

"Every false religion has a genetic disposition to self-justification." - Derek Thomas

"The church was founded not upon men's judgments, not upon priesthoods, but upon the teaching of apostles and prophets [Eph. 2:20]." - 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 LXXXV. To whom is Baptism to be administered?

Answer. Baptism is to be administered to those who are blessed with and actually profess repentance towards God, and faith in, and obedience to, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 2.37-38,41 & 8.12,36-37 & 10.47-48 & 22.16.

Question LXXXVI. Are infants proper subjects of Baptism?

Answer. There is neither command nor example in the Holy Scriptures, nor certain consequences from them, to baptize infants; therefore they ought not to be baptized.

Mark 16.15-16; Acts 8.37.

#### 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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### THE WISDOM OF GOD

*Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:20-21)*

In Isaiah 40:18 the question is posed, “To whom will ye liken God? Or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?” In considering the wisdom of God we might apply the same impossibility of finding anything to compare to it. Daniel ascribed the very possession of wisdom to God saying, “...Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His...” Paul wrote of the impossibility of discovery in this way: (Romans 11:33) O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! To the Ephesians, Paul described his objective in preaching the Gospel as the making known the manifold wisdom of God and that according to the eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord. It would seem that the aim here is not that all the reasonings of God were to be revealed; rather it would be that the existence of the superiority of the wisdom of God be declared. As we subscribe more and more to the Gospel and see it revealed in the person of Christ, we shall find ourselves in the never-ending process of growing delight in Him. And we will grow in awe of both God and His wisdom.

An evaluation of wisdom can be made by observing what it produces. The comparison here is to be made of God’s wisdom to that of man. The wisdom of men produces a failing self-reliance, a misguided sense of rightness, and a false claim of righteousness. Idolatry is the

inevitable outcome of the exercise of human wisdom in that it always directs away from faith in God. Men seek to harmonize fleshly desires and practices with a sense of justification of their actions. This may involve anything from religious pride to outright immorality and crime. As men pit their wisdom against that of God it becomes evident that they harbor animosity toward God. Paul wrote in Romans 1:28 that, “they did not like to retain God in their knowledge...” The Old Testament bears record that despite all the wonderful revelations of God to them in everything from creation to the word of the prophets, they persisted in devising their own ways which could never harmonize with the holiness of God.

Men continue to try to find out God through their own wisdom. On several occasions I have witnessed the presentations of a diluted gospel followed by a line of reasoning that could have only been born out of the wisdom of men. As I read in scripture of men coming to Christ one thing stands out. They have despaired of any hope within themselves and they come in full surrender. Where in scripture do we find either Jesus or the Apostles asking men to raise their hands or act in any manner as to depict that it might be okay to be embarrassed about coming to Christ. The leper had abandoned his pride, Bartimaeus would not be silenced, the crowd at Pentecost cried out “what shall we do,” and the Philippian Jailer cried out without hesitation

“Sirs what must I do to be saved?” None of these were given anything to say or pray. They simply repented and believed the Gospel. They were shut up to the mercy of God. Men seem to persist in the thought that they can make some addition to the grace of God in salvation when the only commandment we have is to preach the Gospel.

While man’s wisdom dictates to them a method, we are simply given Christ. Instead of an explanation as to the workings of the divine will and purpose we are given Him who is declared to be “...Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” The last part of v. 21 is often twisted to glorify the preaching over the one who is to be preached. That which we preach concerning Jesus and the resurrection is to the world foolishness indeed. Many who seize on those words are themselves often guilty of acting contrary to the revealed wisdom of God. With Paul, it was not that he was compelled to preach; it was “...woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel.”

