

A story I heard years ago pretty well sums up what I say in this book. An undernourished boy was found on the city street and taken to a hospital. After the nurses had bathed him and dressed him, they put him to bed and brought him his dinner tray. Conspicuous on that tray was a large glass of milk. The boy's eyes lit up as he reached for the glass, but then he paused and, looking at the nurses, asked a question that broke their hearts: "Can I drink all of it?" It was obvious that back home there was never enough of anything. It makes me think of the woman who stood watching the Atlantic Ocean and said, "It sure is good to see something that there's plenty of!" Too many Christians are living like paupers when Christ has made us rich! Isn't it time we stopped living on substitutes (even religious substitutes) and started drawing on the riches we have in Christ? My friend—Be Rich! —Warren W. Wiersbe

BENJAMIN KEACH'S CATECHISM

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

Q. 37. What is justification?

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone. (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:19; Phil. 3:9; Gal. 2:16)

Q. 38. What is adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. (1 John 3:1; John 1:12; Rom. 8:16,17)

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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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YE ARE MY WITNESSES

Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. Isaiah 43:10

The concept that many have of witnessing is far removed from that indicated here. The uttering of religious catch-phrases in selective company bears witness to one's inclination to religion or to a specific church but falls far short of the divine purpose in being a witness. In fact, we might be careful in using the term “witnessing” in that so many differing concepts arise in the minds of men and most of them are superficial to say the least. The terms that are used in this text call for a deeper understanding of what it is to be a witness and to whom and to what we are bearing witness.

The message here begins with an identification of Jacob as the chosen of the Lord. Having already dealt with many issues in which the chosen people had been soundly condemned for their idolatrous disobedience, the indications here are that the message is to the faithful both then and now. In the preceding verses to this text, several issues are called out to which the people of Jehovah would indeed give testimony. In verse 4 we read of the impact of Lord's dealing with the faithful: *Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Isaiah 43:4.* This assures us that this is not a call to the nation in general; it is rather to those, the objects of His eternal love, that the call is made. Some essential witnesses so summoned are those upon whom a miracle has been worked: *Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and*

the deaf that have ears. Isaiah 43:8. We who know the Lord have an obvious identity with these in that we were both blind and deaf and are brought forth by His mercy and grace both seeing and hearing those things which the world cannot.

Of great importance here is that the nations are summoned to see if they can produce evidence of any among them who could either reproduce the miracle of regeneration or who could produce things that had before been declared and then have come to pass. It is in contrast with such as these that the Lord here identifies those who are “My Witnesses.”

They are here identified as the Israel that sees and hears (Keil and Delitzsch). Also, K&D stated that this was not a calling out of; it is rather a call to a judicial proceeding. It is in this sense that we understand that herein is a summons to testify. There is no doubt that the children of Israel were well schooled in the things of their history. Of special notice is that which had been told to Abraham concerning their sojourn in Egypt and the subsequent deliverance at the appointed time. Other things of both a positive and negative nature had been predicted and had occurred in their history to that point. This much they knew by experience and could bear witness accordingly. No others could register such a claim.

But, it is to the being and existence of God that the most powerful witness was to be given. And, it is to this end that a special identity is

given. The term witness speaks for itself. Such can tell what they know. But these are the possession of the Lord. First, and foremost, they are His by right of redemption. We must ever be remembering that we are not our own, we are “bought with a price.” But, also, these are they whom He would have to know Him and to believe Him. Of these it could be said that they had seen and heard Him and that they were endeared to Him and Him to them. Their knowledge of Him went beyond mere human powers of observation. Spiritual identity is here implied if not stated.

“My Servant” here introduces a second subject. Often this is a second term used for the same thing. K&D seem to think it makes reference to the more deeply spiritual among the Israelites. Matthew Henry implies that the references is to Christ. *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. Isaiah 42:1.* Henry would read it “Ye are my witnesses and so is my servant whom I have chosen.” This would certainly connect with the identity of Christ in: *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our*

sins in his own blood, Revelation 1:5.

As the redeemed of the Lord we are all “His Witnesses” and it is to Him we bear witness. John the Baptist first identified in this way: *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. John 1:6-7.* We are ever directed to the words of our Lord to the disciples just prior to His ascension: *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts 1:8.* We are reminded of the words of the Psalmist: *Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; Psalms 107:2.* We are the living evidence of the miraculous work of our Creator and our Redeemer. We were not only saved and called; we have been summoned to bear witness before the world that “before Him there was no God formed...” and *I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour. Isaiah 43:11.* The early disciples responded to that summons and great power attended their way. O that the witness of the saints might again resound through the land! *bhs*

PRAY FOR HIS FAME

“Pray then like this: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.’” (Matthew 6:9)

Dozens of times Scripture says that God does things “for his name’s sake.”

“He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” (Psalm 23:3)

“For your name’s sake, O Lord, pardon my guilt.” (Psalm 25:11)

“He saved them for his name’s sake.” (Psalm 106:8)

“For my name’s sake I defer my anger.” (Isaiah 48:9)

“Your sins are forgiven for his name’s sake.” (1 John 2:12)

If you ask what is really moving the heart of God in all those statements (and many like them), the answer is that God delights in having his name known and honored.

The first and most important prayer that can be prayed is, “Hallowed be your name.” I used to think this is an acclamation. Like, “Hallelujah! The Lord’s name is hallowed!” But it’s not an acclamation. It’s a petition. Actually a kind of imperative or command. Lord, let it be! Cause it to be. May your name be hallowed. This is my request, my prayer. I am urging you to this: Cause people to hallow your name. Cause me to hallow your name!

God loves to have more and more people “hallow” his name. That’s why his Son teaches Christians to pray for it. In fact, Jesus makes it the very first and paramount prayer. Because this is the first and great passion of the Father.

“Lord, cause more and more people to hallow your name,” that is, esteem, admire, respect, cherish, honor, reverence, and praise your name. More and more people! So, you can see it is basically a missionary prayer.

--John Piper

By asking that the name of God be “hallowed,” Jesus is asking God to so move and act in the world that people value his glory, esteem his holiness, and treasure his character above all else. We must not miss this: Jesus’ first request is not that his personal needs be met, but that God’s glory and holiness be known and loved as it deserves. What a remarkably God-centered prayer.

Second, “hallowed be your name” is also an evangelistic petition. This opening line of the Lord’s Prayer is a clear reminder to us that when any sinner comes to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and his or her sins are forgiven, God’s holy name is shown to be evermore holy in the eyes of the church and of the world. And the more people there are who come to know Christ, the more people exist who revere God’s character and hallow his name. Thus, God’s saving of a sinner shows God’s glory and, in turn, the saved sinner proclaims to the world the excellencies of the God who saved him. God’s name is thus hallowed in the world.

Al Mohler *The Prayer that Turns the World Upside Down*

There are but too many Christians who would consecrate their vices, and follow their corrupt affections, whose ragged humor and sullen pride must pass for Christian severity; whose fierce wrath, and bitter rage against their enemies, must be called holy zeal; whose petulance towards their superiors, or rebellion against their governors, must have the name of Christian courage and resolution. -- But certainly religion is quite another thing, and they who are acquainted with it will entertain far different thoughts, and disdain all those shadows and false imitations of it. They know by experience that true religion is a union of the soul with God, a real participation of the divine nature, the very image of God drawn upon the soul, or, in the apostle’s phrase, “It is Christ formed within us.” Briefly, I know not how the nature of religion can be more fully expressed, than by calling it a divine life...

--Henry Scougal