we are that You have given a message, and then given a voice to that message, to the prophets You have chosen. May those prophets be sent, and may Thy people turn from their wicked ways to serve Thee today. Amen. -A. W. Tozer *The Voice of a Prophet*

Jesus willingly became an outcast so that we sinners, who have been justly cast out of Paradise by God, might be brought back into His presence. Jesus was thrown out of Jerusalem so that outcasts like us could be made citizens of the New Jerusalem, the eternal land of glory. We read in Galatians that Jesus was made a curse to redeem sinners from the curse of the law. The living Word of God was made the curse of God. From a human perspective Jesus was unjustly condemned, but from God's perspective Christ was justly condemned, for He was paying for the sins of the guilty. That's why Hebrews 13:12 says, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." -Joel Beeke *Walking as He Walked*

The Bible declares that sinners are helpless and lost ... not in need of help, but of rescue. While all other religions teach what a man must do to help himself attain salvation, Christianity declares that man is in willful rebellion, enslaved to sin and is morally hostile to God. He is unwilling to respond to commands ... and pridefully refuses all help. To deliver us from such captivity, therefore, we need a Savior, not someone to help us save ourselves. So a Christian is not first someone who follows Jesus' life and example. That is an impossible standard for the natural man. No we need Someone who will disarm our natural hostility and deliver us from ourselves that we might be humble enough to look to Another ... to Christ alone.

- J. W. Hendryx, *Monergism*