

(Deitrich Bonhoeffer's view of a life among enemies was formed in the Nazi Germany of the 1930s, a situation that was becoming increasingly hostile to Christians.)

The Christian cannot simply take for granted the privilege of living among other Christians. Jesus Christ lived in the midst of his enemies. In the end all his disciples abandoned him. On the cross he was all alone, surrounded by criminals and the jeering crowds. He had come for the express purpose of bringing peace to the enemies of God. Christians, too, belong not in the seclusion of a cloistered life but in the midst of enemies. There they find their mission, their work.

Biblical Wisdom: Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. Matthew 10:16



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. 114. What do we pray for in the third petition?

A. In the third petition, which is, “Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,” we pray that God by His grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to His will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

(Matt. 6:10; Ps. 103:20-21; Ps. 25:4-5; Ps. 119:26)

Q. 115. What do we pray for in the fourth petition?

A. In the fourth petition, which is, “Give us this day our daily bread,” we pray that of God's free gift, we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life and enjoy His blessing with them.

(Matt. 6:11; Prov. 30:8-9; 1 Tim. 6:6-8; 4:4,5)

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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

Volume 5, No. 53

December 30, 2012

LAYING DOWN IN PEACE

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety. Psalms 4:8

The life of David was one of persecution and trial. From the time of his anointing to be King over Israel he was in danger from Saul and his people. He was assaulted by Satan and succumbed to temptation. His own family turned against him and would have killed him. Why would the one we first remember as confronting and killing the evil giant Philistine Goliath as an act of faith suffer so much in his lifetime? Perhaps there is no immediate explanation, but we are reminded of Paul's words to Timothy: *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12.* No doubt David often wondered as to the reason of such tragedy as was often found in his life.

In some cases with David we simply conclude that his troubles and ours are often the natural consequences of sin or the chastising of a loving Heavenly Father. But, we observe that often the troubles came from his enemies that were in fact the enemies of God. Fallen man hates every evidence of Christ in the life of a believer. He will be accepting of the good things that may come to him from the work of grace in the life of another; he cannot be accepting of the change wrought in God's people because of the righteousness of Christ in them. God's people are new creatures and bear his nature. Fallen men are by nature "haters of God." And so the enmity against God continues against the people of God and against the Son of God and will until He comes in complete victory over this present world. It is likely that David

seldom felt safe with regard to his enemies. It was in the presence of his enemies that he could both lay himself down in peace and sleep.

Men think of personal safety in a number of ways. They feel safe in the company of friends. They feel safe at home and in their beds. They are assured by locked doors and security systems. They even feel safe when they have armed themselves. But, are we ever truly safe in this hostile world? In the light of recent tragedies in our land we have reason to ask that question. Evil exists and the evil one is bent on the destruction of mankind. He attacks the most vulnerable and those who are called the innocents. Do we have a defense against their treachery (they are not stupid)? How can we rest or how can we sleep? David had the answer.

It is wonderful that a child of God can lay himself down in peace. His is a peace with God and a peace of God. He has been delivered from the wrath to come by the Blood of Christ and stands fully justified and immune from the judgment of our Holy God. Furthermore, such have the promise of the securing power of God to do as He wills and to do as He has promised. But, we do not have these things in a place of apparent safety. We have them in this present evil world. The adversary is a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. David once said that there was but a step between himself and death. Sin and evil continue to abound and are completely intolerant of anyone who opposes. They have stopped their ears and refuse to

acknowledge the God of all the earth and His Son. Christ declared that the dogs have compassed men about. See Psalm 22. Evil knows no rest but is ever at the task of warring against God. It is in this environment that we know this Peace and the Prince of peace. The eternal security of our souls is rested in Him and in Him alone do we trust.

Thus when David said he would “lay me down in peace” it was with full awareness of the potential of the enemy. How easily is our peace disturbed and our sleep troubled? We go to sleep professing that we trust the Lord but awake to check that all is well or to contemplate our own solutions to the things that trouble us. We have lost the simplicity of the child’s bedtime prayer: “Now I lay me down to sleep/ I pray the Lord my soul to keep/ If I should die before I wake/ I pray the Lord my soul to take.” The more we know of the Lord’s promise to those who have come to know Him the more we should be able as David to lay down in peace. The thought of sleeping alone in a jungle inhabited by lions and ravenous beasts is terrifying to most of us. Yet, we live in the midst of an untoward generation that is far more

dangerous. But, David knew the source of his peace and therefore he could sleep.

