

Scripture treats spiritual warfare as a normal, everyday part of the Christian life, and so we should as well. It's not about spooky special effects. It's about how we think, feel, live, desire, and act in the presence of our enemies. —David Powlison

### 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 XCI. What must God's people expect when they transgress the law of Christ?

Answer. God has declared He will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes; therefore they must expect fatherly chastisement.

Psa. 89.30-33; Isa. 26.16; Jer. 31.18-20; Mic. 7.9; Heb. 12.5-13.

Question XCII. Can God's people ever perish everlastingly?

Answer. No; for they shall never perish; but, in spite of sin, Satan, the world and the flesh, shall have everlasting life; for their life is hid with Christ in God, and because He lives, they shall live also.

Jn. 3.14-16 & 10.28-29 & 14.19 & 17.24; Col. 3.3; 1 Pet. 1.5.

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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 BLESSEDNESS OF SELF DENIAL

*And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Luke 14:25-26*

In commenting on this passage, F. B. Meyer wrote: "Here we have our Lord's use of the winnowing-fan. Amid the teeming crowds He knew that there were many light and superficial souls who had not realized the cost involved in discipleship." He further noted that in the passage running on to the end of the chapter that the words, "ye cannot be my disciples" are repeated three times. Our Lord's sense that many were shallow and lacked commitment causes us to wonder at the vast numbers who find religion to be very compatible with their worldly ways.

Over the years I have read some books that had deep and profound impact on my life. Two such books are *The Knowledge of the Holy*, by A. W. Tozer and *Knowing God*, by J. I. Packer. In more recent years yet another of these came to my attention: *The Cost*, by Steven Lawson. In it he dealt extensively with this passage. It may have been Lawson or someone he quoted that made a most emphatic statement regarding our Lord's declaration here. The essence of the statement was that "Salvation is absolutely free; but it will cost you everything." This is our Lord's message in this text and the verses following.

We would note at the outset that our God never requires that which He does not enable. And if He enables, it is for His glory and our good. I would further add that if it is for our good it is for our joy and His. While the terminology here would sound harsh to the

world, the understanding of true believers points them to blessedness as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We would be delivered from any hint of legalism here and rather look to the grace of our God to grant liberty to be as our Lord requires.

It is certain that many stumble at the use of the word "hate" here in our Lord's declaration. If indeed the idea of malice toward the objects was being invoked here it would set the Lord at odds with His own teaching. He clearly taught that parents were to be honored and chided the Pharisees for their own inconsistency regarding that issue. Paul would teach, "husbands love your wives..." It has been well said that issues about affection are comparative. Thus, our Lord, in a parallel passage said it this way: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Matthew 10:37. It is clear that full surrender and complete devotion to Him above all others is in view. The best commentary on this issue is found toward the end of the account: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:33. Thus, the issues of human affection and the cares and affairs of this world with which we have to do are to be made subject to our love and devotion to Christ Jesus our Lord.

To emphasize both the requirement and the

objective of disciples, our Lord inserted two parables. They are the parable of the reasonable builder (some would call him the “rash builder”) and the parable of the reasonable king. In both, an assessment of cost is involved. In the first, the reasonable builder is to determine if he has sufficient resources to complete the building. An incomplete building is useless and, in the end would prove an embarrassment to the builder. In the second parable the reasonable king assesses the strength of the enemy king with whom war is inevitable. Comparison is made to his own lesser army. We are compelled to give attention to these parables in that our Lord brings them to bear in Luke 14:33 with the word “likewise.” It is to be observed that in the first the question is whether to begin or not. In the second there is necessity to act. Hendriksen observed that in the first the lesson was “look before you leap.” In the second he concluded you must leap. You cannot remain neutral. So, you must leap, but be sure it is in the right direction.

We would conclude in both instances the message of our Lord is that we do not have the resources to either construct the building or to engage the enemy king. Our resource is Christ and complete devotion is required. While the requirement is unyielding, the outcome is glorious.

We would note that the idea of blessedness is of happiness. While it is not a reference here, it is implied that being a disciple is to be greatly

desired. In the Beatitudes we read of the happiness of the meek, the poor in spirit, the mourners, the hungry and thirsting, and even of the persecuted. In each case that which is contrary to the desired way of the world is a source of happiness to the possessor. So, while all is to be forsaken that stands in the way of full devotion to the One who gave all to redeem His people from their sin, the gain is immeasurable and made reachable by the blood of Christ our Lord.

