

"A few more trials; a few more tears; a few more days of darkness, and we shall be forever with the Lord. In this tabernacle we groan, being burdened: All dark things shall yet be cleared up; all sufferings healed; all blanks supplied; and ...we shall find fullness of joy (not one drop lacking) in the smile and presence of our God. It is one of the laws of Christ's kingdom- 'we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.' We must not reckon upon a smooth road to glory, but it will be a short one."
(Robert Murray M'Cheyne)

SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

7. Q. What are the decrees of God?

VII. A. The decrees of God are his eternal purpose according to the counsel of his own will, whereby for his own glory he has foreordained whatever comes to pass (Eph. 1:11-12).

8. Q. How does God execute his decrees?

VIII. A. God executes his decrees in the works of creation (Rev. 4:11), and providence (Dan. 4:35).

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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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THE GROWTH WE NEED

But the word of God grew and multiplied. Acts 12:24

Men are often heard to profess a belief that the Bible is the Word of God while denying in word and deed the very teachings set forth therein. By reciting the belief often and being vehement in their defense of it they think themselves to have met the requirements of orthodoxy. Therefore, the same people spend little time in searching the scriptures and give little heed to what is preached from it. This is inconsistent with the picture we meet with in the Acts of the Apostles. In spite of intense persecution the Apostles and their faithful disciples clung to the Word of God and delighted in the Gospel and the precepts they found there. “They gladly received Peter’s Word” and they “continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine...” Persecution failed to dissuade them. It rather fueled their devotion to the Word of God and prayer.

The Old Testament prophet Amos predicted a time of famine of hearing the words of the Lord. See Amos 8:11. This often occurred and it seems that we witness such a condition in our day. Religion seems to abound but with little emphasis on the Word of God. But, such was not the case here. Herod Agrippa had launched some intense persecution on the church leaders in Jerusalem including ordering the execution of the Apostle James. He waxed bolder and bolder with his power until the unthinkable happened. In the midst of a flowery oration given to an approving audience His glory suddenly disappeared as he was eaten of worms and died on the spot. In a most glorious contrast we read

that the Word of God grew and multiplied. The young church continued to grow at a rapid rate and it did so without crusades, programs, methodologies and the devices of men set forth in the absence of the Word of God.

We observe rather the conviction of the Apostles concerning the Word of God and their adamant refusal to refrain from preaching it. They continued in that way hazarding their freedom and their lives. But, for all their seeming heroics the evidence is overwhelming that God was honoring His Word and all attention was to Christ and the Gospel. This conviction is evident as we witness these men withstand their accusers in high places with their determination to obey God rather than men. Their conviction was duly noted by those examining them. One of them, a leader named Gamaliel, warned the council that if this thing were of God they couldn’t stop it and their efforts would be found to be fighting against God.

As many continued to be added to the church, problems of administration arose. The result was that the Apostles moved the people to appoint deacons to attend to the day-to-day affairs of the church while they would give themselves completely to prayer and the ministry of the Word. This being done, the result was profound. *And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. Acts 6:7.* It is to be noted that when the Word of God

increased, that the matter of numbers seemed to fall in line. It seems that in our day the emphasis is on any method that will entice more members into the visible church while interest in the Word of God is of little consequence.

What is meant by the statement “the Word of God Grew and multiplied?” The message being preached was called “the Apostles’ Doctrine.” We would first understand that the work of inspiration was underway and that the message brought first from the Old Testament was being confirmed in the message of Jesus Christ our Lord. These men were His eyewitnesses to the Truth. But, that having occurred we would further note that the Word was being manifested as the living Word of God. James wrote of it as the “engrafted Word.” We note the power of discernment with regard to men’s hearts. *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hebrews 4:12.* Growth would be found in both recognition that it is the Word of God and a full submission to it as from Him. Thus, the effect of the Word of God growing would be seen in the lives of those being regenerated and brought to faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thus we would note the emboldening

of the Apostles and their disciples. In spite of all the uproar Paul encountered at Ephesus many came to believe and there was a destruction of the implements of idolatry and a book burning. Thus, the declaration: *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed. Acts 19:20.*

From such things as we see here, the enemy is not confounded by campaigns and social reforms. It is the Word of God that prevails. It would seem that we need Preachers and members with the conviction of the Apostles and their followers. We do not need administrators. We do not need innovations. What is needed is growth that can only occur where the Word of God is dominant in the man and in the message. Such must come from the Lord. Christ did not go to the Cross and pay the penalty for the sins of His people and then rest on the hope of the success of the programs of men to finish His purpose. We can be assured that when true growth comes it will be centered in the Word of God and that those affected will be jealous for the glory of God alone.

We must fervently pray that we would be found with such conviction that neither opposition nor popular opinion would divert our attention away from that which is steadfast and sure and written in Heaven and that we might be fastened on Him who is the Word of God. *bhs*

Jesus Christ’s Disciples Known and Distinguished

The Biblical definition of disciple is “one who follows one’s teaching”.

In Jesus Christ’s day there were certain disciples who were known for teaching that they had freewill, for claiming to be more righteous and more holy than others, for justifying themselves through their works of righteousness, for faithfully following the traditions of their elders, for observing the weekly Sabbath Day, and for obeying other regulations found in the Law of Moses (e.g., abstaining from things considered “unclean”).

Whose disciples do you suppose they were?

If you think they were disciples of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, you are wrong! They were disciples of the Pharisees (as they are identified in Luke 5:33). And they were Jesus Christ’s foremost enemies (Matthew 22:15f).

Yes! Jesus Christ's most ardent opponents were – and still are today – known for and distinguished by their outward religion.

For what were Jesus Christ's disciples known?

Negatively, Jesus Christ's disciples were not known for the things for which Pharisees' disciples were known. Jesus' disciples were not known for boasting of their freewill, for they acknowledged their native spiritual bondage in Satan's snare, and Jesus as their liberator therefrom. Jesus' disciples were not known for claiming to be more righteous and holy than others, for they acknowledged themselves as the chief of sinners. Jesus' disciples were not known for justifying themselves through their works, for they acknowledged that they were justified by God's grace through faith in Christ. Jesus' disciples were not known for following the traditions of manmade religion, for they followed Christ. Jesus' disciples were not known for observing the weekly Sabbath Day, for He was their Sabbath, and they were at liberty to esteem every day alike. Jesus' disciples were not known for observing other regulations found in the Law of Moses (e.g., abstaining from things considered "unclean"), for they were not under that law, and they knew that things considered "unclean" under that law are no longer "unclean" through Christ.

Positively, Jesus Christ's disciples are known for loving one another as He loved them. He tells them so in John 13:34-35: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

And in this world of hatred, this is a most distinguishing characteristic.

Are you a disciple of Jesus Christ? – Daniel E. Parks

Served in Serving Others

Jesus said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened?" (Mark 8:17)

After Jesus had fed both the 5,000 and the 4,000 with only a few loaves and fish, the disciples got in a boat without enough bread for themselves.

When they began to discuss their plight, Jesus said, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand?" (Mark 8:17). What didn't they understand?

They did not understand the meaning of the leftovers, namely, that Jesus will take care of them when they take care of others. Jesus says,

"When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

Understand what? The leftovers.

The leftovers were for the servers. In fact, the first time there were twelve servers and twelve basketfuls left over (Mark 6:43). The second time there seven basketfuls left over — the number of abundant completeness.

What didn't they understand? That Jesus would take care of them. You can't outgive Jesus. When you spend your life for others, your needs will be met. – John Piper