

"Jesus had little trouble reaching the harlots, the thieves, robbers, criminals, outcasts, and sinners of society, including the tax collectors and the extortionists, but He had an almost impossible time reaching the religious, self-righteous, moral people who were under the illusion and self-deception that because of their goodness, everything was OK between them and God. They recognized no sin, so they needed no Savior. That is always the danger of morality. Morality creates an illusion of safety when in fact the person who is moral may be in the greatest danger of all." - Dr. John MacArthur

BENJAMIN KEACH'S CATECHISM

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

Q. 35. What is effectual calling?

A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He does persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel. (2 Tim. 1:9; John 16:8-11; Acts 2:37; 26:18; Ezekiel 36:26; John 6:44,45; 1 Cor. 12:3)

Q. 36. What benefits do they that are effectually called, partake of in this life?

A. They that are effectually called, do in this life partake of justification, adoption, sanctification, and the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them. (Rom. 8:30; Gal. 3:26; 1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 8:31,32; Eph. 1:5; 1 Cor. 1:30)

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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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A PERSONAL CALL TO WORSHIP

Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Psalms 103:1-2

How easily the words “praise the Lord” roll off the lips of many. The statement is often made with reference to some ordinary feeling of relief or on receiving some benefit pertaining to the flesh and may or may not be of any great consequence. Sadly, in any case the thought is of self and the reference to the Lord is casual at best and does not truly engage the soul in praising our Worthy Lord. While believers know the “joyful sound” and have been engaged in the true worship of God, it is to be feared that even they may express words of praise that are not that at all.

The Psalmist reminds us that our references to our triune God are to take on a note that is unheard by those of the world: *Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand; Psalms 149:5-6.* This exhortation is not to mere praise, but to “high” praise and emanating from joyful saints. The mention of the “two-edged sword” suggests that our praise is informed by none other than the Word of God. So, it is that we are called to attain to greater knowledge of our Lord that we may praise more.

Matthew Henry observed “This Psalm calls more for devotion than exposition...” and we would cling to that thought as we proceed. The example of David is worthy to be followed in that he stirs up his very soul to consider the wonders of the Lord, His person, and His work. William Plumer wrote that “David calls on his

soul, his immortal nature, and all that is within him, his inward part, or inward thought, meaning all his senses and faculties.” With the focus on the external things of religion, this manner of devotion is often passed over. Missed in the process is that most awe-inspiring experience of soul in which it becomes totally absorbed in the Lord Himself. We are often exhorted by others to praise and worship, but here we are encouraged to speak to ourselves – to engage in what Spurgeon called “self-communion.”

Our Lord posed the question as to what a man would give in exchange for his own soul. Thus, it is designated as to be the most valuable thing we have. In looking to David’s address to himself, John Gill called it “...His better part, his soul, which comes immediately from God, and returns to Him, which is immaterial and immortal, and of more worth than the world.” Thus, David would look to the best interests of his soul knowing of his dependence upon the Lord, His mercy, and His grace. There was, no doubt, much that David (and for that matter, we) did in the interest of praising the Lord in external expression. But, he understood and so must we that “unless the spirit and soul of a man, is engaged in the service of God, it is of little avail (Gill).”

So, the soul is called upon to bless the Lord and to bless His Holy Name. “Jehovah is worthy to be praised by us in that highest style of adoration which is intended by the term ‘bless’

(Spurgeon).” *All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee. Psalms 145:10.* When the Lord blesses His saints, there is benefit to them realized that could have come from no other. When we bless the Lord, we add nothing to Him nor do we enhance His position in any way. Yet, it becomes us to have “put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” So, should we have our souls drawn out in acknowledgment that He is God and there is none else. We should be caught up in admiration of His majesty, His might, His power, and His beauty. We hesitate to use the word “adulation” in that it is defined as excessive admiration or praise. But, there can never be enough said or thought concerning God whose wonders defy description. Thus, we allow our souls to reach for the heights of understanding knowing that He is incomprehensible. How delightful it is for the soul to be fully engrossed in adoration in that the deepest love and respect is due Him above all. It is important that we confess that He is worthy of all the above without regard to any benefits received. Indeed, “He is altogether lovely!

