

A Cavalier Culture by Charles R. Swindoll

There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24

A hurry-up lifestyle results in a throwaway culture. Things that should be lasting and meaningful are sacrificed on the altar of the temporary and superficial.

The major fallout in such a setting is the habit of viewing relationships casually. This cavalier attitude cripples society in various ways: Friends walk away instead of work through. Partnerships dissolve rather than solve. Neighbors no longer visit and relax together. The aged are resented, not honored. Husbands and wives divorce rather than persevere. Children are brushed aside rather than nourished. Relationships! Never sell them short.

If we'll slow down the hurry-up lifestyle for a moment and pause to catch our breath, we'll realize the need to call a halt to our throwaway culture.

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 XXXI. What offices does Christ execute as the Redeemer of God's elect?

Answer. Christ, as the Redeemer of God's elect, executes the offices of a prophet, of a priest and of a king, both in His estate of humiliation and exaltation.

(Prophet) Luke 7. 16; Jn. 1.1,14 & 6.14 & 13.19; Acts 3.22-25 & 7.37-38.

(Priest) Heb. 2. 17-18 & 3.1 & 4.14-16 & 5.5-7 & 7.24-28 & 10.19-22.

(King) Psa. 2.6 & 24.7-10; Psa. 45; Zech. 9.9; Rev. 11.15 & 19.16.

Question XXXII. How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?

Answer. Christ executes the office of a prophet in revealing to the elect, by His word and Spirit, the will of God in their salvation.

Jn. 1.18 & 6.33,45,63 & 10.27-28 & 13.19 & 14.26 & 15.15...

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THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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THE DIFFERENCE

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Ephesians 2:4

Much of the wonder of God’s marvelous grace is shown to us in contrasts. The “but God” that begins this verse is set between an awful summary of the condition of fallen men and an enumeration of what God has done for believers through Christ. It is in viewing such contrasts that the faithful in Christ Jesus are brought to the heights of thanksgiving and praise. It is evident to regenerated people that the difference between them and the “children of disobedience” is entirely the work of God and truly “not of works.” There is no redeeming virtue to be found among men so they have no way of acceptance with God. There is no will to turn to God in that they are devoted to walking “according to the course of this world.” The awful plight of man finds him dead in trespasses and sin. Thus the summary given in the first three verses of this chapter leaves men without qualification, inclination and ability to be accepted with God. All three things are requirements. Such acceptance is found in the Beloved Son of God. See Eph. 1:6.

Men of God down through the centuries have known who makes the difference. David, in responding to his enemies’ assertion that he had no help in God, would declare: *But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. Psalms 3:3.* We encounter that phrase often in the Old Testament as the description of conflict and opposition abound. In defense of the integrity of God David would declare “But thou art Holy,” implying the ultimate distinction. In claiming

personal identity the cry is, *But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breasts. Psalms 22:9.* Victory would be declared thusly, “But thou has delivered us from our enemies.” Such a thought implies that the enemy would have won, “but God” made the difference. The enemy continues to rage against God and His people: *But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee. Psalms 55:23.*

We learn in the Bible many things that are true about God. Yet, for all that we learn we are reminded that His person, His thoughts and His ways are far above ours. His holiness stands tall among His attributes. His righteousness is infinite and set in comparison to the “filthy rags” used to describe the best man has to offer. How then shall such a one even contemplate, let alone love, those whose very nature is at enmity with Him. The answer is mercy! We often speak of the greatness of the wealth of God. Unfortunately the thoughts of men go to material things. Indeed He does own the “cattle on a thousand hills.” But, here we are reminded that, not only is He merciful, but He is also rich in mercy. Above all, God will preserve and protect His holiness. To truly understand mercy we must realize that therein God withholds from us that which His holiness and His justice demands – infinite death and eternal punishment!

Some seem to think that God moves

favorably toward fallen men with a “wink and a nod” and accepts whatever feeble attempt is made at self-atonement. They seem to think that He passes over His offended holiness and arbitrarily dismisses all charges. Such foolish thoughts would lead to the conclusion that God bows to the desires of men rather than graciously and without asking supplies what is needed. The integrity of God must remain intact in the salvation of men. Only of Him could it be said that He can be “just and the justifier” of fallen men. Their thoughts would compromise His integrity and do despite to the divine holiness. Again, “we are made accepted in the beloved.” That is we must be accepted with Him, on account of Him, dependent on Him and made like Him. The Beloved is none other than Jesus Christ, the Righteous.

