

The sense that God has thus invaded one's own darkness and lostness in order to bring salvation naturally prompts the question that was poignantly posed in a modern gospel song—"But, Jesus, why me?" The New Testament faces and answers this question by pointing backward and upward to an eternal purpose of sovereign divine love to sinful individuals, a purpose that has its source in God's own free decision. It is manifested by the prevenient grace that brings each one to faith and salvation, and guarantees their final glory. New Testament writers do not tell me why God chose to save me. They only tell me to be thankful that He did. –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. 47. Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?

A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments. (Deut. 10:4; Matt. 19:17)

Q. 48. What is the sum of the Ten Commandments?

A. The sum of the Ten Commandments is, to love the Lord our God, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves. (Matt. 22:36-40; Mark 12:28-33)

#### 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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### THE DESIRE OF CHRIST

*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:3*

The first several verses of John 14 are often read at funerals and that usually without comment. At such times there are many with troubled hearts, both believers and unbelievers. In hearing them they may derive some temporary benefit. But, without understanding something of the occasion in which they were spoken and the basis of this wonderful encouragement these words can be neither meaningful or have a lasting effect on the hearers. Yet, men grasp at the mention of Heaven, of mansions there, and our Lord's interest in preparation and try to make application even in unbelief. The result is much fantasizing about things that are not in the Word of God and have no connection to the truth the Lord would communicate with these words to His disciples.

It is certain that His comforting words here were in connection with a death. But, it was His death that He knew would be the source of great grief for a period following. His disciples sensed that something was about to occur, and they were dealing with personal uncertainty. He would direct their thoughts to things that would both comfort and assure and such was the tenor of much that He shared with them during this time. These words came a very short time before His crucifixion and may even have been on the eve of His being taken and offered as the Lamb of God. Had they been able to fully grasp at that time that which was about to occur they would not have had reason for their hearts to be

troubled. His words later remembered would contribute to the strength and confidence with which they would proceed to preach the Gospel after His ascension.

Is it then proper that we should claim these words in our own troubling situations? We are certainly directed to trust in the Lord in all situations and circumstances. The heart quieting words of our Lord may be more fully understood in light of the knowledge that Christ has died and is risen again and has ascended back into the glory which He had with His Father before the world was. It is with the assurance of a risen Christ that we are able to follow the words of James and “count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations.” To be sure, words such as these direct our attention away from our trials and rather cause us to focus on Christ and the design He has for His people. It is here that folks tend to miss the whole purpose of God in Christ.

The compassion of Christ for sufferers is well documented in the Word of God. His compassion is declared, and He moved to relieve suffering for many. Yet, all these died eventually – even Lazarus. Men often respond as though God lost control or that death occurred in spite of all He was trying to do. Such frustration is often expressed by the unregenerate and some would even charge God with failure. Believers, on the other hand, are assured of divine purpose and that the things which bring the greatest sorrow on earth will be made to work together for good for them. We

may witness an even higher aim for things brought about in the providence of God. This arrests our attention in the text. The desire of Christ was expressed to His disciples in telling them the reason of His preparations. It was "that where I am, there you may be also." If it were not for the wonderful intercessory prayer of our Lord recorded in John 17, we might leave it as being all about them. But, we read there. *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. John 17:24.*

It is to be feared that sometimes we become so technical with the Word that we lose sight of some things that speak assurances to our hearts in another manner. Do we fail to attribute emotions to our Lord that He clearly expresses? In this statement He assures of preparation but then quickly adds that He wanted them to be with Him and that as a matter of purpose and affection. What a wonderful thought that the things which we come properly to desire are also the desire of Christ and is that for which He died. It is His joy that He left us. It was the joy of what redemption accomplished that moved Him to "endure the cross" and despise the shame. He was completely self-abnegating in all that He

did in suffering, but He will reap the full benefit along with those given Him by the Father. His prayer in John 17 clearly expressed the desire that those purchased by His own blood should be with Him to behold His glory and that will be their glory as well as we appear with Him.

The fantasies of men are born out of human inadequacy to conceive of the glory of God in any way. But, the things they describe such as resuming earthly relationships, family reunions and all such are so very inferior to what God has in store for us in Christ and the Heaven of His making. While we may fail at description, we know that it is a place wherein the glory of God will be fully seen, the Lamb of God will be the center of attention, and the worship of the redeemed of the Lord will be fully facilitated. The atmosphere will be that of joy ever increasing and the desire of Christ and that of His people will be fully realized in being where He is.

Will there be reunions of believers? Perhaps. But, such will not be that imagined by men; rather it will be a joining together in delightful praise of the One who is worthy of all honor and glory. In accordance with the desire of Christ we shall all be caught up together to meet Him and "so shall we ever be with the Lord." *bhs*

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We are, if the Bible is true, immortal beings. Heathen philosophers have conjectured that man may be immortal; and infidels have professed to believe it; but, if we exclude the Bible, we have no means of certain knowledge on this point. Yet it is a matter of the utmost importance. If we are immortal, we have interests beyond the grave which infinitely transcend all our interests in the present life. What folly, then, it is, to reject the only source of information on this momentous subject! Besides if we have such interests in a future world, we have no means of knowing how to secure them, except from the Bible. Shall we throw this book from us, and trust to vain conjecture, on questions in which our all is involved? it would be folly and madness. – John Dagg

**"...THERE OUGHT TO BE A SIGN POSTED IN EVERY CHRISTIAN BOOKSTORE THAT READS, "THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THESE BOOKS DO NOT NECESSARILY EXPRESS THE VIEWS OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST." - VODDIE BAUCHAM**

## TIM Keller on Prayer

The seventeenth-century English theologian John Owen wrote a warning to popular and successful ministers:

A minister may fill his pews, his communion roll, the mouths of the public, but what that minister is on his knees in secret before God Almighty, that he is and no more.

To discover the real you, look at what you spend time thinking about when no one is looking, when nothing is forcing you to think about anything in particular. At such moments, do your thoughts go toward God? You may want to be seen as a humble, unassuming person, but do you take the initiative to confess your sins before God? You wish to be perceived as a positive, cheerful person, but do you habitually thank God for everything you have and praise him for who he is? You may speak a great deal about what a “blessing” your faith is and how you “just really love the Lord,” but if you are prayerless—is that really true? If you aren’t joyful, humble, and faithful in private before God, then what you want to appear to be on the outside won’t match what you truly are.

Just prior to giving his disciples the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus offered some preliminary ideas, including this one: “When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. . . . But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen . . . in secret” (Matt 6:5–6). The infallible test of spiritual integrity, Jesus says, is your private prayer life.

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### FROM IRWIN LUTZER --- *WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE*

I’ve been told that after a young African was martyred for his faith, this writing was found in his room; here is an excerpt: I’m part of the fellowship of the unashamed, the die has been cast, I have stepped over the line, the decision has been made—I’m a disciple of Jesus Christ—I won’t look back, let us, slow down, back away or be still. My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, my future is secure—I’m finished and done with low living, sight walking, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tamed visions, worldly talking, cheap giving and dwarfed goals. My pace is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions are few, my guide is reliable, my mission is clear. I won’t give up, shut up, let up until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up for the cause of Jesus Christ. I must go till He comes, give till I drop, preach till everyone knows, work till He stops me and when He comes for His own, He will have no trouble recognizing me because my banner will have been clear. With this kind of resolve we will, with God’s help, have the strength to withstand our crumbling culture, and perhaps even reverse what seems to be “irreversible.” Of course, we are a minority, but armed with the promises of God we can have a spiritual impact that is greater than our numbers might suggest. It may come down to a simple question: Are we willing to pay the price?