

"Grace ... eliminates boasting; it suffocates boasting; it silences any and all negotiations about our contribution before they can even begin. By definition we cannot "qualify" for grace in any way, by any means, or through any action." - Sinclair Ferguson, The Whole Christ, pg. 110

"The great mistake made by most of the Lord's people is in hoping to discover in themselves that which is to be found in Christ alone." - A. W. Pink

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)*

45. Q. What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?

A. The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law (Rom. 2; 14, 15, and 10:5).

46. Q. Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?

A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments (Deut. 10:4; Mt. 19:17).

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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

Volume 10, No. 16

April 16, 2017

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### PROVIDENCE AND PRAYER

*Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf. 2 Corinthians 1:10-11*

If we should look to extremes in every aspect of Christian experience, the life of the Apostle Paul is a great example. He would call attention to the terrible objectives he pursued before being arrested by our Lord and certainly his life following demanded the greatest of faith. His early experience with our Lord involved great depth of revelation and his ministry reached the heights of service in accordance with the Lord's will. It seems there was never a time of routine Christianity or service with him nor did his zeal for the things of the Lord and His glory ever wane. In the preceding verse, he expressed the fact of a life lived under the sentence of death. Truly, the enemy would have loved nothing more than to have silenced this powerful Gospel witness.

Many pay lip-service to the idea of divine providence while failing to recognize both divine involvement and purpose. Their disregard borders on fatalism. It is well to acknowledge that every aspect of creation and material existence is under the absolute control of a determined Sovereign. It becomes sweeter indeed that the determination of that Sovereign involves the redemption of a people upon whom He set His love from all eternity. Paul, very precious, taps into that aspect of faith that embraces all that has happened, experiences what is happening, and trusts the Lord for all that will happen. Robert Hawker wrote: “It is very blessed, when faith, from past

proofs of God's faithfulness finds strength for all future emergencies.”

Paul would use this confession of his personal faith as part of the validation of his apostleship in that such deliverances had the stamp of the Lord upon it. As we read the Book of Acts, we see many situations that are, humanly speaking, impossible. Of note, is Paul's reference to death as being great. It is certainly not his thought that his desired departure to be with the Lord was in view here. It was rather the wicked intent of the enemy and the desire to torture their victims. While Paul had been beaten many times, he perhaps had in view a most horrific death which he had approached often (see: *Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 2 Corinthians 11:23*). He attributes repeated deliverances to the Lord.

But, it was further to be noted that the threat was never removed. He seems to imply that at any time the hand of the Lord be removed that the enemy would immediately move to destroy in whatever way and manner available. And, with this comforting thought Paul had proceeded from calling to calling in the face of seen and unseen dangers with the confidence that the Lord would see His purposes through.

Paul's immediate situation speaks volumes regarding dedicated service. We are reminded

of: *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: Hebrews 12:28.* But, what does it mean to us? These things have not been inspired and preserved to present mere curiosities for future readers. It is rather that we should recognize that a similar pattern exists wherever there is faith manifested. The disciples asked the Lord to increase their faith. We do well to recognize that while we may not have suffered after the manner of Paul, we have been in danger all along the way; we are in danger at this very moment; and the completion of our journey would be prevented, if possible. It is the same faith that Paul had that enables a look behind with the inevitable witness, at any moment, to our present identity with our Lord and the assurance of all future hopes realized. John Newton credited grace for an entire lifetime of active providential care: "Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far and grace shall lead me home."

With thoughts of divine sovereignty and the absolutes of God it is easy for some to neglect prayer. Yet, while Paul attributes past, present, and future deliverances to the Lord, he acknowledges the aid of others through prayer. Many pose the question why preach when being presented with the truth of divine election. The objection might be raised that, If God is controlling all things, why pray? The answer to both questions should first be: because the

Word of God commands it. We are reminded of such passages as, *Pray without ceasing. 1 Thessalonians 5:17.* It had certainly been God's purpose that Peter was not to be executed, but much prayer was made for his deliverance. James referred to the praying of Elijah as being "effectual fervent prayer."

Among the wonders of salvation and the grace of God that obtained it is the fact that God chooses to work through the experiences of His people. It is unthinkable to presume that God, who ordained before the foundation of the world to send His Son to suffer and die for the sins of His people and to raise Him up again for our justification, needs us for anything. It is another manifestation of His love and mercy that He allows, yea ordains, our participation in the workings of His determinations.

Was the praying of those helping essential to Paul's deliverance in three tenses? Yes! We answer in the affirmative because it was God's purpose that those prayers should avail with God granting both deliverance to Paul and gratitude to God from those so praying. Prayer changes nothing as to God's purpose; it is rather that it is incorporated into God's purpose. Thus, God is glorified, Christ is exalted and all concerned are blessed of the Lord. *Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf. 2 Corinthians 1:11.* O that our prayers be offered with such urgency. *bhs*

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The fact of the matter is that none of us are grace graduates, including the man who is writing this devotion. We are all in daily and desperate need of forgiving, rescuing, transforming, and delivering grace. When you resist humble acknowledgment of your sin, you resist the ever-present Redeemer who is making that sin known to you. He does this not to humiliate or punish you, but because he loves you so much that he will not turn from his work of grace in your heart until that work has accomplished all that Jesus died to give you. There is little room for neutrality here. Today you will resist grace or you will humbly run to grace. May the latter be your choice.

--Paul David Tripp

You see, that is the way God has designed us. One of the most startling things about life is that it does not start with reason and end with faith. It starts in childhood with faith and is sustained either by reasoning through that faith or by blindly leaving the reason for faith unaddressed. The child's mind has a very limited capacity to inform it of the reason for its trust. But whether she nestles on her mother's shoulder, nurses at her mother's breast, or runs into her father's arms, she does so because of an implicit trust that those shoulders will bear her, that her food will sustain her, and that those arms will hold her. If over time that trust is tested, it will be the character of the parent that will either prove that trust wise or foolish. Faith is not bereft of reason.

In summary, therefore, faith in Jesus Christ is a cognitive, passionate, and moral commitment to that which stands up under the scrutiny of the mind, the heart, and the conscience. It is not an escapist grasp that comes to the rescue when life is out of control. It is recasting every threat and possibility that life presents into the design of God. This is why Jesus challenged the notion that more evidence would have generated more faith. George Macdonald said years ago that to give truth to him who does not love the truth is to only give more reasons for misinterpretation. – Ravi Zacharias

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### Will You See the Lord?

Many believe they may raise hell and harm people and live like the Devil, then rise to heaven to live in peace and love with God.

And no wonder! Such people may have membership in a religious sect – if they want it. When their lives are finished, religious people will honor them with a celebration of their lives. And clergymen will declare that God loves them, and that they have gone to their reward in heaven.

God's Word declares otherwise! It requires "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

To "pursue holiness" is first to pursue Christ Jesus, whom God made to be the holiness of all who are in Him (1 Corinthians 1:30).

To "pursue holiness" is also to obey the exhortation "be holy in all your conduct, because it is written [in Leviticus 19:2], 'Be holy, for I am holy'" (1 Peter 1:15). All who pursue Christ Jesus will do so.

To "pursue peace with all people" is to obey the exhortation "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Romans 12:18). All who pursue Christ Jesus will do so.

Therefore, none will see Jehovah but those who pursue Jesus Christ, and find in Him their holiness before God, and exemplify His holiness in their lives, and endeavor to live in peace with all people.

If you raise hell (as they say), you will sink to hell. If you harm people, God will harm you. If you live like the Devil, you will die forever with him. You will never see the Lord.

Will you see the Lord? – Daniel E. Parks