

"It is certain that all men are untamed till Christ subdues them by the gospel." - John Calvin

"Our security doesn't depend on our ability to stay saved, but on God's ability to keep His promise." - John MacArthur

GADSBY'S CATECHISM

By William Gadsby, about 1800

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

Question XIV. What are God's works of providence?

Answer. God's works of providence are His most holy, wise and powerful preserving and governing of all His creatures and all their actions.

1 Sam. 3. 18; Job 23.13-14; Psa. 31.15 & 103.19 & 145.15-16; Prov. 5.21 & 16.9, 33 & 20.24; Matt 10.29; Heb. 1.3.

Question XV. What are God's works of grace?

Answer. God's works of grace are the rich displays of His everlasting love in redemption, regeneration and the glorious works connected therewith.

Jer. 31.3; Eph. 2; Phil. 2.13; Rev. 1.5-6.

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsj@msn.com

Website: www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com

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

Volume 12, No. 30

July 28, 2019

THE WITNESS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there. John 10:41-42

At the mention of John chapter 10 the thoughts of many turns to the Good Shepherd and that most assuring picture of salvation and the tender care of our Blessed Lord. Continuing in that chapter we note that occasion is given to again define the relationship of the Shepherd and His sheep in answer to the challenges of the unbelieving Jewish leaders. At the declaration of His identity as the Son of God and God the Son they took up stones and would have killed Him on the spot. But He refuted their objections and walked away as they tried to take Him. It is then we note an addition to the narrative inserted between the above encounter and the account of raising Lazarus.

We are not given a reason, only an account, as to what prompted the Lord to leave the area and return to site of John’s baptisms three years earlier. It would be easy to think that He just wanted to visit the place where He had been baptized of John. It is unlikely that our Lord would be given to mere nostalgia. Another motive seems to be in view. It was not that He did not know of these people, but He would have it confirmed for our learning that the Gospel they had heard from the lips of John (now dead) had remained and that it bore witness to the ministry of John. Of course, it is noted that wherever He went He attracted people. But these came with something to say themselves concerning Jesus their Lord and ours. These had remembered well the fiery, strangely dressed preacher from out of the

wilderness and took note that he was a prophet indeed. They remarked that he had accurately reported on the coming Messiah and that everything he said about this man was true.

They were careful to note that no miracles accompanied John’s ministry. His purpose was unique, and his message was to be without distraction. It was said of Jesus that He was accredited by miracles and so was it with the Apostles. John was the prophesied forerunner of Christ and as such no other fascination was to be forthcoming from him. Of far greater importance was the fact that what he said about Jesus was true. They had believed it then and were now bearing witness of it in the presence of the Lord Himself.

There is much to be learned from what they observed. Not the least of this is that outward shows in the flesh serve no purpose whatsoever – it is only that which is true of Jesus that is of consequence. Any who would bear witness to the glory of Christ would do well to imitate the thoughts of John – “He must increase, but I must decrease.” At every turn John sought to disqualify himself from consideration beyond being the one prophesied as “the voice crying in the wilderness.” What was it that he cried with the effect that they learned that it was all true about Jesus? Our Lord’s commendation of John is reason enough for us to study it.

The message of John was straightforward as to the need that was before the people who came to hear him. The demand for repentance

when understood is repulsive to the flesh and therefore tends to be rejected out of hand by those who are comfortable with their way of life. Drastic change is demanded, and John demanded no less. He looked for proof that such a change had occurred. That is no different than the message our Lord preached. Both announced the Kingdom as being at hand, and that was good news –Gospel. These folks had believed it and still did. At the preaching of John, they had repented and believed the Gospel.

The substance of that exhortation to repent was anchored in the description that John gave of the Lord who was soon to appear. The account of John's ministry in Matthew 3 reveals what John knew and said about Jesus. His message was grounded in the declaration of the sovereignty of Christ. John's baptism was with water and was to bear witness to repentance. But he quickly contrasted the mighty power of Christ as the One who was able to baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His message declared the necessity of regeneration. They would have heard things that could only be attributed to Almighty God and so manifested in the Messiah. What they heard was Gospel indeed.

