Once Saved, Always Saved

"Once saved, always saved" is a popular mantra of easy-believism that turns God's grace into lasciviousness by promising eternal life to those with ungodly lives. It has no Biblical basis as it is commonly used.

The God of heaven will not lose a single one of His elect, but the concept of "once saved, always saved," based on decisional regeneration that obligates God rather than God's work of grace leading to godly evidence, is wrong in both phrases. *Copied – Let God be True* 

## 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 XV. What are God's works of grace?

Answer. God's works of grace are the rich displays of His everlasting love in redemption, regeneration and the glorious works connected therewith.

Jer. 31.3; Eph. 2; Phil. 2.13; Rev. 1.5-6.

Question XVI. What special act of providence did God exercise towards man in the estate wherein He created him?

Answer. When God created man He gave him a law, promising him a continuance of the life and blessings which he then possessed on condition of his perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil upon pain of death.

### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A P. O. Box 628 Richwood, WV 26261 B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406
Email: <u>branthsj@msn.com</u>
Website: www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com

### 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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#### ACCEPTED WITH HIM

But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. Acts 10:35

These words were spoken by Peter in the house of Cornelius the Roman Centurion. They were uttered after a long inner struggle. Peter, as was most Jews, prejudiced against Gentiles. The Lord had shown Peter something of His intent with a vision wherein he was commanded to eat unclean things. Peter had, of course, recoiled at the idea. But, the reason of the vision had become evident when he was sent to take the Gospel to a Gentile soldier. The things he heard had a profound impact on his thoughts of what constituted salvation and to whom it was given.

What Peter witnessed in Cornelius and his identity with the Lord constrained him to conclude that "God was no respecter of persons." That is, God's favor was not bestowed on men because of any merit found in them or because of any work they might perform and certainly not with regard to a nationality. There were rather two simple conditions or evidences of acceptance given: the fear of God and the working of righteousness. With this, Peter preached the Gospel to those Gentiles and the Holy Spirit confirmed the message in the hearts of the hearers. They had been born again.

The statement is simple but raises important questions. What is it to fear God? What is it to work righteousness? And, what is it to be accepted with God? We begin with the fear of God and note its evidence in the life of Cornelius. We are not told how he came to know the Lord as to human means. We assume that either through witness or observation that

there had been some revelation. He feared, he gave and he prayed and the effect was felt on his house. We are reminded in the Old Testament that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of both knowledge and wisdom. We learn by the approach of many unto God that this is not a slavish or craven fear such as that God might destroy them. There are those who have reason to feel that way and the Bible confirms that in their persistent wickedness and rebellion that they will be subject to the wrath of God and eternal punishment. But, this fear is that which a loving son has for his father. It is of reverence and heartfelt devotion and respect with a desire to please. It is born of faith in that the look is to Him as the only one to be entrusted with our eternal life as we see His provision in Christ. It engenders love and is therefore a delightful outlook. The gift of faith is employed in such in that they know that they cannot please God without it.

Secondly, we ask what is meant by working righteousness. This is that manner of life that is driven by the loving and reverential fear of God. It is understood that one is doing what the Lord would have him to do. Cornelius gave alms and was acknowledged as upright. We would quickly note that this "working" does not arise by some exercise of human will. The only righteousness that is accepted with God is that of Christ Jesus our Lord. Peter both understood that and proceeded to preach it. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to the account of all the Lord's people. And, by the sovereign act of

regeneration (the New Birth) such is imparted so that they are New Creatures with a New Nature. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Philippians 2:13. This is not the legalistic attempts at morality engaged in by men in an effort to gain acceptance with God. Such is an insult to the righteousness of Christ and the Grace of our God. But, it would be a gross inconsistency to claim salvation at the hands of a Gracious and Holy God and not see the working of righteousness. So it is that the reverential and loving fear of God and a true desire to work that which is pleasing to Him are seen as essential evidences of being accepted with God.

There is a tendency among the religious to set arbitrary standards. Some would require a proper creed, a particular form of practice and an accurate doctrinal statement. We should not count these lightly, but we should look to what the Word of God declares as essential. Here Peter lays out two essentials. They are stated in such a way as to not permit deviation from the absolute standard of God that is understood in Christ alone. But, they are presented in such a way as to prevent the intrusion of other things

that would take away from these two essentials.