Steven Lawson wrote in *The Cost*, “Following Christ will cost us much. It will cost us our old way of life and forfeiting our past sins. It will cost us a life of ease and living for this world. It will cost us old habits and even old associations. It will cost us following our own agenda for how we think our life should work. It will cost us our time and treasure to spread the gospel message. It will cost us suffering for being identified with Him. It will cost us varying degrees of opposition and persecution from the world. It may even cost us our life. But in the end, we gain far more than we lose.”

O that we might come to know the blessedness of uncompromising discipleship in following our Lord in His teaching, in His suffering, and in His joy. Implied in His reason that one could not be His disciple is the way in which we may: “All to Jesus I surrender, All to Him I freely give.” And it will all be of Grace and Glory. *bhs*

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“Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.”— Matt, v. 25, 26

My soul! hast thou agreed with thine adversary, and made full payment of all the law charges? If so, it is blessed to review the account, and look over the several particulars, wherein thou wert a debtor, now struck out of God’s book, and marked paid, paid, in red letters, with Jesus’s blood. To thee, as a sinner, born in sin, and an insolvent debtor, both by nature and by practice, the law of God stood forth as thine adversary.

To agree with him as quickly as possible, whilst in the way with him, and while life remains, which is every moment subject to be ended, is the first and most momentous of all concerns. Hadst thou not done this, and death had come, both law and justice must have consigned thee over to the Judge of quick and dead; and having rejected him as thy Saviour, and knowing him only as thy Judge, he must have delivered thee to the angels, who are officers in his kingdom, to execute his wrath; and into hell, as the eternal prison, thou must have been cast: and as the debt then could never have been paid, so deliverance could never have been obtained; but unsatisfied justice would have continued to demand, without any possibility on thy part of paying, to all eternity. Now see how thy account stands. It is a solemn thing to deal with God. If thy debt of original and actual sin be not paid by thy surety, it is not cancelled; but if Jesus, thy surety, hath paid it for thee, thy God hath accepted it of him; yea, he himself constituted and appointed him to pay it; and Jesus never gave over, nor did he compound with God, until he had paid the uttermost farthing: then art thou free. Oh! then, be often reviewing the blessed account, in which all thy plea for grace and acceptance here, and glory hereafter, most completely stands. Jesus hath paid the whole, and God the Father graciously saith, "Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom."—Job xxxiii. 24. – Robert Hawker, *The Poor Man's Morning and Evening Portions*

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A felt conviction of the preciousness of the Saviour has ever been regarded by enlightened ministers of the gospel as constituting a scriptural and unmistakable evidence of the existence of divine life in the soul; and in moments when neither time nor circumstance would admit of the close scrutiny of a theological creed, or a nice analysis of spiritual feelings and emotions, the one and simple inquiry upon which the whole matter is made to hinge has been—"What is your experience of the worth of the Saviour? is Christ precious to your heart?" And the answer to this question has been to the examiner the test and the measure of the soul's spiritual and vital change. And how proper that it should be so. In proportion as the Holy Spirit imparts a real, intelligent sense of personal sinfulness, there will be the heart's appreciation of the value, sufficiency, and preciousness of the Lord Jesus. -Octavius Winslow

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"There is an election-union in Christ from everlasting." And, according to Gill, this federal union between Christ and His People unites them as "one in a law-sense, as surety and debtor are one." As Gill went on to explain: The bond of this union is Christ's suretyship, which is from everlasting, and in which Christ...drew near to God the Father in the name of the elect, substituted himself in their place and stead, and laid himself under obligation to pay their debts, satisfy for their sins, and procure for them all the blessings of grace and glory. This being accepted of by God, Christ and the elect were looked upon, in the eye of the law, as one person, even as the bondsman and the debtor, among men, are one, in a legal sense; so that if one pays the debt, it is the same as if the other did it. This legal union arising from Christ's suretyship-engagements, is the foundation of the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of his satisfaction for them, and also of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, and of our justification by it. Christ and his people being one, in a law-sense, their sins become his, and his righteousness becomes theirs. –Jeffrey D. Johnson