

"What is it about your own miserable works and doings that you think you could please God more than the sacrifice of His own Son?" — Martin Luther

"Man is never sufficiently touched and affected by the awareness of his lowly state until he has compared himself with God's majesty." --- John Calvin

"Adoption is the highest privilege of the gospel. The traitor is forgiven, brought in for supper, and given the family name." ---J. I. Packer

BENJAMIN KEACH'S CATECHISM

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

Q. 5. How do we know that the Bible is the Word of God?

A. The Bible evidences itself to be God's Word by the heavenliness of its doctrine, the unity of its parts, its power to convert sinners and to edify saints; but the Spirit of God only, bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in our hearts, is able fully to persuade us that the Bible is the Word of God. (1 Cor. 2:6,7,13; Ps. 119:18, 129; Acts 10:43, 26:22; Acts 18:28; Heb 4:12; Ps. 19:7-9; Rom. 15:4; John 16:13,14; 1 John 2:20-27; 2 Cor. 3:14-17)

Q. 6. May all men make use of the Scriptures?

A. All men are not only permitted, but commanded and exhorted, to read, hear, and understand the Scriptures. (John 5:39; Luke 16:29; Acts 8:28-30; 17:11)

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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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ASKING FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? Luke 11:13

This chapter begins with a request from the disciples that the Lord teach them to pray. It is obvious that they sensed something of great importance by observing Him and the earnestness, intensity, and duration of His praying. They had observed the fact that John the Baptist taught his disciples to pray. What followed was what is commonly called The Lord's Prayer which is in fact a pattern for praying for them and to all who would properly seek audience with Him. The lines that follow have often been recited and are known by heart by many. Yet, sadly they remain just that with many and lack the life and fervor that characterizes true prayer.

In seeking to instill this need in their hearts He adds two parables. In the first the issue is importunity and asks them to put themselves in the place of one needing to borrow three loaves of bread at midnight. The point is made in that the friend will not respond because of friendship, but will because of persistence in the request. The matter of importunity conveys the degree of urgency and necessity in the request and so should we convey our needs to the Lord.

The second parable is quite profound in its application. It is often observed that an earthly father is devoted to the care and provision for his family and will be responsive to the needs and requests of his children. He will give him fish and eggs rather than serpents and scorpions. See vv. 11-12. This thought carries over into our text with the divine observation that those

acting in what seems an acceptable way are, in fact, evil.

Inserted between the two parables is the threefold injunction to ask, seek and knock (v. 9). It is understood that these are to be continual and reflect attitudes in importunity. It is further then that the willingness of the Father to give good things is a reason of confidence that the thing sought might indeed be granted.

We return then to the thought, “If ye then, being evil...” It is as if He is saying that you, being totally depraved, have the capacity to do things that are relatively good. Such behavior by a caring earthly father is approved by the world and reckoned as honorable. Our Lord's purpose here is not to commend the behavior of earthly fathers; it is rather to declare the excellent willingness and care of our heavenly Father. Our heavenly Father will be more responsive than the friend approached at midnight and will give better things to His children than any earthly father. The declaration concerning the earthly fathers gives way to a question which invites us to wonder at “how much more” our heavenly Father does.

Such is the thought expressed by the Apostle in Romans 5. We certainly marvel that God commended His love to us while we were yet sinners. Paul declared the compounding of grace by using the phrase “much more” five times in this chapter. By “much more” we shall be saved from wrath. “Much more,” being reconciled to God we are saved by His life. By

“much more” the grace of God abounds to many. “Much more,” is realized in the abundance of grace and righteousness by which we reign. And, we are ever reminded that “where sin abounded, grace did ‘much more’ abound...” Inserted along the way is the fact that “not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement.”

The “much more” of God has infinite dimension. Who can put a measure or a limit on the blessedness we receive at our Father’s hand? In that it is applied here to the gift of the Holy Spirit we certainly could imagine none greater. Such a statement as this often elicits the response that we receive the Holy Spirit in regeneration and are in fact regenerated by Him. That being accepted, we understand this passage in the light of what Christ was teaching by these examples followed by His promise to those asking, seeking, and knocking. It is evident that those “pricked in their hearts” on the day of Pentecost had been quickened by the Holy Spirit. But, there was further promise of the Holy Spirit to follow their repentance and baptism. Such was the promise to “as many as the Lord our God shall call” Acts 2:38-31.

