

True Excellency! -- (Jonathan Edwards)

Worldly men imagine that there is true excellency and true happiness in those things which they are pursuing. They think that if they could but obtain them, that they would be happy. But when they obtain them, and cannot find happiness, they look for happiness in something else, and are still upon the futile pursuit.

But Christ Jesus has true excellency, and so great excellency that when they come to see it they look no further, but the mind rests there.

"Yes, He is altogether lovely! This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend!" Song of Songs 5:16

SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

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

32.Q. What is justification?

XXXII. A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardons all our sins (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7), and accepts us as righteous in his sight (2 Cor. 5:21) only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us (Rom. 5:19), and received by faith alone (Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9).

33.Q. What is adoption?

XXXIII.A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace (1 Jn. 3:1), whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God (Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:17).

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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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DIVINE COMMENDATION

But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. 2 Corinthians 10:17-18

There is no greater commendation than that which comes from the Lord. But, it is only realized by those who observe it, not those who receive it. That is, this divine commendation of which the Apostle speaks is not sought after by the person receiving it and such a person never thinks themselves deserving of it. Furthermore, only those who know the Lord will perceive that such is from the Lord. The natural man cannot discern the things of the Spirit and will invariably attribute the things of the Lord to that person themselves. Men will not only claim the merit for that which they perceive to be praiseworthy in themselves, they will praise men for that which God has done.

Men are presented in the scriptures in two extremes. The first is characterized by the writer of Proverbs and depicts both the condition of pride and the inevitable outcome: *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Proverbs 16:18.* Such an attitude is patently offensive to God and His displeasure will ultimately be expressed. At the other end of the continuum we find the condition which meets with divine approval and attracts the companionship of the Lord. See, *For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Isaiah 57:15.* David expressed confidence in the acceptance of such a person in saying: *The*

sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Psalms 51:17. Other scriptures also convey the fact that the Lord will only be approached in true humility.

In order to convey this thought to the Corinthians that were troubling him, Paul quotes from the Old Testament. *Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. Jeremiah 9:23-24.* It was herein that the prophet conveyed a warning with regard to glorying but also set forth those things with which the Lord is well-pleased. Those things that the Lord exercises are the reason of His delight as they appear in those who are born of the Holy Spirit. The ultimate display of these things was and is brought to us in the person and work of Christ Jesus our Lord. It is His very nature that is imparted to His own.

Pride and self-commendation is heard from every corner in our land. We hear the boastings of athletes and entertainers and we witness the admiration of those who follow them. The poorest of men cling to the idea of personal preservation and are no different in that regard to those enjoying great prosperity and glorying in those things. There are many who proudly

acclaim their perversions and many more who think it admirable that they do so. It is the nature of fallen man to despise the things that are pleasing and acceptable to God. Those things and those people that God commends would never be commended by men as these things appear before God.

How then is it that it may be said that the Lord commends any? It is interesting to note that there is no record of the Lord thanking men for anything. Men seem to think their works are thankworthy, but such will not be forthcoming. The commendation is not a matter of announcement in some public forum. It is rather in the evidence produced in the lives of the Lord's people. With men, where there is a commendation there is typically glorying on the part of the recipient. It is not so, with those commended of the Lord. These are they who do what they do because of the Lord's presence with them. They are acting in accordance with the divine nature within. The consciousness they cultivate is that of their indwelling Lord. They think themselves to be "yet unprofitable servants." So, when lovingkindness, judgment (in their case discernment) and righteousness appear in them they do not think themselves to have done something exceptional. It is rather that the evidence of the exceptional One is produced in them. When they would be allured

into some form of self-exaltation they retreat to scenes of the cross where they are constrained to extoll the virtues of their suffering substitute. There they glory in what He has done and in all that He is and ever shall be.

