

God is God; you are but one of His creatures. Your only joy is to be found in obeying Him, your true fulfillment is to be found in worshipping Him, your only wisdom is to be found in trusting and knowing Him. -- Sinclair Ferguson

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 XXXV. Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

Answer. Christ's humiliation consisted in His being born of a woman, made under the law, and becoming a servant, though He was Lord of all; in His undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; and in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

Isa. 53; Matt. 12.40 & 27.46; Luke 22.42-44; 1 Cor. 15.3-4; 2 Cor. 8.9; Gal. 4.4; Phil. 2.5-8; Heb. 5.7-8.

Question XXXVI. Wherein consists Christ's exaltation?

Answer. Christ's exaltation consists in His rising again from the dead on the third day; in ascending up into heaven with the elect on His breast as trophies of victory; in sitting at the right hand of the Father; and in coming to judge the world at the last day, accompanied by all His holy angels, and His Bride adorned in His glory, who shall meet Him in the air at His coming; and in His sitting upon His throne of glory, to be admired and honoured by all the redeemed throng, for ever and ever.

Luke 24.1-7; Act. 1.9-11; Rom. 8.34; 1 Cor. 15.4; Eph. 1.20-23; Phil. 2.9-11; I Thess. 4. 16-18; 2 Thess. 1.10; Rev. 5.11-14 & 20.11 & 21.2-4.

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsj@msn.com

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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THE GARMENTS OF THE ELECT

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Colossians 3:12

Any reference to the idea of divine election is infuriating to many. Minds are closed to the thought and there is a refusal even to hear what the Bible says on the topic. To those who know it to be true and receive it under the instruction of the Holy Spirit as the Word of God it is a precious expression of the love of God. The teaching is connected to the sovereignty of God to which all pay lip service but few actually acknowledge in practice. It would seem that seeing the Elect referred to in such a context as this would soften some thoughts and even attract curiosity. Election must be truth else how could there be any referred to as the Elect.

The controversy has raged down through the centuries as whether salvation is a matter of divine hope or an absolute certainty with God. If we believe that God is sovereign and all powerful how could we believe that anything could stand against Him and that must include the will of man. Sovereignty means absolute authority and omnipotence means absolute power. Thus, if God sovereignly wills the salvation of all men then rest assured that all will be saved. Yet, it is revealed in Scripture that some are already in hell. The insistence that man must play a critical role in salvation is born out of pride. Election removes any semblance of pride and casts the whole of salvation on the mercy of God. The so-called gospel that says “God has done all He can and now it is up to you” is no gospel at all. It appeals to men to grant permission to God to save them.

The fact is that men do come to God in response to His loving overtures toward them. “It is the goodness of God that leadeth thee to repentance.” But the Psalmist declared that *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*. Election is the eternal expression of the love of God to His people and His people are willing. Salvation is all of Grace. It is not a work of cooperation between fallen men and God and certainly it does not come by the offering of “filthy rags” in exchange for salvation. If God does not act in power to save then none will be saved, because “there is none that seeketh after God.”

Divine election is not salvation. It is unto salvation. Thus, it is manifested with evidence. It is to this evidence that the Apostle appeals in this passage.

Salvation is not only by grace but it is through grace that we are able to properly serve. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: Hebrews 12:28*. These things that Paul here presses are manifested and enabled by grace. The “bowels of mercy” is that which is in imitation of Christ in a most precious way. Those truly coming to Christ come pleading for mercy. It is then that they learn of the “great love wherewith He has loved us.” They come with awareness that they deserve hell and are

terrible offenders against God. Along with David they cry: *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Psalms 51:4.* The scriptures declare the Lord is plenteous in mercy. We are given the nature of Christ in being “born of Him.” We therefore show forth the character and nature of Christ in our actions toward others.

