

Christians no longer look forward to death with silent dismay, as a horrible thing which they don't like to think about. Through Christ they can look this last enemy calmly in the face, and say, "You cannot harm me." They can look forward to all that comes after death – decay, resurrection, judgment, and eternity – and yet not be the least concerned. They can stand by the side of an open grave, and say, "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" They can lay down on their deathbeds, and say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." "Not a hair of my head will perish." This is true liberty. This is to be truly free. Best of all, those set free by Christ are free forever. J.C. Ryle



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. 53. What is forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment forbids the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God, as God and our God; and the giving that worship and glory to any other, which is due unto Him alone.

(Joshua 24:27; Rom. 1:20-21; Ps. 14:1; Rom. 1:25)

Q. 54. What are we especially taught by these words, "before me," in the first commandment?

A. These words, "before me," in the first commandment, teach us, that God, who sees all things, takes notice of, and is much displeased with the sin of having any other God.

(Deut.30:17-18; Ps. 44:20-21; Ps. 90:8)

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Sunday Evening 6:00 PM

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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CHRISTIAN EXPECTATION

And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. 1 Thessalonians 1:10

Trials and persecutions often cause doubt and discouragement. Such was the case with the Thessalonians. The Apostle Paul wrote to assure them concerning their salvation. He did so by citing evidences of a work of the Holy Spirit that was being displayed in their lives. A recurring theme in both Thessalonian epistles was the return of Christ our Lord. A particular indicator that their salvation was real was the fact that they had faithfully served with a look to a future with Christ our Lord. Paul would have them to know that their hope was built on a solid foundation.

Often, interests with regard to the future are given more to fascination than to expectation. By this is understood that there is much speculation and curiosity rather than the desire for unhindered identity with Christ our Lord. The focus in scripture with regard to the second coming is not the events so much as it is the person of Christ. The New Life in Christ that is characterized by faith here becomes sight when He appears. It is the appearing of Christ that we see as the end of that which is begun here. *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Titus 2:13.* Such desire on the part of believers is expressed throughout scripture. *For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. Galatians 5:5.* The hope of salvation is to them who look for Him. *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear*

the second time without sin unto salvation. Hebrews 9:28. Thus, the coming of our Lord is the culmination of the work of salvation and the bringing of all things to fruition that pertain to His glory and our salvation. The requirements for the redemption of His people have been met. He is now awaiting the full harvest.

Paul commended the Thessalonians and their testimony to the faith. *Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; 1 Thessalonians 1:3.* They had turned to God by faith. Their labor was one of love to God and for each other. Their patience was not characterized by idle waiting. Theirs was a hope in Christ. This brings to mind the reason of such hope. They knew Him to be the Son of God and God the Son. They were aware of all that He had suffered in bringing salvation to them. They understood that He had taken their punishment (as He does for all believers) and had endured the wrath of God that was due them. They knew that God had raised Him from the dead with the promise that He would return and would raise all those who wait and have waited for Him. They knew that He had ascended back to Heaven and even now intercedes for His own. Their hope was not relying on some fanciful prediction. Having done all that He did to save, how could He not return to collect that for which He had made full payment?

Peter wrote that many scoff at the idea of

His return: *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 2 Peter 3:4.* They do so at their own peril. *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Ecclesiastes 8:11* An important aspect of the expectation of true believers is knowledge of what is to come when there is no faith in Christ. By those things, mentioned above, He has delivered us from “the wrath to come.” It is important that we note that it is not just wrath, but “the wrath” that is to come. All without exception deserve the wrath of God, even those who are saved by His grace and mercy. All are sinners by nature and by action—rebels against God and His righteousness. All who hold the Son of God in contempt (unbelief) and seek their own way of justification or deny the need of it will receive “the wrath” of God. We who believe are delivered and will be eternally delivered from that which is to come. We know that it is coming because it fell on Christ on the behalf of those who come to believe in Him and trust Him

and His finished work for their salvation.

