

God is God; you are but one of His creatures. Your only joy is to be found in obeying Him, your true fulfillment is to be found in worshipping Him, your only wisdom is to be found in trusting and knowing Him.

--Sinclair Ferguson

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 XXXI. What offices does Christ execute as the Redeemer of God's elect?

Answer. Christ, as the Redeemer of God's elect, executes the offices of a prophet, of a priest and of a king, both in His estate of humiliation and exaltation.

(Prophet) Luke 7. 16; Jn. 1.1,14 & 6.14 & 13.19; Acts3.22-25 & 7.37-38.

(Priest) Heb. 2. 17-18 & 3.1 & 4.14-16 & 5.5-7 & 7.24-28 & 10.19-22.

(King) Psa. 2.6 & 24.7-10; Psa. 45; Zech. 9.9; Rev. 11.15 & 19.16.

Question XXXII. How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?

Answer. Christ executes the office of a prophet in revealing to the elect, by His word and Spirit, the will of God in their salvation.

Jn. 1.18 & 6.33,45,63 & 10.27-28 & 13.19 & 14.26 & 15.15.

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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

Volume 12, No. 38

September 22, 2019

ZEAL NOT ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGE

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. Romans 10:2-3

After addressing the lost condition of his beloved Israel and his desire for their salvation, Paul proceeds to declare the evidence of their condition. It was a misplaced zeal and a lack of the knowledge of the truth. We have an abundant record of everything from their religious pride to their abuse of the Law and the ultimate crucifixion of our Lord. It is well that we recognize the fact that what Paul identified with Israel is equally true with all who look to anything but the righteousness of God as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Their zeal had the marks of defending a worthy cause. Paul terms it as a zeal of God. The Old Testament rituals and an outward observance of the Law seemed to be in place. Their lack of knowledge is defined in these verses in that they were “ignorant of God’s righteousness.” The pattern is oft repeated among any who would seek to grab onto the things of the Gospel and the life of the righteous without actually knowing God.

It is certain that they had this zeal of God through the advantage that was given them through Old Testament revelations. Paul wrote earlier in Romans that “unto them were committed the oracles of God.” The Pharisees and leaders of the day were quite proficient in the content of the Word of God as is witnessed in Paul’s testimony concerning himself. They were diligent in seeking to disseminate the Word properly and yet became quite superficial

in doing so. They fiercely defended the rituals and the Sabbath (even though they misapplied all); they were very defensive of their lineage (they reacted strongly when Christ associated their deeds with the devil). They were violently opposed to anything that seemed to cast doubt on their way and so sought to kill the Lord as He preached to them the true righteousness of God. This was the telling evidence that they did not know God; they did not know that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh in answer to all that the Word had testified to them.

Their knowledge consisted of the record of God as they read it in the Scriptures. They had even heard the report from men of faith such as the prophets. But they were subject unto the interpretations that result from fleshly attempts to deal with spiritual matters. Thus, they did not recognize Jesus as the Son of God and could not bear record with His report of Himself to them: *Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. John 8:19.*

While they knew the letter of the Law, they failed to see the spirituality of it. Being dead in trespasses and sins, they failed to see, and could not see that true righteousness is a matter of being rather than a matter of doing. Therefore, they could only see a need for outward conformity to the precepts of the Law and had no sense of what Christ revealed from

the Old Testament – the love of God and the love of our neighbor. To have such a shallow view leads to the belief that one can attain to it themselves so playing into the hands of pride and self-righteousness. Such a thought engenders bondage as well as ultimate failure and non-acceptance with God.

There is a key term in this passage that differentiates the true religion from the false. The word is submitted. The bondage of pride and self-will dictates self-reliance and therefore they could not do what all comers to Christ must do – submit themselves to the righteousness of God. To do so is to submit to the fact that all that Christ did as our suffering substitute and is as our risen Lord is absolutely essential to eternal life with Him. Any attempt to establish one's own righteousness pits them against Christ and the provisions of mercy and grace.

