

The real crisis of worship today is...that people have no sense of the presence of God, and if they have no sense of His presence, how can they be moved to express the deepest feelings of their souls to honor, revere, worship, and glorify God? —R.C. Sproul

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*)

23. Q. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

A. God having out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life (Eph. 1:4, 5), did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer (Rom. 3:20-22; Gal. 3:21, 22).

24. Q. Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 2:5, 6); who, being the eternal Son of God, became man (John 1:14; Gal. 4:4), and so was and continueth to be God and man in two distinct natures, and one person for ever (Rom. 9:5; Lk. 1:35; Col. 2:9; Heb. 7:24, 25).

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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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AN OLD MAN'S PRAYER

O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come. (Psalms 71:17-18)

Several years ago, as I was describing some ailment to a brother in Christ, he asked if it just might be that I was getting older. While I did not resent his comment, neither did I accept the implications of it. Even then I knew full well that I had more years behind me than were before me. I suppose it was that I did not want to surrender to the effects of age. It has never been that I was concerned about how long I lived; it was more about the quality of physical life that concerned me. As time has gone on, I have become more aware of the conditions described in Ecclesiastes. See Eccl. 12.1-7. I am now older than my dad and both of my grandfathers. The effects are undeniable.

I am now more in tune with the words of the Apostle to the Romans as he wrote, *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. (Romans 13:11)*. I find myself thinking much about the conflict of Paul that he shared with the Philippian church. His desire was to depart and to be with Christ. However, in his great love and care for the saints at Philippi he felt it needful to remain. I cannot help but believe that either of his desires were a reason of experienced joy in Paul. (It is to be remembered that Paul was in prison at the time). I say that in it was ever his delight to preach the Gospel and it was with great joy that he anticipated being in the presence of Christ even as he preached the Gospel.

There have been many who endured and preached the Gospel well into advanced years. I often think of men like George Mueller who turned the care of his orphanages to another in his seventies and spent the years following preaching the Gospel around the world. Perhaps this Psalm and this text were an inspiration to him. We even witness the work of contemporaries like Ian Murray who at age 89 continues to exalt Christ in his written and spoken works. I am made to think of biblical heroes of the faith like Abraham who at age 175 was declared to be old and "full of years." And of course, Moses, who at the age of 120 was of unabated natural force and undimmed eye. There was no surrender to age in these men. In that true believers are in possession of eternal life we may conclude that there is no discharge in this war. What an inspiring word is here given; not to called out ministers only, but to all who are identified as the servants of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We have a responsibility to the generation in which we live and even to the generations that may follow. This implication was strongly given in such instructions as Moses gave to the Israelites concerning their children in ever keeping the Law before them. See Deut. 6. The stones that were taken out of the Jordan River when Joshua led the people into the Land were for the specific purpose of pointing to the mighty power of God. When the children of

future generation would ask “what meaneth these stones,” the message of deliverance was to be given. It is this sense of responsibility exhibited in Paul and this Psalmist the elicits this prayer.

Twice in this Psalm the writer prays that he be not forsaken. In verse 9 it is “Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.” In our text we find further implications of that which caused the Psalmist to so pray. He has sweet memories of the divine instructions that attended his youth even as we who have long known the Lord rejoice in remembrance of those days of old. We have delight in remembering past times of sharing the Gospel and the exhilaration of hope that attended us as we witnessed and preached. But while he was willing to surrender to age, he was not willing to surrender the urgent care for those around him and so he desired to not be forsaken. It does not seem that he worried that the Lord would leave him utterly alone. It was rather that he might lose those things that promoted the service of the Lord in a most active form. His motive was that he be able to show the strength and power of God to this generation. The thought of strength here suggests “the Arm of the Lord. Painfully we remember the cry of Isaiah: “To whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed.” I say painfully because we are conscious of the same burden in our day. The word power speaks to us of ability and of mastery. We know of the accomplishments of Christ and the great salvation that He has wrought in us through His

substitutionary work on the cross, His burial and resurrection, and His rule and reign in glory. It is the word that we are desperate for this generation to hear.

