

“Go to God and have an understanding. Tell Him that it is your desire to be holy at any cost and then ask Him never to give you more happiness than holiness. When your holiness becomes tarnished, let your joy become dim. And ask Him to make you holy whether you are happy or not. Be assured that in the end you will be as happy as you are holy; but for the time being let your whole ambition be to serve God and be Christlike.” ~ AW Tozer

“Most Christians salute the sovereignty of God but believe in the sovereignty of man.” ~ R.C. Sproul



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 XI. How does God execute his decrees?

Answer. God executes his decrees in the works of creation, providence and grace.

Num. 23.19-23; Job 37.13; Psa. 107.25-30; Dan. 4.35; Rev. 4.11.

Question XII. What is the work of creation?

Answer. The work of creation is God's, making all things out of nothing by the word of His power, and all very good.

Gen. 1; Jn. 1.1-3; Col. 1.16; Heb. 11.3.

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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 DAYSMAN

Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. Job 9:33

Job is considered by many to be the oldest book in the Bible. As such we might expect it to be the farthest removed from personal references to Christ and the means of redemption. Yet, we find Job often declaring his lack of ability to be just with God. He is quick to acknowledge that he is among those who are “few of days and full of trouble.” He even declares both the need and promise of redemption in saying: *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Job 19:25-26.* In declaring his need for a “daysman” between him and God he reveals a level of understanding that is sadly missing with many today.

So many labor under the illusion that they may present themselves before God at their own will and pleasure. They expect acceptance with God and some even assert it as their right and God’s obligation to be accepted. Such thought displays an obvious lack of understanding of the holiness of God and the distance between Himself and sinners. We can hear the objection at such a statement in that God is often portrayed as a benevolent provider dependent on men to work His will. In the strictest sense, God is unapproachable by sinful men. We note the action taken with the fall in the Garden of Eden. The blood of innocent animals was shed to clothe the nakedness of Adam and Eve. They were ejected from the Garden and Cherubim with flaming swords were

sent to guard the way of the tree of life. From that time forward men would only be spared the justice and judgment of God by the shedding of blood – the innocent in the place of the guilty.

These thoughts in no way take anything from the love of God for His people. But, His is an unconditional love and His is an uncompromising holiness. We consider the word of Habakkuk in saying: *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he? Habakkuk 1:13.* How can such be reconciled? Men are all alike sinful and unacceptable to God and they are without merit that would recommend them to the favor of God. Men persist in their pride to believe they can change themselves. All they can do is imagine and imitate change. It is only when they, by virtue of regeneration (the New Birth) are awakened to their undone condition and the just demands God in His holiness that they cry out to God. At that point their thoughts of their separation from God become intolerable.

Job had served the Lord and knew true fellowship with Him. Now his perception was that God was not only out of sight, but out of touch with him. His terrible grief at the loss of his family and possessions was great. The pain of his physical sufferings was excruciating. The insensitivity of his wife and friends was frustrating. But the worst of all was that he felt

abandoned by God and he did not understand why. Yet Job did not abandon true faith. *In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly. Job 1:22.* Job understood the concept of substitution in that he offered burnt offerings for his children. But, how could he communicate or plead his own case before God?

A “daysman” is here understood to be an umpire or an arbitrator or perhaps best – a mediator. It would seem that Job in lamenting the absence of such a person and is praying for one. In any event since he seemed to be completely out of touch with God he needed another to contact Him. The thought is very apt. It would have to be someone who could communicate with both and could touch both. He would have to be a proper representative of both. We often hear of labor disputes being resolved by an arbitrator. That is a person who clearly understands the grievances of both parties and is acceptable by both as trustworthy to make a fair decision. Job needed someone who could completely understand his situation and plead his case before God. He never once devalued the most high position of God and so knew that this would have to be a unique and very special person. It is just such a person that we have in Christ.

The writer of Hebrews tells us of His

qualification to touch Job and us. *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15.* Paul understood the divine necessity in declaring Christ to be God manifest in the flesh. Jacob saw Him as the stairway that reached from the lowly position where the exile lay to Heaven. Christ alluded to this in describing Himself to Nathaniel.