Then, we ask, what is it to be accepted with God. We sadly note that men want to reverse the order of things here. There is no place in scripture that suggests that man's acceptance of God brings salvation. The question is not of whether men will accept God but whether God will accept them. God does not need the approval of men – they need the mercy of God. Thus the provision of God is made for true believers in Christ. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. Ephesians 1:6. The whole design of God in salvation is that His people should dwell with Him forever in perfect harmony. That means that all that offends God in men must be taken out of the way and a perfect relationship be manifested. This He does in Christ. To be accepted with God is to be accepted in the same way as He has received Christ back into Glory. This only occurs where sin debts are paid, new life is given, repentance is experienced and faith is exercised. In none of these things is the work of men a factor. It is all of Grace and the precious evidence is the fear of God and the working of righteousness. bhs

"Take My yoke upon you." It may sound very much like a paradox, to bid those who labor and are heavy laden and who come to Christ for "rest" to bid them take a "yoke" upon them. Yet in reality it is far from being the case. Instead of the yoke of Christ bringing its wearer into bondage—it introduces him into a real liberty, the only genuine liberty there is. Said the Lord Jesus to those who believ...ed in Him, "If you continue in My Word, then are you My disciples indeed—and you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free" (John 8:31, 32). That is His unchanging order. First, there must be a "continuing in His Word"—that is, an actual and constant walking in the same. As we do this, He makes good His promise, "and you shall know the Truth". That is, know it in an experimental way, know its power, its blessedness. The consequence is, "and the Truth shall make you free"—free from prejudice, from ignorance, from folly, from self-will, from the grievous bondage of Satan, from the power of sin. Then it is that the obedient disciple discovers that the Divine Commandments are "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25). Said David, "I will walk at liberty—for I seek Your precepts" (Psalm 119:45). A.W.Pink

"I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy — to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship." Romans 12:1 The godly life is not one of ease, pleasure and self-indulgence.

We are taught to present our bodies, as a living sacrifice unto God. Ancient offerings were brought to the altar, and presented dead. But the Christian sacrifice, instead of being poured out in a bloody oblation, is to be a living sacrifice of service, of love, of devotion.

The great sacrifice of Christ is both the model for all Christian life, and also its inspiration. We look at His six hours on the cross — as if that were its only act and expression. Butthe cross was not endured by Christ merely during those six hours on Calvary; it was in all His life, in every day and hour of it. Everything He did was in love, and love is always a living sacrifice. He was always sacrificing Himself. On Calvary, He only wrote the word out in capitals!

The cross stands not merely for the sufferings of Christ endured in redeeming sinners — but also for the law of love and of sacrifice in every department of Christian living. It is not enough to have the cross on our churches, as a symbol of redemption; or to wear it as an ornament around our neck; the cross must be in the heart — and manifested in the life!

We talk a great deal about the love of Christ — but we must strive to illustrate it and reproduce in our own lives, in our own measure — the sweetness, the charity, the kindness and the helpfulness of Jesus Christ. The cross is everywhere. The more of the 'sacrificial' quality we get into our life — the diviner and the lovelier our life will be. We do not have to be crucified on pieces of wood — to bear a cross, and make a living sacrifice. The cross must be in the lives of those who follow Christ; not branded on their bodies — but wrought into their character, their disposition, their conduct, their spirit! We cannot live a Christian life for a day, without coming to points of sacrifice. The cross of Christ does not take our own cross from us — Christ does not bear our cross for us. His cross becomes the law of our life, and makes it all sacrificial. Every sacrificial thing we do, reveals the cross. The Beatitudes are all sacrificial. No one can live the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and not crucify self continually. All sacrifice at length, blossoms into Christlike beauty, sweetness and joy.

"Take me, Lord, and use me today — as You will. I lay all my plans at Your feet. Whatever work You have for me to do — give it into my hands. If there are those You would have me help in any way — send them to me, or send me to them. Take my time — and use it just as You will."

## THE GOSPEL CHANGES PEOPLE

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The gospel, rightly understood and cordially embraced, will inspire the slothful with energy and the fearful with courage. It will make the miser generous, melt the grouch into kindness, tame the raging tiger in the breast, and in a word, expand the narrow, selfish heart and fill it with a spirit of love to God, cheerful unreserved obedience to His will, and benevolence to mankind.

– John Newton (1725-1807), author of hymn Amazing Grace! – Quoted by Daniel Parks.