

In Christ we have a love that can never be fathomed; a life that can never die; a righteousness that can never be tarnished; a peace that can never be understood; a rest that can never be disturbed; a joy that can never be diminished; a hope that can never be disappointed; a glory that can never be clouded; a light that can never be darkened; a happiness that can never be interrupted; a strength that can never be enfeebled; a purity that can never be defiled; a beauty that can never be marred; a wisdom that can never be baffled; and resources that can never be exhausted. Author Unknown

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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

10. Q. What are the decrees of God?

A. The decrees of God are his eternal purpose according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass (Eph. 1:4, 11; Rom. 9:22-23; Is. 46:10; Lam. 3:37).

11. Q. How doth God execute his decrees?

A. God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence.

12. Q. What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good (Gen. 1 throughout; Heb. 11:3).

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsj@msn.com

Website: 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

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FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Isaiah 9:2

It is an exciting thing that we may read those things written centuries before the birth of Christ our Lord and then read of the outcome as revealed to the writers of the Gospels. How we marvel at the accuracy with which such prophecies were fulfilled. Many things about the life, ministry and sacrifice of our Lord were well documented well in advance of His first advent. So much so is this that scoffers have charged that the prophecies must have been written after these things had occurred and were in fact history and not prophecy. To those who know our glorious God and all His attributes and to those who have experienced His faithfulness to all generations it is understood that whatever He determines must surely come to pass. But, it is not only the facts and events that arrest our attention, but also, the effect registered upon those who truly behold them.

In the scriptures we are often shown great contrasts such as light and darkness and life and death. These are not difficult concepts to the minds of men. We have experienced total darkness and then seen the brightness of light following that. We have seen the absence of life and witnessed vitality that is the indicator of life in any form. Many, however, who easily understand these distinctions, remain in the spiritual darkness that is characteristic of all who have not the knowledge of Christ. Our Lord once told the Pharisees that because they claimed sight while denying Him that they remained in blindness. Thus, we understand from the

Isaiah's prophecy that the general condition of the people was that they were walking in darkness of mind and spirit. Until Christ is seen all remain in this way. Like the Pharisees and these people described here, the problem is compound. That is they "walked." They were not stumbling as those having no ability to function. They were living and moving and being and having existence. They did not have such light as would reveal their imminent danger and their rebelliousness against God.

The miracle of revelation of the true light that we experience in Christ delivers from such darkness. Historian Alfred Edersheim observed that the conditions of the nation of Israel were at their lowest ebb ever when Christ came into the world. He was indeed a "root out of dry ground." There was no life support to be found in the world to which He came. All that resulted in His birth, life and the obtaining of our salvation had to be brought with Him. But, He came and the Word of God makes much of it and so should we. What was beheld by the shepherd and announced by the angels at the birth of Christ was figurative of a light such as none had ever fully beheld in this world. He had been seen by many who by faith had beheld His glory. His glory was revealed to Isaiah. *In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Isaiah 6:1.* The prophet Habakkuk understood the reverence due to Him alone: *But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all*

the earth keep silence before him. Habakkuk 2:20. But, then He literally came into the world and the world saw the greatest of lights. And so He was perceived by many, but many did not. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. John 1:5.

We read that “the glory of the Lord shone round about” those shepherds on that night of nights. The exhortation from the Heavenly Host was: *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:14.* Such is the manner of the appearance of the Lord to all who truly behold Him. *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6.* The work of salvation is the revelation of the glory of God in the hearts of individuals. As a result many things are revealed to them. First is the fact that they were “walking in darkness” prior to receiving such life from above. They are discovered as without resource to deliver themselves unto God in an acceptable manner. They are introduced to that true light lighteth every aspect of their lives. So it is that as we have Christ revealed to us and revealed in us that we

see Him as the Way as did blind Bartimaeus. We see Him as the Truth which eluded Pilate. And, we experience light out of darkness and into our hearts, life out of death and joy forever more. We see Him as the singular attraction of Heaven. “Great is the mystery of Godliness, God was manifest in the flesh...”

The world will seize any excuse to have a celebration. While we may enjoy the season that has become such a tradition throughout the so-called Christian world, the Light of the world is not to be found in the trappings and decorations of men. We must rejoice that the name of Christ is brought to the world’s attention at humanly appointed times. But, the Light that shined in darkness resides in the hearts of many who once “walked in darkness.” They, by the grace of God and through faith in the Name of Jesus Christ our blessed Lord emerged from the shadow of death and saw that great Light. And, it is He that dawns on every heart brought to new life in Christ.

We must not forget that this Blessed Babe was born in Bethlehem so that He might go to a cruel Roman cross and so save His people from their sins. Glory to God in the Highest – He was born, lived, died, rose and He reigns!!! *bhs*

The Contrast of Christ’s Comings

“The second coming of Christ shall be utterly unlike the first. He came the first time in weakness, a tender infant, born of a poor woman in the manger at Bethlehem, unnoticed, unhonored, and scarcely known. He shall come the second time in royal dignity, with the armies of heaven around Him, to be known, recognized and feared, by all the tribes of the earth.

“He came the first time to suffer – to bear our sins, to be reckoned a curse, to be despised, rejected, unjustly condemned and slain. He shall come the second time to reign – to put down every enemy beneath His feet, to take the kingdom of this world for His inheritance, to rule them with righteousness, to judge all men and to live forevermore.

“How vast the difference! How mighty the contrast!” ~ J.C. Ryle

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:11-13

The following is from Spurgeon's, "Christ's Incarnation, the Foundation of Christianity"

That is a wonderful text in Galatians 1:4, did you ever meditate upon it? "Who gave Himself for our SINS..."

Jesus never gave Himself for our RIGHTEOUSNESS, but He did give Himself for our SINS! Sin is a horrible evil, a deadly poison, yet it is this which gives Jesus His title of Savior when He overcomes it. What a wonder this is!

The first link between my soul and Christ is- not my goodness, but my badness; not my merit, but my misery; not my standing, but my falling; not my riches, but my need. He comes to visit His people, yet not to admire their beauties, but to remove their deformities; not to reward their virtues, but to forgive their sins. Fully, Entirely and Perfectly!

"You Shall Call His Name Jesus: For He WILL SAVE His People From Their Sins." Matthew 1:21

JESUS is nothing at all if He is not a SAVIOR. He is anointed to this very end. His very Name is a sham if He does not SAVE His people from their sins.

This Jesus of Nazareth, the King of kings, and Lord of Lords, is the one and only Savior. He, and none but He, shall save His people. He, and not another, shall save them by His own act and deed. Singly and unaided, He shall save His people. Personally, and not by another, in His own Name, and on His own behalf, He shall, by Himself, purge away His people's sins. He shall do ALL the work, and leave none of it undone; He shall begin it, carry it on, and complete it; and therefore is His Name called Jesus, Savior, because He Shall Fully, Entirely, and Perfectly, Save His People from Their Sins!

Jesus Christ has come to seek and to save those who were lost. If He does not save, He was born in vain, for the object of His birth was the salvation of sinners. If He shall not be a Savior, then His mission in coming to this earth has missed its end, for its design was that lost sinners might be saved.

Lost one, lost one, if there were news that 'an angel' had come to save you, there might be some good cheer in it; but there are better tidings still. God Himself has come! The Infinite, the Almighty, has stooped from the highest heaven that He may pick you up, a poor undone and worthless worm! – copied from Grace Gems

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. Luke 2:8-20