

God's way is always right. ``Charles Swindoll

It doesn't always make sense---in fact . . . it is often mysterious. It can seldom be explained. It isn't always pleasurable and fun.

But I have lived long enough to realize that His way is always right. . . .

I believe that not until we embrace God's sovereignty will we have the ability to reason our way through life.

Until then we will be too important in the plan. Man's opinion will be too significant to us. And we will churn and wrestle and struggle our way through this Christian life, trying too hard to please people rather than living it relieved and relaxed in His plan.



### 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. 73. Which is the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment is, "Thou shalt not kill."

(Exodus 20:13)

Q. 74. What is required in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment requires all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life and the life of others.

(Eph. 5:29-30; Ps. 82:3-4; Prov. 24:11-12; Act 16:28)

Q. 75. What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment forbids the taking away our own life, or the life of our neighbor unjustly, or whatsoever tends thereto.

(Gen. 4:10-11; 9:6; Matt. 5:21-26)

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#### Services:

Sunday Morning 11:00 AM

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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### INEFFECTIVE CLEANSING

*For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD. Jeremiah 2:22*

Many products on the market today claim the ability to remove the toughest stains. Yet, experience has taught us that some stains resist the most intense efforts to remove them. They remain clearly visible and the appearance of the clothing is permanently marred. Our Lord pointed to just such stains as He declared: *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Isaiah 1:18.* The scarlet and crimson referred to here are dyes that were so deeply embedded as to be impossible to remove. Yet, the Lord reveals gracious intentions in that He could and would make them white again. Sin and sinfulness in the hearts of men is revealed to us in the Scripture as fact and believers readily confess it and even the unregenerate often acknowledge it. In that God will only accept purity and perfect righteousness the question remains at to how shall a man be right with God.

The cleansing agents referred to in this text seem to be mineral compounds and those made from vegetable sources being burned and mixed with oils. They were the most powerful cleansers known to them at that time. These represented the best efforts of men to bring about complete cleansing. It is evident that something beyond stained garments is in view. The subject of the passage is idolatry and the stain is the result of their pursuit of idolatry. The passage goes on to reveal that they did not deny

their participation. It is rather that they denied that they were permanently stained by their idolatry. They resorted to their own means and methods to render themselves acceptable to God. He declares that in spite of all their efforts their iniquity was still clearly in view and was marked before the Lord.

Idolatry was the consuming sin of Israel. The intoxicating and alluring effects of it were felt to such a degree as to draw them fully away from the devotion the Lord required. We may find practices of idol worshipers hard to imagine such as sacrificing children and perversions of human nature. These things involved that which appealed to the fallen nature of man and manifested itself in open opposition to the things of God. From Aaron's golden calf in the wilderness to the warnings of John in his epistles the sin and sins of idolatry are a recurring theme in the Bible. Most of the warnings of the prophets and the judgments of God addressed the issue. From such precedents as this we may conclude that the fallen and depraved nature of man is drawn to idols. The nature of idolatry is such that the participant is often deceived into believing that it is not that at all.

We have all heard such statements from men on the order of “I am not that bad.” This is, of course, a denial of the charges leveled against all in the Bible. The reasoning of many professing Christians is that certain deeds or manners of thinking are “not that bad.” In both instances there is the confidence that they can

clean themselves up. So they continue in their way of thinking while applying the “nitre” of self-righteousness and the soap of good works. They engage pious thoughts but remain the slave of their idols. They attempt to serve “God and mammon.” They vainly suppose that they can offset the bad by offering up that which they believe is good. The fact remains that the iniquity is marked before the Lord. He is a jealous God and will not share His glory with another nor will He tolerate mixed devotion. Let us fear that we hear the awful words of the Lord through Hosea: *Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone. Hosea 4:17.* John warned: *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen. 1 John 5:21.*

Men are prone to justify their behaviors and attempt to work a compromise between what the flesh clings to and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. They do not like to hear of the absolutes of the Word of God such as is here: “...thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.” But, when we read that God did not spare His own Son when He bore our sins in His body on the cross we are then convinced that He has zero tolerance for sin. True believers have a consciousness that they cannot cleanse

themselves and thus they apply to the mercy of God and the promise of God. David prayed: *Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. Psalms 19:12.* Again, he cried: *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Psalms 51:2.* Again, we ask how can this be? *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Titus 3:5.* You must be born again.

