

"What will it cost a man to be a true Christian? It will cost him his self-righteousness. He must cast away all pride and high thoughts, and conceit of his own goodness. He must be content to go to heaven as a poor sinner, saved only by free grace, and owing all to the merit and righteousness of another." - J. C. Ryle

"People treat God's sovereignty as a matter of controversy, but in Scripture it is a matter of worship" - J. I. Packer

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)

58. Q. Which is the third commandment?

A. The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain (Ex. 20:7).

59. Q. What is required in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names (Mt. 6:9; Deut. 28:58), titles (Ps. 68:4), attributes (Rev. 15:3, 4), ordinances, (Mal. 1: 11, 14), word (Ps. 136: 1, 2) and works (Job 36:24).

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthjs@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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OUR GREATEST LESSON

But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: Ephesians 4:20-21

Many see Ephesians 4:17 as a dividing point in the epistle. It is easy to observe a shift to an emphasis on encouragement, exhortation, and application of the truth, previously expounded, to personal life. This the Apostle does by first summarizing the nature of Gentile behavior and the extremes to which it may be manifest. As aliens from the life of God, unregenerate men are given over to vanity, ignorance, blindness and hardness of heart, and inclined to work all manner of uncleanness and greediness. It is with that the Paul contrasts the infinitely more desirable life of God as it is in Christ.

I was blessed many years ago to obtain a copy of Philip Henry's book *Christ All in All*. Among the many chapters with titles beginning with the phrase "Christ is..." is one called "Christ is our Lesson." On revisiting it I found I had heavily underlined the chapter and was renewed in the thought that Christ is to be learned and that He will be learned by all who come to Him. The typical concept of a lesson is that of the presentation of facts presented in a meaningful way with some objective in view and then drilled into memory. Much of what we know has come because of such objective study. The thought of Christ cannot be distilled down to a collection of facts. He is not a natural law. He is not a skill to be mastered. He is an infinite person and will ever be being learned by those who know Him.

While many try to teach Christ in terms of fact and often offer proofs after the manner of

men. The Apostle assured us that men would never know God in that way. *For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 1 Corinthians 1:21.* A further revelation followed: *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14.* And yet, the indications are that He must be learned and that is implied, if not declared, in His prayer of John 17: *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.*

J. M. Boice observed three verbs and a context in this passage. He pointed out that learning is an activity and so we are subjected to it. The method is that we have heard Him. We are taught by none other than Christ Himself. And, it is not that we are merely taught about Christ and left to a decision; it is that we are taught in Christ. Thus, we are taught in the spiritual school of Christ and we are addressed as new creatures in Christ. The emphasis here is on a personal knowledge of Christ and not a mere collection of facts about Him. This does not say that we will not learn such or that we should not learn all that we can about Him, but all will be understood to be about One we know and love; it will be about He with whom our life is eternally bound. After all, He directed that we

should take His yoke and learn of (from out of) me.

The conditional (if so be that ye have heard Him) is not thrown to us with a mandate of compliance. It is the indicator that our knowledge of Him is genuine. Again, it is not merely about Him but Him that we hear. How often in reading the Word of God have we realized that it was not mere facts that were coming off the page to us; it was Christ speaking directly to us personally. I have not only experienced such, but have also heard of the same from many. I have sat under Spirit-filled preaching and had the sense that every word was being channeled directly to me as if there were no one else in the place. We would beware of such things as comes from many that “the Lord spoke directly to me” when the message was inconsistent with both the Word and the Spirit of it. In our meditations, how sweet it is to have the Lord Himself connect the scriptures in our hearts and minds. We are sweetly reminded that: *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: John 10:27.*

Paul adds here that you “have been taught by Him.” Some suggest that it might better read “in Him.” By this we understand an intimate

action on the part of our Lord and that it was and is His objective that we be taught to know Him in every aspect of His being. In this way, we will preciousy understand the divine attributes in Him and rejoice that they are engaged in our behalf. These things are being communicated to us in a way that no other can. It is such knowledge as defies human ability and is above all that we could imagine. It is knowing Him as He teaches us! He is the teacher, He is the lesson, and He is the place where the lesson is learned.

The statement is made in contrast to ungodly thought and behavior and so is positively declaring that those who know Christ have learned Him. Thomas was sweetly taught: *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14:6.* How increasing sweet do these words appear to us as we continue to learn Christ in this manner. While it is good that we are given specifics as to the manner of godliness, it is taught us by Him that His is the way of holiness and nothing less is acceptable. We dare not endeavor to learn incidentally or secondhandedly. We would hear from Him and we would learn HIM! *bhs*

WILDERNESS ENCROACHMENT

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. —Revelation 3:17 The wilderness encroaches on the fruitful field, and unless there is constant fighting off of this encroachment, there will be little or no harvest. I think it is exactly the same with the church, for as one of the old saints said, “Never think for a minute that there will be a time when you will not be tempted. He is tempted the most effectively who thinks that he isn’t being tempted at all.” Just when we think we are not being tempted, that is the time of danger, and so it is with the Church. We lean back on our own laurels and say, “That may be true of some churches, but it is not true of us. We are increased with goods and have need of nothing!” (see Revelation 3:17). This is to remind us that we must fight for what we have. Our little field of God’s planting must have the necessary weapons and plenty of watchmen out there to drive off the crows and all sorts of creatures, to say nothing of the little insects that destroy

the crops. We have to keep after them. We must keep our field healthy, and there is only one way to do that, and that is to keep true to the Word of God. We must constantly go back to the grass roots and get the Word into the Church. Lord, don't ever let us become complacent in Your blessing. Keep us vigilant that our field might stay healthy and the little weeds might never be allowed to take root. Amen.

--A. W. Tozer, *Tozer on Christian Leadership*

Arthur Pink on the Goodness of God

The goodness of God appeared most illustriously when he sent forth his Son "made of woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4-5). Then it was that a multitude of the heavenly host praised their Maker and said, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill toward men" (Luke 2:14). Yes, in the Gospel the "grace (which word in Greek conveys the idea of benevolence or goodness) of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). Nor can God's benignity be called into question because he has not made every sinful creature to be a subject of his redemptive grace. He did not bestow it upon the fallen angels. Had God left all to perish it would have been no reflection on his goodness. To any who would challenge this statement we will remind him of our Lord's sovereign prerogative: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" (Matt. 20:15). "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men" (Ps. 107:8). Gratitude is the return justly required from the objects of his beneficence; yet it is often withheld from our great Benefactor simply because his goodness is so constant and so abundant. It is lightly esteemed because it is exercised toward us in the common course of events. It is not felt because we daily experience it. "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness?" (Rom. 2:4). His goodness is "despised" when it is not improved as a means to lead men to repentance, but, on the contrary, serves to harden them from the supposition that God entirely overlooks their sin. The goodness of God is the life of the believer's trust. It is this excellency in God which most appeals to our hearts. Because his goodness endureth forever, we ought never to be discouraged: "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him" (Nah. 1:7). "When others behave badly to us, it should only stir us up the more heartily to give thanks unto the Lord, because He is good; and when we ourselves are conscious that we are far from being good, we should only the more reverently bless Him that He is good. We must never tolerate an instant's unbelief as to the goodness of the Lord; whatever else may be questioned, this is absolutely certain, that Jehovah is good; His dispensations may vary, but His nature is always the same." C. H. Spurgeon

"As straightforward as the word of God is, people continually have difficulty accepting the doctrine of election. The reason, again, is that they allow their preconceived notions of how God should act (based on a human definition of fairness) to override the truth of his sovereignty as laid out in the scriptures." - Dr. John MacArthur