

Just as fruit does not give life to the tree but is the natural produce of it, so our good works flow from the cross but do not contribute to it. Christ alone is our righteousness. –Monergism

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 LXVII. What is repentance unto life?

Answer. Repentance unto life is a grace of the Spirit, whereby a sinner, under a true sense of his sin, and an experimental acquaintance with God's pardoning mercy in Christ, does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God with full purpose of heart, and to serve the Lord in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

Joel 2.12-13; Luke 23.40-42; Acts 2.37 & 5.31 & 11.18; Rom. 2.4; 2 Cor. 7.9-10; 1 Thess. 1.9.

Question LXVIII. What is love?

Answer. Love is a grace of the Spirit, communicated to the believer, whereby he loves and delights in God, and in His ways, Word, worship and people.

Rom. 5.5; 1 Cor. 13; Gal. 5.6,22; 1 Jn. 3.14 & 4.7-21 & 5.1-3.

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

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MERCY AND TRUTH IN ACTION

By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil. Proverbs 16:6

How practical indeed is the study of the Proverbs. Such jewels of wisdom should ever be sought after and worn as emblems of a work of grace in our hearts. Thereby the righteousness of Christ is both experienced and seen and appears to all as the manifestation of new life in Christ. By them we are encouraged to flee from the damaging effects of human depravity and the course of evil. By them we are urged to cling to the precepts witnessed in the perfect life of Christ. Their value is witnessed in Paul's advice to Timothy: *But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. 1 Timothy 6:11-12.*

Many have extolled the virtues of the wisdom of Solomon, not all of whom were believers. In this text we have reference made to the Covenant of Grace given us in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is there we discover the reasons that incline us to pursue the Godliness taught in the Proverbs. The declaration is made of iniquity purged. And the fear of the Lord is shown to be profitable. Solomon would have the believer to be assured by that which is from out of himself and rather grounded in the eternal will and purpose of God. That assurance is of redemption accomplished and the fear of the Lord that emerges as a result of new life accomplished.

It is evident throughout that the iniquity of

men must be addressed in order to gain acceptance with God. He is holy and holiness is demanded of all who would come to Him. The means to that end is here identified as Mercy and Truth. A question here arises and has been expressed as to the point of reference. Is this looking to the quality of mercy and truth in the one coming? Or is it the mercy and truth that we know in Jesus Christ and the wonderful work of redemption? The fact that sins are purged (expiated) points to the latter. John Gill points out that “it is not by the mercy and truth of men; not by alms deeds or showing mercy to the poor.” He further observes that such things as that may be done by those who are destitute of faith in Christ. We are rather directed to the mercy of God as the reason of His sending His Son as the propitiation for our sin and the obtaining of pardon before the inflexible justice of God.

Many folks labor under the deadly assumption that repentance, a profession of faith, attendance upon ceremonies and rituals, or any number of things result in sins being purged. Yet, true believers gladly confess, “Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to thy cross I cling.” Charles Bridges wrote: “Man would purge iniquity by repentance or external ceremonials. God determines it by sacrifice; not nullifying the sanctions of the law by a simple deed of mercy; but combining the manifestation of His truth, by fulfilling these sanctions upon the Surety, which mercy provided.”

Mercy is that determination of God not to

require the due recompense on a guilty sinner. It could not be that God would abandon His integrity or forsake His holiness to exercise His will to show mercy. In the exercise of His mercy He provided the only means where satisfaction could be obtained – the Lamb of God. Upon Him, the truth of the Holiness of God was displayed. On Him, the justice of God was declared. On Him the fact of the repulsiveness of fallen man was revealed. Charles Bridges further wrote: “Mercy engages, truth fulfils – the engagements. Mercy provides, truth accepts – the ransom. Both sat together in the eternal council. Both made their public entrance into the world. Both, like the two pillars of the Temple (1 Kings vii. 21), combine to support the Christians confidence; that there is abundant material for condemnation is the holiest saint; actual condemnation there is not – there cannot be.

