

“Does any man live more to himself, or less to God — than the proud man? Our very business is to teach the great lesson of self-denial and humility to our people — and how unfit is it then, that we should be proud ourselves!
We must study as hard how to live well — as how to preach well.”

Richard Baxter

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

25. Q. How did Christ, being the Son of God become man?

A. Christ the Son of God became man by taking to himself a true body (Heb. 2:14, 17; 10:5), and a reasonable soul (Mt. 26:38); being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her (Luke 1:27, 31, 34, 35, 42; Gal. 4:4), yet without sin (Heb. 4:15; 7:26).

26. Q. What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?

A. Christ as our Redeemer executeth the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of king, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation (Acts 3:22; Heb. 12:25; 2 Cor. 13:3; Heb. 5:5, 6, 7; 7:25; Ps. 2:6; Is. 9:6, 7; Mt. 21:5; Ps. 2:8-11).

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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

Volume 10, No. 6

February 5, 2017

FOLLOWING AND FINDING

He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour. Proverbs 21:21

We are made to marvel as we consider the way God delivers to us the gracious provisions He has ordained for us. When John wrote of the fullness of Christ, he included the thought of “grace for grace.” While many interpretations and applications of this phrase have been given, certainly the idea of grace given resulting in grace discovered is included. While we often think of the grace of salvation and all that it entails (election, justification, adoption, and regeneration), magnificent things attributed to the grace of God are manifested in the objects of His grace and mercy. John clearly understood that he was saved by grace and that he further had received grace to preach the Gospel with a compounding effect. Perhaps, this was the thought of Newton as he wrote “’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear” as an initial operation of grace, and then adding “And grace my fears relieved” in recounting the preciousness of being brought to believe the Gospel of God’s free and sovereign grace.

The wise man writes here in a similar manner. One does not follow after either righteousness or mercy apart from a work of regenerating grace. But, having been so awakened, the fact of a real work is evidenced in action. The word used here for “follow” is often used to indicate pursuit with hostile intent according to Strong. The thought of the pursuit of an avenger comes to mind. Certainly, there is no hostile intent here. It would seem to indicate the intensity of the pursuit as being born out of necessity in the individual. Paul’s testimony

concerning his preaching was that “necessity is laid upon me.” So, when righteousness and mercy are sought as a matter of the grace of necessity, greater grace is sure to be found.

To follow after righteousness indicates that one is seeking the very thing that separated Christ Jesus from all others in comparison. As in many things, there is no end to such a pursuit. The righteousness of Christ defies definition and is as infinite as His Person. The thought is not to be separated from His holiness which is to be an object of believing pursuit. *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Hebrews 12:14.* There are, however, things implied in the term as it is applied to the seeker. The thought of “rightness” is included in the thought. At the risk of sounding legalistic, we must be reminded that we are told what is right and no one has the right to be arbitrary with respect to the divine definitions of right and wrong. This is the aim of the saved; it is not in order to be saved. The thought further implies rectitude, or morally correct behavior and thinking. This is me thinking about me. We are reminded that “...we have the mind of Christ.” Included in that righteousness is a sense of attaining unto a justice in us that is consistent with the realization that we have been freely justified. And, we would be reminded of the words of Peter as he wrote: “...giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue...”

The co-object of pursuit here is “mercy.” Mercy is both realized and practiced. We know

well the words of our Lord: *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Matthew 5:7.* In countering the legalism and ritualism of the Pharisees our Lord quoted the Old Testament saying: *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. Matthew 9:13.* Our Lords deals in sovereign mercy: *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Romans 9:18.* Mercy is the determined method of God for dealing with His people and He will have mercy as an attribute of those with whom He is identified. So, it is to be followed after with a desire to its development both to us and in us.

Something of a summary thought is given us in the words of Micah: *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah 6:8.* If we might read this in reverse, as we walk humbly with God, we will be increasingly conscious of His mercy and love to show it, and we will do justly.

With such “following after” there is precious discovery. In the pursuit of things pertaining to God, we are inevitably lead to Christ our Lord. He is both pattern and embodiment of all that is

required of us. A most precious definition is given us in His prayer: *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.* In that it is eternal life it is ever being discovered to our ever-increasing joy. We are not merely alive or even merely saved. We are ever being increased: *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10.* It becomes a matter of Christian character that loving obedience is rendered and so, much is discovered: “I will write my laws in their hearts...” We are sweetly brought to Christ Himself as we pursue the things of God and truly righteousness is found, but not as a matter of law or pride; it is rather a delightful way of life in and with Him.

