

## WE SPEAK ACCORDING TO WHAT WE ARE

Politicians speak politics. Moralists speak morality. Economists speak economics. Lawyers speak law. Fools speak folly. Liars speak lies. Jokesters speak jokes. Christ's ministers speak Christ.

So, what is a preacher who speaks politics? morality? economics? law? folly? lies? jokes?

He speaks according to what he is!

– Daniel E. Parks

## 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 LVIII. Which is the eighth commandment?

Answer. Thou shalt not steal.

Ex. 20.15; Deut. 5.19.

Question LIX. Which is the ninth commandment?

Answer. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Ex. 20.16; Deut. 5.20.

Question LX. Which is the tenth commandment?

Answer. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.

Ex. 20.17; Deut. 5.21.

### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: [branthjs@msn.com](mailto:branthjs@msn.com)

Website: [www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com](http://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 LORD’S SONG

*For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the LORD’S song in a strange land? Psalms 137:3-4*

This Psalm is a reflection of them that were taken captive by the Babylonians. It was enough that they were captives, but their oppressors would have them to entertain them as well. The reaction to this strange request indicates that there was a remnant of the faithful in Babylon. They would not forget the significance to them of Jerusalem and the Temple. This was where the songs of Zion were to be sung and to do otherwise would be to forget their true identity with the Lord. They recognized the fact that this request was for entertainment or even for mockery. It was as if they were saying to them sing the praises of your God who has allowed you to become captives. And so, they refused.

There is an attachment of the Lord’s people to a proper context for singing. It was not therefore feasible that they should sing “The Lord’s Song” apart from true worship and praise. The Lord’s songs are reflective of His Word and therefore not to be cast forth as “pearls before swine.” They had no sense of the Lord’s presence in this place. They were surrounded by the icons of a heathen culture. No doubt they sang to their gods. The request to sing one of your songs was flippant at best and would have at worst tried to associate it with their pagan practices.

The issue is worship in a manner that is prescribed by and acceptable to God. The scriptural references to songs and singing reflect that the true singer in Israel was aware of the Spiritual nature of both the song and the singing

of it. So we read: *And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. Psalms 40:3.* It would be safe to say that the message here was to the faithful in the Land. Such a reaction would be inspired in those who were attentive unto the Word. Note that it is the Lord that has put the song, and the witness is thus born by the singer. Again, the subject is of salvation and victory. *O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. Psalms 98:1.* And even now we witness the scene at the throne: *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; Revelation 5:9.*

In this text we see them lamenting being separated from the religion and worship of which the Temple was the center. But, the true context is that of acknowledgment of the divine presence. F. B. Meyer wrote, “The land of the stranger and the Song of the Lord can never be found together.” The significance to the true believer is that we may not separate any aspect of the true worship of God so that it becomes an end in itself. Many today are entertained by “sacred music,” so called. There is a song to be sung. Its essence is the Gospel and the praise it brings to the Lord alone. The Song in the mouth of David caused fear to be directed to the Lord

not to the talents of David. Paul leads us to both the manner and purpose of the “Lord’s Song” in this way, *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Ephesians 5:19*. We note that it is to the Saints – “speaking to yourselves.” The message is to be from the Word of God. There are Psalms which are actually from the Old Testament book. Hymns are those works of men, not inspired as was David and the other Psalmists, but who wrote on scriptural themes relating to praise and worship. The spiritual songs are those which relate to any spiritual theme or doctrine anchored in the Word of God and therefore meeting the requirement of praise and honor to God alone.

The most important aspect of this is that these songs were to be from the heart and “to the Lord.” Throughout the Bible we encounter memorable songs. We are reminded of the Song of Moses and the Lamb. We are encouraged by the Song of Deborah. And our hearts are inspired by the Song of Hannah. All these have in common that they praise the Lord and declare His victory. It is characteristic of the

redeemed that they sing. But, they sing of redemption through the blood of Christ and the salvation that is in Him alone. They sing from the heart. And, first of all they sing unto the Lord. Theirs is a song that only they know. Only the saved can sing of grace and salvation. Their song will always echo praise to God. Its theme will be of God’s glory and redemption. But, above all else it will be Christ centered. The song of the Lord will not be about human sentiment nor will it extoll the virtues of men. Paul and Silas sang praises in the depths of a prison. It was not a mournful occasion because they were singing unto the Lord knowing that their existence was in His Kingdom and they were truly free. We do not sing at the bidding of the devil and the song cannot be stifled by all his opposition.

