

The boundless stores of Providence are engaged for the support of the believer. Christ is our Joseph, who has granaries full of wheat; but He does not treat us as Joseph did the Egyptians, for He opens the door of His storehouse and bids us call all the good therein our own. He has entailed upon His estate of Providence a perpetual charge of a daily portion for us, and He has promised that one day we shall clearly perceive that the estate itself has been well-farmed on our behalf and has always been ours. The axle of the wheels of the chariot of Providence is Infinite Love, and Gracious Wisdom is the perpetual charioteer. —Charles Spurgeon

### BENJAMIN KEACH'S CATECHISM

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

Q. 7. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man. (2 Tim. 3:16,17; John 20:31; Acts 24:14; 1 Cor. 10:11; Eccles. 12:13)

Q. 8. What is God?

A. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. (John 4:24; Ps. 147:5; Ps. 90:2; James 1:17; Rev. 4:8; Ps. 89:14; Exod. 34:6,7; 1 Tim. 1:17)

#### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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WXTH-LP 101.7 FM— In Richwood

#### Services:

Sunday Morning Bible Study -- 10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship -- 11:00 AM

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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### COMMITMENT

*And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever. Exodus 21:5-6*

If we had no other reference to this passage it would provide us with a beautiful picture of love and devotion leading to absolute commitment. This was incorporated in the earliest of the body of laws given to Moses as preparations for the governing of the Nation of Israel were being made. The servant (slave) in question would have been freed after six years and so was under no legal constraint to continue. The terms of his release were that if he came into slavery with a wife, she would go free with him. If he married while in slavery his family would remain in servitude. Thus, the argument could be made that his motivation to submission was his family. However, as we look at the declaration his love for his master is mentioned first. In revisiting this issue in Deuteronomy, Moses does not mention the family, but does include the thought that he will remain “because he loveth thee and thy house...”

The mere mention of slavery often results in thoughts of oppression and the evils that are often part of the practice. But, such is not the case here, nor is it so in the testimony of Paul and the submission of our Lord to the cross. There is a voluntary component to the action of the slave here and in those who are so found in the service of Christ our Lord. Our thoughts are directed to Paul’s description of the submission of Christ: *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and*

*was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Philippians 2:7-8.* The term used here for servant is the same elsewhere understood as slave in either the literal or spiritual sense. While we may observe and be moved by desirable behaviors in others, when Christ is seen as the ultimate example, we are compelled to attention. No doubt, this was the effect on Paul, James, Peter, and Jude as they each began epistles with the claim that they were the servants (slaves) of Jesus Christ our Lord.

As a believer whose confidence is rested in God and His absolute sovereignty and who believes that He does as He wills in all circumstances, I gladly and gratefully acknowledge that all proper motivations in His people and their outcomes are of all of Grace. We observe the submission in Christ and hear the exhortation of Paul to “let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” That being said, we believe that “we have the mind of Christ,” and as such, we experience the same motivation exhibited in Him. Thus, when we speak of voluntary action, we refer to that which springs up in us because of redemption (we are His and bought with a price and obedience is demanded), and regeneration (we are partakers of the divine nature resulting in delightfully voluntary compliance).

Therefore, as we study this example in the Old Testament we should have no problem emulating the committed servant. As we look to the figure several things come to mind, Not the least of which is the devotion of the servant to his master and the expression of his desire to serve him for life. This leads us to wonder concerning the profession of many. It should cause us to examine the terms under which we are bound to Christ our Lord. Upon belief on the Lord Jesus Christ we may justly claim to be saved. The implications in that belief are that He has redeemed us and that we are His. By so much we are claiming to be the eternal possession of a loving Master, and we are committing to serve Him forever as one who exclusively possesses our affection and our devotion.

I have heard men describe their conversions as if God beat them into submission. When in fact we learn that it is the “goodness of God that leads to repentance.” The example of Paul upon his arrest was immediate and voluntary servitude and commitment.

We would note that the location of the mark on the body of the servant was his ear. This pointed to the fact that the words of the master were to be heard and acted upon. John Newton wrote, “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer’s ear.” I would submit to you that any

words of Jesus falling on a believer’s ear are compelling unto gracious and precious obedience.