Third in the list of discovery is “honor.” At first look the believer may be uncomfortable with this. But, then we are reminded that there is no greater honor than to be identified as Sons of God. See 1 John 3:1. Even the world is able to detect the distinction as one, who by His grace, “follows after righteousness and mercy.” Paul, in the face of death, rejoiced at the thought of a “crown of righteousness.” We are infinitely honored at the identity of Christ in us. *bhs*

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”
2 Timothy 4:2-4

Worship and the Sermon – Dr. Ron Rumburg

“Preach the word” was Paul’s primary charge to Timothy for the last days. Paul was not a pessimist desiring to paint a bleak picture, but he was a future-oriented realist—“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure” (2 Tim. 2:19). This brings the importance of the sermon or preaching to our attention. Charles E. Jefferson in *The Building of the Church* reminds us:

“The sermon is the climax of public worship. It summons to the throne of God a larger number of faculties than any other act of worship. It calls upon everything within us to bless

God's holy name. The pastor of a church is preeminently a preacher. 'Feed my sheep,' so our Lord said to the leader of the twelve. It is a command which comes to all Christian pastors. 'God did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel,' so said the Master-builder, and let every man remember it, when he is tempted to shirk the arduous duties of a prophet and choose the easier occupations of a priest. The history of the nineteen Christian centuries confirms the wisdom of Paul's great declaration, that it has pleased God to save the world by the foolishness of preaching. Experience shows that when preachers cease to preach, a darkness falls upon the world."

What has happened to the sermon? We are being told by marketers, church growth experts and others that people don't want to be preached to or hear sermons. So what are the hirelings doing? They are consoling with ten to fifteen minute pep talks based on a lot of psychobabble. The rest of the service which they try to pass off as worship includes: drama that will entertain the senses, music that appeals to the feel good desires of the flesh, and interpretive dance that will appeal to the sight with an atmosphere that will suit the human fancy.

What has just occurred? The base part of man has received the appeal. There is a world system of evil we are not to love (1 John 2:15). There are three areas of caution—"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:16). Here is the spirit of the world system of evil summed up for us. "The lust of the flesh" refers to carnal man in his depravity. "The lust of the eyes" wherein the window to the mind is opened with suggestions to the depraved nature and here covetousness reigns supreme. "The pride of life" is self-centeredness and refers to all that ministers to human vanity. This was the sin whereby Satan fell. These elements are found in the first sin of man. Eve saw that the forbidden fruit was "good for food" which is "the lust of the flesh." She saw that the forbidden fruit was "pleasant to the eyes" which is "the lust of the eyes." And she saw that the forbidden fruit was from "a tree to be desired to make one wise" which is "the pride of life." This is what has happened to the sermon.

What are the primary elements of public worship commanded in the Bible? Jesus in John 4:23-24 extends the responsibility we have in worship. The Bible lays out the following elements for public worship: corporate adoration of the triune Godhead; the preaching of His Word; the singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs; the two ordinances observed when applicable; the receiving of tithes and offerings as well as prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. These are the elements the Bible gives of public worship. One of the primary elements is preaching the Word of God and this is the reason the pulpit is placed in the center. Whatever the new trend is against preaching, God has not changed our task, fellow preachers. It is still the same: According to 2 Timothy 4:1-4 we are charged before God and the Lord Jesus Christ to preach the Word with urgency in season and out, which includes reproving, rebuking, exhorting with patience and doctrine. We could say the time has come when they will no longer tolerate sound doctrine, but they are looking for and selecting teachers who will pander to their lusts and tickle their fancies. These have given up listening to the truth; God has turned them over fables or myths or fictions.

"Let not sermons be as jewels only to hang in your ears, but let them be locked up in the cabinets of your hearts." The puritan Wm. Jenkyn (1612-1685)

"A TREASURY OF PRAYERS LAID UP FOR OUR CHILDREN, MAY STAND THEM IN BETTER STEAD THAN THOUSANDS OF GOLD AND SILVER LAID UP FOR THEM." - REV. MATTHEW HENRY