No amount of human endeavor apart from God given faith can ever be the subject of divine commendation. Paul did encourage Timothy thusly: *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15.* It is to be noted that study is not mere reading. It is to give diligence in discovering the approval of God. It is the proper attitude of preparation in serving God in accordance with revealed truth. Such a way is a source of mutual delight.

The true servant of God in any calling (all believers are called to be Saints) delights to do so and does without any thought of earning a commendation. Yet, because he is a partaker of the divine nature he will be distinguished in this world and approved of God. His delight cannot be and will not be in glorying. It will be in pleasing Him who has purchased his redemption. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" is divine commendation. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Romans 13:14.*
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A MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION

This question is most important or it would never have been asked. The context in which it was asked demands consideration! "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven" (Acts 1:11)? The importance attached to this question is pertinent especially for our time? Christians seem to be in the escape mode these days. Things are bad morally and in so many other ways. Therefore, this is distasteful to anyone with a conscience, but as Christians are we supposed to escape? Does the Lord have us here for a purpose? People are ready to jump ship so-to-speak. Believers want to be and are looking for the rapture. You may be asking, "So what! Isn't that what we should be doing?" No! Not according to Scripture. Our Lord said, "Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13). The world is going to hell, the culture is in collapse, the government has left its Constitutional moorings becoming rogue, the modern religionists are floundering in pagan darkness and true Christians want to run away. From all appearance we are at a critical stage. Are we salt or are we savorless salt? In what state are we leaving our children and grandchildren? Ron Rumburg

Chrysostom on Prayer

“The potency of prayer hath subdued the strength of fire; it hath bridled the rage of lions, hushed anarchy to rest, extinguished wars, appeased the elements, expelled demons, burst the chains of death, expanded the gates of heaven, assuaged diseases, repelled frauds, rescued cities from destruction, stayed the sun in its course, and arrested the progress of the thunderbolt. Prayer is an all-sufficient panoply, a treasure undiminished, a mine which is never exhausted, a sky unobscured by the clouds, a heaven unruffled by the storm. It is the root, the fountain, the mother of a thousand blessings.”



HONOR THIS PURPOSE

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. —Genesis 17:1 Without argument, most things are at their best when they are fulfilling their purpose and design. For instance, a piano is made with a specific purpose: to produce music. However, I happen to know that someone once stood on a piano in order to put a fastener of some kind in the ceiling. Some artistic women have used piano tops as family picture galleries. I have seen piano tops that were cluttered filing cabinets or wide library shelves. There is an intelligent design in the creation of a piano. The manufacturer did not announce: “This is a good piano. It has at least nineteen uses!” No, the designer had only one thought in mind: “This piano will have the purpose and potential of sounding forth beautiful music!” ... Do not miss the application of truth here. God was saying to Abraham, “You may have some other idea about the design and purpose for your life, but you are wrong! You were created in My image to worship Me and to glorify Me. If you do not honor this purpose, your life will degenerate into shallow, selfish, humanistic pursuits.” *Lord, so many lives today have indeed degenerated into “shallow, selfish, humanistic pursuits.” Work through me this week to help people with whom I come in contact to see the one purpose for which You created us. Amen.* A. W. Tozer



THE WONDER OF THE GOSPEL

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:5, “What we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord.” But then in verse 6 he goes beneath that proclamation of the Lordship of Christ—beneath the rule and authority of King Jesus—and tells the essence of his preaching: It is “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” The only submission to the Lordship of Christ that fully magnifies his worth and reflects his beauty is the humble gladness of the human soul in the glory of God in the face of his Son. The wonder of the gospel, and the most freeing discovery this sinner has ever made, is that God’s deepest commitment to be glorified and my deepest longing to be satisfied are not in conflict, but in fact find simultaneous consummation in his display of and my delight in the glory of God.[9] Therefore, the goal of preaching is the glory of God reflected in the glad submission of the human heart. And the supremacy of God in preaching is secured by this fact: The one who satisfies gets the glory; the one who gives the pleasure is the treasure. John Piper