

All that men do in the world is but seeking to supply their wants;—either their

- 1) natural wants, that nature may be supplied; or their
- 2) sinful wants, that their lusts may be satisfied; or their...
- 3) spiritual wants, that their souls may be saved.

For the two first, men without the gospel lay out all their strength; but of the last there is amongst them a deep silence. - John Owen

SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

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

65.Q. Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

LXV. A. No mere man, since the fall, is able in his life perfectly to keep the commandments of God (Eccl. 7:20), but does daily break them in thought, (Gen. 8:21) word (Jas. 3:8), and deed (Jas. 3:2).

66.Q. Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?

LXVI. A. Some sins in themselves, and by reason of various aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others (Jn. 19:11; 1 Jn. 5:16).

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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

Volume 7, No. 39

September 28, 2014

PEACE WITH GOD

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: Romans 5:1

Theologian John Stock included an article called “The Gospel is Friendly to Human Happiness in this Life.” He began by declaring his aim to show “that the gospel is eminently adapted to promote the happiness and well-being of man in this state of existence; that it is in fact the only form of truth by which man can attain to true blessedness.” The Apostle Paul declared the Gospel to be how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He rose again according to the Scriptures and that the fact of His resurrection was confirmed by a significant number of credible witnesses. This is, indeed, a glorious revelation that such a feat be accomplished. It is also glorious in what it accomplished with regard to the relationship of God with His people. The end result of the work of Christ is summarized in: *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:19.*

The words of Mr. Stock seem to be justified as we consider the accomplishment of the work of Christ as it is declared in the words of our text. That we should be at peace with God is a reason of true happiness indeed. Certainly this is not what those apart from faith term as happiness. Theirs is a course of uncertainty, insecurity and anything but peace. Their quest for joy is centered in the things of this present world which perish with the using and produce only the illusion of happiness temporarily. The declaration of the writer here is of permanent

peace secured by an indestructible bond of peace.

It is interesting that the scholars disagree over the meaning of the words “we have peace with God,” here. The question is do the words convey an exhortation to have peace with God or is it a declaration of the fact that we, as a result of justification, have peace with God. I will leave the resolution of that debate to more learned men than me. It would seem however that we can understand merit in both arguments that will stand in the light of the Gospel purpose and the happiness we enjoy therein. The “therefore” that begins this verse is a reference, at the very least, to the previous chapter in which the faith of Abraham brings us to understand the relationship of faith to justification. Dr. Gill and others aptly point out that faith does not justify, rather it lays hold on and believes in Who does justify. See, *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Romans 5:9.* We may safely conclude that the same faith that apprehends and claims justification also aspires to the knowledge that “we have peace with God.”

Thus, it is a fact that by virtue of the great work of Justification those so blessed are at peace with God. This is knowledge on which we may rest if indeed we know Christ our Lord. It was done without our knowledge and claimed by God-given faith. We stand before God as though we had never sinned. What a precious thought to be so found while knowing that we,

with all others, have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It should follow then that we should not only know, but that we should also enjoy and rejoice in the fact that we have peace with God. There can be no true happiness apart from "peace with God."

Often the scripture places contrasting situations alongside declarations of blessedness. We do well to note that unhappiness is built into all outside the realm of blessedness and peace with God in Christ. We are reminded of what we were and the fact that true happiness was absent. Compare: *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. Titus 3:3.* Such is the way of unrest and misery because it is consistent with the fallen nature. See then that we were characterized as the "children of disobedience and that: *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Ephesians 2:3.* The Scripture often describes the misery of the wicked thusly: *But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. Isaiah 57:20.* It is

impossible to know true happiness and live at enmity with the God of Peace.

He is called The God of all peace. It is He who has determined the grounds of peace and it is He who has met the conditions of peace through Christ our Lord. This does not leave us in a sterile and unfeeling state wherein we know the facts and not the joy. To know peace with God is to enjoy access. It is to know the ability to come unto Him crying Abba Father. It is to know more than a truce declared, it is a relationship experienced. It is true that without faith we cannot please Him, but true faith exercised results in coming to Him and embracing Him with full joy and in the absence of fear. The world "loves its own," but it cannot protect its own. It can only deceive and destroy.

