

Here are 3 truths worth mulling over:

1. Have you ever considered struggle in the Christian life as a temporary privilege? (Take the time to read the scene leading up to Acts 5:41.)

2. In heaven, we'll honor Christ to His face. But now we have the privilege of honoring Him in the face of struggle—by faith, not by sight.

3. Then we'll glory in His transfiguration. Now we glorify Him beneath the cross we bear—and in temptation and weakness (see 2 Cor. 12:7-9).

I'm no masochist, believe me. Yet I'm eager to honor God during the longest life He will allow me and, while I'm here, to struggle well. –Wayne Stiles

### BENJAMIN KEACH'S CATECHISM

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

Q. 71. What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment forbids the neglecting of, or doing anything against the honor and duty which belongs to every one in their several places and relations. (Prov. 30:17; Rom. 13:7,8)

Q. 72. What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?

A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve God's glory and their own good), to all such as keep this commandment. (Eph. 6:2,3; Prov. 4:3-6; 6:20-22)

#### 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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### OUR AIM IN PREACHING

*For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20*

The question has often been asked, “why preach,” and that usually in response to the declaration of sovereign grace in the Gospel. There are various answers that may be given, none of which will satisfy the skeptical and unregenerate. Among those answers might be that it is in obedience to a call from the One who has every right to demand it. We would preach to glorify God in Christ Jesus our Lord. We would labor to exalt Jesus as Lord and Christ and so declare Him as the Lamb of God, the only acceptable substitute for sinners and further to declare that He has accomplished all that He determined to do. We would preach the holiness of God and so seek to expose sin to the hearts of the hearers and declare their hopelessness apart from mercy and grace. We would declare that there is life and salvation in no other. And, we would declare Christ alone as our hope and rejoice that He has risen and ascended, is reigning and shall reign, and that He is coming again.

A further question may now be asked. That is, what is the outcome desired for those to whom we preach? How often does preaching sound apologetic in that it is perceived that some may be offended. Or, it may be confrontational to the degree that it sounds as if God and His truth need to be defended when, in fact, both God and truth can defend themselves. It is rather our business to proclaim the Gospel. But, I must ask of myself, what is my ultimate aim for those to whom I speak and what should

they expect from hearing it. Paul sweetly expressed it in declaring that his desire was “ye in the presence of our Lord at His coming.”

The state of those to whom we preach should be a matter of immediate concern and so we would see the effects of the Gospel expressed in both the lives and expectations of those who hear. Paul’s confidence and rejoicing in the Thessalonians could hardly be contained. Thanksgiving had been expressed for their faith, labor, and hope expressed in their patience. He had been a witness to their departure from idols and their emphatic service to “the living and true God.” He expressed further thanksgiving for the way they had received the truth and its effectual work in them. He rejoiced personally to have been employed of the Lord to bring these results to life. His hope, his joy, his crown of rejoicing, all became personified in them.

These people had been and were being persecuted because of the Gospel. Paul had been forced to flee under the threat of death. He seems to express that there was much more that he wanted for them and would have greatly preferred to have been present with them. But, the Spirit inspired expressions of his care and identity with them would rather serve the divine purpose. As a result, we have the same encouragement and example as they received in this epistle. Paul conveyed to them, not only the Gospel, but also the outcome he desired for them. It was no different from that expressed by our Lord. *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.* And, his desire for them was that they might be in full harmony with the promise of Christ for them.

Paul had no doubt as to who he was and what he was doing. We are familiar with the words, "...by the grace of God I am what I am." An Apostle and a minister of the Gospel was not only what he was, it was who he was. Through his being who he was his life had been inseparably tied to theirs and so their outcome was to his glory and rejoicing. Therefore, his personal hope or expectation was them in the presence of the Lord. His basis for that was, of course, that he saw them as in the presence of the Lord even then and would have them to be conscious of that fact. In the face of separation and persecution and knowledge of their trials, the joy of the Lord prevailed with him. Their state and their prospect were claimed as his joy. They were to him his crown of rejoicing or boasting. Their victory was his and he was not silent or unexpressive about it.

