

"Christians are in themselves no wiser than are other men. What they have, they have by grace. They must be 'all things to all men.' But it is not kindness to tell patients that need strong medicine that nothing serious is wrong with them."

- Cornelius Van Til

"Today sin is called sickness, so people think it requires therapy, not repentance."

- John MacArthur

## 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)*

98. Q. To whom is baptism to be administered?

A. Baptism is to be administered to all those who actually profess repentance towards God (Acts 2:38; Mt. 3:6), faith in and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to none other (Acts 8:12, 36, 37, 38; 10:47, 48).

99. Q. Are the infants of such as are professing believers to be baptized?

A. The infants of such as are professing believers are not to be baptized, because there is neither command or example in the holy scriptures, or certain consequence from them to baptize such (Ex. 23:13; Pr. 30:6; Lk. 3:7, 8).

### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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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. 43

October 22, 2017

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### THE VALLEY OF DECISION

*Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. Joel 3:14*

In these days of “decisionism” it is certain that passages such as this provide much fuel for the preaching of those who would abandon the sovereignty of God and appeal rather to the will of man as the key to salvation. In so doing they proceed without shame to abandon all sense of context whether historical or theological and apply such thoughts to their inventions thereby falsely claiming the authority of the Word of God. I once listened to a man announce the following text: *And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him. Mark 11:4.* He proceeded to draw attention to the phrase “where two ways met” and spent the rest of his message exhorting his audience to choose the right way and so make a decision. He passed over the connection to our Lord’s triumphal entrance into Jerusalem and certainly never mentioned the cross. While this is an extreme occasion (most are not so completely devoid of substance) it does point to the violence often done to the Word of Truth in order to propagate a false gospel which is not the gospel at all.

To any degree that the ability or will of man is claimed as an essential to salvation one places a limitation on God and His grace in salvation. So, it is that many distort scripture and avoid those things that declare the absolute sovereignty of God. In particular, we would call attention to those things dealing with the justice and judgment of God. They seem to have no idea of the meaning of such passages as, *Justice*

*and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face. Psalms 89:14.*

We would note here that this is the only occurrence of the word “decision” in the King James Version of the Bible. No doubt, some would construe this as a meeting in order to make a decision. In fact, there is only one decision in question. It is a decision that has never been in question in that God does not change and this reference is to the Lord and His Day. In our courts we often are found waiting for a judge to hand down a decision. It is here that the ultimate decision is being handed down. It is not something the Lord recently came to or something that was arrived at by arbitrary means. It is the day of reckoning for all who have opposed God and His Son Jesus Christ the righteous.

It is apparent that there are many views as to the prophetic meaning and placement of that which is described here. I will not venture any thought as to placing the event herein described in the context of popular positions regarding things to come. What is apparent is that such a time is at hand in which the world will continue in their opposition to God and the Gospel as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The indications here is that “multitudes, multitudes” are not coming to hear of terms or condition. They are coming to war against the Lord and His people. While that is their intent, it is all according to His purpose and they are being assembled by Him to know of and experience His eternal decision against all

unrighteousness and they who pursue its practice.

This passage is certainly not unique in declaring the certainty of divine judgment and the eternal punishment that is rightfully executed. The prophets by both declaration and implication are united in revealing the intolerance of God for sin and rebellion. The New Testament writers pick up the refrain and bring emphasis to this truth that the mercy of God may be declared. It is certain that those who think of themselves as worthy in any way despise mercy and do not have any idea of the fierceness of His wrath revealed. He is longsuffering, but will render vengeance in all matters.

Should there be any doubt, it is removed as we are pointed to the cross. The certainty of judgment is certified to us by the resurrection of Christ. *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Acts 17:31.* Two things are immediately declared in this statement. The first is that Christ was raised from a death which the world does not understand. His death was the result of His suffering for the sins of His people. The same judgment reserved for those brought to the

“Valley of Decision” was poured out on Him at the cross in the behalf of those who come to God by Him. All that the Father gave to Him will come to Him because the reason of their estrangement from Him has been taken away – their hell has been suffered. They come by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit thus being delivered from this present evil world and unto eternal life with Him.