John's message also looked to the majesty of Christ and it was personal with Him. We are well acquainted with his words concerning his own unworthiness. He clearly saw himself as a servant and made it evident to all, that worship was the order of his day and that he would have it witnessed that he desired no less than the

glory of Christ. He pointed without hesitation to the fact of the deity of Christ. *And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. John 1:34.* John was careful to separate himself from any consideration and we read: *John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. John 1:15.*

John's message was of redemption. It is evident that he understood the meaning of the Old Testament sacrifices as well as the determination of God to provide the only acceptable sacrifice for sin. We read in two places in John 1 his identification of Jesus as the Lamb of God. And, he pointed his disciples to Christ.

Consider then that the elements of true Gospel witness are seen in what John had said concerning Jesus. Human depravity is declared in insisting upon repentance and that regeneration must occur. The message of divine sovereignty is clearly set forth making all subject to His power. And redemption through our suffering substitute was preached. He further declares Him to be the righteous judge and holds Christ forth as the object of faith: *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. John 3:36.*

As we would go about this present world, in whatever form we may witness, may the substance ever be Christ, and may it be said of us that what we said about Jesus is true. *bhs*

Why are we still here? –Don Fortner

Mark 5:18-20

Why has our Savior left us here? He has already made us completely worthy of heavenly glory. Has he not? Colossians 1:12-14 tells us that he has.

So why has he left us here? I have been pondering that question a good bit lately. I cannot answer it fully. But I have found an answer that satisfies me in Mark 5:18-20. There we read about the Lord Jesus healing the maniac of Gadara. When the poor man

was made to know the Lord Jesus and his grace, he desired to be with him. But the Master denied him that great joy for some time for a very noble and good reason.

“And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.”

What a wonderful change grace had wrought in this man. He who, but a short time before, was a terror to everyone, was now so heavenly composed that he desired never to leave his blessed Savior. Is that not the case with you, who have been called out of darkness into light, and from the power of sin and Satan to the living God? Surely, having once tasted that the Lord is gracious, we cannot but long to be “absent from the body, and present with the Lord.” Yet our Savior says, “No, not yet.” Rather, he tells us to go home to our lost friends and speak forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Our Lord Jesus has left us here until God’s appointed time shall come to take us home to glory. Our God and Savior must have his witnesses upon earth, as long as the earth remains. None of us shall live upon this crumbling ball of clay too long. But...

“Mortals are immortal here, until their work is none.”

What mercy! What grace! What condescending goodness! Our God has put the treasure of his gospel in us earthen vessels, choosing to employ you and me to tell other eternity bound sinners what great things the Lord has done for us and how he has had compassion on us. Let us wait in contentment, happiness, and overflowing gratitude, telling out the good news of redeeming love and saving mercy all the days of our appointed time, until our change come. Having a desire to depart and be with Christ, for now, to abide in the flesh is more needful. When we are no longer needed here, we will be with him there, in that “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!”

Oh, eternity bound sinner, make certain that you are in Christ! Let every child of God take comfort with regard to those who have gone to heaven. — “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord!” And be assured, weary pilgrim, that your weary, troublesome life will end soon and that it will end well (2 Corinthians 4:17-5:2).

“If we do not preach about sin and God’s judgment on it, we cannot present Christ as Saviour from sin and the wrath of God. And if we are silent about these things, and preach a Christ who saves only from self and the sorrows of this world, we are not preaching the Christ of the Bible.

We are, in effect bearing false witness and preaching a false Christ. Our message is ‘another gospel, which is not another.’ Such preaching may soothe some, but it will help nobody; for a Christ who is not seen and sought as a Saviour from sin will not be found to save from self or from anything else.

An imaginary Christ will not bring a real salvation; and a half-truth presented as the whole truth is a complete untruth.”

-J. I. Packer, "The Puritan View of Preaching the Gospel"