

You know, Jesus did a very curious thing in the Gospel of Mark. It says, “[He] took the blind man... and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man’s eyes..., Jesus asked, ‘Do you see anything?’ As the story goes, the blind man got his sight. But the curious part is the manner in which this miracle was performed. Jesus spit on his eyes. We associate spit with ickiness, but Jesus had a lesson to teach. You see, when I was first injured a friend told me to find comfort in God’s sovereignty. I felt as if he were spitting on me. But it is possible God will bless you by the truth you once despised. Because now, I love God’s sovereignty. So don’t despise truths that seem hard. God wants to make you into the spitting image of His Son. Joni Eareckson Tada



GADSBY’S CATECHISM – William Gadsby about 1800

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

Question III. How may we know that there is a God?

Answer. The works of creation and providence plainly declare that there is a God, but His Word and Spirit only do it effectually to the salvation of His people.

Job 38 & 39; Psa. 19; Jn. 16.8-14 & 17.8; 1 Cor. 2.10.

Question IV. What is the Word of God?

Answer. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, and the only certain rule of faith and obedience.

Psa. 119.140; Prov. 30.5; Isa. 40.8; 2 Tim. 3.14-17.

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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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THE HARD WAY

Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard. Proverbs 13:15

From my earliest childhood I remember the admonition of my mother “you will just have to learn the hard way.” These words were uttered with regard to my unheeding attitude toward the wisdom of others or outright disobedience. With the latter the punishment that followed was indeed hard. The fact is that I never seemed to learn but rather proceeded in a way of self will in spite of the consequences. Regrets would come but were short-lived and soon forgotten.

How typical this is of the way of depraved man. In spite of the consequences so often encountered because of sin and rebellion there is a persistence in men to believe that eventually they will get it right. We often read of the addicted gambler who plunges deeper and deeper into debt while believing that they will eventually strike it rich. Sometimes, although rarely, the gambler does win. The self-willed rebel against God never does. He learns the “hard way” and that too late.

This proverb provides a delightful contrast of two kinds of character among men. The first is descriptive of those who have been graciously delivered by our Sovereign Lord to a way of delightful acceptance with both God and men. The character of the first is that of one having been given a new nature in being born again of the Spirit of God. It is eternal life in such a person being lived out to the glory of God. It is the life of one graciously made accepted in the Beloved. Such acceptance begins with the work of justification wherein sins of such a person are declared forgiven on the basis of the work of

our suffering substitute. It is then manifested before God and men. Such a person walks humbly with his God in the knowledge of redeeming grace and thus totally free of presumption as to anything he has done. The effect of such humility before God carries over to one’s approach to men and the result is favor.

In stark contrast is the life of the transgressor. Perhaps at this point many may think that you do not have to be a Christian to be good and thus accepted with God. The fact is that every act of the unregenerate is contaminated with the ruin and decay of their fallen nature and is unacceptable with God. If it is not of faith, which rests in the righteousness of Christ, it is sin. Apart from the grace of God men go on with the idea that they will somehow “beat the system.”

Two ideas are given by some commentators as to the meaning of the word “hard.” The first is the idea of unchanging or permanent. This would suggest that transgressors, all who are outside of Christ, proceed in an intractable and unchangeable way. The thought is that many are “hard” in their approach to life and are unsympathetic to the needs of others. Certainly we have seen this in many. Or, they persist and are unchanged as to what constitutes true righteousness and refuse the counsel of God and the Scriptures. We often wonder at how men can persist in their own way in the face of death and judgment. But, they are hardened and continue to their own hurt. The second

meaning given is that the results of the way of the transgressor are hard. Sin has consequence both in this world and in the world to come. Consider: *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23.* This well-known passage describes the way as being labor with the payoff being death. In the life of those who trust in themselves there is no balm for pain, no comfort in trials, no peace in conflict, no joy in serving and no hope in death.

