

A very hell of corruption lies within the best saint; and if the grace of God did not restrain it, he would soon be found among the chief of sinners. —Charles Spurgeon

Those who are full are not interested in food. In the same way, sinners who are satiated with their sin have no hunger for spiritual things. —John MacArthur

The Baptist Catechism

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813 (*Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church*)

1. Q. Who is the first and chiefest being?
A. God is the first and chiefest being (Is. 44:6; 48:12; Ps. 97:9).
2. Q. Ought every one to believe there is a God?
A. Everyone ought to believe there is a God (Heb. 11:6); and it is their great sin and folly who do not (Ps. 14:1).
3. Q. How may we know there is a God?
A. The light of nature in man and the works of God plainly declare there is a God (Rom. 1:19,20; Ps. 19:1, 2, 3; Acts 17:24); but his word and Spirit only do it fully and effectually for the salvation of sinners (1 Cor. 2:10; 2 Tim. 3:15,16).

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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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AN ABUNDANT ENTRANCE

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:10-11)

It has now been several years that my family was affected by one of our loved ones developing Alzheimer's disease. I remember reading something at that time that expressed one of the characteristics of sufferers. It was that they could form no new memories. Of course, we all suffer memory lapses of varying sorts and to different degrees. But we are reminded of how memory serves us and are often able to thank God for an experience of His grace in our lives and are thus encouraged. Even in the course of remembering bad experiences or during an immediate unpleasantness we are able to "remember our songs in the night" and the Lord God who gives them.

Peter was very much about remembering. He spoke of those things that vividly remained of His time with our Lord and of their value to him. He would urge the same on those to whom he ministered. In v. 9 of this chapter he warned of forgetting and in subsequent verses stated his determination to put them (and us) in remembrance of essential issues. He endeavored to stir them up through remembrance. He further stated in verse 15 that it was his desire that they be able to have those things in remembrance after his death.

Before proceeding to the things to be remembered, we would note the emphasis on the sovereignty of God in salvation being paired with urging of participation in order to enjoy both expectation and assurance. The mention of

"calling and election" might at first read seem to be a reversal of order. In Romans 8 predestination precedes calling. But when we think in terms of human experience, we quickly realize that calling is experienced, and election is then revealed. The effectual calling of the Holy Spirit is the beginning of revelation to us, and the fact of our salvation is made manifest through faith and the experience of the things pertaining to salvation confirm it in us. The matter of our salvation is settled with God. Our assurance of salvation is an ongoing expression of life from above in us.

Verse 10 begins with a "Wherefore" which points us to the previous words. In vv. 3-4, we are reminded of the operations of the power of God and that which is given through it. We are reminded that the call is unto glory and virtue. The great and precious promises by which we "might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Thus, the grace of God is exalted and secured by the Word of God and received by faith. Then follows the urging that is so essential to the realization and confirmation of these things. Diligence is to be given to this matter. That which is described here is to be a lifelong effort faithfully attended. So, beginning with faith we are to strive to add virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, Godliness, brotherly kindness and charity (agape).

These are the indicators that salvation is

real. These are not static ideas or thoughts. It is that the real thing is increasing (abounding) and the result is an increase and a fruitfulness in the knowledge of "our Lord Jesus Christ." What follows is difficult of comprehension in that the behaviors described would seem to be that of a lost person (v. 9). However, believers are herein addressed and so Peter would be concerned that they remember who they are. Losing sight of, or neglecting these things makes one short-sighted and forgetful of what was required to save them. It is in this we see the reason of Peter's emphasis on remembering all that pertains to salvation and especially the characteristics of a life well-lived before God and men.

So, for the second time Peter urges diligence in these matters as a means to make one's calling and election sure. He is not suggesting that these things might be considered as meritorious. It is rather that the presence of these things is the evidence of "life and godliness." Where these things are evident assurance is enjoyed and that through the previously mentioned knowledge of "our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Assurance does not come by means of an empty profession attended by an outside approval; it is that personally given us thusly, *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* (1 John 1:7). The promise is that "ye shall never fall." That is, we are kept from the overt practice of sin, failures are quickly realized, and hearts are rejoiced in the way of a walk with our Lord.

