

"I have always considered, with Luther and Calvin, that the sum and substance of the gospel lies in that word Substitution-Christ standing in the stead of man. If I understand the gospel, it is this: I deserve to be lost forever; the only reason why I should not be damned is this, that Christ was punished in my stead, and there is no need to execute a sentence twice for sin." C. H. Spurgeon

"That prayer is most likely to pierce Heaven, which first pierces one's own heart. Prayer without fervency is no prayer. Lifeless prayer is no more prayer than the picture of a man, is a man."
Thomas Watson

SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

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

9. Q. What is the work of creation?

IX. A. The work of creation is God's making all things (Gen. 1:1) of nothing, by the Word of his power (Heb. 11:3), in six normal consecutive days (Exod. 20:11), and all very good (Gen. 1:31).

10.Q. How did God create man?

X. A. God created man, male and female, after his own image (Gen. 1:27), in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness (Col 3:10; Eph. 4:24) with dominion over the creatures (Gen. 1:28).

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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FITNESS TO PARTAKE

*Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:
Colossians 1:12*

A nineteenth century preacher (Alexander MacClaren) remarked that “Thankfulness ought to be a sweet duty.” This speaks volumes with regard to the ability of the Saints to be thankful. Many express thanksgiving for such mundane things so that it is little more than a courtesy and certainly not a deep matter of the heart. With true believers the value of that for which they are grateful is registered in the heart, is of infinite value, centered in Christ, and comprehends eternity in the gift.

Paul’s prayers for the Colossians and the Ephesians set forth objectives that will never be known outside a regenerate heart. In this passage he reminded them that he prayed for filling with the knowledge of the will of God. This included wisdom and spiritual understanding so that they might perceive God’s will. He prayed for a worthy walk (see Eph. 4:1), pleasing to the Lord and fruitful. And, he prayed for an increase in the knowledge (or knowing) of God. Furthermore, he was praying that they might have strength in the power of God unto patience, longsuffering and joy. We normally associate patience and longsuffering with sorrows and trial. Here, joy is included and the source and reason of that joy is expressed in our text.

Those things which men perceive of as gifts are of uncertain usefulness and durability. That which God gives is characterized as an inheritance indicating both durability and permanence. Much of the promises to Old

Testament Israel centered in the Land, and yet, their fitness to possess the Land left them lacking and eventually suffering loss. The object of thanksgiving in this passage is that fitness to participate in and enjoy the inheritance be given to His people. This is, however, not about the Land or material things. The preparations of God in and for His people address two very precious things. The first, of course, is the inheritance itself. The other is that He makes His people fit or “meet” to be partakers of the inheritance. We have all received gifts for which we had neither desire nor use. Such would be the situation of bestowing heavenly things on depraved man. These things would not make them joyful servants of God and would certainly not be to God’s glory.

Paul gave great emphasis to the inheritance of the Saints in his letter to the Ephesians. In Eph. 1:11 we are said to have obtained an inheritance. In verse 14, we learn that the Holy Spirit is the “earnest of our inheritance.” In Acts 20:32 Paul spoke to the Elders of an inheritance among the sanctified. It is evident that the substance of it is indeed spiritual, valuable and certainly the reason for thanksgiving. We, as the Levites of old, have the Lord as our portion and that thought is often revisited throughout Scripture.

The inheritance we receive is not as that which we sometimes hear. One receives notice that he is the lasting living relative of some benefactor that they have never known. Being

made meet to be partakers of this inheritance is the work of a loving Father who will make sure that it will be received in fullness of joy and will be of great benefit to the heir and to the Glory of the One who obtained it for us. It is easy to confess that we are undeserving. Men often take the word of another as to being saved and going to Heaven. But, true assurance comes when we are enabled to become active and aggressive participants in that which God has ordained for us. That takes a mighty work of Grace and it is God who has wrought this in us. It certainly follows that the things that move the hearts of the Saints to this most high level of thanksgiving would be of no interest at all to the unregenerate and lovers of this present world.

