

"When God has something very great to accomplish for His church, it is His will that there should precede it, the extraordinary prayers of His people... when God is about to accomplish great things for His Church, He will begin by remarkably pouring out the spirit of grace and supplication" - Jonathan Edwards.

"Prayer is life passionately wanting, wishing, desiring God's triumph. Prayer is life striving and toiling everywhere and always for that ultimate victory." - George Campbell Morgan

"A man who kneels before God will stand before men." - Leonard Ravenhill

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)

13. Q. How did God create man?

A. God created man, male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures (Gen. 1:26, 27, 28; Col. 3:10, Eph. 4:24).

14. Q. What are God's works of providence?

A. God's works of providence are his most holy, (Ps. 145:17;) wise (Is. 28:29, Ps. 104:24), and powerful preserving (Heb. 1:3) and governing all his creatures, and all their actions (Ps. 103:19; Mt. 10:29, 30, 31).

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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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NOT SAVED

The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. Jeremiah 8:20

Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered? Jeremiah 8:22

Is there a point of no return and no hope with the Lord? It would seem that this was that to which the people were resigned in this sad refrain. What a terrible thought that the day had come and gone when the time of reaping those things that would have preserved life should have long since been gathered to their barns and there was nothing to save them. The picture anticipates the arrival of forces that would be to their destruction and that no evidence was forthcoming that the Lord would prevent their demise. The Psalmist aptly wrote that: *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. Psalms 9:17.* Such words have fallen on deaf ears for centuries and our age is no exception.

The point is clear in this passage that seasons had come and gone and nothing had changed. The people had persisted in their idolatry. They had followed the immoral practices dictated by such religions. They had looked to other nations for their deliverance from their enemies only to have those same nations become their enemies. It would seem that someone along the way would have learned by repeated failures. Albert Einstein defined insanity as: doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. Judah had at this time witnessed the fall of the Northern Kingdom to the Assyrians and had experienced failures typical of those of whom it might be said: “God is not in all their thoughts.”

It is rather that their trust is repeatedly placed where repeated failures have been discovered – their flesh!

A powerful illustration unfolds before our eyes daily in this country. We experience an accelerated downhill slide in morality. We witness open attacks on the things of God which anchored this county at its founding. We witness the perpetration of violence by leaders so-called and the rationalization of the same by others. The same tired rhetoric continues to issue forth from those who would claim to do that which only God can accomplish. Peace and harmony only occur where the Prince of Peace is the center of attention and the One to whom all are submitted. Many will invoke the name of God but deny both His sovereignty and His right to rule. They are the dupes of the devil and glorify the pride of man and will not truly come unto God that they might have life. Thus they continue to deceive all sides with the belief that the problems of men can be solved in the absence of God. While we could not embrace his religion we concur with then presidential candidate Barry Goldwater when he observed: “you cannot legislate love.” In the absence and hatred of the love of God only ruin can be expected.

The question asked in verse 22 seems to be rhetorical. That is, it was asked to reveal that there had been a healing power available to them. The message of the prophets all along

was essentially the same message that Christ preached when He came into the world – “repent ye and believe the Gospel!” It was not necessarily in those words, but the essence of hope to Israel of old was the Lord Himself and not their rituals and sacrifices. We look to Christ and are reminded of: *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. Isaiah 45:22.* In the New Testament we are told: *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; Romans 10:8.*

Salvation is of the Lord and nothing is to be added or taken away from that statement. There are no qualifying factors or conditions to be laid down by man. It must be of the Lord because the requirements are so exacting that none but the Lord could meet them. Salvation is the Lord’s to give. *For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. John 5:21.* That being said we would be reminded that the Gospel is to be preached to every creature. Nations suffer judgment and men go to hell because they choose to do so. Man’s condemnation is confirmed by his own refusal: *The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because they refuse*

to do judgment. Proverbs 21:7. We are further reminded of these words: *Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. Isaiah 65:12.* AND *I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not. Isaiah 66:4.*

There is Balm in Gilead! His name is Jesus. We do not discover salvation in political or religious systems but in a person. Indeed it is to this hope we look: *But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. Malachi 4:2.* It is “with His stripes we are healed.” Even as it appears that the heavy hand of judgment lays upon our nation and the world, the Gospel continues to be preached. It appears that all hope is irreversibly passed, but to the question, “Is there no balm in Gilead?” we reply “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” It is He who is the Lord God Omnipotent and He reigns! *bhs*

Some choice observations:

Listen to the typical gospel presentation nowadays. You’ll hear sinners entreated with words like, “accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior”; “ask Jesus into your heart”; “invite Christ into your life”; or “make a decision for Christ.” You may be so accustomed to hearing those phrases that it will surprise you to learn that none of them is based on biblical terminology. They are the products of a diluted gospel. It is not the gospel according to Jesus.

