

"People often argue that this doctrine of divine election and choice leaves no place for evangelism, for preaching the gospel, for urging people to repent and to believe, and for the use of arguments and persuasions in doing so. But there is no contradiction here any more than there is in saying that since it is God that gives us the crops of corn in the autumn, therefore the farmer need not plough and harrow and sow; the answer to which is that God has ordained both. God has chosen to call out His people by means of evangelism and the preaching of the Word. He ordains the means as well as the end."
-Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Ephesians - God's Ultimate Purpose)

SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

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

11.Q. What are God's works of providence?

XI. A. God's works of providence are his most holy (Ps. 145:17), wise, (Isa. 28:29) and powerful (Heb. 1:3), preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions (Ps. 103:19; Matt. 10:29).

12.Q. What special act of providence did God exercise toward man in the state wherein he was created?

XII.A. When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; (Gal. 3:12) forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death. (Gen. 2:17)

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

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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A REASON TO WEEP

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. Luke 19:41-42

As we consider the attributes of God manifested in Christ our Lord it is difficult to imagine why He should weep. After all, He above all knew that divine providence would prevail and in the end all things would be as God intended. Many would here feel constrained to put great distance between the deity of Christ and His humanity. He is God manifest in the flesh and He is one person and the wonders of the mystery shall ever remain great. It remains that the scriptures record the fact that beholding the city of Jerusalem, He wept. According to A. T. Robertson and others, the word means He burst into tears. We would be foolish to think we could fully enter into the thoughts of our Lord at this point beyond what the text reveals. It is sufficient to say that His compassion was great and the fact of His humanity is again confirmed. In this He is presented to us as a pattern for compassion in us that is often lacking.

It is without question that the city is in view and that it is the object of His observation. Here He beholds a city that was in its day world famous and the Temple a wonder in the whole earth. It was referenced as the “Joy of the whole earth.” Psalm 48:2. There is no doubt that He envisioned the carnage that would be their lot in the near future and did in fact come to pass in 70 A.D. The city and the Temple would be destroyed and a great number of her inhabitants, young and old, would suffer horrible deaths. All of this would occur because

their day had come and gone and they had rejected the very One who had come to them preaching repentance and faith in Himself.

We might be inclined to think a different reaction would be forthcoming. After all, these very ones over whom He was weeping were even then plotting His death. The city had a long history of rebellion and idolatry. One commentator called it “the slaughterhouse of the prophets.” And yet, He wept over that wicked and rebellious city. It is here that we might pause and ask if we might not have reacted differently?

The purpose of God was never thwarted in any way by the actions of Jerusalem. There were many even then that were openly professing faith in Him. Furthermore, in less than two months there were several thousand of God’s chosen people who would manifest the operations of grace and mercy in their lives. Among them would, no doubt, be some of them who cried out for His crucifixion. These same would truly be quickened and repent and gladly embrace Christ Jesus as their Lord. The compassion of our Lord for these is not the same. He wept over the destruction of a people and a system and a city that had been established long ago to testify of Him to the glory of God. They did not recognize the “things which belong unto thy peace.”

How easily it would be for us to think that Jerusalem got what they deserved. We do rejoice that we serve a just and a Holy God.

Especially is this so if we had been included as the object of their contempt as were the Apostles and other faithful followers. This of course betrays that there is lacking a real depth of capacity to have compassion and forgive in the natural man. It is only in close association with our Lord that we learn of the nature of One who while we were yet sinners died for us. Are we able to maintain a defense of the justice of God and yet grieve over the unbelief of those who hold both God and His Son in contempt? He did!

We have no authority here to transfer this action of our Lord to any other situation. The thought that He is grieving over any other city or nation is not recorded in the Word of God. However, He has placed us among nations that we love and to which we pledge allegiance. We are mindful of the decree of God: *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. Psalms 9:17.* Such was the lot of Jerusalem except for a remnant that would be delivered. How shall we react to that which we see in our own nation, state and community?

