

"First, you give God thanks for your conversion ... because you know in your heart that God was entirely responsible for it Secondly, You pray for the conversion of others...when you pray for unconverted people, you do so on the assumption that it is in God's power to bring them to faith." - J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*

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)

39. Q. What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A. The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are assurance of God's love, peace of conscience (Rom. 5:1, 2, 5), joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5, 17), increase of grace (Pr. 4:18), and perseverance therein to the end (1 John 5:13; 1 Pet. 1:5).

40. Q. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at their death?

A. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness (Heb. 12:23), and do immediately pass into glory (2 Cor. 5:1, 6, 8; Phil. 1:23; Luke 23:43); and their bodies being still united to Christ (1 Thess. 4:14), do rest in their graves (Is. 57:2) till the resurrection (Job 19:26, 27).

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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JOSEPH’S BONES

By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. Hebrews 11:22

The story of Joseph is one of the most memorable in the Old Testament. His coat of many colors has been romanticized and popularized, even in secular music. Volumes have been written regarding the narrative of his life. The lessons are many. We watch with delight the outworking of the providence of God as well as the development of one inspired of God and used mightily in the accomplishment of His purpose.

It is interesting that we note that there is little reference to Joseph in the New Testament. There is an indirect mention of him by John in that Sychar (in Samaria) was near the ground “that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.” Stephen cited significant parts of the story as he challenged his accusers of refusing Christ and the Gospel. He reminded them of the fact that the patriarchs had sold Joseph because of their intense resentment of him. He further shows Joseph as a picture of Christ and an exemplar of forgiveness. Lastly, Stephen pointed out that it was Joseph’s action that had brought the nation into Egypt where they grew into such a formidable group. All this despite the resentful brothers of Joseph. The only other New Testament mention of Joseph is found in our text.

There are two prominent figures in the Old Testament against which there is no sin or transgression recorded. Of course, we know that both were men and therefore come under the general assessment that all have sinned and

come short of the glory of God. But, this fact was not revealed to us in their character or their obedience toward God. Both rose to prominence in the lands of their bondage and were highly placed in the government of each. The blessing of the Lord upon them was highly respected by men who evidently did not know the Lord. We know nothing of the end of Daniel’s life, but the departure of Joseph is quite significant. While the whole story is most instructive, it is the end of the story that is most revealing of the life of this great man of God.

We marvel at the wisdom imparted to Joseph as it unfolded in Egypt. It was a wisdom that came from the Lord and he would quickly acknowledge that to be so. Pharaoh discovered him in prison to which he had come because of his integrity. Even there he maintained his faith in the Lord and languished until the proper time. Even the memory lapse of the butler to Pharaoh was part of the divine ordering of things. First came the dreams of Pharaoh followed by interpretations of Joseph. Then the recognition by Pharaoh that this man possessed powers that went beyond his own. Thus, Joseph was placed into the position where, not only would Egypt be spared a devastating famine, but also his family would be rescued. Thus, they were secured in Egypt until the time for them to go forth and claim the promised land. There they grew to be a formidable people and continued to prosper in circumstances that would, in time, be most undesirable.

When Jacob came to die, he extracted a promise from his sons that they would bury him in the land from whence he had come. Abraham had purchased the land. It was the place where his fathers and mothers and his wife were buried. Yet, the land itself remained a promise and not yet a reality. Joseph obtained permission and honored Jacob's wishes. His body was embalmed and then after the proper time borne out of Egypt. So, it might have been with Joseph. But, his faith assured him that he would likewise be interred in the land promised to Abraham. As we read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews we are reminded of many things wherein faith prevailed to respond to the will and purpose of God. There are things that would seem great to the minds of any. From the righteous offering of Abel, to the walk and ascension of Enoch, to those who were stoned and sawn asunder, we stand in awe of such God-given faith and of our God who gave it. Included in this catalog of the faithful is the simple statement of Joseph concerning his bones. Perhaps, by the record of Joseph's dying instructions, even the exploits of Moses were inspired. Thus, we are inspired to wait on the Lord and rejoice in Him!

