

Choice discoveries of the wondrous love and grace of Jesus are most tenderly vouchsafed unto believers in the times of grief. Then it is that he lifts them up from his feet, where, like Mary, it is their delight to sit, and exalts them to the position of the favored John, pressing them to his breast and bidding them lean on his bosom. The love of Christ in its sweetness, its fullness, its greatness, its faithfulness, passeth all human comprehension. Heaven on earth is abounding love to Jesus. This is the first and last of true delight to love him who is the first and the last. To love Jesus is another name for paradise. Spurgeon

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM
AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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60. Q. What is forbidden in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning and abusing of any thing whereby God makes himself known (Mal. 1:6, 7, 12; 2:2; 3:14).

61. Q. What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?

A. The reason annexed to the third commandment is, that however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment (1 Sam. 2:12, 17, 22, 29; 3:13; Deut. 28:58, 59).

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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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A FATHER UNTO YOU

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

2 Corinthians 6:17-18

We often read or hear of someone who is searching for a birth parent. Such have discovered that the people they have known as parents are not in fact their biological parents. The desire to know of their origin is understood, but the truth is that the biological parent has never functioned as a parent to them. This text addresses not merely an origin, but the function of a parent; in this case, it is the perfect parent and we do well to respond in kind to the relationship herein described. We may think of the universal Fatherhood of God as our creator to be sure. But, the relationship to those who are “born again” as the children of God know a relationship that none other does. When the Word quotes Him as saying “I will be a Father unto you,” He is speaking of function and not mere origin.

Sadly, it seems that many think of God and the fatherhood of God as being at a distance from them. As one searches his ancestry he is likely to find many, from whom he descended but never knew. Such is the empty claim of many and may remain as they have disconnected thoughts of God while calling Him Father. Such is the case for one who does not know his birth parents. It is not so in being graciously and effectually brought to know God as our Father. The relationship is discovered to be eternal and as such takes on a vastly different identification with God. It is realized in Christ and involves personal action and

interaction.

It is true that the Bible reveals many aspects of our relationship with God. Indeed, we are exhorted to remember our Creator. It is in Christ our Lord that we realize all things that are true about Him and we learn to function accordingly. We hail Him as the Sovereign of the universe. We delightfully bow to Him as our King. We sit at His feet and are taught by Him as our Prophet. And we acknowledge Him as our Great High Priest and by His Spirit are drawn out in true faith and learn of our salvation. It is enough that all this and more is true and yet, there is more. In verse 16 of this chapter the declaration is that “...I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Grateful subjects we are. But, the chapter is concluded with the endearing thought that He will be to us a Father; and so, He is.

We would first make the connection that Christ did in teaching us to pray. He taught that we should begin with the acknowledgment of the Fatherhood of God. “Our Father which art in Heaven...” It should attract our attention that the plural possessive pronoun is here used. If He is “our Father,” then most assuredly He is my brother’s Father and my sister’s Father as well. And, in private prayer I may address Him confidently as “my Father.” In that it was Christ speaking and using the term we would understand that He is also the “God and Father

of our Lord Jesus Christ!" And we rejoice that we have the actions of the Father toward the Son and the devotion of the Son toward the Father lived out before us in the Gospels. In that we are in Christ, we are elevated to the same place of attention, affection, and care as was Jesus our Lord. And, all that He became and did in obtaining our redemption He did as the Son in obedience to His Father. Because of that we are made partakers of His nature.

Our Lord's instruction as to prayer and this exhortation of Paul have the end in view that we should be conscious of the aim of God in relating to His people. It is to our benefit that we separate from those things wherein our sensitivity to the Fatherhood of God is dulled. But, then we are comforted in being reminded that earthly fatherhood has a divine example. Christ reminded that even earthly fathers know how to give good things to their children; and then reminded us that our Heavenly Father was infinitely better at it. The Psalmist depicted us as being under the watchful eye of God as to our needs: *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. Psalms 103:13.* A most tender example of being a father was given us in the example of David. His beloved son Absalom had rebelled against him and

would have killed him. Yet, David instructed his military leaders with regard to their dealings with Absalom: *And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom. 2 Samuel 18:5.*

We must never lose sight of the fact that we were, by nature, constituted as the enemies of God. Yet His eternal purpose is that He should display the perfect love of a Father and that we should respond to Him as dear children. Are we aware, as we should be, that this is the aim of God and not a reward for any action on our part? This is the work of grace in salvation that He should be unto us in every way a Father (and perfectly so) and that we should respond as children and not mere subjects.

The words of Jesus to Mary Magdalene are profound: "...I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God." It is no small matter to be identified with our Father as He who has begotten us unto a lively hope and is eternally functioning as "Our Father which art in Heaven." *bhs*

When I hear professing Christians say that since God is love He would never violate our free will (btw, a concept not found in the Bible)... my first thought is to ask:

"So you are troubled that God did for you what you couldn't do for yourself? Is Hell better than being saved? In everyday life we keep our children back from things that would harm them. Why? We do it because we love them. If this is true for our children, how much more God? So if God rescues us, in spite of our willful disobedience, it springs from His great mercy and love. But if His love toward us were based on a condition we have to meet, it would, by definition, be neither loving nor gracious."

It is better to reach important doctrinal positions by being biblically informed, rather than relying on unaided human reason or emotional appeals. Monergism

A Word to Those Who Pierced Jesus Christ

Consider two prophecies in God's Word.

The first is in Zechariah 12:10: "And I [Jehovah] will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him [Jesus Christ] as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn."

The second is in Revelation 1:7: "Behold, He [Jesus Christ] is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen."

Every one of us has pierced Jesus Christ!

Some pierced Jesus Christ physically. These include those who crucified Him, and all others complicit with them in this deed. They pierced His head with their crown of thorns, His hands and feet with their spikes, His side with their spear.

All have pierced Jesus Christ spiritually. When we refuse to believe His gospel, we pierce His heart with our unbelief and rejection, and identify ourselves with those who pierced Him physically.

The first prophecy above tells us that some will look on the Christ they pierced, and then mourn unto salvation. This prophecy has been fulfilled (see John ch.19 and Luke 23:43, 47). It is still being fulfilled in those who see the pierced Christ and believe in Him through the preaching of His gospel (as in Acts ch.2). Are you one of them?

The second prophecy above tells us that some will look on the Christ they pierced and mourn – but too late for salvation (see Revelation 6:15-17). Will you be one of them? – Daniel E. Parks

"Sin always aims at the utmost. Every time it rises up to tempt or entice us — if it has its own way, it will go out to the utmost sin in that kind. Every impure thought or glance — would be adultery if it could. Every thought of unbelief — would be atheism if allowed to develop. Every rise of lust, if it has its way — would reach the height of villainy. Sin is like the grave, which is never satisfied. The deceitfulness of sin is seen in that it is modest in its first proposals — but when it prevails, it hardens men's hearts, and brings them to eternal ruin." John Owen

"That which once was — will be no more. Yesterday will never come again. Today is passing away — and will not return. You may work while it is day; but when you have lost that day — it will not return for you to work in. While your candle burns, you may make use of its light — but when it is done, it is too late to use it." Richard Baxter

"Everything that a man leans upon but God — will be a dart that will certainly pierce his heart through and through. He who leans only upon Christ — lives the highest, choicest, safest, and sweetest life." Thomas Brooks