The second thing is precious to all who come to Him in that His resurrection from the dead assures that He is alive forevermore and, so they live in Him. It further certifies that all that is evil and hateful to the Lord and His people will fall under His judgment in the Valley of Decision and so be dispatched to receive the results of their decision.

Are we being witness to the “multitudes” arraying themselves against the Lord? They seem to be marching forth from every corner of society. We witness the openness of sin and rebellion in our land and over the world. They would normalize what God hates. They will be discovered in the end receiving the “decision” that is without recourse – *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Matthew 7:23.*

Remembering the warning of John the Baptist, we must preach Christ as the only way to “flee from the wrath to come.” *bhs*

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"We understand that nothing poses a greater threat to our well-being than the holiness of God. Left to ourselves, none of us would invent the God of the Bible, the being who is a threat to our sense of security more primal and more fundamental than any act of nature. Martin Luther and the other Reformers understood the holy character of this God. For them, the recovery of the gospel was such good news because they knew the trauma of holiness and that the only way to endure the presence of this holy God's judgment is to be covered in the holiness and righteousness of Christ."

- R. C. Sproul

"He who is armed with the power of God will not tremble at the noise raised by the world."

- John Calvin, Commentary on Paul's Epistles to Timothy

## WHAT DOES GOD SAY?

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. —2 Timothy 3:16 I knew a man from India who got hold of a New Testament, was converted and started to preach, but he had no background at all. That is, he started from scratch. He did not have a Greek Orthodox or Roman Catholic or Protestant background. He just started from the beginning. He didn't know anything about churches. He testified, "What I did when I had a problem in the church was to go straight to the New Testament and settle it. I let the New Testament tell me what I was to do." The result was that God greatly blessed him and his work in the land of India. This is what I would like to see in our church—the New Testament order of letting Scripture decide matters. When it comes to a question—any question—what does the Word of God say? All belief and practices should be tested by the Word; no copying unscriptural church methods. We should let the Word of God decide. Lord, help us to lead our churches to seek clear direction from Your Word and Your Spirit. Amen.

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

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## THE SUPREME INVESTITURE

Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto Me!" — Matthew 28:18 What an empire is this! Heaven and earth — the Church militant — the Church triumphant — angels and archangels — saints and seraphs are under Christ's supreme authority! At His mandate: the billows were hushed — demons crouched in terror — the grave yielded its prey! "Upon His head are many crowns!" He is made "Head over all things!" Yes! over all things, from the minutest — to the mightiest. He holds the stars in His right hand — He walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, feeding every candlestick with the oil of His grace, and preserving every star in its spiritual orbit. The Prince of Darkness has "a power," but it is not an "all power." Satan is potent — but not omnipotent. Christ holds him on a chain! He has set bounds that he may not pass over. "Satan," we read in the book of Job, "went out (with permission) from the presence of the Lord." Satan "desired" to have Peter that he might "sift him;" but there was a mightier agency at hand: "I have prayed for you," Jesus said to Peter, "that your faith will not fail!" Believer, how often is there nothing but this grace of Jesus, between you and everlasting destruction! Satan's key may be fitting the lock in your wayward heart — but a stronger than the strong man is barring him out! The power of the adversary fanning the flame — the Omnipotence of Jesus quenching it! Are you even now feeling the strength of your corruptions, the weakness of your graces, the presence of some outward or inward temptation? Look up to Him who has promised to make His grace sufficient for you; "all-sufficiency in all things" is His promise. It is power, too — in conjunction with tenderness. He who sways the scepter of His universal empire "gently leads" His weak, and weary, and burdened ones! He who counts the number of the stars — loves to count the number of their sorrows! Nothing is too great — and nothing is too insignificant for Him! He paves His people's pathway, with love!

MacDuff, John. Meditations from MacDuff