

Apart from God, there would be no law that is universally binding on everyone. And if there is no ultimate law or standard to appeal to ... no universally binding law, then there are no grounds for moral outrage about anything. We are only left with your own subjective feelings versus the feelings of those who disagree with you. Who's to say who is right? By what standard? All that is left is a will to power. –John Hendryx

### 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 XCVI. What shall be done to the wicked at their death?

Answer. The souls of the wicked shall, at their death, be cast into the torments of hell and their bodies shall be in their graves till the resurrection, and the judgment of the great day.

Psa. 9.17; Matt. 3.12 & 24.51; Luke 16.23-26; 2 Cor. 5.10; Heb. 6.2 & 9.27; Jude 7.

Question XCVII. What shall be done to the wicked at the day of judgment?

Answer. At the day of judgment, the bodies of the wicked, being raised out of their graves, shall be sentenced, together with their souls, to unspeakable torments and the vengeance of God's righteous displeasure, with the devil and his angels, for ever and ever.

Dan. 12.2; Matt. 10.28 & 13.38-42 & 25.41,46; Jn. 5.29; Rev. 20.11-15 & 21.8.

#### 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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### NOTHING BEFORE THE TIME

*Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God. (1 Corinthians 4:5)*

Early on in my Christian experience and ministerial study I wrestled with the thought of judging. Matthew 7:1 was especially troubling to me in that I felt that I had the ability to discern sin and sinfulness in both myself and others. Yet, the commandment was clear. As a result, I was reluctant to address such matters fearing that I had no right to notice sin in anybody. It took a better understanding of the passage to clarify what our Lord was saying. The issue was not one of recognition; it was rather about the attitude in approaching sin, especially in others. The “mote” in the eye of our brother constituted a problem to him. The “beam” that might be in my own eye was an attitude of judgment in which conclusions as to outcomes and assigning blame took precedent over seeing a need for mercy. The tendency to judge and to act in such a fashion is part of our depraved nature. We like to assign blame. To do so is to infringe on that which belongs to the Lord alone.

How do we see what is occurring in our Land today? The assigning of blame is loudly vocal and often cruel and unfounded assumptions are made. Political parties are no longer vowing to serve the people. They are more intent in besmirching the character and impugning the motives of the opposition. Of course, this is not unexpected in an election season. But the actions of the politicians in this era increasingly betray the fact that they have no thought of

God. It is written that “God is not in all their thoughts.” It may be that God is “not in any of their thoughts.”

What we are witnessing is the enslaving characteristics of sin and the hidden things of darkness. As we witness the passions on both sides of any issue, we see the attitude of necessity. Among those things they feel compelled to do is to defy God, His commandments and to ignore the lessons of history that bears witness to past judgments of God on the same ground. Ultimately the tolerance of God for such blatant rebellion will end. Consider: *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. (Psalms 2:1-4).* Certainly, we may conclude what the end of such a course of action will be if it persists to the end. The scriptures declare it. However, we may not presume to go further in determining a final judgment on the souls of these acting in this manner. Their need is mercy as is ours. Judgment by us is no remedy.

It is to be recognized that Paul is here addressing judgment aimed at himself. And the foregoing observations may seem to be far removed from the text. The point to be made is

that all judgment rests with God and we should neither be affected by such judgment aimed at us nor to engage in such judgment of others, regardless of how extreme they may seem.

In the preceding verses, Paul addresses three scenarios of judgment. Alexander MacLaren and others elaborated on this point. They depicted Paul as in three courtrooms. The first in verse three of this chapter finds Paul showing contempt for the court of human opinion. He said, "it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you." Some of the Corinthians had been critical of his stewardship of the Gospel. He further made reference to being in the court of his own conscience. It is certain that his assessment of himself would have been mixed. His life was fully involved in the service of his Master and Lord. He had faithfully communicated the Gospel to them. Yet, in humility, he knew himself to be a sinner and did not trust his own judgment of himself. He rather appealed to and trusted in the court of the Lord alone, saying, *For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. (1 Corinthians 4:4)*. While he knew of nothing that deserved their criticism, he did not look to that for justification. He knew that to be found only in the blood of Christ our Lord.