The name of the Lord stands for all that He is. We are not merely considering a symbolic title – His name declares Him. Thus, we pray

“Hallowed be thy Name,” desiring that it be so with us and that we desire it to be universally known. We sing “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God almighty.” O that it might spring from within our very souls. Might it call forth the full measure of faith, of hope, of love, joy, and all the fruit of the Spirit; truly His name inspires such within and among the saints. Truly, we behold the “glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,” and further rejoice that we are able to be directed to stir up our souls to “Bless the Lord.” *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; Philippians 2:9-10.* And, we “Bless His Holy Name!”

Many would claim the benefits without the experience of soul-worship. Yet, this experience called forth is as the result of the wonders of this “so great salvation” graciously bestowed. Claiming David’s expression here, “all that is within me” is to be drawn out and expressed to all that He is and ever shall be, our glorious King. Our view of Him is now hindered, but we have the promise of the eternal increase in the knowledge of Him and our ability to say and respond to, “Bless the Lord O my soul.” *bhs*

Some say “God helps those who help themselves.”

They who can help themselves do not need God to help them.

Saints speak differently.

First, we acknowledge ourselves as helpless, and look to Jehovah alone for help: “The helpless commits himself to You” (Psalm 10:14).

Second, we acknowledge Jehovah as our Helper: “Hear, O Jehovah, and have mercy on me; Jehovah, be my helper!” (Psalm 30:10); “Behold, God is my helper” (Psalm 54:4).

Third, we acknowledge Jehovah as our Help: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1).

Fourth, we acknowledge Jehovah as more than sufficient as our Helper and Help: for He says “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

Is God your Helper and Help? Or do you instead trust in yourself? – Daniel E. Parks

THE JOYFUL TRANSFORMATION

Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy!" — John 16:20 Christ's people are a sorrowing people! Chastisement is their badge; "great tribulation" is their appointed discipline. When they enter the gates of glory, Christ is represented as wiping away tears from their eyes. But, weeping ones, be comforted! Your Lord's special mission to earth — the great errand He came from Heaven to fulfill, was "to bind up the brokenhearted." Your trials are meted out by a tender hand! He knows you too well — He loves you too well — to make this world tearless and sorrowless! "There must be rain, and hail, and storm," says Rutherford, "in the saint's cloud." Were your earthly course strewn with flowers, and nothing but sunbeams played around your dwelling, it would lead you to forget your nomadic life — that you are but a pilgrim and sojourner here. The tent must at times be struck — the movable tabernacle taken down, pin by pin, to enable you to say and to feel with the spirit of a pilgrim, "I desire a better country!" Meantime, while sorrow is your portion, think of Him who says, "I know your sorrows!" Angels cannot say so — they cannot sympathize with you, for trial is a strange word to them. But there is a mightier than they, who can. All He appoints for you, and sends to you — is in love. There is a provision and condition wrapped up in the bosom of every affliction, "if need be!" Coming from His hand, sorrows and riches are to His people equivalent terms. If tempted to murmur at their trials — they often murmur at disguised mercies. "Why do you ask me," said one, on his deathbed, "what I like? I am the Lord's patient — I cannot but like everything which He does." And then, "your sorrow shall be turned into joy!" "The morning comes" — that bright morning when the dew-drops collected during earth's night of weeping shall sparkle in its beams; when in one blessed moment, a lifelong experience of trial will be effaced and forgotten — or remembered only by contrast — to enhance the fullness of the joys of immortality! What a revelation of gladness! The map of time disclosed, and every little streamlet of sorrow, every river will be seen to have been flowing heavenwards — every rough blast to have been sending the ship nearer the haven! In that joy, God Himself will participate. In the last "words of Jesus" to His people when they are standing by the triumphal archway of Glory, ready to enter on their thrones and crowns, He speaks of their joy as if it were all His own. "Enter into the joy of your Lord." Reader, may this joy be yours! Sit loose to the world's joys. Have a feeling of chastened gratitude and thankfulness when you have them; but beware of resting in them, or investing them with a permanency which they cannot have. Jesus had His eye on Heaven when He added, "Your joy no man takes from you!"

--John MacDuff

O God our glorious Father! With You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared. While we were still sinners, objects of Your just and holy wrath, You loved us and sent Your Son to die for us. You reached out in Your mercy to relieve our misery, and in Your grace to forgive our guilt. And now through Jesus we call You "Abba, Father." Create in our hearts that sense of filial fear that will cause us to worship and adore You because of Your love to us. Again we praise You through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

--Jerry Bridges