

I venture to say that the greatest earthly blessing that God can give to any of us is health, with the exception of sickness. Sickness has frequently been of more use to the saints of God than health has. —C.H. Spurgeon

### 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 CII. But will it not be presumption for a poor sinner to venture wholly upon Christ for salvation, without bringing a good heart, or something good, to recommend him to His notice? Answer. No; it is the privilege of a sensibly poor, helpless, guilty, undone sinner to call upon God in the day of trouble; and He has promised to hear and to deliver him, and he shall glorify Him; "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Psa. 50.15; Isa. 55.1-8; Jn. 7.37; Acts 4.12.

Question CIII. Is salvation wholly of grace?

Answer. Yes; wholly of grace! without money and without price; for, "by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Isa. 55.1-2; Eph. 2.5,8; 2 Tim. 1.9; Rev. 21.6 & 22.17.

#### 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 MISSIONARY TO DECAPOLIS

*Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel. (Mark 5:19-20)*

The deliverance of the demoniac of Gadara is one of the most memorable events in the earthly ministry of our Lord. We are given a look at how terrible the bondage of sin and Satan can be, and we are shown the only remedy. We are powerless to overcome and, sadly, left to ourselves we have no desire to overcome. In this account we are made to see contrasting reactions to Christ and to the work that He alone can do.

In addition to all else they had seen; the disciples had witnessed our Lord's power over the unmanageable forces of nature and now over an unmanageable man. It is important to note that the men He would have to propagate the Gospel were ever learning of His power and the effects of it. Just as they had doubted at feeding the multitudes and had feared the great storm on their way to deliver this man, they would have hesitated at the sight of such a ferocious adversary. At the work He did here they may have again been made to ask, “what manner of man is this.” He would have them to learn more. It is often the case that while the story ends for the moment, it does not end. Such is the case here. We witness two vastly different reactions here, each with its own continuing story.

When the power and presence of Christ is made evident, it is not possible to be indifferent. And it is certain that the citizens of that land

were not indifferent. Surely, they must have known of the man's existence before. Even those tending the swine may have been harassed and threatened by his presence. They would have known of the man's family and the grief they would have suffered as a result of his condition. A great miracle had been done in their land. A soul had been delivered from bondage and torment. A family had been given wholeness. A man caught up in total lawlessness and rebellion was found “sitting and clothed and in his right mind.”

It is hard to believe that they had not heard of Jesus and all His wonderful works of kindness and healing. Yet, they brought Him no sick and desired nothing from Him. Their primary concern was the loss of their pigs which the demons had driven into the sea to their death. But now they had seen Him and desired that He leave. Instead of embracing Him as deliverer, they feared that such power would threaten their way of life. They preferred the profit from pigs over the value of a human soul.

Personal pride and the desire for self-control cannot tolerate the presence of Christ. The rich young man who came to Christ thinking to earn salvation when challenged to sell all and give to the poor, simply went away – away from the only hope for men. Now these simply want Him to go away. Anything that seems to declare the Lordship of Christ is perceived as a threat to the

pride of men. Furthermore, they fear losing control over the minds of others. We witness the desire to destroy the witness of Christ in our Land.

We would consider two prayers here and the response of our Lord to each. We who love the presence of our Lord marvel that any should desire Him to leave. But we read in v. 17 “they begin to pray Him to depart out of their coasts.” Quite often the Lord gives men what they want and that becomes judgment called down on themselves. This first of the prayers considered had no hope expressed nor was their desire for anything that would be of benefit to them.

We would then contrast the prayer of the man who had been healed. His prayer was to continue with Jesus. He would have immediately forsaken all and boarded the boat with no question as to where they were going. He just wanted to be with Jesus. We are reminded that the rich man went away, Bartimaeus followed Jesus in the way. The man’s prayer was answered but not in the way he expected. Jesus had other plans for him, and he obeyed his Lord.

Things are not as they might seem here. While Jesus would bodily remove from the Gadarenes, His presence would not. He would remain in the witness of the healed man. Jesus would personally remain with the man, and the man would worship Christ as if He were there. Such was the nature of the Kingdom within and among you. The presence of Christ had displaced the demons that had previously held him fast. From this we would learn that we may have both the intimate presence of Christ while zealously pursuing His service in our lives.

