

"No one who enters heaven deserves to be there; no one who enters hell deserves anything different." - Joel Beeke

"Regeneration is inseparable from its effects and one of its effects is faith... The embrace of Christ in faith is the first evidence of regeneration and only thus may we know that we have been regenerated...We are NOT born again by repentance or faith or conversion: we repent and believe because we have been born again." - John Murray

BENJAMIN KEACH'S CATECHISM

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

Q. 41. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

A. The souls of believers are at death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory, and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection. (Heb. 12:23; Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:8; Luke 23:43; 1 Thess 4:14; Is. 57:2; Job 19:26)

Q. 42. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the Resurrection?

A. At the resurrection, believers become raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity. (Phil. 3:20,21; 1 Cor. 15:42,43; Matt. 10:32; 1 John 3:2; 1 Thess. 4:17)

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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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EFFECTUAL FAITH

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Mark 11:23

When we read in James that “...the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” the exercise of faith in such a man is assumed. Faith in such a case would be in response to a desperate need and would believe the needed resource to be found in the One to whom the prayer is addressed. We witness the progression here of faith, then prayer and then success. By such examples we are greatly encouraged in both righteousness and prayer. Peter referred to the “trial of your faith” and so we realize that faith is not a mere state of mind. It is the gift of God and like all that God provides, it is to be used for His glory.

The words of our Lord here encourage us to become aggressive in pursuit of the things of God and the propagation of the Gospel. We understand the words to be figurative, unless a literal mountain might stand in the way of accomplishing something of God’s will and purpose. There are things that present themselves in the life of believers that might appear more formidable than any mountain. The message here is that true faith is not uncertain either as to its source or to its effectiveness in claiming the power of God to accomplish that which is needed.

Faith does not act indiscriminately. It has respect to what is said or promised in the Word of God. It is certain that Jesus never engaged in the spectacular as the manner of some is. While His works are called wonderful they were always

done with a specific object in view – often the display of mercy to those in dire need. Paul’s prayer was often for increased comprehension of the power of God with a view toward drawing upon it (Ephesians 1:18-20).

We clearly understand that it is God which works in us both to will and to do. Yet, in the walks of life we are often called upon to respond rather than explain. It is a marvel of the grace of God that the inclination to look to the merits of Christ and the power of God has been wrought in us and in defense of this we would resist the obstacles to faith.

Christ once said to a man “all things are possible to him that believeth” to which he responded, “help thou mine unbelief.” The man received the thing for which he prayed and that perhaps because of the confession of unbelief. This may indicate to us as to where to begin in combating unbelief and claiming what our Lord directed here.

There are several places where we are so taught. The disciples often marveled at what Jesus did. In this case it involved cursing the fig tree and seeing it wither so quickly. But, it occasioned the further revelation to them: *And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. Matthew 21:22.* There is something of an absolute in such statements that raises a question at our own ineffectiveness. In response to the disciples request to “increase our faith,” we read, *And*

the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you. Luke 17:6.

Many of us will surely confess to reading such passages (promises) and immediately doubt our ability to believe with such intensity. Perhaps it is because we forget the essential aspects of such direction. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. John 15:7.* In abiding in Him, we are delivered from the capriciousness of men who use such terms as "I threw up a prayer," or "toss one up for me." I am often asked to "say a prayer for me" as if it were a mere recitation of words rather than a desperate appeal to Almighty God. Faith lays hold on Christ our Lord and is exercised in such effectual prayer. The situation of Daniel and the lions seemed to be impossible to all observers. But, the end result was otherwise: *...So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God. Daniel 6:23.* We carefully note that he was delivered because he believed. One would argue that it was never the will of God that Daniel be devoured by Lions and they would be correct. The God-given faith of Daniel was such

that he believed and that was the means God used to deliver him.

James writes of something for which we should look to the Lord: *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. James 1:5-6.* The alternative is human reasoning and that engenders confusion at best. If we would be "movers of mountains" we need both the wisdom and the power of God. The Psalmist wisely wrote: *Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Psalms 37:4.* Christ and His glory are the desire and delight of every true believer.

The writer of Hebrews encourages us in this manner: *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Hebrews 10:22.* With such assurance as this we would claim the promise: *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. John 14:13.* The fact that such belief and prayer is tied to the Father being glorified in the Son is duly noted. *bhs*

DUTY OF LOVE TO GOD

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." [Deut 6:5]

In this manner the Bible commands the chief of all duties. No reasons are assigned for the requirement. No proof is adduced that God exists, or that he possesses such perfections as entitle him to the supreme love of his creatures. Jehovah steps forth before the subjects of his government, and issues his command. He waits for no formal introduction. He lifts up his voice with majesty. Without promise, and without threat, he proclaims his law, and leaves his subjects to their responsibility.

From the manner of this announcement, we may derive instruction. It is not necessary that we should enter into a formal demonstration that God exists, or a formal investigation of his attributes, before we begin the duty of loving him. We already know

enough of him for this; and to postpone the performance of the duty until we have completed our investigations, is to commence them with unsanctified hearts, and in rebellion against God. From the dawn of our being we have had demonstrations of God's existence and character, blazing around us like the light of noonday. The heavens and the earth have declared his glory; his ministers and people have proclaimed his name; he is not to us an unknown God, except so far as our minds are wilfully blind to the displays of his glory. If, therefore, we withhold the affections of our hearts, we can have no excuse in the plea that more evidence is needed. And with hearts so alienated from God at the outset, all our religious inquiries are likely to be unprofitable. What probability is there that further proof will produce its proper impression and effect on our minds, if that which is already in our possession is unheeded or abused? If, from what we already know of God, we admire and love him, we shall desire to know more of him, and shall prosecute the study with profit and delight; but, if we have already shut him out of our hearts, all our intellectual investigations respecting him may be expected to leave us in spiritual blindness. John Dagg *A Manual of Theology*

But what is faith?

Faith is:

- The soul's window through which God's love comes pouring in.
- The open hand whereby man reaches out to God, the Giver.
- The coupling that links man's train to God's engine.
- The trunk of salvation's tree, whose root is grace, and whose fruit is good works.

Faith was:

- The means of Abraham's justification.
- The magnet that drew Moses away from the pleasures of Egypt, so that he threw in his lot with God's sorely afflicted people.
- The force that overthrew Jericho's wall.
- The secret that enabled Ruth to make her stirring confession.
- The weapon that killed Goliath and destroyed Sennacherib's host.
- The deciding factor in Carmel's contest.
- The shield that protected Job in the midst of his trials.
- The muzzle that closed the mouths of Daniel's lions.
- The remedy that cured the centurion's servant and many others.

Scripture also describes faith as:

- Leaning on the everlasting arms.
- Committing one's way to the Lord, trusting in him, knowing that he will do whatever is best.
- Receiving the kingdom (or rule) of God as a little child.
- Being sure of what we hope for, and being convinced of what we do not see.
- The victory that overcomes the world.

-- William Hendriksen