

Overly Disturbed

Many preachers, I fear, are overly disturbed about matters of no great consequence, causing needless strife and division in the kingdom of God. If a brother's differences with me in doctrine or practice will not divide us in heaven, they should not divide us on earth. If we worship and serve the Lord Jesus Christ, if we both believe and preach the gospel of God's free and sovereign grace, we are laborers together in the Lord's vineyard.

--Don Fortner

BENJAMIN KEACH'S CATECHISM

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

Q. 69. Which is the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment is, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Exodus 20:12)

Q. 70. What is required in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment requires the preserving the honor, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals. (Lev. 19:32; 1 Peter 2:17; Rom. 13:1; Eph. 5:21,22; Eph. 6:1,5,9; Col. 3:19-22; Rom. 12:10)

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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

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“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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PROVIDENCE AND PURPOSE

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Galatians 1:15-16

Paul's epistle to the Galatians is confrontational owing to the errors that had appeared among them. This being the case, he would again present his credentials for apostleship to them. Along with that would be the certification of the genuineness of the Gospel he had preached to them as opposed to the false teachings of the legalistic Jews who has come among them. In so doing he would reconfirm the fact of divine revelation in his receiving of the Gospel. Thus, the claim to inspiration would be reinforced as a matter of direct teaching from Christ our Lord. What he did not do was to place himself in opposition to the Apostles at Jerusalem even though he did not initially consult them. It was rather that in later witness to them they would confirm his claim to the office of Apostle.

All would agree that the call and conversion of Paul is unique. There is much, however, to be gained in a close look at this passage of scripture as to the operations of God in bringing His purposes to bear in Paul. Paul acknowledges that the dealings of the Lord with him began from birth and were brought to fruition in the ministry given him. This he realized to the point that he did not hesitate to assert his claim and so to “magnify mine office.” Webster's 1828 in dealing with the word providence stated: “He that acknowledges a creation and denies providence, involves himself in a palpable contradiction; for the same power which caused a thing to exist is necessary to continue its

existence.”

In referring to his natural birth he notes both place and time. It was his mother that was singled out to give birth to this man who would have such a widespread and enduring influence in the matters of the Gospel, its substance and its propagation. And, that birth, far removed from the dramatic event occurring on the road to Damascus, was made to serve the ultimate purpose of God. It happened because it “pleased God” and so we would note that all that came to pass because of that birth was because it pleased God. We remember the words of our Lord: *Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. Matthew 11:26.*

Paul did not hesitate to confess his sin and rebellion and his zealous pursuit of the self-righteous manner of the Pharisees and these who would trouble the Galatians. He renewed that confession in the verses preceding our text. He would use these things to make his point for grace and justification by the blood of Christ alone. He did not hesitate to label himself as a saved blasphemer. He saw it all as divine preparation for what was to come. The purpose of God was from eternity (see Romans 8:29). He does not justify what he had done or what he had been; he rather acknowledged the necessity of divine intervention.

That which followed was the call of God (Romans 8:30) by His grace. That which God designs He accomplishes and it was claimed as authority by Paul. This is to be understood as a

powerful operation on and in Paul by which he was separated from the darkness, blindness and ignorance of Judaism. There appeared, by the operational grace of God, the light of the Gospel and he bowed to the Lordship of Christ and by the same workings of grace through the Spirit embarked on a life of faith and trust in Christ alone. It is evidenced in the desire for a greater knowledge of Him: *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; Philippians 3:10.* And, we delightfully read him declare, "But, by the grace of God, I am what I am..."

With this application of grace came the revelation of Christ in Paul. Paul had referenced the revelation of the Gospel in verse 12 of this chapter. But, this is looking deeper into the matter. The revelation of the Gospel had come because of the revelation of Christ in him. Many would externalize this by asserting that Christ was revealed to him. While this is true, it happened from within as Paul made the most important discovery ever. Christ first presented Himself to Paul from without (See Acts 9), but the ultimate revelation came from within. John Gill preciously observed, "for he had an internal discovery of Him as God's salvation, and of His interest in Him as such; Christ was formed in him; He lived and dwelt in his heart by faith, as

the Son in His own house; He was known unto him, as Christ in him the hope of glory."