Thus, the prayer here would be that we do not suffer the loss of zeal and ability to forcefully declare the Gospel. The Psalmist would elsewhere pray, “And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments (Psa. 119:43). Yet, in another place in referencing the righteous we read: *They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; (Psalms 92:14)*.

In both 1 Timothy 4, and 2 Timothy 3, Paul warned of the utter lawlessness and contempt for the things of God, the order of God, and any consideration of the worship of God. That which he described we are witnessing in abundance throughout the Land and the world. Even a plague has no effect on those who continually spew their ungodly message and commit their ungodly deeds. The fear is that with the constant exposure to the lie that many will turn from the faith once delivered to the saints. It was the prayer of the Psalmist that even in old age that his power to preach to this generation is not taken away.

This old preacher would claim this prayer as his own. It is my prayer that despite the rigors of age and the infirmities of the flesh that I might be given both the desire to preach to this generation and the empowering of the Holy Spirit that God be glorified, and Christ be exalted in the presence of all who come. bhs

Believing Prayer

Peter was kept in prison: but prayer [instant and earnest prayer] was made for him. - Acts 12:5

Peter was in prison awaiting his execution. The Church had neither human power nor influence to save him. There was no earthly help, but there was help to be obtained by the way of Heaven. They gave themselves to fervent, importunate prayer. God sent

His angel, who aroused Peter from sleep and led him out through the first and second wards of the prison; and when they came to the iron gate, it opened to them of its own accord, and Peter was free.

There may be some iron gate in your life that has blocked your way. Like a caged bird you have often beaten against the bars, but instead of helping, you have only had to fall back tired, exhausted and sore at heart. There is a secret for you to learn, and that is believing prayer; and when you come to the iron gate, it will open of its own accord. How much wasted energy and sore disappointment will be saved if you will learn to pray as did the Church in the upper room! Insurmountable difficulties will disappear; adverse circumstances will prove favorable if you learn to pray, not with your own faith but with the faith of God (Mark 11:22, margin). Souls in prison have been waiting for years for the gate to open; loved ones out of Christ, bound by Satan, will be set free when you pray till you definitely believe God. —C. H. P.

Emergencies call for intense prayer. When the man becomes the prayer nothing can resist its touch. Elijah on Carmel bowed down on the ground, with his face between his knees, that was prayer—the man himself. No words are mentioned. Prayer can be too tense for words. The man's whole being was in touch with God, and was set with God against the powers of evil. They couldn't withstand such praying. There's more of this embodied praying needed. —The Bent-knee Time

"Groanings which cannot be uttered are often prayers which cannot be refused." —C. H. Spurgeon

"Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein" (i.e., continueth looking—meditating on what he there beholds, lest he forget the impression received through the mirror of the Word), "this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25).

Here then we have a threefold witness to the secret of true prosperity and unmixed blessing: devout meditation and reflection upon the Scriptures, which are at once a book of law, a river of life, and a mirror of self—fitted to convey the will of God, the life of God, and the transforming power of God. That believer makes a fatal mistake who for any cause neglects the prayerful study of the Word of God. To read God's holy book, by it search one's self, and turn it into prayer and so into holy living, is the one great secret of growth in grace and godliness. The worker for God must first be a worker with God: he must have power with God and must prevail with him in prayer, if he is to have power with men and prevail with men in preaching or in any form of witnessing and serving. At all costs let us make sure of that highest preparation for our work—the preparation of our own souls; and for this we must take time to be one with his Word and his Spirit, that we may truly meet God, and understand his will and the revelation of himself.

Arthur T. Pierson In his biography of George Muller

WHATEVER IS YOUR BEST TIME IN THE DAY, GIVE THAT TO COMMUNION WITH GOD.

—HUDSON TAYLOR