

What the Church needs today is not more or better machinery, nor new organizations, nor novel methods--but men whom the Holy Spirit can use, men of prayer, men mighty in prayer.

-E. M. Bounds

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 LXXIX. Can you give a proof of the precepts of the gospel as a rule in the family?

Answer. Yes; as it is written, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged," "but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. 5.22-25,33 & 6.1-4; Col. 3.18-21.

Question LXXX. Can you give a proof of the gospel as a rule in the church?

Answer. Yes; as it is written, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." "As God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches." "Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." "Keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." "Let all things be done decently and in order." "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous."

Matt. 23.8-10; 1 Cor. 7.17 & 11.2 & 14.40; Eph. 6.9; Heb. 10.24-25; 1 Pet. 3.8-11 & 5.1-5.

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 13, No. 13

March 29, 2020

A CLARION CALL TO RETURN

Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. Hosea 6:1

There is an abundance of entitlement thinking in our land. The idea of entitlement is that one is owed something or has a right to it. Often this is with no thought to having earned the right or of any other form of merited benefit. It is to be granted that there are needs that elicit a compassionate response in us. But often it is simply demanded as a right and generations have capitalized on their demands. Many would apply the same kind of thinking to our gracious God. This would extend to the point of questioning God while dictating to Him the conditions of their needs. Two errors become immediately apparent. The first is that they fail to recognize or acknowledge that He knows all things and is fully aware of the conditions and the reason. The second is that God owes man anything. He does all things in accordance with His own will and purpose. Men would question the wisdom of God.

There are many characterizations of the being and existence of God. Absent from the thoughts of many is that He is holy. Accordingly, then they will have no reference to their sin and sinfulness. In the absence of a proper concept of both divine sovereignty and the absolute purity of God they move to construct a human reference and then seek to subject God to ideas of what seems right. The Old Testament error of “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” would be compounded by seeking the aid of God in carrying out their own erroneous thoughts.

Conspicuously absent from the alarm being sounded across our land is any cry for the mercy of God. Have they not heard that “There is none righteous, no not one.” Neither is there any sign of repentance among the alarmed and suffering. The Psalmist wrote that “God is not in all their thoughts.” This is coupled with the irresistible urge of men to find blame in time of trial. It is certain that finding blame does not bring comfort, but many find a sense of justification for themselves. It was the finger of God that etched the Law on the tables of stone in the Mount. And even the wicked Egyptian magicians acknowledged that the plagues on their land was the “finger of God.” But it is recorded that on hearing those words that Pharaoh “hardened his heart.” Solomon’s pleading at the dedication of the Temple conditioned blessing on the recognition of the “plague of his own heart” and then to appeal to the mercy of God. Even wicked Ahab was granted a reprieve of sorts when he put on the garments of humility. Nineveh repented and was spared at the preaching of Jonah. But we ask, where is the cry for national repentance and who is seeking after the mercy of God. “There is none that understandeth, there is none that see seeketh after God.”

What we do hear today is the boasting of American greatness and the assurance from our leaders that we will defeat this thing. Ravenhill wrote in 1962: “Sinned as we have as a nation, yet to our sin we have added pride in our

sinning. The world has lost the power to blush over its vice; the Church has lost her power to weep over it." Will we not learn the words the Lord gave to the prophet in this passage?

It would be a manifestation of the mercy of God if men would acknowledge the hand of God in all. This call for a return to the Lord is strongly connected to the last verse of the previous chapter. "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early." Hosea 5:15. O to believe that such a realization would come upon our land and that true revival might be given. Yet, this thought manifests the absolute necessity of mercy. We are reminded of the obstinacy of men as we read: "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory." Revelation 16:9. It requires the mercy of God to be enabled to cry for mercy!

