

“How long I was, myself, dictating to God instead of trusting Him! I thought I must have a certain amount of conviction of sin before I could be saved. I really had it all the while, though I did not know that I had it. I thought I must feel a certain weight of guilt. I was feeling it and, for that very reason, I thought I was not. I might have been spared much needless suffering if I had only believed what the Lord had taught me in His Word—that I had nothing to do with feeling burdens or anything else by way of preparation for coming to Christ, but that I had to come to Him just as I was... So, poor blind ones, come to my Master, blind as you are—but do not lay down any rules or regulations as to how He is to save you, for He will do it in His own way, which is, after all, the best possible way” Spurgeon



KEACH’S CATECHISM – Benjamin Keach 1640 - 1704

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

Q. 13. What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is God's making all things of nothing, by the Word of His power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

(Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3; Ex. 20:11; Gen. 1:31)

Q. 14. How did God create man?

A. God created man male and female, after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.

(Gen. 1:27; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; Gen. 1:28)

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THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

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“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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THE NATURE OF REQUIRED LOVE

And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. Luke 10:27

The occasion of this quote from Deuteronomy 6:5 was Christ provoking a man to answer his own question. The man had asked the Lord what he must do to inherit eternal life. As the manner of Christ was at times, He asked the man what the Law said with regard to his question. After having quoted this text our Lord declared that he had given the correct answer and then challenged the man to do it and live. However, the man seemed more interested in self-justification and continued the challenge. It seems that he missed the challenge our Lord presented to him.

We often assume that if we, or someone else, knows a truth, it is as if it were practiced. Our Lord did not say, “Good answer” and leave it at that. Rather told the man that if he would do that he would live and the implication was that it would be eternal life. Did our Lord imply that it was possible for the man to effect a personal change that would qualify him for life eternal? Or, did He confront the man with something that He knew could not be done as an act of will on the part of the man? It would seem the latter was the case. Men labor under the false assumption that love is something that can be turned on or off at will. In fact, one loves without a reference to will. A person does not meet another and decide that he will or will not love that person. Either he does or he doesn't. Coming to love another may happen instantly or over a period of time. A mother instantly loves her child from its conception in the womb. Yet a couple may go through a process. The important

thing to understand here is that one does not “will” it to happen.

No command of God can be fully obeyed apart from a spiritual relationship with Him. Thus laws designed to promote harmony among men do not work. A wise man (Barry Goldwater) once said “you cannot legislate love.” This probably did not come from spiritual understanding so much as from an understanding of human nature. But, this is the nature of the love that God demands. Is it then possible for one to so orient the heart, soul, mind and strength as to direct them all into the love of God?

If we only direct our attention to the heart we find reason enough to see the impossibility of the challenge to the man with regard to his own “free will.” Consider that the Lord said in His heart “... *for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth...*” *Genesis 8:21*. The Lord through Jeremiah observed: *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? Jeremiah 17:9*. The determination of the Lord was to provide a replacement heart in salvation to remedy this condition: “...*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.*” *Ezekiel 36:26*. The motivation to all manner of sin finds its origin in the heart and proceeds from within to be expressed in practice. See *Mark 7:21-22*. Could such a heart ever be fully engaged to Love the Lord?

So it is, in salvation we are made new creatures with new hearts and such hearts are fully committed to the Lord. The old heart is taken out and decommissioned. And, the nature of true Love to God in Christ Jesus is described by this text. With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. Matthew 19:26. This new heart affects the entire being of its possessor. The affections are fully set upon the Lord and are ever in imitation of Christ and His love. The soul, the very being, finds its identity with God and only and always in the context of love expressed. There is no superficial or fickle emotion here. The love of God is incorporated into the very soul or being. Thus the strength is engaged in the expression of this love in service and outward devotion. All is to be done in Christ's name. It only follows that the mind will be occupied with the thoughts of Him in contemplation and will reason that God is to be joyfully served. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Philippians 2:5.* These things are to be with singleness of eye and

purity of heart. There is no place here for hypocrisy and cheap imitation. These things describe the new heart. You must be born again.