Paul wrote to the Colossians: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts..." There could be no "peace of God" if there were no peace with God and in Christ alone we have just that. Truly, the Gospel is friendly to our happiness. Our Lord declared in parting "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you..." Years later John would write: *And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. 1 John 1:4.*
bhs

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion." - Rev_14:1

The apostle John was privileged to look within the gates of heaven, and in describing what he saw, he begins by saying, "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb!" This teaches us that the chief object of contemplation in the heavenly state is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." Nothing else attracted the apostle's attention so much as the person of that Divine Being, who hath redeemed us by his blood. He is the theme of the songs of all glorified spirits and holy angels. Christian, here is joy for thee; thou hast looked, and thou hast seen the Lamb. Through thy tears thine eyes have seen the Lamb of God taking away thy sins. Rejoice, then. In a little while, when thine eyes shall have been wiped from tears, thou wilt see the same Lamb exalted on his throne. It is the joy of thy heart to hold daily fellowship with Jesus; thou shalt have the same joy to a higher degree in heaven; thou shalt enjoy the constant vision of his presence; thou shalt dwell with him for ever. "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb!" Why, that Lamb is heaven itself; for as good Rutherford says, "Heaven and Christ are the same thing;" to be with Christ is to be in heaven, and to be in heaven is to be with Christ. That prisoner of the Lord very sweetly writes in one of his glowing letters-"O my Lord Jesus Christ, if I could be in heaven without thee, it would be a hell; and if I could be in hell, and have thee still, it would be a heaven to me, for thou art all the heaven I want." It is true, is it not, Christian? Does not thy soul say so?
All thou needest to make thee blessed, supremely blessed, is "to be with Christ." SPURGEON

PERSONAL GOOD NEWS

Someone once elaborated on each line of the well-known and much-loved Psalm 23:

The Lord is my Shepherd — that's relationship! I shall not be in want — that's supply! He makes me lie down in green pastures — that's rest! He leads me beside quiet waters — that's refreshment! He restores my soul — that's healing! He guides me in the paths of righteousness — that's guidance! For His name's sake — that's purpose! Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death —that's testing! I will fear no evil — that's protection! For you are with me — that's faithfulness! Your rod and the staff, they comfort me — that's discipline! You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies —that's hope! You anoint my head with oil — that's consecration! My cup overflows — that's abundance! Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life —that's blessing! And I will dwell in the house of the Lord — that's security! Forever — that's eternity! AUTHOR OF ELABORATED MATERIAL UNKNOWN

This broad but specific, sweeping but individual, assurance came from the pen of a man after God's own heart. Only when you see this pattern for yourself can you see the breadth of God's care for the cosmic scene and his personal care for your life. The single most important thread in working through your disappointments is that your heart and mind ponder and grasp what the cross of Jesus Christ is all about. Either your heart and mind will be shaped by that reality or they will be misshapen by false utopias. There is no pattern without the cross. There is no Good News without it. That is what the gospel is all about. Ravi Zacharias in *The Grand Weaver*



A CROWN OF LIFE

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away." — 1 Peter 5:4 What! is the beggar to be "raised from the ash-heap, set among Princes, and made to inherit a throne of glory?" Is dust and ashes, a puny rebel, a guilty traitor — to be pitied, pardoned, loved, exalted from the depths of despair, raised to the heights of Heaven — gifted with kingly honor — royally fed — royally clothed — royally attended — and, at last, royally crowned? O my soul, look forward with joyous emotion to that day of wonders, when He whose head shall be crowned with many crowns, shall be the dispenser of royal diadems to His people; and when they shall begin the joyful ascription of all eternity, "Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us Kings — to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." Will you not be among the number? Shall the princes and monarchs of the earth wade through seas of blood for a corruptible crown; and will you permit yourself to lose the incorruptible diadem, or barter it for some perishable nothings of earth? Oh! that you would awake to your high destiny, and live up to your transcendent privileges as the citizen of a Kingly Commonwealth, a member of the Blood-royal family of Heaven. What would you not sacrifice, what effort would you grudge, if you were included in the gracious benediction, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?"

John McDuff

I think now of the wisdom of a statement by the famed writer Professor E. M. Blaiklock from New Zealand, who said, "God alone knows how to humble us without humiliating us, and how to lift us up without flattering us." Ravi Zacharias