Peter seems to connect this way of life to entering the kingdom of our Lord and Savior

Jesus Christ. The mention of the kingdom seems to trigger future thoughts in the minds of many. It may be that the thoughts are of our death and the reception of our Lord into His presence is suggested here, and that is certainly included. But when Christ spoke to Nicodemus about seeing and entering the kingdom He was talking of a present situation. When our Lord taught us to "seek ye first the kingdom of God," He was not directing attention to the distant future. In the same sense that we speak of salvation as past, present, and future, we may realize that the kingdom is experienced in His people as they look to the full expression of it in time to come.

We are on our way, but not fully there. The provision for the journey has been made and it is abundant. *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:* (2 Peter 1:3). There is the abounding of grace to deal with our sin. There is "joy unspeakable and full of glory." And we have the presence of our Lord of Whom Paul wrote: *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.* (Ephesians 3:20-21).

It is comforting that twice in this epistle Peter uses the words "our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." He was fully identified with us as individuals and would have us embrace our Lord in this manner and enjoy His presence as the abundance with which we enjoy and enter His glorious Kingdom. bhs

THE FORGIVENESS OF GOD

In whom we have . . . the forgiveness of sins. — Ephesians 1:7

Beware of the pleasant view of the Fatherhood of God - God is so kind and loving that of course He will forgive us. That sentiment has no place whatever in the New Testament.

The only ground on which God can forgive us is the tremendous tragedy of the Cross of Christ; to put forgiveness on any other ground is unconscious blasphemy. The only ground on which God can forgive sin and reinstate us in His favour is through the Cross of Christ, and in no other way. Forgiveness, which is so easy for us to accept, cost the agony of Calvary. It is possible to take the forgiveness of sin, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and our sanctification with the simplicity of faith, and to forget at what enormous cost to God it was all made ours.

Forgiveness is the divine miracle of grace; it cost God the Cross of Jesus Christ before He could forgive sin and remain a holy God. Never accept a view of the Fatherhood of God if it blots out the Atonement. The revelation of God is that He cannot forgive; He would contradict His nature if He did. The only way we can be forgiven is by being brought back to God by the Atonement. God's forgiveness is only natural in the supernatural domain.

Compared with the miracle of the forgiveness of sin, the experience of sanctification is slight. Sanctification is simply the marvellous expression of the forgiveness of sins in a human life, but the thing that awakens the deepest well of gratitude in a human being is that God has forgiven sin. Paul never got away from this. When once you realize all that it cost God to forgive you, you will be held as in a vice, constrained by the love of God. – Oswald Chambers

HUMBLE APPOINTMENT

Read 1 Samuel 16:12–17

Here's our first good look at David. He walks into the house, still smelling like sheep, and all of a sudden an old man hobbles over and pours oil on his head. It drips down his hair and drops on to his neck. Josephus, the historian, writes, "Samuel the aged whispered in his ear the meaning of the symbol, 'You will be the next king.'"

What did David do? What do you do in a situation like that? I mean, it doesn't come along every other day. God's ways are so marvelous, aren't they? At the most surprising moment, the most magnificent things happen. "You're going to be the next king." What did he do? Well, I'm happy to report, he did not go down to the nearest department store and try on crowns. He didn't order a new set of business cards, telling the printer, "Change it from shepherd to king-elect." Didn't have a badge saying, "I'm the new man." Didn't shine up a chariot and race through the streets of Bethlehem, yelling, "I'm God's choice . . . you're looking at Saul's replacement!"

What did he do?

It made no difference that Samuel had anointed him with oil. He didn't bronze that horn and hang it up in his tent. He didn't expect special treatment from others. No, he simply went back to the sheep. And when the king said, "Come on over here and play music for me," David went over and played a little. And when he got through, he thought, Hey, I gotta get back with my sheep; that's my job.

David was sensitive enough to hear the whisper of God's voice, "You will be the next king." But as soon as the big moment was over and they turned out the lights, he was humbly back with his sheep. People had to actually pull him from the sheep to get him to do anything that was related to the limelight. In fact, I think that's one of the reasons he was a man after God's heart. He was always approachable, always believable, always authentic . . . and always faithful in the little things. –Charles Swindoll