So it is that Christ went to the Cross to do two things. First, by His death He would address the matter of the sins of those who come unto God by Him. He would suffer the sentence of death that lay upon them all. As a result true faith believes God for justification by His blood. Secondly, He rose again with Eternal life for them. They would become partakers of the divine nature and as such would love as Christ loved. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13.* So it is that this love God requires does not come by an act of will on the part of men, it is bought by the blood of Christ and given to them in regeneration wherein the nature of Christ is imparted to them. Truly Christ indwells His people and is loved by them unconditionally and with all their faculties even as He loved them. *bhs*

PRAYER is an ORDINANCE of God, and that to be used both in public and private; yea, such an ordinance as brings those that have the spirit of supplication into great familiarity with God; and is also so prevalent in action, that it getteth of God, both for the person that prayeth, and for them that are prayed for, great things. It is the opener of the heart of God, and a means by which the soul, though empty, is filled. By prayer the Christian can open his heart to God, as to a friend, and obtain fresh testimony of God's friendship to him. I might spend many words in distinguishing between public and private prayer; as also between that in the heart, and that with the vocal voice. Something also might be spoken to distinguish between the gifts and graces of prayer; but eschewing this method, my business shall be at this time only to show you the very heart of prayer, without which, all your lifting up, both of hands, and eyes, and voices, will be to no purpose at all. "I will pray with the Spirit." John Bunyan

What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. 1 Corinthians 14:15

A Righteousness In Which Jehovah Himself Cannot Find A Flaw

We must have a righteousness in which Jehovah Himself cannot find a flaw, a righteousness which Jehovah cannot mend, a righteousness which neither sin nor Satan can mar; and unless we have on a righteousness of this nature, we can never enter into the blessedness of the world to come.

Where, then, are we to find it? Eternal praises to the matchless mercy of a covenant God, we have it in the blessed Person, glorious work, and spotless obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ! And, therefore, as it was essential for Him to fulfill all righteousness for His people, He loved the Lord His God with all His heart, with all His mind, and with all His strength. He began at the beginning, and went through holily, righteously, and steadily every step of the law of God and all in justice and righteousness. He fulfilled every iota of it, and gave it immortal glory and honour. The law could only require the perfect obedience of a perfect man, but He gave it the perfect obedience of the God-Man, and stamped forever a holy dignity and majesty on it, in order to manifest that this glorious righteousness is suited to every sinner's case, to all their needs, and to honour and glorify all the perfections of God; and thus He has "forever perfected them that were sanctified," all those who were set apart for Himself. They are perfected forever in His own blessed obedience and spotless righteousness; and this righteousness which God gives shall endure forever. As for you who have a righteousness of your own, you never can feel your need of Christ's righteousness. You do not know your need of it, and it is an insult to your pride to mention it. But, for the poor creature who feels himself to be a loathsome, vile, and ruined sinner, and is brought experimentally to feel what he is before a heart-searching God, and that every iota of the law is against him - for God to give this righteousness to him, to put it upon him and communicate the power of it to his soul, why it will raise and exalt him to such a blessed enjoyment of God's righteousness that his tongue will sing aloud and speak forth praise to the honour and glory of His blessed Name; and he will say, "My soul shall be joyful in my God; I will glory in the God of my salvation; for He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness; He hath adorned me with the garments of salvation." —William Gadsby, from a sermon preached June 1, 1843



The load will be too heavy for us!

I compare the troubles which we have to undergo in the course of the year—to a great bundle of sticks, far too large for us to lift. But God does not require us to carry the whole bundle at once. He mercifully unties the bundle, and gives us first one stick, which we are to carry today; and then another, which we are to carry tomorrow, and so forth. We can easily manage our troubles, if we would only carry the trouble appointed for each day. But the load will be too heavy for us—if we carry yesterday's burden over again today, and then add the burden of tomorrow to the weight, before we are required to bear it. John Newton