To the true seeker our Lord declared: *For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matthew 11:30.* The promise to the believer is that which was given to Paul: *And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Corinthians 12:9.* There is no promise of deliverance from difficulty in this world. There is the promise of the presence of Christ. And, there is such promise of grace that assures happiness in it all. Thus we read without recourse: *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Isaiah 26:3.*

So it is that the true believer operates from a position of “good understanding.” In the fear of

the Lord he is given knowledge and wisdom. That new nature, derived from Christ, is most receptive to the teaching of the Spirit. Consider: *This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; Hebrews 10:16.* Such a gracious provision brings imitation of Christ in the life. Compare: *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. Luke 2:52.* The persecution of Christ will continue until He comes. We must be sure however that the issue is Christ and not us. Staying close by Christ our Lord gives good understanding of Him. It is well that we know and understand this: *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Romans 14:17-18.*

The way of the transgressor is dictated by his fallen nature and it is hard from the beginning to the end. They are both hardened in their way and their way is incurably hard. How precious indeed it is to follow Jesus in the way. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3. bhs*

Post-it Note or Real

2 Corinthian 5:21

When the Holy Spirit declares that our great Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, was “made sin for us,” does he mean for us to understand that God put a post-it note on his Son that read “sin” and killed him?

You know better. Such a view of imputation is beyond absurd. It is contrary to everything revealed in Holy Scripture about the character of our God and the sin-atoning suffering and death of our dear Savior.

God’s imputation of sin to his darling Son was a just imputation, because the transfer of sin from chosen sinners to their Surety was real. — “He hath made him to be sin for us!” God’s imputation of righteousness to his elect is also a just imputation, because he has made us “the righteousness of God in him!”

Our sin was not pasted on our Savior; and his righteousness is not pasted on the believer. Christ was “made sin for us,” and we are “made the righteousness of God in him.”

Don Fortner

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God." (Mark 10:27)

There are two great incentives from Jesus to become a World Christian and to dedicate yourself to the cause of Frontier Missions as we begin the twenty-first century.

1. Every impossibility with men is possible with God (Mark 10:27). The conversion of hardened sinners will be the work of God and will accord with His sovereign plan. We need not fear or fret over our weakness. The battle is the Lord's, and He will give the victory.

2. Christ promises to work for us and to be for us so much that when our missionary life is over, we will not be able to say we've sacrificed anything (Mark 10:29-30). When we follow His missionary prescription, we discover that even the painful side effects work to improve our condition. Our spiritual health, our joy, improves a hundredfold. And when we die, we do not die. We gain eternal life.

I do not appeal to you to screw up your courage and sacrifice for Christ. I appeal to you to renounce all you have to obtain life that satisfies your deepest longings. I appeal to you to count all things as rubbish for the surpassing value of standing in service of the King of kings. I appeal to you to take off your store bought rags and put on the garments of God's ambassadors.

I promise you persecutions and privations—but "remember the joy"! "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:10).

On January 8, 1956, five Auca Indians of Ecuador killed Jim Elliot and his four missionary companions as they were trying to bring the gospel to the Auca tribe of sixty people.

Four young wives lost husbands and nine children lost their fathers. Elisabeth Elliot wrote that the world called it a nightmare of tragedy. Then she added, "The world did not recognize the truth of the second clause in Jim Elliot's credo: He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. *John Piper*



"In reading the word of God, it becomes us ever to remember that the sacred pages are a transcript of the perfections of the infinite God, who is the "high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy" (Isaiah 57:15). A Being whose omniscient eye beholds the end from the beginning, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, and will do all His pleasure; who "bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought, and maketh the devices of the people of none effect" (Psalm 33:10). Whatever change takes place in our minds, the eternal God knows no change."

(William Gadsby)

"The gospel of Jesus Christ is the mystery of God; and was designed of God to be fitted for poor, perishing, guilty sinners. It was intended only to suit poor, needy, ruined, guilty, wretched creatures, as we are; because, if it were not for poor sinners, it would not belong to us."

(William Gadsby)