

Until men are deeply humbled for their sin — they can part with Christ and salvation for a lust, for a little worldly gain, for that which is less than nothing! But when God has enlightened their consciences, and broken their hearts — then they would give a world for Christ! Richard Baxter (1615-1691)

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 CVI. Do the prayers and offerings of the elect ascend to the Father, with acceptance, on the ground of their own goodness?

Answer. No; for Christ is the only way of access unto the Father; and the prayers and offerings of His people can only ascend to the Father with acceptance as they are offered up on Christ the altar, that sanctifieth both the gift and the giver; for the Father is well pleased with Him for His righteousness' sake.

Isa. 42.21; Jn. 17.19-20; Eph. 2.18; Heb. 4.14-16 & 7.24-28 & 10.10-12,19-22 & 13.10-15.

Question CVII. What does this teach the elect?

Answer. This teaches the elect that they are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ in all their approaches unto the Father, and to trust only in Him, and not in themselves.

Psa. 40.4 & 62.8 & 125.1; Rom. 13.14; Phil. 3.3; Heb. 4.14-16 & 7.24-27 & 10.19-22.

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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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GODLINESS IS PROFITABLE

But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

1 Timothy 4:7-8

In contemplating this topic, a question immediately arises. How can anything that man does ever be considered profitable either to him or to God? The thoughts here are certainly not about material things that feed the pride or superficial happiness of men. The usual thoughts about profits are man-centered and involve some action of men designed to bring about gain to them. However, in the light of, *For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? 1 Corinthians 4:7*, we must believe that, in every sense of the word, all that appears as profit to men is owing to God alone.

Godly men of old had a clear understanding that all that came from God was good and that it was ultimately for their good and His glory. When David wrote the precious words, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,” it was as much, or more, to exalt the graciousness of the Lord as it was to call attention the complete provision that was his in Christ. It is characteristic of men to “lay up treasures on earth” and find a sense of personal satisfaction. Perhaps, it is only as they come to depart this world that they realize that there never was a continuing benefit from those things. Like all other worldly pleasures, they are gone with the using. To the child of God, that which is profitable is unknown apart from Godliness and

so the exhortation is to exercise ourselves unto Godliness that we may be profited.

The thought of verse eight is not to debate the relative merits of bodily exercise and Godliness. It is rather brought up to extoll the virtues of Godliness. It is well-known that bodily exercise is beneficial to good health and fitness. In that sense it does profit and we may derive from it some spiritual benefit in that a fit and healthy body is conducive to clear thought and the ability to serve the Lord. It is hard to imagine all the foot travel of Christ and the disciples or of Paul and his entourage if there were not a good degree of fitness. The KJV margin has it that it profits for “a little time.” From this we draw the most important inference.

Godliness is profitable both in the present and the future and the benefits are infinitely great in each. Thus, it is proper that we give thought to the definitions of Godliness. The ISBE defines it “as denoting character and conduct determined by the principle of love or fear of God in the heart, [and] is the summing up of genuine religion.” The 1828 Webster’s calls Godliness “...a careful observance of the laws of God and performance of religious duties, proceeding from love and reverence for the divine character and commands.” Perhaps, it is best expressed in the desire of the Psalmist in *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer. Psalms 19:14*. In

the desire for and pursuit of Godliness it is soon discovered that the benefit is immediate and we are truly profited thereby.

We would quickly add that such a pursuit results from a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit and that the desire for Godliness is a characteristic of that new creation in us. "You must be born again." Furthermore, we would freely confess that the work and investment that brings profit to us is realized completely in the person and work of Christ our Lord. *And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. Colossians 1:20.* By that same merit we are "made partakers of the divine nature."

We are further assured of the profitability of Godless in Paul's words to Timothy. *But godliness with contentment is great gain. 1 Timothy 6:6.* Christ spoke of the immediate benefit in: *But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. Mark 10:30.* As we are made aware of Christian fellowship and hospitality the meaning here becomes apparent. Peter addressed the whole of the Christian experience in assuring his persecuted brethren. *According*

as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 2 Peter 1:3. We are reminded of: *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. Psalms 37:25.*

It is the present reality of Kingdom life that we find most precious. *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Matthew 6:33.* It is most profitable to experience the essence of the Kingdom in that it is defined as "...righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14:17)." So, we connect with *Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Psalms 37:4.*

It is given us in Christ that the pursuit of Godliness confirms to us the ultimate profit – "...when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2)." David's confidence in His Shepherd brought the matter of final profit to Him. *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. Psalms 23:6.* Are we so exercised unto Godliness and is the Lord our ultimate delight? Is the Lord God our "...shield and our exceeding great reward (Genesis 15:1)?" *bhs*

Who will deny that true religion consists, in a great measure, in vigorous and lively actings of the inclination and will of the soul — or the fervent exercises of the heart? That religion which God requires, and will accept — does not consist in weak, dull, and lifeless, wishes, raising us but a little above a state of indifference. Jonathan Edwards

A fountain is continually flowing, there are fresh supplies of water coming from the fountain-head continually, so that a man may live by it, and be supplied with water all his life.

In the same way, Christ is an ever-flowing fountain. He is continually supplying His people, and the fountain is not spent. Those who live upon Christ, may have fresh supplies from Him to all eternity. They have an increase of blessedness that is ever new, and which never will come to an end. Jonathan Edwards

Reformation vs Relationship

“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.”

— Matt. 12:43-45 —

What we have before us is a truth that so many refuse to understand. It’s not just that they can’t understand it (for they certainly are unable), but were they able to understand, they would not, for the hearts of natural men are dark and rebellious. What is being said here is that the natural man cannot reform himself, and all of his self-effort is futile from the word ‘go.’

This past Sunday we spoke of how the seeming “goodness” of men clouds our thinking about the Gospel. We look at other people who seem to “have their act together” and we say to ourselves, “That’s a good person.” This kind of thinking tends to blur what we should know to be true of the Gospel—that all men are, by nature, wicked and sinful, bound for hell and in need of a Savior. No matter how men appear on the outside, they are all the same on the inside—evil, “for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

The fact of the matter is that men, no matter how they may try, cannot reform themselves to the ultimate standard of God’s holiness, which is exactly what His law demands. A man may quit drinking, smoking, cursing, gambling, overeating, and a host of other vices, and, in the end, be worse off than he was before!

And why is this? It is because, once he reforms, his wicked heart pats him on the back and says, “You are now righteous.” This places him in even greater danger, for Christ “came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Mark 2:17).

As long as a man believes himself to be righteous, he cannot be saved. “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.” — Romans 3:10-11 — Pastor Paul Osborne (Lima OH)

Satan attacks us at our weakest points. Like a good fisherman, he baits his hook according to our appetites. I recently went on a fishing trip with my son, and was pleasantly surprised to pull in a good-sized walleye in the first five minutes. Later on, several experienced fishermen told me that I shouldn’t have caught that fish with “only a worm.” It wasn’t the right bait, but the fish was an easy catch. Far too often, we are spiritually like my walleye—easy catches, even on unsuitable bait. We must be on our guard. We must expect subtle temptations and violent assaults; we must set a watch before every gate that leads into our heart. What love Jesus showed to Peter, the apostles, and to us in His warnings about such attacks! As Proverbs 27:6 says, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.” How we need to realize that “there is a spark of hell in every temptation,” as William Gurnall put it. J. I. Packer said, “All Satan’s temptations are so many ‘welcome’ billboards along the broad road that leads to destruction.” Joel Beeke *Walking as He Walked*