We are living in a land that has been in decline for some time. While religion seems to prosper it does so at the cost of substance. The

Gospel is held in contempt, morals are of no consequence and often those who do believe are indifferent and pass off what they know to be wrong with a sigh. A government that has allowed the erosion of true religious liberty is fast openly becoming the avowed enemy of the Lord's true people. Countries whose governments are killing Christians are being subsidized while the truth of God's Word is being subjected to legal proceedings. We are inclined to ask just how much of this God will allow. How many will be taken in by the grand deceptions?

It seems there is no end to such observations. The question is do we have the compassion displayed by our Lord. We see our nation as condemned, but do we weep over it? As we look at the sometimes listless condition of our churches, do we weep over them? We profess to hate sin in ourselves, but do we weep over unforgiven sin in the lives of others and do we weep for their souls. We rejoice at the sovereignty of God and the assurance of His purposes in salvation. But, that must not leave us indifferent and unmoved. Our Lord beheld Jerusalem and wept. *bhs*

The blemishes and faults of others

"Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble." 1 Peter 3:8

We should learn to look at the blemishes and faults of others--only through the eyes of love, with sympathy, patience, and compassion. We do not know the secret history of the lives of others around us. We do not know what piercing sorrows have produced the scars we see in people's lives. We do not know the pains and trials which make life hard, to many with whom we are tempted to be impatient. If we knew all the secret burdens and the heart-wounds which many keep hidden beneath their smiling faces--we would be patient and gentle with all people.

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Colossians 3:12

J. R. Miller

LOST!

(Arthur Pink, 1951)

"But if our gospel is hid--it is hid to those who are LOST! The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers!" 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

What multitudes of people there are who have no concern over, in fact, no consciousness of, their woeful condition! While they do not regard themselves as perfect, yet they are not aware that there is anything seriously wrong with them. They are respectable people, law-abiding citizens, and nothing particular ever troubles their conscience. They consider that they are certainly no worse than their religious neighbors, and though they scarcely ever read the Bible or enter a church, they fully expect to go to Heaven when they die.

Some of them will indeed admit that they are sinners, but imagine that their good works far outnumber their bad ones. Some of them were sprinkled as infants, attended a Sunday school class as children, said their prayers each night, and later joined the church. Nevertheless, to this moment, they have never realized that they are the enemies of God, an abomination in the eyes of His holiness, and that Hell is their just deserts! They see no beauty or glory in the Gospel, no suitableness in it unto their case, and therefore do they despise and reject it.

Though Satan rules in their hearts and lives (Ephesians 2:2), yet it is by their own free consent. They voluntarily obey him and submit to his will. His dominion over them is maintained by . . .

keeping their minds in darkness,

deceiving and deluding them,

blinding them by pride, prejudice, and the workings of their own corruptions.

Nowhere but in the Scriptures, can we learn what is the real condition of the natural man. There his case is diagnosed with unerring precision by the divine Physician. Many are the terms used therein by the Holy Spirit to describe the solemn and direful state to which the fall has reduced every descendant of Adam; and among them probably none is more pointed and awesome than is the term LOST! How dismal is its sound! How much is summed up in that single word! It signifies . . .

that the natural man is in a sinful, wretched, and perilous state,

that he is far astray from God,

that he has willfully and wantonly forsaken the path of duty.

Lost! A traveler from time to eternity, treading the road that leads to certain and everlasting destruction!

Lost! A creature who has forfeited the approbation and favor of his Maker, and is now an outcast from Him!

Lost! One who has squandered his substance in riotous living, and is now a spiritual bankrupt and pauper. He is out of the way of peace and blessing, and utterly incapable of finding his way back to it!

Fearful beyond words, is the condition of fallen man. His case is as hopeless as that of a dying person whose disease is incurable. A lost child is a pitiful object--but what mind can estimate or pen depict the tragedy of a lost soul? Lost now, lost forever--unless a sovereign God intervenes and performs a miracle of mercy for its recovery!

Man is lost positively, in that he is not what he should be. He is . . .

a defiled creature, a guilty criminal, a child of disobedience!

Arthur Pink