

....."The Scriptures should be read with the aim of finding Christ in them. Whoever turns aside from this object, even though he wears himself out all his life in learning, he will never reach the knowledge of the truth." - John Calvin

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 XXIII. What is the misery of that estate whereunto man fell?

Answer. All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, incurred the curse of the law, and so were made liable to all the miseries of this life, and to death itself; and all who die in sin must endure the pains of hell for ever.

Gen. 3. 16-24; Job 5.7 & 14.1-2; Isa. 64.6; Matt. 22.13 & 25.41; Rom. 3.23 & 8.7; 1 Cor. 2.14.

Question XXIV. Did God leave all mankind to perish in that estate of sin and misery?

Answer. No; God, having out of His own good pleasure from eternity elected some of them to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of that estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation by a Redeemer.

Rom. 3.21-25 & 9.6-24; Eph. 1.4-7; 1 Thess. 5.9; 2 Thess. 2.13; 1 Pet. 1.2.

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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 GOODNESS OF THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night, Psalms 92:1-2

We often hear from men that they are in pursuit of the “good life.” By that it would seem that their thoughts are of worldly pleasure and such things as would bring personal gratification. Their attentions are upon earthly possessions either owned or sought after. At various times men in the midst of some earthly revelry have been heard to remark, “It just doesn’t get any better than this.” Perhaps for them that would be as good as it will ever get but eventually it gets infinitely worse. Assuredly, for the believer things get infinitely better. The worldly concept of “good” is that which satisfies the flesh.

In the Word of God we are told what is good and what it is that pleases the Lord: *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.* It is well that we recognize that those things which are good in the sight of God are also sensed as good by the Lord’s people. So, it is not surprising that Psalms such as this were featured on the Sabbath as the title states. “A Psalm or Song for the sabbath day.” In understanding the reverence attending the Sabbath observations in Old Testament Israel we might tend to limit the application here to such a special occasion. J. Vernon McGee aptly observes that “The worship of believers today is a little bit different. The Lord said to the Samaritan woman, ‘...Woman believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this

mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father... But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.’ Believers today are made into a kingdom of priests unto God, not so serve Him in and earthly sanctuary, but to worship Him in spirit and in truth.”

Considering that thought, we would conclude that such expressions of thanksgiving and praise are not only applicable now, but with a reverence that should far exceed the formal worship on the old Sabbath.

What is a “good thing?” The word “good” suggests the idea of pleasant and agreeable. It may suggest an excellence in quality. Often that which is of great value is called good. Another thought is of being appropriate and belonging. It just seems right. Of course, with all these considerations we would not overlook the fact that things that are right, moral, and ethical are called good things.

The Psalmist elevates the definition to great heights by his reference here to the Lord. The good that is referenced here is a matter of delightful experience which draws us away from ourselves. The good that we sense meets all the definitions given above. Pleasantness, quality, value and appropriateness are all proper here as we see the Lord and delight therein. To the world, giving thanks cannot rise above being happy about material gain or of health and wellbeing of self and family. While some of this

is admirable it does not look to salvation. That which is expressed here is the very acknowledgement of salvation. Part of what is good is the realization of being saved. That is, we are rejoiced at the possession of that which is thankworthy. Often men express thanksgiving without a reference to whom. In the case of true believers, they know exactly Who to thank and it is not a matter of obligation rather of loving constraint. It is a good thing because the Lord is worthy to be thanked. It is a good thing because it displays the very nature of salvation. It is a good thing because God is glorified in the acknowledgment of His Son and the finished work of salvation. It is a good thing because the believer is preciously assured of his standing with the Lord in the giving of thanks. Elsewhere, it is referred to as a sacrifice since it comes up before the Lord as a sweet savor of Christ our Lord. It is a result of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. Where there is no thanksgiving unto the Lord with a look toward Calvary there is no salvation.

It is a good thing to sing praises unto His Name. True singing is the joyous expression of the heart. It is what saved people do. They make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. And, it is enjoyable in a way this world cannot understand. Thus, we understand this as a characteristic of a new heart given to the Lord's people. It is from the heart that men believe unto righteousness. It is with the heart that praises are sung out to the Lord. He is the "Most High" and it is great joy to believers to know

that His power and might are engaged for us.

