

Within the context of church and society, however, Christians have often preached the love of God and have quoted verses of Scripture to prove their point, but in practice have shown the least love toward their neighbor. In fact, the liberal in the church or the humanist in society often demonstrates a greater degree of love for his fellow man than does the person who cites chapter and verse from the pages of the Bible. Unfortunately, Christians frequently give the world the impression that they are more interested in strife and confrontation than in peace and love. –Simon J. Kistemaker

BENJAMIN KEACH'S CATECHISM

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

Q. 93. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel. (Heb. 10:39; John 1:12; Phil. 3-9; Gal. 2:15,16)

Q. 94. What is repentance unto life?

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience. (Acts 2:37; Joel 2:13; Jer. 31:18,19; 2 Cor. 7:10,11; Rom. 6:18)

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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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THE CHARACTER OF TRUE WISDOM

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. James 3:17-18

The things needed in applying grace must assuredly come from above as does new life in Christ. They find their perfect pattern in none other than Christ Jesus Himself. They appear in the life of believers as a matter of Spirit directed experience and not apart from the study of the Word of God and attention to detail. We are not left to generalizations. These may be infiltrated by fleshly ideas and so rendered unfit for Christian witness. For that reason, we often find directions in the form of lists in the scripture which accommodate our abilities to remember. It is attention to such detail that James here directs our thoughts about wisdom.

The 1828 Webster's dictionary's first definition of wisdom begins with: "The right use of knowledge; the choice of laudable ends, and the best means to them." It is obvious that wisdom appears in connection with objectives being sought. It goes on to observe: "It differs somewhat from prudence in this respect; prudence is the exercise of sound judgment in avoiding evils; wisdom is the exercise of sound judgment either in avoiding evils or attempting good." James seems to have both objectives in view. This is consistent with the observation of Job: *And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding. Job 28:28.*

The issues James addressed in his epistle certainly provoked the thought that wisdom would be needed. He would set forth tests of

faith in chapter 1. He would reveal dead faith in chapter 2. He would expose the poison in the tongue in chapter 3. He would exhort us to walk with God in 4. And, he would direct us to patience and prayer in chapter 5. In such anticipation he wrote: *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. James 1:5.* Paul would have us to know that what is given us in answer to that need is Christ: *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 1 Corinthians 1:30.*

Wisdom is personified in the early chapters of Proverbs and the importance of seeking after it is emphasized: *Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Proverbs 4:7.* The, not so subtle, suggestion here is that understanding the details is critical to its application. Timothy would learn of that importance from Paul in this way: *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15.* In facing "a famine of the hearing of the Word of God" today essential wisdom is sadly missing as a result.

We would observe, above all else, the source of this wisdom. It is from above – that is, it is of divine origin. The word here is the same as that Jesus used in addressing Nicodemus. *Jesus*

answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John 3:3. The word “again” is the same as is translated “above” in our text.

From the consideration of its source we find no difficulty in understanding that the first requirement for this wisdom is that it be pure. The characteristics that follow are meaningless apart from this. To be pure is to be free of contamination. Of Jesus, it was prophesied: *And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; Isaiah 11:2.* Not only do we understand this to have been manifested in the man Christ Jesus, we also understand it to exclude any consideration of wisdom from any other source.

It is sad to observe claims to knowledge and wisdom that do not display the things that are characteristic of pure wisdom. Like humility, those who possess great wisdom are often unaware that they do. What they may know is the intent of their heart to act in the way that is herein described. Simon Kistemaker observed three groups here. They are attitude, action, and judgment. Under the first, being peaceable heads the list. Our Lord pronounced a blessing here in saying, *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9.* See further: *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Proverbs 3:17.* The second is that of being

gentle. Even in our English language we might understand this to imply being considerate of others whether of the brethren or not. The thought of being “easy to be intreated” suggests that such a person is open to hearing the ideas of others. Certainly, the wise man will listen carefully to admonitions and corrections.

As to action, the scriptures reveal that we are the products of mercy and as such should consider the needs of others. Again, we hear our Lord: *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Matthew 5:7.* And from Micah the prophet: *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah 6:8.* Such will result in good fruits.

Discerning judgment is to be applied in that true wisdom will be impartial and sincere. He will act only in accordance with the scriptures and not in a way of favoritism.

The fruit of righteousness (that of Christ) realized in us engenders Holy expectations. The idea that it is sown speaks of a harvest to come both in this life and the one to come. In verse 13 of this chapter James posed a question for us all: *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. James 3:13.* True wisdom, that is heavenly wisdom, is in this world with the people of God and is unaffected by the world, as our focus is fixed on Christ alone. *bhs*

IS JESUS CHRIST JEHOVAH YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS?

Jehovah prophesied of Jesus Christ in Jeremiah 23:6 when He said “this is His name by which He will be called: Jehovah Our Righteousness.”

Some say Jesus Christ is not Jehovah.

We reply that Jehovah says Jesus Christ is indeed Jehovah – and “who are you to reply against God?” (see Romans 9:20).

Some say it is illogical for Jesus Christ to be from Jehovah and yet be Jehovah.

We reply that it is illogical to dispute Jehovah, and that they who do so are illogical. Some say they do not understand how Jesus Christ can be Jehovah.

We reply that there is a good reason for their lack of understanding: “the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

But we who have Jehovah’s Spirit know the things that have been freely given to us by Jehovah (1 Corinthians 2:6-16), and believe Him when He says Jesus Christ is Jehovah, and trust in Jesus Christ as Jehovah Our Righteousness.

Many do not have Jesus Christ as their Righteousness. Some delight in unrighteousness (e.g., Balaam in 2 Peter 2:12-15). Some trust in themselves that they are righteous (e.g., Pharisees in Luke 18:9; Isaiah 65:5a). Some trust in their legal righteousness, which they claim to have established through keeping God’s commandments and law (Romans 10:3f).

But Jehovah’s witnesses have forsaken their self-righteousness, submitted to Jehovah’s righteousness, and found Jehovah’s righteousness to be Jesus Christ (ibid), who is to us “Jehovah Our Righteousness”!

Do you confess Jesus Christ as Jehovah your Righteousness? – Daniel E. Parks

I Will Meditate on You in the Morning -- Marshall Segal, Staff writer, desiringGod.org

When I have lost passion or devotion in my time alone with God, I have simply lost sight of him. I’m still reading and praying, but I’m not seeing him, not as clearly. A fog has blown in slowly over days or weeks, covering his beauty from the eyes of my heart, numbing me to my need for him, and depriving me of a deeper and stronger happiness in him.

Maybe you’ve known the fog. King David did. And he longed for what he would see, and feel, when the clouds finally parted:

My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food,
and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,
when I remember you upon my bed,

and meditate on you in the watches of the night. (Psalm 63:5–6)

David teaches us to cut through the fog with meditation. And not just meditation on words, but on God himself — “I remember you upon my bed . . . and meditate on you.” Meditation means to linger longer over God in Scripture for the sake of our hearts.

When we steep our souls in the exodus, the Levitical laws, the Psalms, the Minor Prophets, the Gospels, the early church, and Paul’s letters, we are meditating not merely on words on a page but on God. He reveals himself through words. We are seeing him in radiant glory, hearing from him in infinite wisdom, tasting him in his unique ability to satisfy the human soul.

We do not wake up early simply to study God or to exercise discipline. We wake up early to meet God. “On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate” (Psalm 145:5). When we sit down to meditate — early in the morning, in the middle of the afternoon, during the watches of the night — we can expect glory, splendor, and majesty. We can expect God.