John MacArthur

I do not come into this pulpit hoping that perhaps somebody will of his own free will turn to Christ. My hope lies in another quarter. I hope that my Master will lay hold of some of them and say, “You are Mine, and you shall be Mine. I claim you for Myself.” My hope arises from the freeness of grace, and not from the freedom of the will.” - Charles Haddon Spurgeon

“And as the circumcised in the flesh, and not in the heart, have no part in God's good promises; even so they that be baptized in the flesh, and not in heart, have no part in Christ's blood.” -William Tyndale

“He has clothed me with the garments of salvation” (Isaiah 61:10a)

“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness ...”

During the time of my residence on a certain island in the Caribbean, a church on that island invited one of my dear friends on another island to minister in a conference. I arranged for him to be lodged at my residence. A member of the church met him at the airport and transported him to my residence. My friend exited the vehicle with only a small case in his hand, and said good-bye to the driver, who then departed. When I asked my friend where his luggage was, he replied that he had not brought any. Certain circumstances had prevented him from bringing dress clothes. But he assumed I would lend these to him during his visit. I was not about to disappoint my dear friend's trust. I therefore clothed him in a pair of my trousers, and one of my shirts, and one of my ties, and one of my sport coats. Upon arriving at the church building in which he was to preach, he struck a pose before his greeters and said, “Don't I look great!” He then explained that he was wearing borrowed garments. On every subsequent occasion he attended the conference that week, he clothed himself in another set of garments borrowed from me. At the end of the conference, he returned to me my clothes and then returned to his home.

Yes, this account is a bit out of the ordinary.

But what I have done, and what has happened to me, goes even further:

I. I came to my heavenly Father's house naked. My friend was received in my house wearing the clothes he had worn from his own house. But God does not permit in His house the clothes I wore – the “filthy rags” of self-righteousness (Isaiah 64:6) and the “the garment defiled by the flesh” (Jude v.23). Therefore He commanded, “Take away the filthy garments from him”; then He promised, “I will clothe you with rich robes” (Zechariah 3:4).

II. And I came to my heavenly Father's house empty-handed. My friend came to my house carrying a small case containing his toiletries. But I came to God empty-handed, for I possessed nothing that would cleanse me enough to stand in His presence (Job 9:30f). And I was “abominable and filthy” (Job 15:16). But I came believing His promise that “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols” (Ezekiel 36:25).

III. I was completely clothed by my heavenly Father. As I did not disappoint my friend's trust in me, neither has God disappointed my trust in Him: “for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness” (present text). But first His Son “washed me from my sins in His own blood” (Revelation 1:5 adapted) and “through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5; see also Psalm 51:7b; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 9:14). Then He clothed me in the righteousness of His Son, “Jehovah Our Righteousness” (Jeremiah 23:6). And whereas my friend wore his own undergarments under the outer garments I supplied to him, God has supplied to me every stitch of clothing I wear. Therefore, from head to toe and from the innermost to the outermost garment, I will “be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith” (Philippians 3:9).

IV. The garments provided to me by my heavenly Father need never to be changed. This is true because Christ, the righteousness in whom I am clothed, is immutable – “For Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). My garments will never need to be cleaned or mended or replaced.

V. I will never be disrobed from the garments provided to me by my heavenly Father. These garments are mine for as long as I lodge in His house. And I will never depart His house, for God's sons abide in His house forever (John 8:35).

VI. “Don't I look great!” My friend clothed in my earthly garments did not look nearly as glorious as I do clothed in Christ. Being clothed in Christ, who covers all I am, I am viewed to be as righteous as God, for God is my righteousness! Surely “I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God.” - Daniel E. Parks