The labor arbitrator takes into consideration the demand of both parties and resolves the issue in his own mind and then hands down a decision that is binding on both. As Christ hung suspended between Heaven and earth He bore the sins of His people in His body on the tree. The justice of God demanded satisfaction and the holiness of God required that His wrath be poured out on the very soul of Christ. All of the sins of His people were accounted for and justice was satisfied and the holiness of God was vindicated. Truly, God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

Christ said: *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14:6.* And so it is that we are brought into eternal union and bliss with God in Christ our Lord. *bhs*

Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ Ephesians 1:2

The best Christians here need peace, and to that end Christ's blood and satisfaction, which is alone the procurer of all our peace, to wash their souls daily with the efficiency and spirits of that blood; and likewise for the acceptation even of their holiness and faithfulness they need grace too, the free favour of God. 'Grace and peace to you saints, and faithful Ephesians.' They both need the things themselves to be daily continued unto them; and their souls need to apprehend more of them, and about them, to have more enlarged revelation of them made to their faith. Hast thou peace already with God through faith? Yet still thou hast guilt and doubtings; thy faith is mixed with unbelief; therefore thou needest more of peace, 'Peace be to you.' Again, hast thou assurance of God's love? Yet, oh how little dost thou know of it! (as Job speaks.) This grace and love of God and Christ passeth knowledge, Eph. iii. 19. As in like manner this peace is said to pass understanding, 2 Pet. i. 2; Phil. iv. 7. And this is the Apostle's meaning in his benediction in both Epistles, 'Grace and peace be multiplied (says he) through the knowledge of God (the Father and his love) and of Jesus our Lord' (and his satisfaction for you.) Hence it is evident, that the communication of these to us is through our knowledge and apprehension thereof increased and multiplied; as also a further possession of them thereby. Thomas Goodwin 1681

The questions should rather be ...

"In the world ye shall have tribulation." John 16:33

True victory is not found in escaping or evading trials--but in rightly meeting and enduring them. The questions should not be, "How can I get out of these worries? How can I get into a place where there shall be no irritations, nothing to try my temper, or put my patience to the test? How can I avoid the troubles which continually harass me?" There is nothing noble in such living. The soldier who flees when the battle approaches, is no hero; he is a coward.

The questions should rather be, "How can I pass through these trying experiences--and not fail as a Christian? How can I endure these struggles--and not suffer defeat? How can I live amid these provocations, these reproaches and testings of my temper--and yet live sweetly, not speaking unadvisedly, bearing injuries meekly, returning gentle answers to insulting words?"

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son." Revelation 21:7 (J.R. Miller)

"It's Never Too Late to Keep Asking"

And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." (Luke 23:42)

One of the greatest hope-killers is that you have tried for so long to change and have not succeeded. You look back and think: What's the use? Even if I could experience a breakthrough, there would be so little time left to live in my new way that it wouldn't make much difference compared to so many decades of failure.

The former robber (the thief on the cross next to Jesus) lived for another hour or so before he died. He was changed. He lived on the cross as a new man with new attitudes and actions (no more reviling). But 99.99% of his life was wasted. Did the last couple hours of newness matter?

They mattered infinitely. This former robber, like all of us, will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of his life. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil" (2

Corinthians 5:10). How will his life witness in that day to his new birth and his union with Christ? The last hours will tell the story. This man was new. His faith was real. He is truly united to Christ. Christ's righteousness is his. His sins are forgiven.

That is what the final hours will proclaim at the last judgment. His change mattered. It was, and it will be, a beautiful testimony to the power of God's grace and the reality of his faith and his union with Christ.

Now back to our struggle with change. I am not saying that struggling believers are unsaved like the robber was. I am simply saying that the last years and the last hours of life matter.

If in the last 1% of our lives, we can get a victory over some longstanding sinful habit or hurtful defect in our personality, it will be a beautiful testimony now to the power of grace; and it will be an added witness (not the only one) at the last judgment of our faith in Christ and our union with him. Take heart, struggler. Keep asking, seeking, knocking. Keep looking to Christ. If God gets glory by saving robbers in the 11th hour, he surely has his purposes why he has waited till now to give you the breakthrough you have sought for decades. John Piper from *Desiring God*