

When Satan put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ into the hands of the Jews, and the Son of God was nailed to the accursed tree, the fiend of hell was outwitted by his own invention and out-shot by his weapon, for it was by the Savior's death upon the cursed tree that he crushed the serpent's head and entered into his glory. Don Fortner

#### SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

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

26.Q. Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

XXVI. A. Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition (Lk. 2:7), made under the law (Gal. 4:4), undergoing the miseries of this life (Isa. 53:3), the wrath of God (Matt. 27:46), and the cursed death of the cross; (Phil. 2:8) in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time (Matt. 12:40).

27.Q. Wherein consists Christ's exaltation?

XXVII. A. Christ's exaltation consists in his rising again from the dead on the third day (1 Cor. 15:4), in ascending up into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God the Father (Mk. 16:19), and in coming to judge the world at the last day (Acts 17:31).

#### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: [branthsi@msn.com](mailto:branthsi@msn.com)

Website: [www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com](http://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 7, No. 19

May 11, 2014

---

---

### LAYING HOLD ON ETERNAL LIFE

*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. 1 Timothy 6:12*

We have now entered and are living in the “age of entitlements.” By this we mean that there are many who believe themselves to hold title to certain things and benefits for which they have invested no labor. They think that certain things are owed to them by the government by virtue of their circumstance. It is one thing to receive help in time of need but quite another to see it as a matter of obligation forced upon another. Religion often reflects the attitude of a culture. So it is that many labor under the conception that God owes them something and is obligated to give it to them regardless of their circumstance and attitude toward Him. In other words they believe in salvation on demand.

What a surprise is in store for many who will hear those ominous words, “I never knew you.” To suggest that such things as genuine repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ are essential to God’s plan of redemption is to evoke anger in many. They have been so acclimated to superficial professions born out of the thought of entitlement that to suggest that God only looks to the broken and the contrite and can only be pleased by Spirit produced faith is hateful to them. This betrays the fact that they have no idea what salvation truly is. To them eternal life means to live forever in some paradisiacal estate that is the product of their own imagination. The idea of a life that is present and that is of divine origin is lost to them. In

fact, eternal life is the prize to which all true believers aspire to claim and they embrace it now as a treasure and in that way they are filled with hope for all eternity. The apostle Paul would exhort Timothy not to merely claim to be saved but rather to grasp eternal life and the Lord of it as one who cannot let go.

With regard to this passage we are often reminded of Jacob’s encounter with the Lord on that special night during his return from exile. As he wrestled with the Angel (who was the Lord) he was told to let go. His answer is that of one who knows the exclusive power of the Lord to bless. He said “I will not let thee go except thou bless me.” Jacob knew that He had the fulfillment of the promise of God and eternal life itself in his hand and he would not let go. He was not as one who believed that God owed him anything. It was rather that he was desperate for the mercy that the Lord alone could give and the life that would fall out to all his progeny. We would learn much from Paul’s words to Timothy and the example of Jacob who did receive that blessing of eternal promise.

One commentator suggested that the terms that Paul used expressed not only the prize but the elation that Timothy should experience. We have often witnessed the winner of an athletic contest being given a trophy. We have seen all sorts of reactions such as holding it above their heads, clutching it to their bodies and even kissing the prize. Certainly that which we have in eternal life is more than those things about

which men become so excited. Yet they are suggestive of reactions that we might have spiritually as we truly contemplate that which we possess in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is the delight of true believers to exalt Christ and to claim Him as their Joy. It is to Him they cling and they would ever draw nigh to Him and draw Him to themselves. They would hold to Him as the exclusive source of all they are and all they have. They would desire that in every way Jesus Christ be praised.

There is the suggestion of absolute necessity here. We are reminded of the response of the Apostles as they were asked if they would go away – “Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” We lay hold on eternal life because it is personified in the person of Christ our Lord. Consider: *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Colossians 3:4.* We lay hold on eternal life because it is a thing of infinite beauty and something to be desired in every way. The image and superscription of our Lord is stamped indelibly on every aspect of

it. Like a precious gem the glory of Christ radiates from it from every angle.

We cling to eternal life in another way that those given to a sense of entitlement (God owes them something) do not wish to consider. That is we cling to it with the knowledge that if it were lost would be to be found without God and without hope in the world. It is precious to the believer that the term eternal is given to the life that he has in Christ. True believers, however, dare not presume on the grace of God and they do not take God for granted. If that life is not such that they “lay hold on it” and cannot think of existing apart from it then it is suspect as to whether it is life at all. We cling to the One who lived, died, raised and ascended in order that we might live. Thus, those truly born again of the Spirit of God cannot help but grasp, cling to, and embrace the life that came at such cost to our Lord.

