

"Every person who has ever lived or will ever live must glorify God, either actively or passively, either willingly or unwillingly, either in heaven or in hell. You will glorify God. Either you will glorify him as the object of his mercy and glory, which will be seen in you. Or you will glorify him in your rebellion and unbelief by being made the object of his wrath and power at the final judgment"
J. M. Boice



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. 76. Which is the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment is, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

(Exodus 20:14)

Q. 77. What is required in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment requires the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior.

(1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2; 2 Tim. 2:22; Matt. 5:28; 1 Peter 3:2)

Q. 78. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment forbids all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.

(Matt. 5:28-32; Job 31:1; Eph. 5:3-4; Rom. 13:13; Col. 4:6)

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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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STRANGE THINGS

And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day. Luke 5:26

Religion today seems ordinary to most people. It is tolerated in its various forms by many and treated with contempt by others. Still others are indifferent to it and to those who practice it. Such was not the case with our Lord during His earthly ministry. Many followed Him. Others hated Him. But, we have no record of any treating Him with indifference. How then can it seem ordinary? Could it be that the essential presence and power of Christ are missing? Is there nothing that truly distinguishes professing Christians from any others? The Gospel writers took notice of the effect that Christ and His work had on those who observed. They may not have understood all the implications of what happened but they knew that it was anything but ordinary.

The word “strange” here is the word we understand as “paradox.” That is something that is contrary to what is generally accepted. It is true, yet seems to defy explanation. In other words it is something that appears impossible but is proven true by evidence. They had witnessed not just one thing, but several things that defied explanation and yet they were true. The other terms used by Luke, Matthew and Mark include “they were amazed” or “they marveled.” In any event it is evident that they were profoundly affected. Theirs was not a mere superficial conception that left them only entertained. They saw things that were, in their reasoned opinions, impossible. They were constrained to “glorify God.”

The crowd had already witnessed some of the miracles of Jesus. But, on this day, there were “things” that went beyond their previous observations. What were these things? They observed the manifestation of faith that would not take no for an answer. Four men were so determined to see a friend delivered from palsy that they broke up a roof and lowered him into the presence of Jesus. This was strange to them in that such love of a person and trust in Christ would so move Him to respond to it. “...He saw their faith...” His initial response was not to heal the man, but to do something that would provoke a response from all.

The forgiveness of sins was not the strange thing in this case. It was the teaching of the Pharisees and generally accepted by all that God could and did forgive sins. But, it was never done without some action or religious activity by the person being forgiven. Jesus had simply declared: “Man, thy sins be forgiven thee.” It was not unexpected that the religious leaders who were present would react strongly to such a statement. But, all were now at attention. Jesus, obviously knew of their murmuring and challenged them as to which was easier to say, thy sins be forgiven thee or take up thy bed and walk. And then He simply commanded the man to take up his couch and go to his house. The result was that the man left glorifying God. The Pharisees had been answered in that only God could effect such a miracle. He had presented them with irrefutable proof that He was God

manifest in the flesh and as such had the authority to forgive sins. After all, He had, by His actions, identified the man as His own. In time He would pay the penalty for the man's sins and so it was His right to forgive. The actions of the forgiven man are evidence that He sensed not only bodily healing but also being forgiven. The religious experts were silenced. A man had forgiven sins. An incurably crippled man had walked and praised God. These were strange things indeed. The implications were hated by the Pharisees but the multitude acknowledged and praised God for what they saw.

Such religion as this was not ordinary. The faith of God's elect is such that they are amazed at what they behold in Christ and the effect they see in themselves. They have been brought through regeneration in which they are made alive and capable of sensing the operations of God in them. They are enabled to see the extent and the terribleness of their sin and their sins. Thus a true repentance before God brings them fully to the end of themselves so that the only hope that lies before them is the mercy of a Holy God. To their amazement they are brought to believe that Christ took their place and suffered the righteous wrath and judgment of God that was due them. And, by God given and

Spirit produced faith they are able to trust Christ and His work for their salvation. Forgiveness does not come cheap. It cost no less than the suffering and death of the innocent Lamb of God. It is certainly not the reaction of God to an empty profession or a meaningless prayer. It does come in answer to repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. To be forgiven never ceases to be a strange and marvelous thing to true believers and is motivation to ever be glorifying God.