While we understand that God the Holy Spirit is a person and as such is responsive to the heirs of salvation, we look to those actions of

His through which we are most gloriously benefited. While He may be grieved, He is also to us intercessor, guide, respondent, and illuminator. He speaks to us through the Word. He is the source of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Thus, by Him the very nature of Christ is perfected in us and we are made to be accepted in the beloved. He is given that we might know true repentance and faith, that we might have power and enabling in the things of God, and that we might better be able to glorify the Father who gave Him and the Christ who redeemed us. It is He who speaks to us of Christ and so is the facilitator to us as we would “Grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Having realized these things and so much more, we have the ultimate object of our prayers. Regarding the things of this material world, our Lord taught that we should “seek ye first the Kingdom of God,” with the promise that “all these things shall be added unto you.” Shall we not desire to have Him through whom the will of God in our lives may be realized. Our Father is here characterized as One who loves, and cares as does no other. How shall we not ask for what our Lord refers to as “much more” in every way? *bhs*

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN scarcely a person in the Anglo-Saxon world would not have been able to cite John 3:16. Doubtless it was the best known verse in the entire Bible. It may still hold pride of place today—I am uncertain. But if it does, the percentage of people who know it is considerably smaller, and continues to decline as biblical illiteracy rises in the West. Meanwhile there is another verse that is (perhaps more) frequently quoted, almost as a defiant gesture, by some people who do not know their Bibles very well, but who think it authorizes their biases. It is Matthew 7:1: “Do not judge, or you too will be judged.” In an age when philosophical pluralism is on the ascendancy, these nine words might almost be taken as the public confession. Three things must be said. First, it is striking that today’s readings include not only Matthew 7 but also Genesis 7. There the sweeping judgment of the Flood is enacted: “Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; men and animals and the creatures that

move along the ground and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark” (Gen. 7:23). The same God stands behind both passages, so we should not be too hasty in understanding Matthew 7:1 to mean that all judgment is intrinsically evil. Second, this is not an instance where something practiced in the Old Testament is somehow abolished in the New. It is not as if judgment was possible in Genesis but is now abolished in Matthew. After all, Matthew 7:6 demands that we make judgments about who are “dogs” and “pigs,” and the paragraphs at the end of this chapter warn against false prophets (and tell us how we are to discern who is true and who is false), and who is truly a follower of Jesus and who is not. Moreover, not only does this chapter speak of a terrible judgment no less final than the flood (Matt. 7:13, 19, 23), but there are many passages in the New Testament that are equally uncompromising. Third, we must not only expose false interpretations of Matthew 7:1, we must understand what it does say and appropriate it. The verb judge has a wide range of meanings, and the context (7:1-5) is decisive in giving it its color in this passage. People who pursue righteousness (6:33) are easily prone to self-righteousness, arrogance, condescension toward others, an ugly holier-than-thou stance, hypocrisy. Not all are like that, of course, but the sin of “judgmentalism” is common enough. Jesus won’t have it. –D. A. Carson in *For the Love of God (Vol. 1)*

Concerning revival Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote:

You must become aware of your need, of your impotence, of your helplessness. You must realise that you are confronted by something that is too deep for your methods to get rid of, or to deal with, and you need something that can go down beneath that evil power, and shatter it, and there is only one thing that can do that, and that is the power of God.

We need the Holy Spirit. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of the Spirit of God for the lives of Christians. In the words of Jesus, the Spirit is the “living water” who satisfies our deepest desires with the streams of Christ’s redemptive glory (John 4:10–14; 7:37–39). Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) said, “The sum of the blessings Christ sought, by what he did and suffered in the work of redemption, was the Holy Spirit.”¹ Christ died to take away the curse and to give us the Spirit (Gal. 3:13–14). This emphasis on the Spirit, if handled biblically, does not detract from the glory of Christ. The Spirit is the glorifier of Christ (John 16:14). Just as His Person cannot be separated from the Father and the Son in the blessed Trinity, so His work is essential to the salvation of those whom the Father chose and the Son purchased by His precious blood. –Joel Beeke (Reprinted from a previous Report)

Ultimately, there are only two ways to preach—by exposition or by imposition. Either your preaching explains the God-intended meaning of the text or it sinfully imposes human speculation onto the text. –H. B. Charles, Jr.