As natural men we are not entitled before God. But, true believers are called to fight the good fight of faith and to lay hold on eternal life, even on Christ Himself. *bhs*

---

“For me to live is Christ.”  
- Phi\_1:21

The believer did not always live to Christ. He began to do so when God the Holy Spirit convinced him of sin, and when by grace he was brought to see the dying Saviour making a propitiation for his guilt. From the moment of the new and celestial birth the man begins to live to Christ. Jesus is to believers the one pearl of great price, for whom we are willing to part with all that we have. He has so completely won our love, that it beats alone for him; to his glory we would live, and in defence of his gospel we would die; he is the pattern of our life, and the model after which we would sculpture our character. Paul's words mean more than most men think; they imply that the aim and end of his life was Christ-nay, his life itself was Jesus. In the words of an ancient saint, he did eat, and drink, and sleep eternal life. Jesus was his very breath, the soul of his soul, the heart of his heart, the life of his life. Can you say, as a professing Christian, that you live up to this idea? Can you honestly say that for you to live is Christ? Your business-are you doing it for Christ? Is it not done for self- aggrandizement and for family advantage? Do you ask, “Is that a mean reason?” For the Christian it is. He professes to live for Christ; how can he live for another object without committing a spiritual adultery? Many there are who carry out this principle in some measure; but who is there that dare say that he hath lived wholly for Christ as the apostle did? Yet, this alone is the true life of a Christian-its source, its sustenance, its fashion, its end, all gathered up in one word-Christ Jesus. Lord, accept me; I here present myself, praying to live only in thee and to thee. Let me be as the bullock which stands between the plough and the altar, to work or to be sacrificed; and let my motto be, “Ready for either.” From Monergism

Alexander MacLaren on Wisdom

*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. James 1:5*

(MacLaren called wisdom the great deficiency in the average Christian character)

What, then, does James mean by 'wisdom'? He means the sum of practical religion. With him, as with the psalmist, sin and folly are two names for the same thing, and so are religion and wisdom. He, and only he, has wisdom who knows God with a living heart-knowledge which gives a just insight into the facts of life and the bounds of right and wrong, and which regulates conduct and shapes the whole man with power far beyond that of knowledge however wide and deep, illuminating intellect however powerful. 'Knowledge' is poor and superficial in comparison with this wisdom, which may roughly be said to be equivalent to practical religion.

The use of this expression to indicate the greatest deficiency in the average Christian character, just suggests this thought, that if we had a clear, constant, certain, God-regarding insight into things as they are, we should lack little. Because, if a man habitually kept vividly before him the thought of God, and with it the true nature and obligation and blessedness of righteous, loving obedience, and the true foulness and fatalness of sin - if he saw these with the clearness and the continuity with which we may all see the things that are unseen and eternal, if he 'saw life steadily, and saw it whole,' if he saw the rottenness and the shallowness of earthly things and temptations, and if he saw the blessed issue of every God-pleasing act - why! the perfecting of conduct would be secured.

It would be an impossibility for him, with all that illumination blazing in upon him, not to walk in the paths of righteousness with a glad and serene heart. I do not believe that all sin is a consequence of ignorance, but I do believe that our average Christian life would be revolutionised if we each carried clear before us, and continually subjected our lives to the influence of, the certain verities of God's word.

And, brethren, I think that there is a practical direction of no small importance here, in the suggestion that the thing that we want most is clearer and more vivid conceptions of the realities of the Christian revelation, and of the facts of human life. These will act as tests, and up will start in his own shape the fiend that is whispering at our ears, when touched by the spear of this divine wisdom. So, brethren, here is our root-deficiency; therefore instead of confining ourselves to trying to cure isolated and specific faults, or to attain isolated and specific virtues, let us go deeper down, and realise that the more our whole natures are submitted to the power of God's truth, and of the realities of the future and of the present, of Time and Eternity, the nearer shall we come to being 'perfect and entire,' lacking nothing.

---

The Scriptures are profitable for all things.

Is the believer cast down? Here are "comforts to delight the soul!"

Is he assaulted by Satan? Here is "the sword of the Spirit" to resist him.

Thomas Watson