A precious reference to mercy and truth in Christ Jesus our Lord has long held me in awe and wonder. Frustration has met me as I have tried to fathom the depths of meaning and express the beauty of the declaration of Psalmist: *Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Psalms 85:10.* Matthew Henry referred to it thusly: “See here how sin is taken away from us – by the mercy and truth of God, mercy in promising, truth in performing, the mercy and truth which kiss each other in Jesus Christ the Mediator – by the covenant of grace in which mercy and truth shine so brightly...”

What is a covenant?

Basically, a divine covenant consists of the legal and binding terms of a relationship with God.[22] Since God is God, He sets the terms of the relationship. Because God is morally perfect, the terms of the relationship can be nothing other than perfect righteousness. Without righteousness, no one can see God. The consequence of sin is always separation from God. These terms never change. Therefore, reconciliation with God requires the establishment of perfect righteousness. The covenant of works and the covenant of grace both contain the legal terms for a relationship with God. The covenant

To be sure, the operations of the grace of God in regeneration have written in the hearts of believers those same attributes of mercy and truth. The Lord would reveal it in this way through 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.* Herein is described the walk that characterizes the fear of the Lord. Many men walk in a way of servile fear while others show utter contempt for God and the just demands to which they are accountable. All those have a consciousness of God they do not like to retain. But the child of God is graciously brought to that form of fear and reverence in which they both desire and delight. The presence within of the grace and goodness of God appears with instruction in righteousness: *Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Titus 2:12.*

Where the Lord is revered sin becomes hateful. Where the grace of God has excited a sensitivity to mercy received and truth realized there is a desire to abstain from evil and from the very appearance of it. Such is the work of grace in the hearts of the Lord’s children that they are put off by those things which sent Him to the cross. “By mercy and truth iniquity is purged,” and we would have our lives purged of all that is contrary to Godliness. *bhs*

of works contains the terms of God's relationship with those outside of Christ, thus condemning its membership. The covenant of grace contains the terms of the relationship upon those in Christ, thus forgiving its membership. The law exists in both the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. However, the law is yet to be fulfilled for those in the covenant of works, and the law has already been fulfilled in Christ for those in the covenant of grace. –Jeffrey Johnson, *The Kingdom of God: A Baptist Expression of Covenant Theology*

MEN SHALL BE BLESSED IN HIM

Psalm 72:17

Everything out of Christ is under the curse; all blessings are treasured up in Him, and can only be received and enjoyed by union to and communion with Him. If in Him, he is made of God unto us, wisdom, righteousness, strength, sanctification, and redemption; if separate from Him, His work will profit us nothing. How important then is union to Jesus! All who are in Him are blessed with the favour of God which compasses them as a shield; with access to God by the Spirit, as to a kind and indulgent Father; with the friendship of God, He calls then not servants but friends, and His friendship is good fortune; with justification before God as the great Lawgiver and Judge of all; with sanctification by God, to the praise, honor, and glory of His grace; and ultimately they will be glorified with God through eternal ages. All things are theirs, and for them is laid up a crown of righteousness, which corrupteth not, and where thieves cannot steal. O blessed state! Oh, happy persons! But this honor have all the saints.

Blessings abound where Jesus reigns;
The prisoner leaps to love his chains
The weary find eternal rest
And all the sons of want are blest;
In Him the tribes of Adam boast,
More blessings than their father lost.

--James Smith

Praise is prayer.

When I lift up my heart to God to praise Him, I talk to Him and commune with Him. Prayer is not all asking. As Thomas Watson, the seventeenth-century Puritan, quaintly put it, 'Many have tears in their eyes, and complaints in their mouth, but few have harps in their hand, blessing and glorifying God. Let us honour God this way. Praise is the quit-rent we pay to God: while God renews our lease, we must renew our rent.'

--Derek Prime

IN OUR FIRST PARADISE IN EDEN THERE WAS A WAY TO GO OUT BUT NO WAY TO GO IN AGAIN.
BUT AS FOR THE HEAVENLY PARADISE, THERE IS A WAY TO GO IN, BUT NOT WAY TO GO OUT

--RICHARD BAXTER