

A certain man said he daily listened to a certain radio preacher even though the preacher occasionally said things diametrically opposed to the truth. The man defended listening to the preacher because “He says a lot of things that are true.”

If a chef is renowned for preparing sumptuous meals, but also suspected of occasionally spitting on them, would you frequent his restaurant?

Is not your soul more important than your body?

– Daniel E. Parks

SPURGEON’S CATECHISM

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

40.Q. What did God reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?

XL.A. The rule which God first revealed to man for his obedience, is the moral law (Deut. 10:4; Matt. 19:17), which is summarised in the ten commandments.

41.Q. What is the sum of the ten commandments?

XLI. A. The sum of the ten commandments is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbour as ourselves (Matt. 22:37-40).

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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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REPENTANCE AND FAITH

And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 20:20-21

Paul's meeting with the Ephesian Elders at Miletus presents us with a display of Christian love that is worthy of emulation. He had labored long with these men and it is evident that he held them in high esteem and cared very deeply for them. He was determined to leave them with parting words that were both affectionate and profitable. He would both remind them of past teaching and warn them of dangers to come. He knew that the same forces that had opposed him would come after them as well. Thus, he would have them firmly established on the foundation which is Christ and the Gospel.

As is often the case, as we examine that which seems basic and sensible we realize how much of that which is precious to us has been abandoned in the interest of modern ideas and methods. His manner among them had been to give to them that which was profitable and to withhold nothing of that sort. I have personally heard preachers say that they did not preach certain things because they tended to upset people. Paul was no tickler of "itching ears." The issue was not popularity. It was profitability in the faith and service of the Lord. He reminded them in v. 27 that "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." He did not address them on the topics of church programs and promotions. His fundamentals began on a personal level. So he had shown them and taught them both publicly and personally those essentials matters of the

Gospel. He began where our Lord began – with Repentance and Faith.

The fact is that much of even fundamental religion (so called) is based on very shallow concepts. We do not mean by this that they are lacking in theological expertise (although everyone should be a theologian in that they should learn all they can about God). It is rather they are lacking in depth of experience and of the things that should be evident in both repentance and faith. Paul taught that genuine repentance came with Godly sorrow which indicates a consciousness of sin that is beyond human ability. The aim with superficial evangelism is to effect a change of mind and trust in mere mental assent as opposed to a change of heart before our Holy God. In much the same way, faith is seen as agreeing to the facts of what Christ has done as opposed to embracing the truth of necessary substitution by the Lamb of God. Paul not only saw these things as profitable to teach but put them in proper perspective. To many the frame of reference is approached arbitrarily while Paul taught these things as absolutes.

Repentance and faith are often casually lumped together as Spiritual gifts. They are in fact, just that. It is, however important that we make the same differentiation that Paul made. That is, we must understand that in repentance one comprehends that God in every aspect of His being is offended by sin. It is further to be

understood that there is nothing coming from man that would remedy the breach that exists because of sin. Thus the truly penitent one is left with hope only in the mercy of God. The thought in the minds of many is that they are simply doing what God has been begging them to do and they are in fact doing Him a favor. It is true that where there is true repentance faith is also manifested in that Jesus is presented as the means of needed mercy. Again, we question the shallow manner in which professions are based on a logic that appeals to the reasoning of fallen men. The faith that is the gift of the Spirit embraces the life and promise of our Lord as a way of life not just agreement. It is exercised with the realization that it is in Christ alone they are delivered from the sin which is so offensive to God.

The writer of Proverbs set forth an important truth in this regard. *The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools. Proverbs 26:7.* The picture here would be that of a lame man trying to engage in skillful athletic activity only to fail because of inability. So it is when a fool attempts to speak in the way of wisdom. To preach repentance unaccompanied by faith or faith apart from repentance would be equally foolish. We often hear someone say, "I am saved." We are

tempted to ask them "from what are you saved." It is likely that with many they would have no thought of the awfulness and hatefulness of the sin from which they are delivered, much less the fact that both repentance and faith are the provisions of God graciously bringing them to embrace Jesus Christ as Lord. We are clearly taught that: *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Romans 3:11.* When one does seek after God it will be a matter of necessity brought about by the life-giving work of the Holy Spirit wherein one sees their sin and discovers faith in Christ. Before anything else, "Ye must be born again."

