

"We must never dare to judge men's happiness by their tables, the heart is the place to look at. The poorest starveling believer is more to be envied than the most full fleshed of the favourites of the world. Better be God's dog than the devil's darling." - C.H. Spurgeon

"Eve was not taken out of Adam's head to top him, neither out of his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him." - Matthew Henry

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 LXIX. What is hope?

Answer. Hope is a grace of the Spirit, whereby the believer expects all that the Lord in His Word has promised to give, and is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."

Psa. 42.11; Prov. 14.32; Acts 26.6-7; Rom. 5.2,4-5 & 8.24-25; Col. 1.27; 2 Thess. 2.16; Tit 2.13 & 3.7; Heb. 3.6 & 6.11,18-20.

Question LXX. What is patience?

Answer. Patience is a grace of the Spirit, whereby the believer submissively waits the will of God, for the accomplishment of blessings promised.

Psa. 40.1; Rom. 5.3-4 & 8.25; Heb. 6.12-15 & 10.35-36 & 12.1; James 5.7-8, 10-11.

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

Volume 6, No. 37

September 15, 2013

PROVING THE WILL OF GOD

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Romans 12:2

Being conformed to this world is easy since that is the way of the old nature. The admonition here is to believers and warns away from the tendencies of the world. We are reminded of: *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Ephesians 2:2*. Men tend to be shaped by those people and those things with which they are associated or identified. But, such a way of life provides no basis for meeting the objective set forth by the Apostle Paul here.

The aim here is to develop the ability to test or try the will of God. This might sound presumptive to think in terms of man testing God. However, the idea is that we should determine what the will of God is and to find ourselves in harmony with it. The believing experience is in view here. The issue is not one of proving either the fact or accuracy of what the good and acceptable and perfect will of God is. The Word of God is forever settled in Heaven. Certainly what we believe is to be found consistent with the Word of God. And, these things are not to be tried in the court of human opinion. The things addressed here are not just a matter of knowing what is right but rather that we experience what is right in fellowship with God. To be conformed to the world in any degree is to have such involvement as to distract from the spiritual activities that are consistent with Christianity. This would include

prayer, praise, and worship. There is no room left for approval of the will and purpose of God.

The word “prove” can also be rendered “approve.” This is the thought expressed by the Apostle in: *That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Philippians 1:10*. It is not that God needs our approval of anything that he does or provides but rather that we should find them delightful to us. So again, Paul writes to the Thessalonians: *Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 1 Thessalonians 5:21*. The Queen of Sheba came to Solomon to prove him with hard questions. We know the story how that she discovered that what had been told about him was true. So it is that we learn of God and of the genuineness of his promise by experience. We began by trusting and we learn, so that we approve of the excellent things of God.

We delight to learn that “of his own will begot He us with the word of truth.” It is with great joy that we learn all the great truths with regard to the operation of the will of God. It was his will to choose us before the world began. He does all things according to his own will. That, in conjunction with knowing that he causes everything to work for good for those that love God and who are the called according to His purpose is a cause for great delight. The certainty of the will of God brings great joy to the heart of the believer. *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he*

hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. John 6:39. It is exciting indeed when true faith lays hold on such revelations as this. Yet, many rebel at such a thought and they would defend their own free will.

It is to be noted that such a relationship with God and the approval of those things that are excellent does not come by way of man's will. The writer did not say here transform yourselves. It was rather "Be ye transformed." What is enjoined here is that we yield to the operations of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We are set apart at regeneration. What is described here is not sanctification in the truest sense of the word. We are set apart for the Masters use and fully equipped in nature at the new birth. There is however, a growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ that is an ongoing process in the life of the believer. Many called this progressive sanctification. There is only an element of truth here and perhaps it should be stated that there is a progressive manifestation of that gracious work that was done at the new birth. But, we must understand that it was the divine aim from before the foundation of the world that we should

ultimately be conformed to the image of Christ Jesus our Lord.

We are thus brought into the culture of the reading. The apostle wrote in another place that our conversation or citizenship is in Heaven. Such a way of life will never be approved from the perspective of the world. Apart from a miracle of the grace of God there can be no accommodation in the life of a person for the things of God. But, by virtue of the substitutionary death of Christ and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit we are made capable of receiving and thus approving those things that constitute the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. This divinely wrought transformation brings to us a new heart that delightfully approves all of that in which God delights.