Thus, they are bidden to "judge nothing before the time." While we look to dire scriptural references that most assuredly address the moral decline of our nation and the appearance that God has abandoned us to the consequences, we must rest in His judgment. It is enough to know all that He has revealed of

Himself through our Blessed Lord Jesus. Even as we know that the forces of darkness and wickedness in high places are working diligently to destroy the testimony of God, we must wait for the revelation of our Lord. Although now they seem to be leading men to embrace anything but God, exposure will not only reveal the wickedness of their ways, it will reveal the face of Him they seek to defile. The thoughts and intents of the hearts of all will be revealed and subjected to the ultimate Judge. There will be no place to hide though they cry for the rocks to fall on them. See further, Jeremiah 17:10 and Revelation 2:23.

What a blessed thought is here added. That we should have praise of God seems unfitting for the likes of us. When all of the revealing takes place, there will be shining forth and acknowledged by God those who have been born again of the Spirit of God, have been robed in the righteousness of Christ our Lord, and have been enabled thereby to serve Him acceptably with reverence and Godly fear.

Paul would always have our thoughts to be directed to the Lord and so to know the consolation that "He doeth all things well." We rest in the "only wise God our Savior." We do so while trusting in what He is doing, why He is doing it, leaving to Him what to reveal, and when to reveal it. We do not need to see behind the scenes of today's chaotic conditions. And we would restrain ourselves from the presumption of judging the thoughts and aims of men. It is rather to realize that we are the products of His mercy and grace in Christ and so to pray for the souls of this lost generation. Pray for revival. *bhs*

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Paul knew that, through the death and resurrection of his Savior, he knew God as his Father. He understood and enjoyed the great truth that, as Christians, in prayer we do not only approach a majestic Sovereign (though we do) or an impartial Judge (though we do)—we approach our Father in heaven and say, "Dearest Father..."

-Alistair Begg, *Pray Big*

## IMPOSSIBLE DEBT

And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. (MATTHEW 18:25)

We can't begin to appreciate the good news of the gospel until we see our deep need. Most people, even believers, have never given much thought to how desperate our condition is outside of Christ. Few ever think about the dreadful implications of being under the wrath of God. And none of us even begins to realize how truly sinful we are.

Jesus once told a story (Matthew 18:21-35) about a king's servant who owed his master ten thousand talents. (Just one talent was equal to about twenty years' wages for a working man.) Why would Jesus use such an unrealistically large amount when He knew that in real life it would have been impossible for any servant to accumulate such a debt?

Jesus was fond of using hyperbole to make His point. That immense sum represents a spiritual debt every one of us owes to God. It's the debt of our sins. For each of us, it's a staggering amount.

This is what the gospel is all about. Jesus paid our debt to the full. And He did far more. He also purchased for us an eternal inheritance of infinite worth. That's why Paul wrote of the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8). And God wants us to enjoy those unsearchable riches in the here and now, even in the midst of difficult and discouraging circumstances.

Without some heartfelt conviction of our sin, we can have no serious feeling of personal interest in the Gospel. What's more, this conviction should actually grow throughout our Christian lives. In fact, one sign of spiritual growth is an increased awareness of our sinfulness. —Jerry Bridges, *The Gospel for Real Life*

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## **Sovereign over Creation**

If we embrace God as our faithful Creator in our suffering, we will begin to find two unmovable rocks beneath our feet. First, God governs all creation from the highest to the lowest, from the farthest to the nearest — from the orbits of moons in unseen galaxies to the shadows of leaves in our front yard.

The suffering of Peter's audience may have seemed frustratingly random. So too with our own suffering: cruel spouses and false "friends," careening cars and spreading viruses may seem, by all appearances, ungoverned: arbitrary menaces in an arbitrary world. But here, Peter reminds us that behind every creature, animate and inanimate, stands a Creator — a Creator so involved in the details of his world that suffering reaches us only if he, in his wisdom and lovingkindness, deems "necessary" (1 Peter 1:6; 3:17).

Just as God says to the seas, "Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed" (Job 38:11), so too he says to our suffering. No slander cuts, no tumor grows, no arrow flies, and no plague spreads a millimeter farther than the Almighty decrees. To each, God says, "Thus far shall you come, and no farther" — and creation is bound to obey.

Suffering can thwart our Creator's sovereign rule as soon as the sun flies from its course, or the seasons refuse to arrive, or the molecules stop hearing the word of him who upholds the universe (Hebrews 1:3). —Scott Hubbard, Editor *Desiring God*