Are true believers subject to the allurements of idols and pleasure seeking? It must be since those warned by John were his “little children.” It behooves us to look away from the world and rather look to the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. It is for us to return again and again to that infinite source of strength, grace and mercy. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9.* In particular we note that it is the Lord who cleanses. He ever lives to make intercession and He pleads the merits of His own blood. May we recognize the fact and the evils of idolatry and flee from it and to the Lord as the only source of cleansing. *bhs*

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### If our faith stops at the cross – J. R

The women had brought spices, expecting to find Jesus' body wrapped in burial garments, lying in the tomb. "He is not here--He has risen!" said the angel. Matthew 28:6

Too many Christians look yet for their Christ, among the dead. They do not get beyond the cross and the grave. They see Christ, as only the Lamb of God who takes away their sin. They think of Him as accomplishing in His sufferings and death, the whole of His work of human redemption. They do not think of a living Christ who intercedes for them in Heaven, and who walks with them on earth in loving companionship.

The cross must never be forgotten! In a certain very real sense--Christ saved His people by giving Himself for them. The cross was the fullest, most complete revealing of divine love, which earth has ever seen! There the heart of God broke--that its streams of life might flow out to give life to the perishing world. To leave a dying Christ out of our creed--is to leave out salvation. The prints of the nails are the proof-marks on all doctrine, on all theology, on all Christian life. He who dims the luster

of the cross of Christ--is putting out the light of Christian hope, by which alone souls can be lighted homeward. We must never forget that Jesus died--died for us!

But if our faith stops at the cross--it misses the blessing of the fullest revealing of Christ. We do not merely need a Savior who nineteen hundred years ago went to death to redeem us--but one who also is alive--to walk by our side in loving companionship.

We need a Savior who can now hear our prayers.

We need a Savior to whose feet we can now creep in penitence, when we have sinned.

We need a Savior to whom we can now call for help, when the battle is going against us.

We need a Savior who is now interested in all of the affairs of our common life, and who can assist us in time of need.

We need a Savior who can now be our real Friend--loving us, keeping close beside us always.

We not only need a Savior who saved us by one great act wrought centuries ago--but one who continually saves us by His warm heart throbbing with love today, walking ever by our side.

Nothing less than a living Christ will do for us! That is what the gospel brings to us. It tells us of Him who lives. He was dead--the nail-prints are in His hands--but He is now alive forevermore! He is risen! He loves us now, today, always. He is ever with us!

It is only as we realize the truth of a living Christ--that our hearts are satisfied. We crave a personal friendship which will come into our life with its sympathies, its inspirations, its companionship, its shelter, its life, its comfort. All this, the living Christ is to us. *James R. Miller* *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:25*

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### The Spiritually Vigorous Saint

. . . that I may know Him . . . -Philippians 3:10

A saint is not to take the initiative toward self-realization, but toward knowing Jesus Christ. A spiritually vigorous saint never believes that his circumstances simply happen at random, nor does he ever think of his life as being divided into the secular and the sacred. He sees every situation in which he finds himself as the means of obtaining a greater knowledge of Jesus Christ, and he has an attitude of unrestrained abandon and total surrender about him. The Holy Spirit is determined that we will have the realization of Jesus Christ in every area of our lives, and He will bring us back to the same point over and over again until we do. Self-realization only leads to the glorification of good works, whereas a saint of God glorifies Jesus Christ through his good works. Whatever we may be doing- even eating, drinking, or washing disciples' feet- we have to take the initiative of realizing and recognizing Jesus Christ in it. Every phase of our life has its counterpart in the life of Jesus. Our Lord realized His relationship to the Father even in the most menial task. "Jesus, knowing . . . that He had come from God and was going to God, . . . took a towel . . . and began to wash the disciples' feet . . ." (John 13:3-5).

The aim of a spiritually vigorous saint is "that I may know Him . . ." Do I know Him where I am today? If not, I am failing Him. I am not here for self-realization, but to know Jesus Christ. In Christian work our initiative and motivation are too often simply the result of realizing that there is work to be done and that we must do it. Yet that is never the attitude of a spiritually vigorous saint. His aim is to achieve the realization of Jesus Christ in every set of circumstances. Oswald Chambers