In singing praises unto the Name of the Lord both morning and night, we are reminded of the morning and evening sacrifices of old. The attributes of God remembered provoke the sweet experience of praise in believers. His lovingkindness speaks to us of mercy received, of forgiveness applied, and the sense of being loved of God. Paul spoke of "the meekness and gentleness of Christ." So, we look forward to the day with such reminders of that which establishes us in good in every way.

To sing of His faithfulness every night brings us to contemplate an even greater accumulation of the evidence of the faithfulness of our Lord. We have been sustained by His grace another day. Reviewing the blessings of His presence assures that we may face whatever the night holds. Reviewing the failures of the day brings to us that He is faithful and just to forgive -- faithful because that is who He is and just because of what Christ has done to obtain forgiveness. How precious and good it is to sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord.

It is reported that while preaching at a young age in his grandfather's pulpit on faithfulness that Spurgeon was interrupted by the old man of 84 years who stated "this young man is preaching about what he has read and heard about the faithfulness of God; I have experienced it." Oh, that we might ever sing of the mercies of the Lord and His faithfulness that others might hear. *bhs*

GOD NEVER FORGETS

I have known the Lord for many years. And He has assured me that He knows me. I have often prayed to Him in times of trouble. And He has heard and answered my prayers.

But there may come a time when I forget the Lord and am unable to pray to Him in a time of trouble. This may be the result of unconsciousness or coma caused by trauma, or severe dementia in my last days, or some other condition of the mind.

But even if this happens, God will never forget me. He assures all His people that "you will not be forgotten by Me!" and "I will not forget you" (Isaiah 44:21 & 49:15).

This is good news to all believers in God! If some failure of the mind causes them to forget God and renders them unable to call to Him, He yet remembers and delivers them, and ascertains that their souls are forever secure in His salvation.

But here is a sobering thought to procrastinators! Someday, perhaps even today, your mind may become incapable of believing the gospel and calling upon God for salvation. But God will never forget your procrastination (see Jeremiah 14:10; Hosea 7:2). He will render to you the punishment your unbelief merits. You will consequently forever perish.

Therefore “Seek Jehovah while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to Jehovah, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:6f). – Daniel E. Parks

We need to let Scripture speak for itself, and it is time to face squarely the reality of this difficult truth. Slavery to Christ is not a minor or secondary feature of true discipleship. This is not merely symbolic or illustrative language devoid of any literal sense. It is exactly how Jesus Himself defined the “personal relationship” He must have with every true follower (John 12:26; 15:20). And that fact is underscored throughout the New Testament. It is significant that the opening words of several New Testament epistles include their various authors’ own confessions that they were but slaves of Christ (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1; Rev. 1:1). Every true disciple in the apostolic church understood this truth completely, because if all the apostles confessed that they were Jesus’ slaves, those under the apostles’ oversight certainly had to be slaves of Christ as well. As a matter of fact, the fundamental aspects of slavery are the very features of our redemption that Scripture puts the most stress on. We are chosen (Eph. 1:4 – 5; 1 Peter 1:1; 2:9); bought (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23); owned by our Master (Rom. 14:7 – 9; 1 Cor. 6:19; Titus 2:14); subject to the Master’s will and control over us (Acts 5:29; Rom. 6:16 – 19; Phil. 2:5 – 8); and totally dependent on the Master for everything in our lives (2 Cor. 9:8 – 11; Phil. 4:19). We will ultimately be called to account (Rom. 14:12); evaluated (2 Cor. 5:10); and either chastened or rewarded by Him (Heb. 12:5 – 11; 1 Cor. 3:14). Those are all essential components of slavery.

--John MacArthur, *The Gospel According to Jesus*

The apostle teaches that a gift should always be generous. He uses a proverbial saying current in an agricultural setting: “Sow sparingly, reap sparingly; sow generously, reap generously.” Giving should never be done reluctantly or under duress. When giving stems from a cheerful heart, the giver becomes the recipient of God’s bountiful blessings. Paul quotes from the Psalter and from the prophecy of Isaiah to prove that God provides gifts and causes their increase. He notes that God provides seed that, when it is sown, returns to the sower a harvest of righteousness. Generosity results in thanksgiving to God.

Supplying the needs of God’s people generates gratitude to God. The name of God is praised and prayers are offered to him for the donors of the material gifts. These prayers unify the giver and the recipient as they experience God’s surpassing grace. Paul concludes with a doxology in which he utters thanks to God for his indescribable gift.

--Simon J. Kistemaker