It is sad that the general population is unaffected by the so-called Christianity of men. Perhaps it is because many who profess to know Christ are themselves unaffected by what they claim to believe! It is a strange thing to ordinary men to see the kind of transformation that takes place with regeneration, repentance and faith in an individual. Lame men walking and blind men seeing and the dead being raised are not as amazing as a person being made a new creation in Christ. The other things pertain to the flesh, but to be born again is to be resurrected to new and eternal life in Christ. Where such has occurred it cannot go unnoticed. To both the observer and the believer it is a strange thing – it seems impossible that a Holy God could forgive sins. O the wonders of the Gospel! *bhs*

Almighty God, as I cross the threshold of this day I commit myself, soul, body, affairs, friends, to Your care. Watch over, keep, guide, direct, sanctify, bless me. Incline my heart to Your ways. Mould me completely into the image of Jesus, as a potter forms clay. May my lips be a well-tuned harp to sound Your praise. Let those around see me living by Your Spirit, trampling the world underfoot, unconformed to lying vanities, transformed by a renewed mind, clothed in the entire armour of God, shining as a never-dimmed light, showing holiness in all my doings. Let no evil this day soil my thoughts, words, and hands. May I travel miry paths with a life pure from spot or stain. In needful transactions let my affection be in heaven, and my love soar upwards in flames of fire, my gaze fixed on unseen things, my eyes open to the emptiness, fragility, mockery of earth and its vanities. May I view all things in the mirror of eternity, waiting for the coming of my Lord, listening for the last trumpet call, hastening unto the new heaven and earth. Order this day all my communications according to Your wisdom, and to the gain of mutual good. Forbid that I should not be profited or made profitable. May I speak each word as if my last word, and walk each step as my final one. If my life should end today, let this be my best day. (Puritan Prayer)

Praying for Your Straying Soul --by John Piper

Do you pray for your straying soul? I do. Daily.

The soul is always in motion. If you think yours is motionless, you are probably floating downstream.

Daily the soul is lured to other treasures, other satisfactions, other rewards besides Jesus and his way. Jesus taught us to pray daily, "forgive us for these wanderings and lead us not into, but out of, them."

So, how do you pray for your straying soul if you believe in God's sovereign will to bring back his wayward ones? For many years I have taken my cue from Jeremiah 31:18. You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; cause me to return and I will return, for you are the Lord, my God. Similarly, Lamentations 5:21. Cause us to return to yourself, O Lord, and we will return! Renew our days as of old.

These are my translations to make clear that the same Hebrew word is behind both verbs: "Cause me to return." And "I will return." The first one is the causal form of the verb, while the second one is the declarative form. If God causes me to return, I will return.

That is the way I believe. And that is the way I pray. I invite you to join me. This is how perseverance happens.



The secret sorrow (Theodore Cuyler)

"I am the Good Shepherd. I know My own sheep--and they know Me." John 10:14

Jesus knows those who are His. He knows all about every one of them: their strong points--and their weak points; their besetting sins--and their graces.

The fact of Christ's perfect knowledge of all our needs and requirements, throws great light on some dark providences. It explains some mysteries--why one of us is put up, and another is put down; why one is prospered, and another is impoverished.

Our blessed Master, in His family discipline, commits no mistakes. When He takes an immortal soul under His loving care and into His training-school, He understands the character of each His pupils. He is a most forbearing and considerate of masters. He never lays on weak shoulders, the loads which only stalwarts can carry. All the while, too, how sweetly come the encouraging words, "I am with you always! My grace is sufficient for you! As your days--so your strength shall be." He calls us not slaves--He calls us His friends.

How perfectly acquainted He is, too, with all our weaknesses! He knows our frame; He remembers that we are but dust. Here is great encouragement for penitent sinners. He quenches no smoking flax--He breaks no bruised reeds.

The secret sorrow which I dare not breathe to the most intimate friend--I can freely unbosom to my Savior. Ah, how well He knows every thorn which pricks my foot, and every wound which trickles its silent drops from my bleeding soul! This is a wondrous encouragement to prayer. For my Physician will never administer the wrong medicine, nor fail to help us in the hour of sudden distress!