As profound as this truth is, Paul does not even pause at this point. He used the purpose clause and asserts the result of that which was born in eternity. He was to preach that same Christ to the heathen. In these short verses, he asserts purpose proceeding from providential separation, to call, to revelation, to the accomplishment of the design of God for him.

Provided here is a test for truth in profession and calling. It is a condition of all true ministering that Christ is preached from Christ revealed in us. It is He who bears witness to the Word. Such preaching and witnessing are in stark contrast to presentations that are intellectual without experience. It is to be realized that all professions are proven genuine as evidence of the presence of Christ within is seen. *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; 1 Thessalonians 1:9.* It is certain that the life of Paul displayed abundant evidence of the presence of Christ in him.

It is claimed by many that Jesus saves. It would be interesting to consider the answers that might be given to the question, "why did God save you?" Paul certainly knew why! *bhs*

In New Testament salvation, Jesus Christ the Savior, who is both God and man (John 1: 14; Col. 1: 13-20; 2: 9), is the key figure. Salvation is through Him, in the sense that our forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, pardon, acceptance, access, standing, and fellowship with God (all these terms are used) rest on His death as a sacrifice for our sins— a sacrifice guaranteeing that believers will never come into condemnation, nor be deprived of the communion with the Father and the Son that is now theirs (John 5: 24; Rom. 8: 32-39). Salvation is also in Him, in the double sense that we are both in solidarity with Him as our representative head, who once suffered as our sin-bearer, and now intercedes on our behalf, and are also in vital and vitalizing union with Him by faith through the Holy Spirit. Thus He becomes truly our life-giver, who animates us for holiness in a way to which we were strangers before (see Rom. 5: 12-19; Eph. 2: 1-10; 4: 20-24; Col. 1: 27; 3: 4). Natural life is supernaturalized as the Holy Spirit makes

Christ present to us, and reproduces in us the God-oriented desires, aims, attitudes, and behavior patterns that were seen in Christ's own perfect humanity when He was on earth. All Christians who can recall their life before they were converted can point to specific ways in which their mindset in Christ has now become different from what it was before.

--J. I. Packer

Prayer is not an act of manipulation or persuasion. We are not simply trying to find the right formula or secret code to force God to answer our prayer as we want it to be answered. Nor are we trying to persuade or bargain with God as if he were one of his creations. Prayer is not persuasion. Prayer is about God's will being done—not our own. We must come to God and learn to pray “your will be done” just as Jesus did. If God's will is truly perfect, then why would we want to persuade him to do something that is less than perfect? It is true that Scripture encourages us to bring our deepest concerns, anxieties, and needs before God—the Bible, in fact, is full of illustrations portraying as much—but we must not bring our needs to God thinking that we do so to break down a wall of hostility or complacency. We must bring our needs before God humbly, willing to submit to his perfect plan.

--Al Mohler

I agree with John MacArthur who wrote, Music and liturgy can assist or express a worshiping heart, but they cannot make a non-worshiping heart into a worshiping one. The danger is that they can give a non-worshiping heart the sense of having worshiped. So the crucial factor in worship in the church is not the form of worship, but the state of the hearts of the saints. If our corporate worship isn't the expression of our individual worshiping lives, it is unacceptable. If you think you can live anyway you want and then go to church on Sunday morning and turn on worship with the saints, you're wrong. In contrast to the once-a-week worshiper (and that term itself is an oxymoron), David worshiped God continually. “I will extol the LORD at all times,” he said; “his praise will always be on my lips” (Psalm 34:1).

--Jerry Bridges

It is necessary for us to recognize that there is an intelligent mysticism in the life of faith . . . of living union and communion with the exalted and ever-present Redeemer. . . . He communes with his people and his people commune with him in conscious reciprocal love. . . . The life of true faith cannot be that of cold metallic assent. It must have the passion and warmth of love and communion because communion with God is the crown and apex of true religion.

--Timothy Keller

A MAN MAY BE THEOLOGICALLY KNOWING AND SPIRITUALLY IGNORANT.

-STEPHEN CHARNOCK