Waiting is here described as part of the believing life. It indicates a continuing and fruitful wait, not mere endurance. It is often characterized with joy in that it is done with the companionship of Christ and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. But always, out in the future is the appearing of our Lord. The desire of the true believer is not for the material things of the Kingdom, but for the King. He is certified to us to be the Son of God. It is confirmed to us that He is in Heaven even now. He is “expecting till His enemies be made His footstool.” His aim is that where He is, there we may be also. His desire is toward those whom He has “loved with an everlasting love.” Christ in us is the “hope of glory.” Even as His desire is for His own, so is their desire for Him. We are to persevere with joy in our hearts at the prospect of eternal life with Him and without the hindrance of sin and the distractions of this world. We belong with Him. And so we wait with true and joyful expectation. *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Philippians 3:20. bhs*

The Look of Inspiration

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher [better, "*Leader and Captain*"] of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb 12:2). In Hebrews 10:32, the apostle began to set before suffering, tried, and persecuted saints — a number of considerations calculated to nerve them for the conflict and stimulate unto the continued performance of duty. Throughout chapter 11, he showed how *faith* was what animated the Old Testament worthies. As a climax, he reminded them of the Savior, who supplied the perfect example of faith and fortitude under unparalleled suffering. When, then, you grow weary of running the race set before you — look unto your Leader and draw inspiration from Him — see Hebrews 12:3-4. Do as He did: look beyond the present sorrows to "the joy" awaiting you; see above the *painful cross* — an *eternal crown* prepared for him who "endures to the end" (Mat 10:22). It is by so looking unto our great Exemplar, by devoutly contemplating His spirit of self-sacrifice and steadfastness, that we obtain strength to bear the hardships of the way. A. W. Pink

THE COMMAND

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: Genesis 12:1

Abraham is first introduced to us in the closing verses of Genesis 11 and the opening verses of Genesis 12. His name was originally Abram, and it was not until years later that it was changed to Abraham. The reason for this change was highly significant, and we shall examine it in due course, but for the present let us get acquainted with young Abram. The Spirit of God passes over his early life in Ur of the Chaldees with but the briefest notice and begins the sacred record with his encounter with God. This is where life truly begins!

In this meeting, Abram came face to face with a command. Abram was commanded to do three things: leave his country, his people, and his father's household. This is exactly the command that comes to every person who hears the call of the gospel today. We are called to leave our country—the place where we have been living, our residence since birth. This does not mean, of course, our physical residence, but rather the old life with all its ambitions, its loyalties, its worship of money and fame and power, and its imagined independence—which is really slavery—all that we have been by nature since birth. This is clearly a picture of the world-organized society with its satanic philosophies and value systems.

Abram was also told to leave his relatives. In the spiritual sense, these are the moral forces that shape our lives. Just as blood relatives affect us greatly on the physical level, so these moral forces at work today change our lives constantly and color all that we think and do. Others' opinions, human traditions, pressures from family and friends, the attitudes of our employers and others around us—these are the kindred we must be willing to forsake when we hear the call of God. We are to renounce this concern about what others think and be preeminently concerned about what God thinks.

The third thing Abram was to leave was his father's house—that is, the ties with the old man. In this sense, Adam is the father of us all. What theologians call our Adamic nature, is the father's house in which we all live. We are called to leave this, to no longer put any dependence upon our looks, talents, or any of our normal resources, but to begin to walk in dependence upon another to do through us what we cannot do ourselves.

Perhaps you have heard the living God of glory say to you, You must no longer depend upon what you have been depending on—the opinions, the attitudes, the philosophy in which you have been reared. These are wrong. They are based upon the lies of Satan, and you must not live on this basis any longer. You must learn to accept the truth reflected in the Word of God, though it cuts right across the philosophy of this world. You must, above all, leave your father's house, which is dependence upon yourself.

It is a simple but vital decision—you cannot stay in Ur and go to the land at the same time.

Lord, grant me the grace to follow You, regardless of what I must leave behind.

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