

"The true cure for self-righteousness is self-knowledge. Once let the eyes of our understanding be opened by the Spirit, and we shall talk no more of our own goodness. Once let us see what there is in our own hearts, and what the holy law of God requires, and self-conceit will die. We shall lay our hand on our mouths, and cry with the leper, "Unclean, unclean." (Levit. 13:45.) - J. C. Ryle

### BENJAMIN KEACH'S CATECHISM

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

Q. 67. What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment forbids the omission or careless performance of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly employments or recreations. (Ezekiel 22:26; 23:38; Jer. 17:21; Neh. 13:15,17; Acts 20:7)

Q. 68. What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?

A. The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment are, God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments, His challenging a special propriety in the seventh, His own example and His blessing the Sabbath day. (Exodus 34:21; 31:16,17; Gen. 2:2,3)

#### 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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### WHY GOD SAVES US

*And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:6-7*

Great value is often attached to particular objects for any number of reasons such as sentiment or costliness. The owner of such a possession will see to its safekeeping but will take it out of its place of security to confirm possession, to examine, and to admire. Such is the case with the first ten verses of the second chapter of Ephesians. It is safely treasured in the heart of every true believer in the grace of God and appears more precious with each new look. Contained within this passage is a summons to come and take a closer look. The place from which we look may enhance the evaluation of that which we are bidden to behold. We have been raised up together with Christ to a position where we may be shown glorious things through Christ Jesus our Lord.

The connection of present reality to future bliss is often lost to view owing to our involvement with this present world. Yet, the Word of God provides for the now and reveals the fact that the future begins now. There need be no disconnect as we consider the vantage point given us by being in Christ. Fanny Crosby wrote preciously of “a foretaste of glory divine.” We have been given preferred seating as we witness the unfolding of the unalterable purpose of God – “made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ.” There is an upward mobility to the comprehensions of believers. That is, we are able to see more and more and to realize that it shall ever be that way.

A skillful tour guide will maneuver the group

so that each succeeding place is more exciting than the last and will save the most exciting part of the tour for last. We note in this passage that it is God who is showing us the riches of His grace in Christ. Unlike the tour guide, there is no end to this journey and each succeeding revelation is of divine delight and increasing joy.

This process is most glorious in consideration of the fact that the company is unmatched. We are said to sit together in Christ. That this is looking to the fellowship of believers is witnessed in the abundant use of “us” in this passage. The place from which we observe is even now termed “heavenly places.” I won’t debate the significance of that term and will only say that it takes us out of the realm of the natural and places us squarely in the realm of spiritual things. Consider Paul’s words elsewhere: *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: Colossians 1:12-13.* What we have is a present look with the expectation of an ever-expanding view in ages to come. There is no heavenly place apart from Christ and it is He who reveals all that is glorious, and it is all of Him.

As we read here of “ages to come” written by Paul, we should be aware that some of these ages of this same Gospel have passed and we have a cloud of witness to attest to the value

thereof. The Gospel is not merely for time but continues to all eternity in its fruition and manifestations in those who have so embraced Christ here. We speak here in terms that strain our abilities and then realize that we have not scratched the surface of all that is true about Him. John Newton wrote in the unsung verses of Amazing Grace that “He will my shield and portion be, As long as life endures.” He then added “Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail, And mortal life shall cease, I shall possess within the veil, A life of joy and peace.” We would not miss the unbroken Gospel continuity expressed in these words.

The riches of His grace defy our description as to their reflections of Him and all that is contained therein. We are pointed to no less than the blood of Christ and then falter as we would try to define the infinite love that produced that “life-giving stream.” We are rejoiced in every way as we experience “so great salvation” and then fail in attempting to fathom the depths of love that drove God to save the likes of us. He is showing us even now of the durability of salvation as it stands against the onslaught of the enemy and the failures of us as beneficiaries. He displays, through that Blessed Hope, the longevity of it all. He has provided us

the ability to both behold and to participate in the glory of God. Of that there can be no end. Is it any wonder that the writer used the word “exceeding” here? It indicates that which goes beyond what appears to be needed and as we are afforded a peek at that which is yet to come, we realize that we cannot comprehend “exceeding.”