The apostle John admonishes: *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2:15.* Rather, precious evidence comes to us when we find ourselves delighting in the revealed will of God and we find ourselves endeavoring to serve God in that context. "Oh taste the Lord and see that he is good." *bhs*

PEACE IN BELIEVING

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." — John 14:27 "You will keep him in perfect peace — whose mind is stayed on You." "Perfect Peace!" What a blessed attainment! My soul! is it yours? I am sure it is not — if you are seeking it in a perishable world, or in the perishable creature, or in your perishable self. Although you have all that the world would call enviable and happy, unless you have peace in God, and with God — all else is unworthy of the name — a spurious thing, which the first breath of adversity will shatter, and the hour of death will utterly annihilate! Perfect Peace! What is it? It is the peace of forgiveness. It is the peace arising out of a sense of God reconciled through the blood of the everlasting covenant — resting sweetly on the bosom, and the work of Jesus — committing your eternal all to Him. My soul! stay yourself on God, so that this blessed peace may be yours. You have tried the world. It has deceived you. Prop after prop of earthly scaffolding has yielded, and tottered, and fallen! Has your God ever done so? Ah! this false and counterfeit worldly peace may do well for the world's day of prosperity. But test it in the hour of sorrow; and what can it do for you when it is most needed? On the other hand, what though you have no other blessing on earth to call your own? You are rich indeed — if you can look upwards to Heaven, and say with an unpretentious smile, "I am at peace with God." -- John McDuff

“Thou hast despised mine holy things.” Ezekiel 22:8

It is a sad fact that many to whom God has given the blessed privilege of having his worship established in their midst are guilty of despising his holy things.

The Charge:

It is impossible for me to understand how men and women who claim to love Christ and the Gospel of his grace can willingly absent themselves from the ministry of the Word. It is one thing to despise the labors of a pastor who faithfully seeks a message from God and diligently preaches the gospel, (That itself is horrible!), but a willing neglect of the Gospel is much, much more than despising the labors of a man. It is despising God's holy things: his Word, his ordinances, his praise, and his people. The Lord Jesus promised that wherever and whenever two or three gather together in his name, he will be with them, in the midst of them. To neglect that assembly is to despise Christ's company! That is the charge God laid against Israel of old; and that is the charge that must be laid against all who despise the worship of God today.

Gospel Cherished:

I know many, many people who have no place of public worship and no faithful pastor to minister to their souls. Whenever a Gospel preacher comes within a hundred miles of them, they get excited and gladly drive the distance to hear the message of redeeming love and saving grace. They plan their vacations around Bible conferences, special meetings, and places of worship. They listen to and/or watch recorded messages every day. When they get a chance to meet with God's saints and hear his Word, they are the first ones to arrive, and the last to leave. They simply cannot get enough of the Word. They soak it up like a dry sponge soaks up water. When the message is over, they talk about it enthusiastically. They cherish what many despise, who have a faithful Gospel church and a faithful Gospel preacher next door.

Gospel Despised:

I know others, many others, to whom God has given faithful pastors, who have a regular place of worship nearby. There the Word of God is faithfully preached. The saints of God gather several times a week to worship Christ and enjoy the blessed fellowship of the Gospel. Yet, these people, though they profess to love Christ and the Gospel of his grace, seem to care little for the blessed privileges that surround them. If they attend a worship service once a week and give a little money to help with the light bill, they are more than content. In many places, where people claim to love the message of God's free and sovereign grace in Christ, the Gospel goes begging for a hearing. The evening and mid-week worship services could be held in a closet with room to spare! Without question, it is to such people that God almighty makes this charge. — “Thou hast despised mine holy things!”

Time to Wake Up:

If that charge stings you, I am very thankful. I am thankful to know that you are not without sensitivity to these things. “It is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness...and make not provision for the flesh” (Romans 13:11-14). If you are too busy to attend the worship of God, you are too busy! If you are too tired, you need to give something up, but not the worship of God! If you despise God's holy things, he will take them away from you and give them to someone else (Romans 11:21). —Don Fortner