Spurgeon said that we can be both Martha (cumbered with much serving) and Mary (sitting at the feet of Jesus). So, both prayers were answered.

The healed man was dispatched to the mission field of Decapolis. He was to go to friends and family and there share his experience with Christ. I have heard people say that they just did not know what to tell someone about Jesus. (That made be due to a lack of knowledge of their subject). What should always be vivid in the mind of true believers is their own experience with Christ. *Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. (Psalms 66:16)*. This man would certainly relate the horrors of bondage and hopelessness he had undergone. He would continue with the account of what Jesus did and power displayed over the power of sin and the emissaries of it. He would speak of the love and compassion that Christ has shown him. He would witness to his present love and devotion to Christ and the eternal life he possessed in Him. He would always be the healed demoniac of Gadara, saved by the grace of God. He evangelized the whole region of Decapolis.

We who come to know Christ should know what this man knew and more. We were in the same bondage as he. Ours may not have been so apparent, but fatal, nonetheless. We have the complete Gospel Truth to tell. We may tell of the awful price paid to deliver him and us. We can speak of resurrected life and of Him who is the Hope of eternal life. The mission field is before us and we have a story to share. *bhs*

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“On whom dost thou trust?”

Isaiah 36:5

This question was raised by Rabshakeh to belittle the faith of the Jews. It is as if he said, like the heathen did to David, “Where is thy God?” Let us answer like David, “Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased!” Should any ask, “On

whom dost thou trust?" I have a ready answer. — "I trust the living God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Some trust themselves. Some trust their church. Some trust a priest. Some trust blind fate. Some have faith in their faith. Some trust a religious experience. I trust the one true and living God, the triune Jehovah (1 John 5:7).

#### God the Father

I trust God, my heavenly Father! — If God is my Father, all is well. Believing that he has chosen me before the foundation of the world, I trust him to care for me as my Father, to provide for me in providence, to teach me, to guide me, to feed me, to correct me, to clothe me, to protect me, and to bring me safely home to his house (Romans 8:32).

#### God the Son

I trust God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, my Divine Savior! — Very God of very God is he — The man Christ Jesus! I trust him for all things, with all things, and in all things. Because of who he is, what he has done, what he is doing, and what he has promised to do, I rely upon him, the incarnate God. "The Lord is my Shepherd. I shall not want."

He is my Surety (Hebrews 7:22). He is my Redeemer (Job 19:25). He is my Savior (Isaiah 43:3). He is my Intercessor (Romans 8:27). He is my Preserver (Isaiah 49:8). He is my Provider (Genesis 22:14). He is my Defender (Psalm 59:9). He is my Advocate (1 John 2:1-2). He is my Judge (1 Corinthians 4:4). He is my Refuge (Psalm 142:5).

#### God the Holy Ghost

I trust God the Holy Ghost, my divine Comforter. He subdues my will, enlightens my understanding, checks my passions, strengthens me in weakness, preserves me in trouble, comforts me in sorrow, guides me in his way, and restores me when I fall.

"On whom dost thou trust?" — "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6). The God I trust is God indeed. — "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him" (Revelation 19:6-7).

Oh, may God give you grace to trust him! Trusting him is salvation. Trusting him gives us peace in a world of trouble. Trusting him, we rejoice, knowing that his rule of the universe is for our good and his glory. Trusting him, we pluck up the tree of trouble and cast it into the sea, remove the mountain that stands to oppose us, and walk with God, just and perfect in his Son, "accepted in the Beloved!" --Don Fortner (1950-2020)

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Prayer is a sincere, affectionate pouring out of the soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Spirit, for such things as God has promised in His Word.

Prayer opens the heart to God, and it is the means by which the soul, though empty, is filled with God's grace.

The truths that I know best, I have learned on my knees.

I never know a thing well, until it is burned into my heart by prayer.

Sincere prayer is . . . a shield to the soul, a scourge to Satan, and a fragrant and pleasing sacrifice to God.  
Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer.  
When you pray, rather let your heart be without words--than your words be without heart. --John Bunyan