

Christians are generally at their best, when they are in the furnace of affliction.

–Martyn Lloyd-Jones

### 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 LXXVII. Is the gospel, in all its branches, a sufficient rule of life to a believer in Christ?

Answer. Yes; for through the life-giving power of the Spirit, faith lives upon Christ, the Living Head, and gospel precepts are the believer's rule in the world, in the family, in the church, and in case of personal offences.

Jn. 14.21; Rom. 6.14 & 8.9-11,14; 2 Cor. 9.8; Gal. 6.14-16; Phil. 3.16; Col. 3.1-3.

Question LXXVIII. Can you give a proof of the precepts of the gospel as a rule to a believer in the world?

Answer. Yes; for it is written, "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;" "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God." "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal."

Matt. 5.43-48; Rom. 12.17-18; Eph. 6.5-9; Col. 3.22-25 & 4.1; I Jn. 2.15.

#### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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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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### WE ARE OF GOD

*They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. 1 John 4:5-6*

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...” Many will recognize this as the opening lines of Charles Dickens’ book *A Tale of Two Cities*. I have never read the book and have little knowledge of the theology of Charles Dickens. Some suspect, and rightly so, that he may have drawn his thoughts from Ecclesiastes 3. This quote came to me as I meditated on the current situation in the world today. The outbreak of a potentially devastating virus is on the minds of most and to many of them it must seem like “the worst of times.” As a believer in the sovereignty of God and His determination to “make all things work together for good for those who love God;” I must believe that it is the “best of times.”

When the effects of the fall and the curse are manifested among men it is not pleasant, to say the very least, and often it is catastrophic. When men are faced with that for which they have no answer, predictable reactions such as fear, panic, survival instincts, and selfishness occur. What they will not do, apart from the mercy of God is acknowledge that He has both the right and ability to “do as He wills in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.” They look to government, to men in

various capacities and despair of hope. The Lord revealed to Solomon that recovery from the effects of their disobedience would come to them when they prayed thusly: “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14. But the masses in our land are neither called by the name of the Lord nor will they call upon Him. They rather indulge themselves in seeking someone or something to blame and wallow in fear and despair.

At the start of this chapter John warned of false prophets and that we should try the spirits whether they are of God. The evidence is simple. They do not acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ and is come in the flesh. So, their message will be of the world. We are comforted and assured by, “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” 1 John 4:4. There is no such comfort for them. He that is in the world is Satan and he is the master of deception. Their message is to those who speak their language. Conspicuously absent from their message is the need of repentance and faith. If they speak of faith it is pointed to men. They would preach up the essential good of men and refuse to acknowledge man as fallen. They would preach “the non-necessity of

any internal work of efficacious grace, a reformation of life and manners being thought sufficient to render a man acceptable to God, and prepare him for eternal happiness; the doctrine of justification and salvation by works; all which are pleasing to carnal men..." John Gill. Grace is nowhere to be found in their message. And the world hears their message. "Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD." Isaiah 26:10

John gives us precious reassurance in declaring "we are of God." Of course, he is asserting his apostleship and the calling of those who preach the Word in truth. But the thought of "we" is inclusive and joined with the thought of "ye" in verse 4, and we see all believers as identified with him. He would include all who are led of the Spirit of God; they are those who are born of the Spirit. As Jesus prayed in intercession for His own, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." John 17:14.

The message is clear. They did not hear John then and they will not hear the message of the Gospel today because they do not know God. It would be wonderful if the fear that is evident today were of God and His judgments. But the fear is of personal loss and even of death and so many remain enslaved by the fear of death. A

responsiveness to the Word of God is a great indicator that one knows the Lord. His sheep hear His voice and follow Him.

When Paul reasoned with the Roman Governor Felix of righteousness, temperance, and judgement to come, he trembled. He did not repent. It is written of the devils that they believe and tremble. There is neither trembling before God or is the word "mercy" found anywhere in the vocabulary of our leaders or people.

The Lord has in the past used great tragedy and devastation to call people to repentance. Our hope will not be found in a vaccine or in the devices of men. It will be found in the blood of Christ.

We are not of the world. In Christ we are cleansed and made whole. We are new creatures in Him. That which is born of God cannot be affected by any externally introduced virus. We are born of incorruptible seed. And we know best of all that there is mercy with the Lord, and it is plenteous.

For those of us who hear His Word, it is the "best of times" to trust the Lord and rejoice in all that the Christ in us includes. May these days be spent in sweet communion with our Blessed Lord and may we be found praying for His mercy upon our Land. We know that He is able. "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;" 2 Corinthians 1:10. *bhs*

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## NOW IS THE TIME

The gospel is always drowned out more easily in peacetime. What is there to fear? But not in a pandemic. When a cholera outbreak came to London, Charles Spurgeon admonished everyone in Christ,

Now is the time for all of you who love souls. You may see men more alarmed than they are already; and if they should be, mind that you avail yourselves of the opportunity of doing them good. You have the Balm of Gilead; when their wounds smart, pour it in. You know of Him who died to save; tell them of Him. Lift high the cross before their eyes. Tell them that God became man that man might be lifted to

God. Tell them of Calvary, and its groans, and cries, and sweat of blood. Tell them of Jesus hanging on the cross to save sinners. Tell them that —

“There is life for a look at the Crucified One.”

Tell them that He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him. Tell them that He is able to save even at the eleventh hour, and to say to the dying thief, “today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.”

God has prepared good works for us (Ephesians 2:10). He has prepared us for days like these. He plans to show the immeasurable riches of his kindness through simple acts of Christian courage in a world paralyzed and consumed by fear. Father, in the name of Jesus, use your church. —Marshall Segal

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### GOD’S BEST PROMISE

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (Romans 8:32)

The most far-reaching promise of God’s future grace is found in Romans 8:32. This is the most precious verse in the Bible to me. Part of the reason is that the promise in it is so all-encompassing that it stands ready to help me at virtually every turn in my life and ministry. There never has been, and never will be, a circumstance in my life where this promise is irrelevant.

By itself that all-encompassing promise would probably not make the verse most precious. There are other such sweeping promises such as Psalm 84:11: “No good thing does [God] withhold from those who walk uprightly.” And 1 Corinthians 3:21–23: “All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future — all are yours, and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” It is difficult to overstate the spectacular sweep and scope of these promises.

But what puts Romans 8:32 in a class by itself is the logic that gives rise to the promise and makes it as solid and unshakable as God’s love for his infinitely admirable Son.

Romans 8:32 contains a foundation and guarantee that is so strong and so solid and so secure that there is absolutely no possibility that the promise could ever be broken. This is what makes it an ever-present strength in times of great turmoil. Whatever else gives way, whatever else disappoints, whatever else fails, this all-encompassing promise of future grace can never fail.

“He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all . . .” That’s the foundation. If this is true, says the logic of heaven, then God will, with absolute certainty, give all things to those for whom he gave his Son!

John Piper, From Future Grace, pages 109–110

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**EVEN AS THE TRIAL COMES, THE LORD WILL SHOW YOU A WAY OF ESCAPE.**

**HE HAS DELIVERED YOU—GIVE HIM YOUR GRATITUDE. HE IS DELIVERING YOU—GIVE HIM YOUR CONFIDENCE. HE WILL DELIVER YOU—BEGIN NOW TO PRAISE HIM FOR MERCIES THAT HE HAS YET TO SHOW YOU, AND FOR GRACE THAT YOU HAVE NOT YET EXPERIENCED BUT THAT HE WILL GRANT YOU IN THE FUTURE. —C. H. SPURGEON**