

"There are many Christian people today, it seems to me, who claim to be believers in the inspiration of the Scriptures but who nevertheless quite deliberately avoid large portions of Scripture simply because they are difficult. But if you believe that the whole of Scripture is the Word of God, such an attitude is sinful; it is our business to face the Scriptures." -Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Ephesians - God's Ultimate Purpose)

The Scripture is the Christian's Balance, in which he weighs his actions! Thomas Watson

SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

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

18.Q. What is the misery of that state whereinto man fell?

XVIII. A. All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God (Gen. 3:8, 24), are under his wrath and curse (Eph. 2:3; Gal. 3:10), and so made liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever (Rom. 6:23; Matt. 25:41).

19.Q. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the state of sin and misery?

XIX. A. God having, out of his good pleasure from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life (2 Thess. 2:13), did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of the state of sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation by a Redeemer (Rom. 5:21).

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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 MEANS TO REPENTANCE

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? Romans 2:4

The Jews had become exceedingly critical of the sins of the Gentiles and were quick to pass judgment. They were given to self-justification on the basis of their national heritage as the children of Abraham. Two great errors were exposed. The first was that some were guilty of the same sins and such had been the case often in Old Testament history. The second error was that they supposed that even if they were sinning it was not of the heinous nature Paul had just attributed to the Gentiles. Jesus had addressed and condemned just such an attitude: *Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? Luke 13:4.* Men in their thoughts of relativism seem ready to rationalize just about anything.

The tendency is to think well of not doing the things belonging to idolatry, gross perversion and immorality. But, however, no amount of “not doing” something will accrue to that which is required. That leaves all under the guilt of sin and the penalty of death. We often hear the character traits such as honesty, kindness and generosity set forth as being meritorious. Even the best of these things in the absence of repentance and faith count for nothing. So, to stand in judgment of those we may think to be the worst of sinners is to place ourselves in the same condemnation. It is sad then that many who are judged by men to be good moral folk see no need to repent and

believe the Gospel. It is only as they are enabled to truly see the goodness of God that they are given a true ground of comparison.

We would be quick to declare that repentance is the gift of God. It cannot be self-generated and must be understood as the result of regeneration. Ye must be born again. It is impossible that a dead man be able to smell the stench of his own decay. Neither can one dead in trespasses and sins understand the offence of his sin before God. Therefore we would understand that it takes a miracle of grace to bring life and enablement before the reason for repentance can be seen by any. It is then of mercy and grace that repentance is granted and we understand the goodness of God directed toward those who experience it. This work of grace does not come about as a result of leading, but one quickened by He, the Holy Spirit is soon led to repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The goodness, forbearance and longsuffering of God are all a part of God’s amazing grace to all who know Him. The kindness of our Lord is understood in His providential dealings with us through which much of this world’s good has come to those who deserve nothing. His forbearance speaks of the fact that He has withheld that which could have been very properly poured upon us at any time in our existence. That He is longsuffering reminds us that He was not obligated to withhold the penalty of sin from us for one instant let alone

for a lifetime. Having made these observations, how is it that these things summarized as His goodness lead us to repentance. It would seem that there is more involved than a mere change of mind.

The goodness of God provides an infinitely strong backdrop against one's sinfulness. C. H. Spurgeon said that he did not understand the awfulness of his sin until he saw it on Christ. While we may ask why He allowed us to live who were such offenders against Him is one thing. But, then we ask how could He put my sin on the only innocent One? The contrast of our sin against the righteousness of God as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord is infinitely great and we cannot help but be moved to repent as we look thereon. As a child I often welcomed the spanking I received because I knew I deserved it and wanted to be restored to my parents loving favor. But, in the case of our sin before God we have nothing to offer and we are constrained to see the goodness of God make complete provision for our sin debt. In this way we are not only led to repentance initially, but we are ever repenting in that we turn from self with true contempt and embrace only the righteousness of God.

