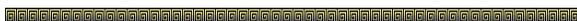


Oh! Men and brethren, what would this heart feel if I could but believe that there were some among you who would go home and pray for a revival of religion—men whose faith is large enough and their love fiery enough to lead them from this moment to exercise unceasing intercessions that God would appear among us and do wondrous things here, as in the times of former generations.—Charles Spurgeon



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.

Gen. 2.15-17.

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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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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THIRSTING FOR GOD

O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; Psalms 63:1

Men typically express indifference to those things that do not concern them. Thus, if they have no sense of the need of salvation they are indifferent to the Gospel and to the urgings of God's people to them with reference to the Gospel. But, further there is a similar attitude in many who profess knowledge of Christ but show satisfaction with their own way of life and are not moved by what they claim to believe. When Jacob was anticipating a meeting with his brother Esau he sent gifts of appeasement thinking that it was the intent of Esau to kill him and his family. But, although he remained unrepentant, Esau told Jacob to keep his gifts saying “I have enough.” It is to be feared that multitudes feel the same way with respect to the gifts of God. They have enough. Many are satisfied with superficial morality and “a form of godliness” that mask the absence of a true focus on God as the object of worship and the source of life, peace and everlasting joy.

David's cry is twofold in declaring a relationship with God. First, he saw Him as Elohim, the most High God. In so addressing God, he acknowledged Him as the almighty creator of the universe, the ruler thereof, God over all and subject to none. He saw Him as He that “sitteth on the circle of the earth” and beholds men as the “dust in the balance.” He was confessing Him who had said to Abraham “...I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect.” He was not as many who address God with a tone of familiarity and are

indifferent to who He truly is. Secondly, David claimed Him as “my God” or my Elohim. One might argue that God is everybody's God and it is true that He rules over all. But, not all are submitted to Him. David's words expressed submission, devotion and worship. Christ's prayer for His own was: *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.* In effect David disavowed all other claims to authority over him and his life. He would look for none higher nor would he submit to any lower. God alone was his God. The Apostle Thomas doubted at hearing of the resurrection of Christ. But, when he was confronted he truly knew Him and said “My Lord and my God.”

David wrote these words while a fugitive in the wilderness of Judea. The conditions under which he was living, no doubt reminded him of his ongoing and intense desire for God. His was first a thirst for God seeing Him as essential to life. It is most probable that he suffered physical thirst there and thus had an illustration ever before him. Thirst is an undeniable need sensed in the human body. David's thirst for God was even more undeniable. Fellowship with God, His presence and His power was not an option, it was a necessity. While normally the flesh is referred to in the Scripture with negative connotations, we are aware that Spiritual necessity will dictate to the physical body. And so the flesh is constrained in such a way that the desire for God involves the whole man. Men

tend to separate their religion from the things of the flesh. They try to coordinate between spirituality (so called) and fleshly concerns. I have heard some say “you have to have a little fun.” When we are focused on the Lord, there will be either joy or the anticipation of joy that far surpasses the insignificant and short lived entertainment of the world. *As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. Psalms 42:1.*

Such need will also align priorities. Because God was David’s God and because David was submitted to, delighted in and dependent on God he would seek Him early. Several thoughts come to mind as we reflect on such urgency. We are surely taught that we begin each day with God and so these thoughts might be applied to devotional practice and anticipation of whatever the day may bring. In response to the challenges of life in general we would quickly go to the Lord with all our concerns, large or small. But, most assuredly in dire circumstances we would go to the Lord at the beginning of the battle and not wait until we are made aware that there is none to help besides Him. There is a promise attached to such an approach. *I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. Proverbs 8:17.*

Those who truly thirst for God have learned that the land in which they dwell is barren and they can derive no help from it. No doubt, the wilderness in which David was living was a hostile place and could not support life. So it is with this present world in general. There is nothing here that can quench the thirst that the soul experiences for God. Men vainly attempt to divert the attentions of men away from their conditions. Thus the world is driven by psychological solutions and “feel good” religion. These have nothing for the soul thirsting for God.

In the following verse David describes his desire to see the power of God as He saw Him in the sanctuary. This is God in all the manifestation of His power and Glory. It is revealed to us in the work of redemption and so David would see Him as the champion and deliverer of His people. He would see God in Christ bringing to pass those things wherein God is glorified. He would desire such satisfaction as can only be brought about in seeing and knowing the redeemer God and being persuaded that He shall accomplish all His glorious will and purpose. *But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him. Habakkuk 2:20. bhs*

Restraining Grace

Let not the godly therefore be insensible of their indebtedness to the restraining grace of God. Though the godly cannot be said to be enemies to God, because a principle of enmity does not reign; yet they have the very same principle and seed of enmity in them, though it be mortified. Though it be not in reigning power, yet it has great strength and is too strong for them without God’s almighty power to help them against it. Though they be not enemies to, God, because they have another principle, besides a principle of enmity, viz., a principle of love, yet their old man, the body of sin and death, that yet remains in them, is a mortal enemy to God. Corruption in the godly is not a whit better than it is in the wicked. The corruption in them is of as bad a nature every whit, as that which is in a mortal enemy to God; it aims at the life of God—wherever it is. And though it be not in reigning power, yet it would dreadfully rage were it not for God’s restraining grace. Jonathan Edwards

GROUNDS FOR ASSURANCE

The Lord will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:8–9)

What are you depending on that your faith will last until Jesus comes?

The question is not, Do you believe in eternal security? The question is, How are we kept secure? Does the perseverance of our faith rest on the reliability of our own resolve? Or does it rest on the work of God to “keep us trusting”?

I said it is a great and wonderful truth of Scripture that God is faithful, and will keep forever those whom he has called. Our confidence that we are eternally secure is a confidence that God will “keep us trusting”! The certainty of eternity is no greater than the certainty God will keep us trusting now.

But that certainty is very great for all whom God has called. At least three passages put the call of God and the keeping of God together.

1 Corinthians 1:8–9: “The Lord will sustain (keep) you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24: “May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, he will do it.”

Jude 1: “Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: may mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.”

The “faithfulness” of God guarantees that he will keep safe all whom he has called.

“Those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified” (Romans 8:30). “He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

“[We] are being kept by God’s power through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5). “Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing . . . be glory forever!” (Jude 24). John Piper

“Grounds for Assurance That God Will ‘Keep Us Trusting’”

Lord, I would trust Thee completely; I would be altogether Thine; I would exalt Thee above all. I desire that I may feel no sense of possessing anything outside of Thee. I want constantly to be aware of Thy overshadowing Presence and to hear Thy speaking Voice. I long to live in restful sincerity of heart. I want to live so fully in the Spirit that all my thought may be as sweet incense ascending to Thee and every act of my life may be an act of worship. Therefore I pray in the words of Thy great servant of old, "I beseech Thee so for to cleanse the intent of mine heart with the unspeakable gift of Thy grace, that I may perfectly love Thee and worthily praise Thee." And all this I confidently believe Thou wilt grant me through merits of Jesus Christ Thy Son. Amen. A. W. Tozer *The Pursuit of God*