Two things come to mind at this point. One is that expectation should be a major aspect of our view of Christ and His glory. The other is that we should know from the abundance of grace that the supply will never be exhausted. R. C. H. Lenski preciously wrote: “...but after having removed every trace of sin from us and having brought us to perfection and glory, grace will still have endless goodness and kindness to lavish on us.”

Obviously, it was the eternal purpose of God to show these things to those He would save. But, we cannot help but note that we are not left to discern for ourselves. He is even now about the business of showing to those seated with Christ the glorious riches of His grace and such is a matter of mutual delight. It is now and ever has been His aim to manifest His mercy and kindness, to those who love and adore Him, throughout all eternity – the ages to come. *bhs*

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Worshiping with other believers helps you view all of life from the vantage point of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's not just the most important miracle ever. It's not just the most astounding event in the life of the Messiah. It's not just an essential item in your theological outline. It's not just the reason for the most important celebratory season of the church. It's not just your hope for the future. No, the resurrection is all that and more. It is also meant to be the window through which you view all of life. Second Corinthians 4:13–15 captures this truth very well: “[We know] that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.” But what does it look like to look at life through the window of the resurrection? As I assess my life right here, right now, what about the resurrection must I remember? Let me suggest five things. The resurrection of Jesus guarantees your resurrection too. Life is not a constantly repeating cycle of the same old same old. No, under God's rule this world is marching

toward a conclusion. Your life is being carried to a glorious end. There will be a moment when God will raise you out of this broken world, and sin and suffering will be no more. The resurrection tells you what Jesus is now doing. Jesus now reigns. First Corinthians 15 says that he will continue to reign until the final enemy is under his feet. You see, your world is not out of control, but under the careful control of One who is still doing his sin-defeating work. The resurrection promises you all the grace you need between Jesus's resurrection and yours. If your end has already been guaranteed, then all the grace you need along the way has been guaranteed as well, or you would never make it to your appointed end. Future grace always carries with it the promise of present grace. The resurrection of Jesus motivates you to do what is right, no matter what you are facing. The resurrection tells you that God will win. His truth will reign. His plan will be accomplished. Sin will be defeated. Righteousness will overcome evil. This means that everything you do in God's name is worth it, no matter what the cost. The resurrection tells you that you always have reason for thanks. Quite apart from anything you have earned, you have been welcomed into the most exciting story ever and have been granted a future of joy and peace forever. No matter what happens today, look at life through this window. – Paul David Tripp *New Morning Mercies*

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Following Christ will cost us much. It will cost us our old way of life and forfeiting our past sins. It will cost us a life of ease and living for this world. It will cost us old habits and even old associations. It will cost us following our own agenda for how we think our life should work. It will cost us our time and treasure to spread the gospel message. It will cost us suffering for being identified with Him. It will cost us varying degrees of opposition and persecution from the world. It may even cost us our life. But in the end, we gain far more than we lose. – Steven Lawson *The Cost*

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### Lost Sinners

As sinners, we were lost in the way that stray sheep are lost: cut off from our true home and out of touch with our true master. We had nothing to look forward to save misery without end. We merited nothing but exclusion and banishment from the presence of the living God whom we had already excluded from our lives. Perhaps we did this through preoccupation with the quest for pleasure and profit, position and possessions, and perhaps even by sheltering behind a smokescreen of religiosity. One way or another, however, we did it, and it is nothing more than justice for God now to shut us out of His life in the way that we shut Him out of ours. Made by God for God, and so made that at the deepest level we cannot find contentment save in a love-relationship with God, we were thus “without hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). This is the universal human condition. All Christians know in their heart that everyone in whom fallen nature runs its course is naturally in that lost and hopeless state, and each believer glories accordingly in the “Amazing grace . . . that saved a wretch like me.”

--J. I. Packer

Take a saint, and put him in any condition, and he knows how to rejoice in the Lord. --Walter Cradock