The disciples once asked the Lord, "who then can be saved?" His answer was that with men it was impossible, but with God all things were possible. As we who believe the Lord and who find our assurance, not in the abilities of men, but in the cleansing blood of Christ our Lord, we are encouraged to seek Him for the impossible. It is to be feared that we ask too little. It is to be noted that we are promised an audience with God through Christ our Lord where we may repent and believe the Gospel as a way of life; where we may boldly confess our sins and those of our nation as did Daniel of old; where we may

praise; and where we may intercede after the example of our Lord.

John Gill wrote of this passage and of these words: "for they are the words of those persons under the afflicting hand of God; and, being brought thereby to a sense of their sins, acknowledge them, and seek to the Lord for pardon, and encourage one another so to do..." It is come let us together seek the Lord. It is of His mercy that we are not consumed. O that we may be led to know right well that only He can undo what He has done. These things are the effects of the fall and the continuance of men in their mad rebellions against God.

God owes us nothing but has promised abundant mercy to those who seek it. He is able to heal. We are reminded of the words of Elihu of old: "But none saith, Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night;" Job 35:10. Or the resolve of Asaph in writing: "I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?" Psalm 77:6-8. He knew full well of the mercy of God past, present, and future.

Sadly, the people to whom the Psalmist wrote were unresponsive to the words the Lord had given and they perished. The desire of the Lord is expressed: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Hosea 6:6. What will America have? *bhs*

Thoughts on the Corona Virus – John Piper

"Behold the kindness and severity of God" (Romans 11:22). His providence is sweet and bitter. Naomi did not sin when she said, "The Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me" (Ruth 1:20). That was true. And it was spoken at the very moment when all her fortunes were about to change.

This is not a season for sentimental views of God. It is a bitter season. And God sent it. We know this, because he “works all things according to the counsel of his will” (Ephesians 1:11). All things. Not a sparrow falls to the ground apart from our heavenly Father (Matthew 10:29).

Nature is not sovereign. Satan is not sovereign. Sinful man is not sovereign. God rules them all (Luke 8:25; Job 1:12; 2:6; Acts 4:27–28). So, we say with Job, “I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted” (Job 42:2). Therefore, God not only comprehends the coronavirus; he has purposes for it. God does nothing, and permits nothing, without wise purposes. Nothing just happens. Everything flows from the eternal counsels of God (Ephesians 1:11). All of it is wisdom. All of it is purposeful. For those who trust Jesus Christ, all of it is kindness. For others, it is a merciful wake-up call: “Let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price” (Revelation 22:17).

Often we hear the prayer, “Lord. Thou art able to do this.” That prayer is very good and may build up confidence in the pray-er. But – and this is important – to say that God is able is not faith. Here is a simple but imperfect picture of our lack these days. I myself believe that God who once turned water into wine is *able* to turn into pure gold the desk on which I am writing. (It is sixty inches by thirty-four inches.) What a wonderful slab of gold it would make! What good outlets for the money which the gold would bring me! But – and here is where I fail – I do not have the faith to believe that God *will* turn this desk into gold. My theology says that God *can* do it, but on the faith end I fail. I have said before that one of these days someone will read the Bible for the first time, believe it, and act on it with a daring simple faith. Then we long-time believers will bow in shame crying, “Lord help our unbelief.”

--Leonard Ravenhill, *Revival Praying*

WHAT WE PREACH

Preachers are often asked “What do you preach?”

Most preachers will answer by identifying the doctrines that distinguish their sect from others, especially the doctrines emphasized and required by their founders.

Ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ tell you that His gospel is what they preach. We do so because He commissioned us to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel [or good news of Jesus Christ] to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:16f).

Jesus Christ’s preachers therefore do not major on a doctrine such as baptism, last things, law-keeping, sabbath-observance, dietary regulations, church government.

They who believe the gospel want to hear the preaching of it and of Jesus Christ ever afterward. They are not interested in hearing the doctrines of others.

If you desire to hear a doctrine preached, you will go to a preacher of it. But be aware that no one was ever saved by a doctrine, even if he believed rightly regarding it.

If you are concerned for the salvation and edification of your soul, heed a preacher of Jesus Christ’s gospel. You will be saved if you believe it. – Daniel E. Parks