Peter tells us that we are made partakers of the divine nature. This means that those things that are precious to God are, also, the delight of His people. It is here we are reminded of the words of the Father at the Baptism of Christ – “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” So then, as we are “delivered from the power of darkness into the Kingdom of His dear Son” we realize that He is our inheritance and in Him we are “well pleased.” If left to ourselves what would we do with that? What a wonder that this transformation takes His people from total inability to a glorious ability to partake of this precious inheritance. This is He who is the

Light and in whom is no darkness at all. Our inheritance is therefore with the Saints in light.

Many have been the heirs of land that was developed by their forbears. They did nothing but receive it. But, surely they realize that its value was enhanced by the labors of those before them. The inheritance of the Saints came at the greatest price of all. It took no less than the perfect life and awful sacrifice of Christ our Lord. It entails justification, sanctification and glorification. It comes with the gifts of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. It is sealed with the precious Holy Spirit of Promise. How precious is that which we experience now and how the expectations of the Saints grows as we partake and participate in that which is given at such a cost.

Partaking means that there is present, precious and particular participation in the Kingdom of our Lord. Redemption is a present possession and therein He is made unto all that which God requires. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: Colossians 1:14-15.* O that we might ever be found rendering unto Him who alone is worthy “the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.”
bhs

The work of our great high priest at present

"Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because He always lives to intercede for them! Such a high priest meets our need--one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens!" Hebrews 7:25-26

As believers, we should look upon our great high priest, as having . . . put away our sins from before God, reconciled our persons to God, justified us fully and freely at the tribunal of God, procured for us all spiritual and eternal blessings.

The work of our great high priest at present, is to render our persons, prayers, and services acceptable to God. Every prayer which ascends from us to God, passes through His hands--who cleanses, arranges, and perfumes it, and then presents it to his Father. Thus He renders our poor imperfect prayers, praises, and services--acceptable and pleasant to our God and Father. (James Smith, "Gleams of Grace" 1860)

GOD'S SERVANT

(The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. Isaiah 50:4-6)

Two remarkable things are described here by the servant. He says, first that “morning by morning” God has taught him truth because he listened to his Father. Remember the many times Jesus said in his ministry, “The things that I say unto you I have heard from my Father.” Again and again he made that claim. He had the ear of a learner. He pored over the Scriptures. He saw himself in them. He understood what his work would be. There came dawning into his heart the revelation that he was to endure anguish, pain and rejection. But, as he says, “I was not rebellious. I was willing to go ahead. I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard. I hid not my face from shame and spitting.”

It is well for us to remember frequently the sufferings of Jesus, the sheer physical agony that he went through. Think of the Last Supper when he said his soul was “exceeding sorrowful unto death” (Mark 14:34 KJV); the shadows of Gethsemane among the olive trees; his loneliness, his prayers, his disappointment with his disciples; his bloody sweat, the traitor's kiss, the binding, the blow in the face; the spitting, the scourging, the buffeting, the mocking, the crown of thorns, the smiting; the sorrowful way and the burdensome cross he had to bear. Think of his exhaustion, his collapse, the stripping of his garments, the impaling on the cross, the jeers of his foes and the flight of his friends; the hours on the cross, the darkness, his being forsaken of God, the terrible cry of anguish, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34 KJV). And then the end at last, “It is finished” (John 19:30). This is all seen in anticipation by the prophet and was all fulfilled in Jesus.

It is well to remember what the book of Hebrews says, “We have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities,” (Hebrews 4:15a KJV). He has been through it all. “He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,” (Hebrews 4:15b KJV).

Lord Jesus, thank you for being obedient to your Father. Thank you for enduring so much so that I might be set free.

Life Application: The Lord Jesus Christ voluntarily suffered far greater dimensions of suffering than we will ever experience. Are we worshiping our High Priest who continues to bear our burdens and to intercede for us? From Ray Stedman.

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How divinely full of glory and pleasure shall that hour be when all the millions of mankind that have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God shall meet together and stand around Him, with every tongue and every heart full of joy and praise! How astonishing will be the glory and the joy of that day when all the saints shall join together in one common song of gratitude and love, and of everlasting thankfulness to this Redeemer! With what unknown delight, and inexpressible satisfaction, shall all that are saved from the ruins of sin and hell address the Lamb that was slain, and rejoice in His presence! -- Isaac Watts