It is also to be noted that the slave was taken to the door post of the house and there had his ear fastened to the house. It was “through his ear unto the door.” This temporary fastening backed up the claim that he loved his master and his house (Deuteronomy 15:16). So, his attachment was to his master and all that pertained to him.

Although we here speak of servitude and commitment, we would not neglect the many other relationships a believer enjoys with his Lord. The very word Lord speaks of our commitment to Him. But, what delight we experience as we think with David that “I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Finally, we would note that the slave asked his master to keep him, knowing full well that he would bear that mark of servitude forever. Have we asked to be marked in such a fashion? While Paul bore the literal marks of his service in his body, much more did our Lord.

All are a slave to something. But, thanks be unto God; in Christ our bondage is liberty and we freely serve. *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.* Romans 6:22. *bhs*

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## WHAT IS GOD’S greatest attribute?

I once listened to a series of conference messages on the attributes of God. The first speaker said, “I know it’s wrong to exalt one attribute above another, but if we could, I would exalt the holiness of God.” The next speaker said, “I know it’s wrong to exalt one of God’s attributes above another, but if we could, I would exalt the sovereignty of God.” As I listened I thought to myself, And I would exalt the love of God. Of course all three of us would be wrong. As the two speakers said, we should not exalt any of God’s attributes above the others. All of them, in their infiniteness, are essential to His being. Take away any one of them—say, His omnipotence—and God ceases to be God. God minus omnipotence is not God, just as God minus holiness is not God. Having said that, there’s something about the love of God that should astound us as sinners. His greatness causes us to stand in awe. His holiness lays us prostrate in the dust. His

wisdom calls forth our admiration. But His love, rightly understood, causes us to gasp in amazement. It's not without reason that Charles Wesley penned those memorable words, "Amazing love! How can it be that Thou my God shouldst die for me?" We can understand God's love to a worthy object, but it's the fact that He loves sinners that so astonishes us.

--Jerry Bridges in *The Joy of Fearing God*

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...I am persuaded that the problem with the body of Christ is not that we are dissatisfied with what we do not have, but that we are all too satisfied with what we do have. We are comfortable with a little bit of holiness, a little bit of ministry, a little bit of sacrifice, a little bit of wisdom, a little bit of the satisfying glory that only the grace of Christ is able to give us. I am deeply persuaded that we must resist with all of our might the kind of self-satisfied spirituality that marks the life of so many believers. And I am further persuaded that this pseudo-spirituality is one of the cruel deceptions of a wily enemy. What is the danger of this kind of spirituality? It never results in truly Christ-centered, grace-driven, God-glorifying, heart-satisfying righteousness. True righteousness only ever begins when you come to the end of yourself. Only when God leads you to the place where you begin to abandon your own agenda and false righteousness, does true righteousness take hold. And only then can a passion for selfless service and true worship begin to grow in your heart.

--Paul David Tripp in *Broken Down House*

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Do I "know His name?" Acquainting myself with God, am I now at peace? Do I feel that His loving-kindness is better than life? Amid the brokenness of nature's cisterns — am I turning with earnest longing to the infinite and only satisfying fountain-head, like the deer panting for the waterbrooks? All other objects of earthly love and enjoyment are perishable. But "the name of the Lord is a strong tower — the righteous runs into it, and is safe." "Great is the blessing," says one who knew well that Name, "that the anchor of our love is firmly fixed beneath the cross of Christ! —John MacDuff

If God had perceived that our greatest need was economic, He would have sent an economist. If he had perceived that our greatest need was entertainment, He would have sent us a comedian or an artist. If God had perceived our greatest need was political stability, He would have sent us a politician. If he had perceived that our greatest need was health, he would have sent us a doctor. But he perceived that our greatest need involved our sin, our alienation from him, our profound rebellion, our death; and he sent us a Savior. - D.A. Carson

**EVERY TRUE PROGRESS IN CHURCH HISTORY IS CONDITIONED BY A NEW AND DEEPER STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES.... WHILE THE HUMANISTS WENT BACK TO THE ANCIENT CLASSICS AND REVIVED THE SPIRIT OF GREEK AND ROMAN PAGANISM, THE REFORMERS WENT BACK TO THE SACRED SCRIPTURES IN THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGES AND REVIVED THE SPIRIT OF APOSTOLIC CHRISTIANITY. —PHILIP SCHAFF**