It is here that we marvel even more at the

grace of God. Again, repentance, like faith, is the gift of God. But it is good and profitable that we are brought through the process of Godly sorrow that works repentance. This sorrow is provoked the more by considering the goodness of God. The Psalmist said that it was good for him to have been afflicted. We all will confess that it is good that we have been led to repentance with its attendant sorrow that we may rejoice the more at our forgiveness. What would forgiveness mean if we had not been made to experience such brokenness as we see the goodness of God ever bringing us closer?

It is sad that some would relegate repentance to a self-motivated act of will wherein they decided to act differently. In true repentance we are ever increasingly being brought to an intense hatred of sin and an intense love and delight in the righteousness of God. In this way the command of our Lord to repent and believe the Gospel is truly obeyed and the true believer gratefully acknowledges the sovereign grace of God in it all. Men, left to themselves, will not repent. But, by great grace and mercy we are able to say with the Psalmist *He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Psalms 23:3. bhs*

As though it had never been!

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us!" Romans 8:18

Beloved, soon, O how soon! all that now loads the heart with care, and wrings it with sorrow--all that dims the eye with tears, and renders the day anxious and the night sleepless--will be as though it had never been!

Emerging from the entanglement, the dreariness, the solitude, the loneliness, and the temptations of the wilderness--you shall enter upon your everlasting rest, your unfading inheritance, where there is . . .

No sorrow, no sin, no suffering, no crying, no evening shadows, No midnight darkness!

But all is one perfect, cloudless, eternal day--for Jesus is the joy, the light, and the glory thereof!

"And so we will be with the Lord forever!" 1 Thessalonians 4:17

"He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away!" Rev. 21:4 (Octavius Winslow)

What If No One Responded to the Gospel?

To the mass of ill-deserving sinners on earth, God holds out the gospel that any person who looks in faith to the Son will receive eternal life. But what if no one actually responded to that message? What if not one person took advantage of this opportunity? Because this is the actual condition we find man in - No amount of outward appeals by God to man's heart or reason will suffice to persuade him to come to Jesus. Left to himself he is hopelessly given over to darkness. If he refuses to come it isn't because God is holding him back or coercing him against his will in the way of sin. This is what man wants in his heart of hearts.

Does the love of God allow Him to simply leave all people in the misery of their own stubborn willful choice because to do otherwise would violate their so-called free will? It would certainly be just but God loves His people too much to leave us to our own stubborn will. So out of the mass of ill-deserving sinners he still has a plan to save them in spite of their obstinacy. If people are to come to faith in Jesus they also need mercy to be delivered from themselves - from their own hardened heart. Because it is in man's heart that sin resides and holds him in inescapable bondage. We need God to give us, not just a way to choose, but a supernatural disarming of our innate hostility to God and an implanting of a new heart which loves God - which sees the beauty truth and excellency of Jesus Christ. (John 6:65, 65, 37; Ezek 36:26' Rom 9:15, 16) john_hendryx

The Piercing Power of the Word John Piper

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

The Word of God is our only hope. The good news of God's promises and the warnings of his judgment are sharp enough and living enough and active enough to penetrate to the bottom of my heart and show me that the lies of sin are indeed lies.

Abortion will not create a wonderful future for me. Neither will cheating, or dressing provocatively, or throwing away my sexual purity, or keeping quiet about dishonesty at work, or divorce, or vengeance. And what rescues me from this deception is the Word of God.

The Word of God's promise is like throwing open a great window of bright morning sun on the roaches of sin masquerading as satisfying pleasures in our hearts. God has given you his good news, his promises, his Word to protect you from the deep deceptions of sin that try to harden the heart and lure it away from God and lead it to destruction.

Be of good cheer in your battle to believe. Because the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword and it will penetrate deeper than any deception of sin has ever gone and reveal what is truly valuable and what is truly worth trusting.

"It is blessed to eat into the very soul of the Bible, until at last you come to talk in scriptural language, and your spirit is flavored with the words of the Lord, so that your blood is 'Bibline' and the very essence of the Bible flows from you." Spurgeon