It is granted that many who claim to believe the truth of election and claim to be elected manifest a hard and cold countenance. Such is not the nature of the newborn. They are born into an eternal life with God and are identified by their uniform. Mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind and the other things mentioned here are not self-generated. They are not the “sparks” that fly up as a result of a “zeal without knowledge.” These flashes, while they impress men at the moment have neither duration nor acceptance with God. It is only the “sweet savor of Christ” that is acceptable with God. These things then answer the question “who are the elect of God?” Again, they are known by the garments of true salvation. They are not chosen because of these things, they are chosen to them.

The elect of God are precious referred to as “Holy and beloved.” Paul addressed the Romans similarly: *To all that be in Rome,*

beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 1:7. To the Ephesians Paul wrote: *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Ephesians 1:4.*

It was never the design of God to “count noses” while calling empty professions and empty prayers the basis of salvation. True salvation invariably results in true life – a life lived in the pursuit of holiness. It is a life of repentance toward God and faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. There is a ready acknowledgment that they are redeemed at great price – The Lamb of God. They have no claim of merit or innate ability. They defer to the mercy of God in all things. They are distinguished not by vain claims of self-righteousness but are rather distinguished by the character they exhibit. They bear the fruit of the Spirit: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23.*

Shall we look to a salvation that is of man’s choosing or God’s choosing. Election does not exclude, it includes. The promise is that none are ever turned away. Why does the pride of man rebel at that? Come and welcome! *hbs*

FELLOWSHIP

Someone may fear that we are magnifying private religion out of all proportion, that the "us" of the New Testament is being displaced by a selfish "I." Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshippers met together, each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be were they to become "unity" conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship. Social religion is perfected when private religion is purified. The body becomes stronger as its members become healthier. The whole Church of God gains when the members that compose it begin to seek a better and a higher life.

A. W. Tozer – The Pursuit of God.

Sin cannot be subdued in any other way

"The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Galatians 2:20

There is no way except by being spiritually immersed into Christ's death and life—that we can ever get a victory over our besetting sins. If, on the one hand, we have a view of a suffering Christ, and thus become immersed into His sufferings and death—the feeling, while it lasts, will subdue the power of sin. Or, on the other hand, if we get a believing view of a risen Christ, and receive supplies of grace out of His fullness—that will lift us above sin's dominion.

If sin is powerfully working in us, we need one of these two things to subdue it. When there is a view of the sufferings and sorrows, agonies and death of the Son of God, power comes down to the soul in its struggles against sin and gives it a measure of holy resistance and subduing strength against it. So, when there is a coming in of the grace and love of Christ—it lifts up the soul from the love and power of sin into a purer and holier atmosphere.

Sin cannot be subdued in any other way. You must either be immersed into Christ's sufferings and death—or you must be immersed into Christ's resurrection and life. A sight of Him as a suffering God—or a view of Him as a risen Jesus—must be connected with every successful attempt to get the victory over sin, death, hell, and the grave. You may strive, vow, and repent—and what does it all amount to? You sink deeper and deeper into sin than before. Pride, lust, and covetousness come in like a flood—and you are swamped and carried away almost before you are aware! But if you get a view of a suffering Christ, or of a risen Christ—if you get a taste of His dying love—a drop of His atoning blood—or any manifestation of His beauty and blessedness—there comes from this spiritual immersion into His death or His life a subduing power—and this gives a victory over temptation and sin which nothing else can or will give.

Yet I believe we are often many years learning this divine secret—striving to repent and reform, and cannot—until at last by divine teaching we come to learn a little of what the Apostle meant when he said, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." And when we can get into this life of faith—this hidden life, then our affections are set on things above. There is no use setting to work by 'legal strivings'—they only plunge you deeper in the ditch. You must get Christ into your soul by the power of God—and then He will subdue—by His smiles, blood, love, and presence—every internal foe. – J. C. Philpot



The Demonstration of Being Elected

"Sanctification is the only sure mark of God's election. The names and number of the elect are a secret thing, no doubt, which God has wisely kept in His own power, and not revealed to man. It is not given to us in this world to study the pages of the book of life, and if our names are there. But if there is one thing clearly and plainly laid down about election, it is this - that elect men and women may be known and distinguished by holy lives."~ J.C. Ryle