

Let our hearts admit: "I am poor and weak.

Satan is too subtle, too cunning, too powerful for me — he watches constantly for advantages over my soul.

The world presses in upon me with all sorts of pressures, pleas, and pretenses.

My own indwelling corruption is violent, tumultuous, enticing, and entangling. As it conceives sin, it wars within me and against me. Occasions and opportunities for temptation are innumerable. Therefore, on God alone will I rely for my keeping. I will continually look to Him."

--John Owen

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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19. Q. Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression (Gen. 2:16, 17; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22).

20. Q. Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery (Rom. 5:12).

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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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DO THEY KNOW?

Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? John 7:25-26

The earthly ministry of our Lord provoked many questions in the unregenerate minds of those who heard Him and witnessed some of the His mighty works. These questions arise when the finite mind of fallen man tries to assess the appearance of that which presents them with no logical explanation. They examine evidence from which they cannot come to a conclusion in that they are blinded by the corruption of their minds and the god of this world. In this instance, they were observing both Christ and the reaction of the rulers to His words and ministering. If they so desperately wanted to kill Him, and they did, why were they allowing Him to speak so boldly. This provoked a question which was quickly dismissed through their own faulty logic.

Those whom John referred to here lived in fear of the rulers. They had the power to exclude them from the synagogue and this was, to them, unthinkable. So, the thought emerges. If they are not moving to silence such bold speaking from Him, could it be that they have concluded that He really is the Messiah? The question may not be without merit. The rulers sensed something about this man. It is certain that they hated Him. It is, also, certain they had been frustrated in their attempts to discredit Him. They could find no grounds to deny the miracles. He had a following that was varied and credible. Furthermore, He openly condemned both them and the system of false worship and legalism. But, then they heard such words as:

*For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Matthew 7:29. Officers sent to arrest Him had bowed to His authority rather than the rulers in saying, *The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. John 7:46.* It seems they had dealt with many problems before but had no ready answer to the one presented by the man, Christ Jesus.*

Having raised this question that the rulers may have had a change of mind, they quickly dismissed the idea: *Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. John 7:27.* William Hendriksen identified this argument as being a faulty syllogism: no one will know where the real Messiah comes from (untrue); We know where Jesus comes from (untrue); Jesus cannot be the Messiah (untrue). This is a classic case of man arguing the things of God from the limits of his own mind. Even so, their musing led them to the thought, expressed in v. 29, that only the Messiah could do “more miracles than these which this man hath done.”

Men often sound apologetic when the topic of human depravity arises. It has been said that “depravity does not mean that all men are as bad as they could be.” It is obvious that divine restraints on the world prevents the ultimate expression of the condition of men. We are, however, seeing it in many places in the world where the attempts to destroy the claims of faith are being violently expressed against the Lord’s people. The expression of human

depravity outwardly is seen in evil works, an evil mind, and the lack any spiritual inclination. The ultimate expression of it is rebellion against God and against His anointed. *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed... Psalms 2:2.* This begs the question: do they know who He is?

Paul wrote thusly of fallen men: *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Romans 1:18.* He went on to observe that "...they did not like to retain God in their knowledge..." The Lord presented a strong condemnation of these rulers and all who reject Christ and the Gospel in the Parable of the Vineyard. It is evident that rejection of the owner of the vineyard is the object of this message. The mention of the Son is of particular importance. What is evident is that those portrayed in the parable knew they were rebelling and against whom. Could it be then that the behavior of the rulers was more than mere confusion as to what action to take against Him?

In verses 28 and 29 of this chapter He exposed their error and strongly asserted both His identity and origin. The psalmist wrote: *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works,*

there is none that doeth good. Psalms 14:1. It has been suggested that the words here might be "there is no God for me," or defying His authority by saying "No God!" In any event, we can understand that they were operating from a position of weakness and had no power in the situation. Christ correctly identified them in declaring: *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do... John 8:44.* It is certain that the father of these rulers knew that Jesus was the Christ and hates Him. They had reason to be in fear of Him and so they continued in rebellion. But, they would not lay a hand on Him before the time. They were under His power then and would remain so.

Do we know who Jesus is? Do we understand the extent of His reign? Do we challenge men with the fact that they have no hope aside from His mercy and finding an interest in His redeeming work on Calvary? Those to whom we preach are in rebellion as is seen in their pursuit of sin rather than righteousness as it is in Christ our Lord. Shall we declare that He is God manifest in the flesh and has absolute reign over all? Shall we pray that rebellious hearts be broken, quickened, and seek His mercy. *But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Romans 2:8. bhs*

One of the lies the world continually presents is that you are not only in control, but that you indeed are your own master. You say to yourself, "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul." It makes for interesting poetry, but it also makes for a life that will fail in the most significant ways. You did not create yourself, and you cannot re-create yourself. Your value is not found in your uniqueness or your individuality. It is found in the God who created you in his own image. Yes, you are special, sacred really, but this is because you, in amazing ways, look like the God who made you. And this is not your uniqueness. In fact this is what makes you common—like every other person on earth. You were made by God, for God. Sadly, you do not live the life your Creator intended. You have often attempted to set the course of your life as if you were the captain. Such rebellion is what mars the image of God. You were created for a person and with a purpose, but you have often worked to undo much of that. But do not

despair. The God who creates also re-creates. He has caused you to be born again. He has given you a new heart. He has made you something new. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Cor. 5:17) To know God as Creator is to recognize that you are his creature. As a Christian you are doubly his, for he has made you and remade you for his glory. You truly are his workmanship. --Joe Thorn

The Sacrifice Has Been Accepted

If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have showed us all these things. (Judges 13:23) This is a sort of promise deduced by logic. It is an inference fairly drawn from ascertained facts. It was not likely that the Lord had revealed to Manoah and his wife that a son would be born to them and yet had it in His heart to destroy them. The wife reasoned well, and we shall do well if we follow her line of argument. The Father has accepted the great sacrifice of Calvary and has declared Himself well pleased therewith; how can He now be pleased to kill us! Why a substitute if the sinner must still perish? The accepted sacrifice of Jesus puts an end to fear. The Lord has shown us our election, our adoption, our union to Christ, our marriage to the Well-beloved: how can He now destroy us? The promises are loaded with blessings, which necessitate our being preserved unto eternal life. It is not possible for the Lord to cast us away and yet fulfill His covenant. The past assures us, and the future reassures us. We shall not die but live, for we have seen Jesus, and in Him we have seen the Father by the illumination of the Holy Ghost. Because of this life-giving sight we must live forever.

--C. H. Spurgeon

People do not drift toward holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith, and delight in the Lord. We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance; we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; we drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation; we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated. (For the Love of God)."

- D. A. Carson

"The first link between my soul and Christ is, not my goodness, but my badness; not my merit, but my misery; not my standing, but my falling; not my riches, but my need. He comes to visit His people, yet not to admire their beauties, but to remove their deformities; not to reward their virtues, but to forgive their sins." - C. H. Spurgeon

"Hell is full of sincere, religious people, never born again, and heaven is full of immoral people who repented and believed in Christ." - Steven Lawson