But, we cannot sing the “Lord’s Song” in the throes of bondage and sin. We cannot sing it and serve mammon. We cannot sing “That” song apart from the Lord and His Kingdom. We are in the world, but not of the world. And, *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Romans 14:17. bhs*

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## WATCHFULNESS OVER YOUR PRAYERS

I commend to you the importance of watchfulness over your prayers. Prayer is the point in religion at which you must be most of all on your guard. Here it is that true religion begins; here it flourishes, and here it decays. Tell me what a peeaons prayers are, and I will soon tell you the state of their soul. Prayer is the spiritual pulse. By this the spiritual health may be tested. Prayer is the spiritual weather-glass. By this we may know whether it is fair or foul with our hearts. Oh, let us keep an eye continually upon our private devotions. Here is the path and marrow of our practical Christianity. Sermons and books and tracts, and committee-meetings and the company of good people are all good in their way, but they will never make up for the neglect of private prayer. Mark well the places and society and companions that unhinge your hearts for communion with God and make your prayers drive heavily. There be on your guard. Observe narrowly what friends and what employment leave your soul in the most spiritual frame, and most ready to speak with God. To these cleave and stick fast. If you will take care of your prayers, nothing shall go very wrong with your soul. J. C. Ryle -- *A Call to Prayer*

God has made Christ everything to the believer:

- Are we nothing but sin? Christ became sin on behalf of his people to redeem them from it (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- Are we perpetual law-breakers? Christ is the fulfillment of the law (Matthew 5:17, Romans 10:4).
- Are we separated from God? Christ was forsaken by his Father as Judge so that we will never be forsaken by him (Matthew 27:46).
- Are we unrighteous? Christ is the all-righteous one, having merited a perfect robe of righteousness through his active and passive obedience (Isaiah 61:10).
- Are we cursed? Christ died the accursed death as curse-bearer for his elect (Galatians 3:13).
- Are we under Divine wrath? Christ merits, keeps, and applies peace (Isaiah 53:5).
- Are we hell-worthy? Christ descended into hell's pains in his earthly sufferings to prevent hell-bound people from going there forever (Luke 22:44).
- Are we condemned by the truth and righteousness of God? In Christ, "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85:10).
- Are we foolish? Christ is wisdom (Proverbs 8).
- Are we filthy? Christ is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26).
- Are we prone to temptation? Christ "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).
- Are we spiritually poor? Christ "was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).
- Are we in spiritual bondage? In Christ there is liberty, for "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).
- Are we weak? Christ is our strength (1 Samuel 15:29, Philippians 4:13).
- Are we prayerless and thankless? Christ is the praying and thanking high priest who sits at the right hand of the Father and never ceases to intercede for his people (Romans 8:34).
- Are we restless? Christ went without rest for thirty-three years, but now he has entered into his rest (Psalm 132:8, Hebrews 1:3), causing his people to rest in him as their prophet, priest, and king who has paid for their entire salvation (Psalm 110).

Joel Beeke – *Getting Back in the Race*

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The Power to Profess Christ, John Piper – *Future Grace*

With great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. (Acts 4:33)

If our ministry is to witness to Christ tomorrow in some unsympathetic situation, the key will not be our brilliance; the key will be abundant future grace.

Of all people, the apostles seemed to need least help to give a compelling witness to the risen Christ. They had been with him for three years. They had seen him die. They had seen him alive. In their witnessing arsenal they had "many proofs" (Acts 1:3). You might think that, of all people, their ministry of witnessing, in those early days, would sustain itself on the strength of the past glories that were still so fresh.

But that is not what the book of Acts tells us. The power to witness with faithfulness and effectiveness did not come mainly from memories of grace, or reservoirs of knowledge; it came from the new arrivals of "great grace." That's the way it was for the apostles, and that's the way it will be for us in our ministry of witnessing.

Whatever added signs and wonders God may show to amplify our witness to Christ, they will come the same way they came for Stephen. "And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people" (Acts 6:8).

There is an extraordinary future grace and power that we may bank on in the crisis of special ministry need. It is a fresh act of power by which God "bore witness to the word of his grace" (Acts 14:3; see also Hebrews 2:4). The grace of power bears witness to the grace of truth.