First of all, David knew it was the Lord that made him to dwell safely. He acknowledged both the intent of the Lord and His power to carry out His will. The second thing we note here was that it was only the Lord that was able to keep him. *Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. Psalms 127:1.* David had armies at his command but knew that they were useless unless the Lord made him safe.

Dark clouds loom large over our nation and this world. Wickedness is increasing. And, judgment is coming. He who “spared not His own Son,” shall certainly pour out upon men that which they have labored for in the slave-market of sin. That includes all outside of Christ. Can we calmly lay down with the assurance of Peace given to us in Him that is called the “Prince of Peace?” Can we sleep in Heavenly Peace? Only by His grace and mercy given in Christ Jesus can God alone make us dwell in safety. This is the way of all who trust Him, His mercy and His Grace. *bhs*

HOW TO ASCERTAIN THE WILL OF GOD

I seek at the beginning to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter. Nine-tenths of the trouble with people generally is just here. Nine-tenths of the difficulties are overcome when our hearts are ready to do the Lord's will, whatever it may be. When one is truly in this state, it is usually but a little way to the knowledge of what His will is.

2.—Having done this, I do not leave the result to feeling or simple impression. If so, I make myself liable to great delusions.

3.—I seek the Will of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of God. The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusions also. If the Holy Ghost guides us at all, He will do it according to the Scriptures and never contrary to them.

4.—Next I take into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate God's Will in connection with His Word and Spirit.

5.—I ask God in prayer to reveal His Will to me aright.

6.—Thus, through prayer to God, the study of the Word, and reflection, I come to a deliberate judgment according to the best of my ability and knowledge, and if my mind is thus at peace, and continues so after two or three more petitions, I proceed accordingly. In trivial matters, and in transactions involving most important issues, I have found this method always effective. GEORGE MÜLLER

ANXIETY FOR SOULS

I HAVE heard of one brought to Christ who was a very great sinner—of so stiff a neck that he never would be approached by anybody who aimed at his conversion. He hated the very mention of religion. He answered all appeals very coarsely. But one of his neighbours felt forced to go to him very early in the morning and say to him, "I beg your pardon for intruding so early, but I lay awake all last night thinking about you; and I cannot rest till I tell you something." He answered, "What were you thinking about me for? I don't want any of your thoughts."

"Oh," said the other, "I felt so sorry to think that if you were to die, you would die without hope." The bearish man replied, "Mind your own business." "But," said the other, "that is my business. I think my heart will break unless I see you saved." All the answer was, "Go away with you, don't come here with any of your cant." The brother went home weeping, but he was not the only one who felt his heart breaking. The bearish one went away from his forge, and said to his wife, "I can always answer these religious fellows. I do not care for your parsons a bit, but that neighbour of ours has been in here, and he says it will break his heart unless I am converted; and that beats me." He was beaten. Out of a sort of kindly pity for his neighbour's weakmindedness, with a mixture of an unacknowledged feeling on his own account, he went to hear the preaching of the Word and was brought to Jesus. C. H. Spurgeon



From the *Meditations of MacDuff*:

Do I "know His name?" Acquainting myself with God, am I now at peace? Do I feel that His loving-kindness is better than life? Amid the brokenness of nature's cisterns — am I turning with earnest longing to the infinite and only satisfying fountain-head, like the deer panting for the waterbrooks? All other objects of earthly love and enjoyment are perishable. But "the name of the Lord is a strong tower — the righteous runs into it, and is safe." "Great is the blessing," says one who knew well that Name, "that the anchor of our love is firmly fixed beneath the cross of Christ! The silver cord of life may be snapped in a moment; but this is embedded in the cleft of the Rock forever!" "Those who know Your name trust in You, for You, O Lord, have never abandoned anyone who searches for you. John MacDuff.



It is important that we get still to wait on God. And it is best that we get alone, preferably with our Bible outspread before us. Then if we will we may draw near to God and begin to hear Him speak to us in our hearts. I think for the average person the progression will be something like this: First a sound as of a Presence walking in the garden. Then a voice, more intelligible, but still far from clear. Then the happy moment when the Spirit begins to illuminate the Scriptures, and that which had been only a sound, or at best a voice, now becomes an intelligible word, warm and intimate and clear as the word of a dear friend. Then will come life and light, and best of all, ability to see and rest in and embrace Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and All.

A. W. Tozer *The Pursuit of God*