In his concern for the Ephesian Elders he would remind of these things as ongoing graces to be both practiced and taught. Repentance is not a one-time act. It is the gift of God that provides for us the motive and manner to be seeking after God and believing on our Lord Jesus Christ. We, as believers learn over and over with these men of Ephesus that these things are profitable and to be taught in every circumstance. It is elementary truth to be presented to unbelievers and it is maturing truth to be preached to all. In the words of the Poor Huckster, "I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all, But Jesus Christ is my all in all." *bhs*

SUPERFICIAL LOGIC

"It is now almost universally supposed that saving faith is nothing more than an act of the human will, which any man is capable of performing: all that is needed is to bring before a sinner a few verses of Scripture which describe his lost condition, one or two which contain the word 'believe,' and then a little persuasion for him to 'accept Christ,' and the thing is done. And the awful thing is that so very, very few, see anything wrong with this—blind to the fact that such a process is only the devil's drug to lull thousands into a false peace. So many have been argued into a believing that they are saved. In reality, their 'faith' sprang from nothing better than a superficial process of logic."

Arthur Pink

Some quarters of the church seem to be suggesting that if you merely gave the collective mass of humanity the Christian ethic and urged them to practice it, the problems of the world would somehow magically disappear. But real change cannot be accomplished apart from the gospel: regeneration is essential. Monergism

THE INCREDIBLE GREATNESS OF HIS POWER

And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Ephesians 1:19

The work of God on the soul, is a work of sovereign and omnipotent power! See what a mighty power was put forth in turning us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and how it was the outstretched arm of Omnipotence alone, which could deliver us from the power of darkness and bring us into the eternal heavenly kingdom! Consider the difficulties which grace has to overcome, in the "quickening" of a dead soul into spiritual life. View the depths of the fall. Contemplate—the death of the soul in trespasses and sins—the thorough alienation from the life of God—the darkness, blindness, and ignorance of the understanding—the perverseness of the will—the hardness of the conscience—and the depravity of the affections!

View the soul's obduracy, stubbornness and obstinacy—its pride, unbelief, infidelity and self-righteousness; its passionate love to, habitual practice of, and long imprisonment to sin. Consider its strong prejudices against everything godly and holy!

Contemplate the desperate, implacable enmity of the carnal mind against God Himself—its firm and deep rooted love to the world, in all its varied shapes and forms—and remember also how all its hopes, happiness, and prospects are bound up in the things of time and sense! O what a complicated mass of difficulties, do all these foes form in their firm combination, like a compact, well armed, thoroughly trained army—against any power which would seek to dislodge them from their position!

Add to this—all the power, malice, and deceitful arts of Satan, as the strong armed man—keeping the palace night and day, and yielding to none but the stronger than he!

Consider, too, the sacrifices which must often be made by one who is to live godly in Christ Jesus—the tenderest ties, perhaps, to be broken—the lucrative prospects which have to be abandoned—old friends to be renounced—family connections to be given up—position in life to be lost—shame and contempt to be entailed on oneself!

Viewing, then, a soul dead in sin, with all these difficulties and obstacles in their complicated array, must we not pronounce that to be a mighty act of power which, in spite of all these apparently invincible hindrances, lifts it up and out of them all, into a new and spiritual life? So fully and thoroughly is this fruit and effect of omnipotent power, and of omnipotent power alone, that it is spoken of in the word as—a new and heavenly birth—a new creation—a resurrection—all which terms imply a putting forth of a divine power, as distinct from and independent of any creature effort.

Contemplate also, the mighty power of God in "maintaining" divine life in our soul. We have to see and feel—what mountains of difficulty—what seas of temptation—what winds and storms of error—what assaults and snares of Satan—what floods of vileness and ungodliness within and without—strong lusts and passions—what secret slips and falls—what backslidings and departures from the living God—what long seasons of darkness, barrenness, and death—what opposition of the flesh to the strait and narrow way—what crafty hypocrites, pretended friends, false professors—all striving to throw down or entangle our steps!

Consider also, what helplessness, inability, and miserable impotency in ourselves to all that is good—and what headlong proneness to all that is evil. We have also to ponder over what we have been and what we still are, since we professed to fear God—and how, when left to ourselves, we have done nothing but sin against and provoke God to His face! And thus as read over article by article, this long dark catalogue, still to have a sweet persuasion that the life of God is in our soul—we realize, believe, and feel, and bless God for His surpassing, superabounding grace, in maintaining this divine life in our soul. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound!" ---J. C. Philpot

God's long forbearance in not punishing of sin, is not forgiveness! The longer God delays the blow--the heavier it falls when He strikes! --Thomas Watson