The richness of His mercy is in accord with “His great love wherewith He loved us.” God’s love is never the expression of a mere feeling. His love is born out in action toward the object of His love. These objects were found in the awful state described in the first part of this chapter. He did not merely wish them well and make kind overtures toward them while leaving them to make the final determination. Such love as the Father displays for His Son is the same eternal Love wherewith He loved His people. It (His love) demanded action and since they had

no ability in themselves, it fell to Him to take the necessary measures. The description of what He had done follows in the next several verses. They were dead in trespasses and sins, BUT GOD, quickened them together with Christ. Ye must be born again! BUT GOD raised His people up and made them “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” The aim of His Love is thus realized on the objects of His love. The operations of His love continue through all eternity. To the mutual delight of God and His people He will eternally show them the riches of His grace in His kindness toward them in Christ Jesus.

True believers know that their condition was one of infinite offense to God and was in no way acceptable to Him. Quite the opposite, He has declared that such as remain in that way will perish forever out of the sight of mercy. Infinite offense requires infinite redemption. It would require infinite love to pay such a price. BUT GOD gave His only begotten Son so that true believers in Him would not so perish. He poured out infinite wrath on His Son and made His soul an offering for sin. How then could any dare to suggest that God offers a cheap deal to men when such a price was paid by His Son? Salvation is of the Lord and they that come to Him do so seeking infinite mercy. *bhs*

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING – A. W. Tozer

Pray without ceasing. —1 Thessalonians 5:17

I knew of an able preacher greatly used of the Lord in evangelism and Bible conferences. He was a busy, busy man. There came the occasion when someone frankly asked him, “Doctor, tell us about your prayer life. How do you pray? How much do you pray?” The man was embarrassed as he replied, “I must confess to you something I have not confessed before. I do not have the time to pray as I used to. My time alone with God has been neglected.” Not too long afterward, that preacher sustained a serious failure. It brought his ministry to an abrupt end, and he was put on the shelf. If we want to be honest with God, we will take solemnly the admonition to pray without ceasing. God’s work on this earth languishes when God’s people give up their ministries of prayer and supplication. I cannot tell you why this is true, but it is true.

Deliver me from neglect and keep me faithful in the high priority of prayer. Then guard me from that “serious failure.” Amen.

PREACHING CHRIST FROM ALL THE SCRIPTURES

A certain preacher preached on baptism every time he addressed his congregation. They did not disagree with the doctrine he preached, for it was according to the written Word. But they desired to hear him preach on some other subject in the Scriptures.

They therefore requested he preach from the first verse in the Bible, Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." They were convinced he would not find baptism in that text.

They were wrong! In expounding on God creating the earth, he said: "Are you aware that water covers 70% of the earth's surface! Why did God create so much water?" His answer to that question was the necessity of baptism.

The church then requested he preach from the last verse in the Bible, Revelation 22:21: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." They were convinced he would not be able to insert baptism into that text and subject.

They again were wrong! After expounding that text and subject, in which he did not mention baptism, he said: "In conclusion, some words about baptism:"

I suppose we all have heard of preachers like that man. Many preachers devote their ministries to preaching on a pet doctrine. Whatever is their text, their favorite doctrine is generally their subject. Even if their favorite doctrine is not in the text, they find some way to insert it or conclude with it.

Have you noticed that the Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest preacher who ever lived, preached Himself from the entirety of God's Word? He said "the Scriptures ... testify of Me" (John 5:39). "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). And He did not have to insert Himself into those scriptures, for He already is there.

Have you noticed that preachers of pet doctrines find in many texts what is not there? and fail to find in all the Scriptures Him who is truly there?

I desire to be a preacher like Christ, and expound Him from all the Scriptures. Whatever is my text, let Him be my subject. – Daniel E. Parks



When men are truly willing to come to Christ, they are freely willing. It is not what they are forced and driven to by threatenings; but they are willing to come, and choose to come without being driven. But natural men have no such free willingness; but, on the contrary, have an aversion. And the ground of it is that which we have heard, viz., that they are enemies to God. Their having such a reigning enmity against God, makes them obstinately refuse to come to Christ. If a man is an enemy to God, he will necessarily be an enemy to Christ too; for Christ is the Son of God; he is infinitely near to God, yea he has the nature of God, as well as the nature of man. He is a Saviour appointed of God. God anointed him, and sent him into the world. And in doing what he did in the work of redemption, he wrought the works of God. He always did those things that pleased God; and all that he does as a Saviour, is to the glory of God. And one great thing that he aimed at in his redemption, was to deliver them from their idols which they had chosen, and bring them to God. The case being so, and sinners being enemies to God, they will necessarily be opposite to coming to Christ; for Christ is of God, and as a Saviour, seeks to bring them to God only: but natural men are not of God, but are averse to him. Jonathan Edwards

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. Psalms 110:3