

Henry Smith:

We should set the Word of God always before as our rule, and believe nothing but that which it teaches, love nothing but that which it prescribes, hate nothing but that which it forbids, do nothing but that which it commands.

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)*

101. Q. What is the duty of such who are rightly baptized?

A. It is the duty of such who are rightly baptized to give up themselves to some particular and orderly church of Jesus Christ, that they may walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless (Acts 2:41, 42; 5:13, 14; 9:26; 1 Pet. 2:5; Lk. 1:6).

102. Q. What is the Lord's supper?

A. The Lord's supper is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ; wherein by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to his appointment, his death is shown forth, and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace (Mt. 26:26, 27, 28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 10:16).

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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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REGENERATION IN 1 JOHN

But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. (1 John 2:27)

The words of our Lord to Nicodemus were emphatic. To either see the Kingdom or to enter the Kingdom he would have to be born again. Nicodemus did not understand these words and many still do not. Being born again is a sovereign and mysterious work of the Holy Spirit. Of course, we who know the Lord know that it has occurred even if we cannot explain it. The Lord pointed Nicodemus to the wind with the fact that there was no explanation of from where it came or to where it went. What we do see is the effects of the wind. When I have looked out of my window and seen the treetops waving back and forth, I know that the wind is the reason. Likewise, when we truly see Jesus and are come to acknowledge Him as Lord and are found seeking first the Kingdom of God, we know that it is the work of the Spirit. When Christlikeness is seen in the Lord's people all observers are constrained to admit that something out of the ordinary has occurred. When one is born again the effects are noted.

In verse 29 of this chapter John goes on to observe that *“If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.”* That is an observable effect noted in the believer and other such effects are noted over the course of this epistle. The work of regeneration is evidenced by a life of devotion to Christ. There is an anticipated outcome from the Old Testament: *A new heart also will I give*

you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. (Ezekiel 36:26-27). This is what it is to be made a “new creation” in Him. The devil endeavors to counterfeit this work more than any other and many claim to be able to merit or self-produce this. John would declare those things that cannot be reproduced in any other way.

The anointing that is received of Him both abides in the believer as his new nature, and it teaches us all things that are needed. No man needs to orchestrate the work of the Spirit of God. He moves independently. He is God the Holy Spirit. The essence of this anointing is teaching us of identity with Christ. This teaching is not a matter of learning mere facts; it is rather teaching us who we are in Christ. It is a blessed relationship that we know in that He abides in us and so we are taught all things and we abide in Him. It is at this point that I often falter in that the wonder of all this contained here is more than can be comprehended and so I simply pause and wonder and worship.

Again, we would see the effect of being born again. We would then wander through this epistle and see that which John noted. It certainly includes holiness: *Whosoever is born of*

God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (1 John 3:9). Many would here claim sinless perfection in this life or point to inconsistencies in the lives of believers. In that nature born of incorruptible seed there is no sin to be found. As a believer, it means that we cannot indulge the practice of sin as a way of life; rather we struggle against it. The pursuit of holiness of life is powerful evidence to the believer and a witness to the world.

Yet another strong indicator of a work of the Spirit is seen in the affections of believers. *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. (1 John 3:14).* It only follows that being made alive in Christ communicates the love of Christ in us. The logic is simple. How could I not love those who Christ loves? We love as He loves, and we love those He loves. Anything else would be an absurd conclusion.

As an extension of that thought we are brought to the matter of knowing God, again, through regeneration. *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. (1 John 4:7).* Jesus declared in John 17:3 that “this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” And as an extension of the thought of knowing God we are brought to the revelation that Jesus is the Christ. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that*

loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. (1 John 5:1). We could pause here and consider all the implication of believing that Jesus is the Christ, but we will simply observe that the belief is enabled because we are born of God.

Then it is by the virtue of the New Birth that we are given assurance of victory with a walk of faith in Christ. *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4-5).* We need not cower at the threatening of this world. By God-given faith, by Holy Spirit power, we are overcomers. We lay hold on the fact that Jesus is the Son of God and that the victory is His and thus in us.

John then brings us full circle as we are reminded what we know. Such things as are taught us through the Holy Spirit concerning the full accomplishment of Christ on the cross. We are thus empowered to be separate and to have full security. Consider: *We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. (1 John 5:18).*

These things addressed by John are essential to eternal life and fully depict its existence. The thought is that Nicodemus did come to know the Lord. If he did, it was because of the work of the Spirit in applying the merits of the blood of Christ. We continue to preach, “Ye Must be Born again.” *bhs*

“He Careth For You!”

1 Peter 5:7

For that child of God who is laboring under some present distress, there are no words sweeter than these — “He careth for you!” He cares for your soul. He cares so much that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem you from sin and supply you with every spiritual need. Surely, if Jesus Christ died to redeem your soul from death, you must know his great care. Not only is that so, the Lord God tenderly cares for the bodies and the concerns of the lives of his people. Do you believe that

He cares? Then cast your care upon the Lord!
Are you troubled about your sin? Cast it upon the Lord. Are you troubled about some personal trial? Cast it upon the Lord. He was tempted in all points like as we are. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He is able to help them that believe. Go, therefore, with your heavy burden to the throne of your merciful High Priest, cast your burden there and find grace and mercy to help in your time of need. – Don Fortner (1950 – 2020)

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER OTHER PEOPLE If God is for us, who can be against us? ROMANS 8:31 All of us at times find ourselves and our futures seemingly in the hands of other people. Their decisions or actions determine whether we get a good grade or a poor one, whether we're promoted or fired, whether our career blossoms or folds. Sometimes those decisions or actions are benevolent and good; sometimes they're wicked or careless. Either way, they affect us, often in a significant way. How are we to respond when we find ourselves desperately needing a favorable decision or action on another person's part? Can we trust God that He'll work in the heart of that individual to bring about His plan for us? Or consider the instance when someone is out to ruin our reputation or jeopardize our career. Can we trust God to intervene in that person's heart so he doesn't carry out his evil intent? According to the Bible, the answer is yes. God does sovereignly intervene in people's hearts so that their decisions and actions accomplish His purpose for our lives. Perhaps the clearest statement of this is in Proverbs 21:1: "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will." Charles Bridges comments that here the "general truth" of God's sovereignty over the hearts of all people "is taught by the strongest illustration—his uncontrollable sway upon the most absolute of all wills—the king's heart." [3] In our day of limited monarchies, it may be difficult to appreciate fully the force of what Charles Bridges is saying. But in Solomon's time, the king was an absolute monarch. There was no separate legislative body to make laws he wouldn't like or a Supreme Court to restrain him. The king's word was law. His authority over his realm was unconditional and unrestrained. Yet God controls that king's heart. The stubborn will of the most powerful monarch on earth is directed by God as easily as the farmer directs the flow of water in his irrigation canals. And if God controls the king's heart, surely He controls everyone else's. All must move before His sovereign influence. That is the Bible's consistent teaching. Yet it also seems equally clear from Scripture that God does this without violating or coercing their wills but rather works in His mysterious way through their own free and voluntary choices to accomplish His purposes. –Jerry Bridges