

A man's most glorious actions will at last be found to be but glorious sins, if he hath made himself, and not the glory of God, the end of those actions."

- Thomas Brooks

Let self-righteous men praise themselves, but he who has been made righteous by grace renders all the praise to the Lord.

~ Charles Spurgeon

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM
AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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64. Q. Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?

A. Before the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-14); and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath (Ps. 118:24; Mt. 28:1; Mk. 2:27, 28; Jn. 20:19, 20, 26; Rev. 1:10; Mk. 16:2; Lk. 24:1, 30-36; Jn. 20:1; Acts 1:3; 2:1, 2; 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2).

65. Q. How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

A. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day (Ex. 20:8, 10), even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days (Ex. 16:25-28; Neh. 13:15-22); and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship (Lk. 4:16; Acts 20:7; Ps. 92:title; Is. 66:23), except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy (Mt. 12:1-13).

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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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BETTER THINGS

*But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.
Hebrews 6:9*

We live in an age of presumption. The most minimal indications of religious interest lead many to conclude that such mere professors are eternally secure. Of course, if any effort of man could lead to salvation then the least of activity would avail something. True believers pray as did the Psalmist: *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Psalms 19:13.* This would certainly hold true regarding any presumptions that work around the Word of God. While many lay claims to salvation with less evidence, it would seem that the reference here is to the presumption of salvation based on something less than the grace of God.

Hebrews 6:4-6 has been a troubling passage to many including this writer. We will not attempt to offer here a full explanation, or to discuss the various positions on the passage. We will note some things regarding the obvious. The possibility of religious experience that closely imitates the evidences of salvation exists. *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, Hebrews 6:4-5.* At this point we are reminded of the Parable of the Sower and the “stony ground hearers” in particular: Our Lord described them as they who with joy receive the Word and having no root,

are offended and do not continue. An ominous note is added here in that Hebrews 6:6 declares the impossibility of renewing such fallen ones to repentance. Further comment follows in verses seven and eight as to a very undesirable scenario and so the basis for comparison is given.

In addressing these people as “beloved” the writer of Hebrews confirms these as did Peter to those whom he wrote: *Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: 2 Peter 1:1.* We are not told of the relationship of the writer of Hebrews to these people, but an evident knowledge and identity with them is indicated. They were beloved in the sense that John characterized it in writing: “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” These he perceived to be the elect of God in much the same way that Paul expressed the thought to the Thessalonians: *Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. 1 Thessalonians 1:4.* John Gill preciously wrote: “The apostle addresses the believing Hebrews, as “beloved”; being beloved by the Lord, not as the descendants of Abraham, but as the elect of God, and so as loved with an everlasting love; and which might be known to themselves, by its being shed abroad in their hearts, and by their being called by grace, and by their love to him, and to his people: and from hence they might conclude

they should not fall away, as the apostates before spoken of; since, in consequence of being beloved by God, they were chosen in Christ unto salvation; Christ was given to die for them; they had the Spirit sent down into their hearts; they were justified, pardoned, and adopted; nor could they be separated from the love of God: and the apostle also so calls them, because they were beloved by him..."

The word "better" (used twelve times in Hebrews) expresses comparison. Here it is that the things that accompany salvation are better than the things expressed in the preceding verses. This persuasion was not mere wishful thinking. It was the result of spiritual evidence as in the case in other places such as Paul in I Thessalonians 1. We note also a similar confidence with the Romans: *And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. Romans 15:14.* John Gill made a distinction between grace and gifts saying of this persuasion: " he was persuaded they had the true grace of God; whereas the above mentioned persons had only gifts, when in the height of their profession; and the least degree of grace is better than the greatest gifts men can be possessed of: grace makes a man a good man, not gifts; a man may have great gifts and not be a good man; grace is useful to a man's self, gifts are chiefly useful to others; grace makes men fruitful, when gifts

leave them barren in the knowledge of Christ; grace is lasting, when gifts fail, and cease and vanish away; grace will abide the fire of persecution, when gifts will not; grace is saving, gifts are not..." From the Old Testament prophet we read: *Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow. Isaiah 50:11.*