The essential knowledge is declared to us by the Lord Himself: *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.* And true zeal is given us in Paul's words to Titus: *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Titus 2:14.* Paul made a comparison in writing to the Galatians: *They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only*

when I am present with you. Galatians 4:17-18. While Paul had felt the sting of the misplaced zeal of the Jews and others, he was certainly zealous in the pursuit of the Gospel and would desire to see it among all the Lord's people.

It is increasingly painful to witness the woeful lack of knowledge of the Scripture in churches today – not in the unchurched only but in the churches. Quite often they are quite zealous in the promotion of their denominations, their programs, and the aim of building mega-institutions. This is often done with the essence of the Gospel nowhere to be found. Like the Jews who Paul lamented, they have a zeal without knowledge. They, and we, should know and preach who Jesus is, what He has done, why He had to do it (no other could), and why there can be no other way. Many are still determined to flaunt their free will and trust to their decisions rather than fall on the mercy of God and so repent and believe the Gospel.

Sadly, missing today in many places is the zealotry for good works and the propagation of the Gospel as was witnessed in the early church. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation..." O that we might be in imitation of our Lord of whom it was written: *For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me. Psalms 69:9.* O that we may truly "hunger and thirst after righteousness!" *bhs*

How Do I Know That God Is for Me?

FROM Sinclair Ferguson Sep 16, 2019 Category: Articles

God has promised to work everything together for the good of His people. If God is for us, it follows that, ultimately, nothing can stand against us. That is logical. Otherwise, God would not be God. If something could rise up against God and overcome Him, that other thing would be God. God would then prove to be a false god—no God at all. But on the contrary Paul is saying that in the last analysis, nothing can be against us if God is for us.

But this raises the million-dollar question: "Is God for me?" Perhaps even more pointed

is the personal question:

“How do I know that God is for me?”

Well, do you know that? How do you know?

Satan is very insistent about this—indeed, he has been insistent on this question from the beginning. He asked it in the Garden of Eden. In fact, his first recorded words are an assault on God’s gracious character (will we never learn how much he hates God and His people?): “Did God put you in this lavish garden and forbid you to eat from any of its trees? What kind of God does that? You don’t think He is really for you, do you, if He does that kind of thing?” (see Gen. 3:1).

You will find this innuendo repeated in various forms and guises throughout your Christian life. You need to have biblical answers to these questions:

- How do you know God is really for you?
- Where should you look for the proof that God is for you? Does it lie in the fact that your Christian life has been unbroken happiness? Does it lie in the fact that your Christian life been one of ecstatic joy?

There is only one irrefutable answer to these questions. It cannot be found in our circumstances. It lies only in the provision that God has made for us in Jesus Christ.

This is the whole point of Paul’s question in verse 32. We can be sure that God is for us because this God, the God of the Bible, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up to the cross for us all.

If this is true, Paul affirms, we can be confident He will give us everything we will ever need.

This is the only sure way we can know that God is for us.

Frequently in the closing pages of the Gospel records we are told that the Lord Jesus Christ was “delivered up” (e.g., Matt. 26:15; 27:2, 18, 26). He was handed over by one person or group to another until eventually He was handed over by Pilate to be crucified as a criminal.

But Paul understood that behind every human “handing over” was the purpose of the heavenly Father. He “handed over” (it is the same verb) His own Son to bear the condemnation due to sinners.

Here is the heart of the plan of God and the wonder of the gospel. The best of all men dies as though He were the worst of all criminals. This is not merely a matter of human wickedness destroying a good man. It is the heart of the purpose of God, as Isaiah had long before prophesied (Isa. 53:4–6, 10).

Behind the handing over of the Lord Jesus—by Judas Iscariot, by Herod, by the priests, by Pontius Pilate—stood the purposes of His heavenly Father handing Him over to the cross in order to die in the place of sinners. He bore God’s judgment and wrath against our sin.

What inexpressible love this is.

"THE LORD REIGNS—NOT SATAN, NOT MAN, NOT GOD AND MAN, NOT GOOD LUCK, NOT BAD LUCK, NOT RANDOM EVENTS, NOT CHANCE OCCURRENCES, NOT THE ALIGNMENT OF THE STARS, NOT ACCIDENTS, NOT BLIND FATE, NOT GOOD OR BAD KARMA—ONLY GOD, AND GOD ALONE." - STEVE LAWSON