We marvel at the wisdom of God in many ways. Who can observe the workings of creation and all that pertains to it and not be filled with wonder at the wisdom of He who has accomplished it all? Likewise, the knowledge that He holds it all together, while man foolishly persists in the delusion that he can control the climate. The quest ever continues to discover the origin of the universe when the answer has been given millenniums ago. Is this the way God would be found out? A wonderful manifestation

of the wisdom of God is seen in that He allowed no discovery of Himself by means of human wisdom which is as depraved as is man. He has given ample declaration to His wisdom and declared His salvation. Apart from new life in Christ there is no true knowledge of God. Not only does the wisdom of God perfectly guide Him in the ordering of the universe and the salvation of His people, but it also prevents an even greater perversion of the Gospel.

Paul later wrote to the Corinthians of simplicity in Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3). It is this simplicity that is a stumbling block to the self-righteous and foolishness to the intellectual. He declares in verse 30, “But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” Human wisdom could have never conceived the obtaining of salvation through the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of a substitute – Jesus Christ the Righteous. Pride would not allow the abandonment of human merit. To the believer, it is merciful that God shut us up to His wisdom and mandated that He be discovered in Christ through the regenerating power of the Spirit unto true repentance and faith in Christ alone. (Matthew 11:25) At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. May we ever delight in Him “In who are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” *bhs*

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### The Pestilence Walking in the Dark

We are told to not be afraid for the arrow that flies by day “nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness” (Ps. 91:6). There is protection for those who have made Jehovah their refuge even the most High their dwelling place (v. 9). Spurgeon declared that the pestilence was “shrouded in mystery ... it marches on, unseen of men, slaying with hidden weapons, like an enemy stabbing in the dark, yet those who dwell in God are not afraid of it.”

In Psalm 91 there is the promise of protection in pestilence to those who find refuge in and trust in the Lord as their fortress (v. 2). How long are we to look to Jehovah? “Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land” (Isa. 6:11-12). The Psalmist noted that Jehovah will deliver such “from the noisome pestilence” (v. 3). William Bridge reminded, “God will honor those persons, and those graces most, that honor him most: of all graces faith honors God most, therefore God will honor that most; no wonder, then, that this protection is put upon faith and trusting in the Lord.” Is it lawful to fly away in time of trouble? Bridge asserted, “Yes, without all doubt it is, so you carry God along with you for your habitation, so you make God your habitation still; a man may lawfully seek the preservation of his life and the life of his family.”

The pestilence is called “the hand of God” because of God’s providence in sending and ordering it. This is true just as the Lord said He would send a famine in the land. Then if it is sent by the Lord may we not flee from it. Abraham, when there was a famine, went to Egypt (Gen. 12:10). Isaac, when there was a famine, went Gerar (Gen. 26:1). Jacob, when there was a famine, went to Egypt (Gen. 42:1-9). Elimelech took his wife Naomi as well as his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, and fled from Bethlehem to the country of Moab (Ruth 1:1-2). What is the difference from fleeing from a famine or a plague?

Do Jehovah’s people have protection from a plague coming near their dwelling? The reason for hope is the guardianship of angels—“For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands,” (Ps. 91:11-12). This is protection in time of plague and pestilence. Even in the shadow of death the Lord promised to be with us. –Dr. Ron Rumburg

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“Crisis has the tendency to reveal what we love and trust most. It challenges our idols. The anxiety which follows pinpoint these false gods by making known the things we realize cannot ultimately save us. It reminds us that we are not really in control and that there are things much bigger than our inadequate solutions. Through it all, God is speaking to us, humbling us, weaning us from self-confidence, and calling us back to Himself.

It is true that God has ordained governments and scientific discovery to help overcome earthly problems but also reminds us of their insufficiency. It ought to cause us to, once again, place our ultimate trust in the One who made us, rather than the false gods we have erected in His place.” –Monergism

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**REMEMBER THE FORMER THINGS OF OLD: FOR I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NONE ELSE; I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NONE LIKE ME, DECLARING THE END FROM THE BEGINNING, AND FROM ANCIENT TIMES THE THINGS THAT ARE NOT YET DONE, SAYING, MY COUNSEL SHALL STAND, AND I WILL DO ALL MY PLEASURE: (ISAIAH 46:9-10)**