It is at the end of Joseph's life that we see what had driven and sustained him all along. No doubt, Jacob had taught him very early that his forefather Abraham had received promise directly from the Lord that this land would one day be theirs. The confirmation of this had been given to his grandfather Isaac and then to Jacob himself. Such instruction had evidently been

received not as mere lore, but rather as Gospel truth. It would seem that, not only was redemption pictured in his actions, it was essential in Joseph's faith. So, according to his instructions his body was embalmed and remained in Egypt until the time of the departure he knew would come.

The time did come. *And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you. Exodus 13:19.* They would not leave without these bones. And, after nearly 200 years, having been carried through the Red Sea and the wilderness, the bones of Joseph were buried in the designated place: *And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph. Joshua 24:32*

How much more then shall we hear and believe and rest in the promise of our Lord: *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:3.* Was not the faith of Joseph similarly rested in no less than the Word of God and all that attended the promises given to Abraham. He has confirmed that promise to us by His resurrection from the dead and His ascension back into Heaven and the promise for which we, by faith, await. *bhs*

On the faithfulness of God:

“Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God” (Deut. 7:9). This quality is essential to his being, without it he would not be God. For God to be unfaithful would be to act contrary to his nature, which were impossible: “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself” (2 Tim. 2:13). Faithfulness is one of the glorious perfections of his being. He is as it were clothed with it: “O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?” (Ps. 89:8). So too when God became incarnate it was said, “righteousness shall be the

girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins” (Isa. 11:5). What a word is that in Psalm 36:5, “Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness unto the clouds.” Far above all finite comprehension is the unchanging faithfulness of God. Everything about God is great, vast, incomparable. He never forgets, never fails, never falters, never forfeits his word. To every declaration of promise or prophecy the Lord has exactly adhered, every engagement of covenant or threatening he will make good, for “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Num. 23:19). Therefore does the believer exclaim, “His compassions fail not, they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness” --Arthur Pink *The Attributes of God*

Christ came to give sinners access to the Father (Eph. 2:18). God sent His Son to redeem them for adoption as God’s children, and He sent His Spirit to make that adoption a heartfelt reality (Gal. 4:4–6). Therefore, when the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to pray, His first words were, “Our Father” (Matt. 6:9). The fatherhood of God is a consolation of infinite sweetness to the believer. Knowing God as our Father by adoption highlights the vast privileges of every Christian. William Perkins (1558–1602) said that a believer should esteem his adoption as God’s child to be greater than being the child or heir of any earthly king, since the son of the greatest emperor may be under God’s wrath, but the child of God has Christ as his older brother, the Holy Spirit as his comforter, and the kingdom of heaven as his inheritance. Yet few people realize this experientially. Perkins said: “At earthly preferments men will stand amazed; but seldom shall you find a man that is ravished with joy in this, that he is the child of God. But...we must learn to have more joy in being the sons of God, than to be heirs of any worldly kingdom.” –Joel Beeke *The Beauty and glory of the Father*

"Jesus calls us to humbly admit that the biggest danger to each of us is not the sin that lurks outside us, but the iniquity that still resides in our hearts. Once you admit this, you begin to get excited about God’s grace in Jesus Christ. If your biggest problem lives outside of you, you don’t really need grace, you just need situational or relational change. I understand why many people who call themselves Christians are not excited about grace. If you think your environment is your problem, you won’t esteem grace, but once you admit that you’re your biggest problem, you will celebrate the grace that rescues you from you." (see Mark 7:14-23)- Paul David Tripp

Being saved by grace alone, some actually falsely argue that Christians don't need to obey. It is as if they believed Jesus' continued intercession for us were ineffectual and his grace only delivers us from the guilt of sin but not its power... that while they rightly believe in the imputation of Christ's righteousness but wrongly ignore the impartation of His Holy Spirit to us. But the bible teaches that those who are in Christ have been set free from sin's captivity. The trajectory of our life is now one of following Christ and His commands. *From Monergism*