The things that accompany salvation continue as surely as does true salvation. They are what defines salvation in biblical terms and relationships. The love of the true believer is the same love wherewith Christ loved and loves us. The faith of God's elect does not stop short of laying hold on eternal life in Christ our Lord. So, it is that we are reminded of divine predestination and its end; it is to be conformed to the image of Christ our Lord. And so, it follows in fact and experience that these are they who are called, justified and glorified in Him. These are eternally sanctified in such a way that there can be no falling away. They are the possessors of better things which are all of grace and such defines their way of life to those of "like precious faith."

Presumption is fatal in the end. "Better things" are the purchase of the blood of Christ and assure our hearts in that all are found in Christ Jesus our Lord. *bhs*

The thought of Grace – J. I. Packer, *18 Words*

The thought of grace, then, is the key that unlocks the New Testament; and it is the only key that does so. However well we may know the wording of the New Testament, we cannot get inside its meaning till we know something of what grace is. This is why so many people find the New Testament bewildering and baffling (especially the letters of that great champion of grace, Paul) and why they so easily misunderstand it. Persons, even religious persons, ignorant of grace who try to read the New Testament as a book of moral maxims, or mystical aspirations, cannot make head or tail of it. Every book of the New Testament is part of a great organic analysis, historical and theological, of the fact of grace, and must be read as such. We cannot make sense of the New Testament

in any other terms. Unhappily, however, the meaning of grace is not well appreciated today. For the past century and more, this topic has been so neglected by some, and mishandled by others, that the clear and profound understanding of it which the Reformers and Puritans and eighteenth-century Evangelicals bequeathed to their posterity has almost vanished from the British religious scene. The word 'grace' remains as part of our religious vocabulary, and we regularly hear it used in public prayer ('grant us the help of thy grace ...', 'give us grace that we may ...'). But to many it suggests only vague notions of a celestial battery-charge administered through the sacraments, while to more (one fears) it signifies nothing whatsoever. And meantime many practise in the name of Christianity forms of religion which frustrate and deny the grace of God completely. Both the legalism of the Roman Catholic doctrine of depending for salvation on loyalty to an ecclesiastical system, and the moralism of the liberal Protestant doctrine that all will be saved who try, even a little, to be good, spring from the same root cause – failure to grasp the meaning of grace. No need in Christendom is more urgent than the need for a renewed awareness of what the grace of God really is. Christians long to see reformation and revival in the churches; today as yesterday, it is only from a rediscovery of grace that these blessings will flow.

Until the Holy Spirit is again given His rightful place in our hearts, thoughts, and activities, there can be no improvement. Until it be recognized that we are entirely dependent upon His operations for all spiritual blessing, the root of the trouble cannot be reached. Until it be recognized that it is "Not by might, (of trained workers), nor by power (of intellectual argument or persuasive appeal), but by MY SPIRIT,' saith the Lord" (Zech. 4:6), there will be no deliverance from that fleshly zeal which is not according to knowledge, and which is now paralyzing Christendom. Until the Holy Spirit is honored, sought, and counted upon, the present spiritual drought must continue. May it please our gracious God to give the writer messages and prepare the hearts of our readers to receive that which will be to His glory, the furtherance of His cause upon earth, and the good of His dear people. Brethren, pray for us.

A. W. Pink, (The Holy Spirit)

SHE GAVE ALL SHE HAD; GOD GAVE ALL SHE NEEDED.

"Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury [a box for collections] and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites [the smallest coin], which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood'" (Mark 12:41-44).

Some have heard this story and then asked, "What did she live on afterward?"

What did she live on afterward? The same thing she lived on before! And the same thing she lives on now – two thousand years later! The unlimited resources of Jehovah, who tenderly loves and graciously maintains the faithful. – Daniel E. Parks