Robert Hawker wrote: "I admire the expression of the Apostle, when he calls the Church their hope and joy. Not that he meant the he was their hope, or they his, for both

rested wholly upon Christ, and Christ is all the joy of the Church, both in heaven and earth. But Paul beheld the Church of the Thessalonians as a beautiful building, founded with himself wholly in Christ; and in the labor of the work, the wise Master-builder had condescended to employ Paul and his companions. As such, their furtherance in the knowledge and love of Christ, became a subject of great joy to the Apostle."

The idea of glorying may seem out of place with any, even the Apostle. But, glorying is not always the same as personal exaltation. It is rather to take pleasure and to revel in something. Paul gloried in God, in Christ, in the cross, in being caught up to heaven, and even in his infirmities. So, it was that he took pleasure in seeing the work of his calling come to fruition – his aim in preaching to them from the beginning.

Thus, we would labor to communicate the desired result in our preaching and that they should look for that aim in that which is preached to them. What is our personal investment in it all, and may we, as did Paul, project our glory and delight into others as we see them in the presence of Christ both now and evermore? "To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen." *bhs*

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## A MOST DIABOLICAL STRATEGY

Years ago, Donald Grey Barnhouse, pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, delivered a message that aired on CBS radio. In this nationwide address, the noted Bible teacher speculated about what would be the most diabolical strategy that Satan could conspire against the church in the years to come. To the astonishment of many listeners, Barnhouse imagined that all of the bars in Philadelphia would be closed. Prostitutes would no longer walk the streets. Pornography would no longer be available. The streets would be clean, and all the city neighborhoods would be filled with law-abiding citizens. All swearing and cursing would be gone. Children would respectfully say, "Yes, sir" and "No, ma'am." Every church in town, Barnhouse added, would be packed to overflowing. There would not be one church pew that could contain one more citizen. What, you ask, could be wrong with this? Barnhouse then delivered the knockout punch. The deadliest, most diabolical danger, he said, would be that in each of these filled-to-capacity sanctuaries, Jesus Christ

would never be preached. In these pulpits, there would be much religious talk, but nothing said of the supreme authority and saving work of Christ upon the cross. There would be mention of morality, but no Christ. There would be expressions of cultural concern and political commentary, but no Christ. There would be positive thinking and inspirational stories, but no Christ. There would be the external trappings of Christianity, but no internal reality of Christ. The most diabolical ploy of Satan would be for churches to be bulging at their seams, but no proclamation of Christ and Him crucified. With this deadly silence, people would never learn of Christ. Thus, they could never know or follow Him. What Barnhouse feared has, in large measure, come to pass in our present day. In countless houses of worship across this nation and around the globe, there is much preaching. But the truth is that there is little proclamation of Christ. There is much empty rhetoric, but little reality of the suffering Savior. These churches preach everything except Christ Himself. Tragically, too many churches and pulpits have everything except the main thing

—Steven Lawson *The Kind of Preaching God Blesses*

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Praise and thanksgiving Praise's preoccupation is with who God is, whereas thanksgiving's preoccupation is with what God has done. Praise looks more to God's Person than to His gifts. We praise God for who He is; we thank Him for what He has done. We must not draw too rigid a distinction between praise and thanksgiving, however, because one passes over into the other, at times almost imperceptibly. Glorifying God and giving thanks to Him are virtually the same thing (Rom. 1:21). Praise attempts a description of God but never achieves it. But still it persists with what it knows is an impossible task. --Derek Prime

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As religious beings, let us seek to understand the truths of religion. As immortal beings, let us strive to make ourselves acquainted with the doctrine on which our everlasting happiness depends. And let us be careful that we do not merely receive it coldly into our understanding, but that its renewing power is ever operative in our hearts.

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

***HOLINESS IS ALWAYS THE SAVED SINNER'S RESPONSE OF GRATITUDE FOR GRACE RECEIVED.***

**-J. I. PACKER**