

Do you wish to grow in grace and be a devoted Christian? Be very sure, if you wish it, you could not have a more important question than this—Do you pray? I ask whether you pray, because neglect of prayer is one great cause of backsliding. —J.C. Ryle

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)*

62. Q. What is the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment is, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy: six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it (Ex. 20:8-11).

63. Q. What is required in the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as He hath appointed in His word, expressly, one whole day in seven to be a holy sabbath to Himself (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-14).

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Sunday Morning Bible Study -- 10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship -- 11:00 AM

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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STAND FAST

Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. (Philippians 4:1)

Quite often we address topics that might be met with the thought that this needs no further explanation; it is self-explanatory. To simply echo the exhortation to “stand fast” would seem to be just such thought. But the simple idea of standing begs the question as to where to stand, why we are standing, and why it is set forth with such stress as the Apostle lays on it. I have heard people “take a stand” on some perception of truth they have and to proudly assert their determination to defend it. The encouragement here is nothing like that. He would have them to know of the tenderness with which he addressed them as well as the gentleness of Christ in maintaining their stand in Him.

We have often noted that chapter divisions obscure an important point as it does here. The “therefore” we encounter here points back across this precious epistle. The last verses of the previous chapter are a case in question. *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)*. It would be wise to consider the whole of a book as we consider any conclusion that is drawn by the writer. This is especially true of these shorter epistles.

Paul had presented several things by way of example to encourage them to stand in the

Lord. He had pointed them to the righteousness of God which is by faith in v. 3:9. This he set in opposition to any claim of personal righteousness. His desire was to know Christ (greatly emphasized) which included the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings (v. 3:10). He expressed confidence in his own resurrection (v. 3:11). He pointed to the need of continual growth and attainment in the knowledge of Christ and summarized his quest with the thought that “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The example of Paul was one of self-abnegation.

The “therefore” points us to these and other reasons in this letter to “stand fast.” What is even more compelling here to them and to us is the manner in which Paul identifies them and how he identifies with them. It is here that Paul reveals his deep affection for the Philippian believers. In reading this epistle we soon learn that the feeling was mutual as witnessed in their care for him. It is very possible that such folks as Lydia and the Philippian jailor may have been active in this congregation. The expression that he used here, “dearly beloved,” is one word in the Greek language. Its root is the same word most often used by our Lord in His expressions of love. We might think of it as “beloved ones.” One commentator expressed it thusly: “...a love that is deep-seated, self-sacrificing, thorough, intelligent, and purposeful, a love in which the entire personality takes part... (BNT). Paul

further identified them as “Longed for.” Such yearning was the product of a love that was in imitation of Christ, expressed an intense desire to be with them. Needless to say, they were a source of his joy to him, and gladness of heart was his expression here. He further ties them to the ministry given him. They were the result of that which the Lord has intended. Paul is not here boasting – he is exulting in what Christ has allowed him to do among these people. He had earlier written: *Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; (Philippians 1:4-5)*. Of the Thessalonians he wrote: *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20)*. True believers had the capability of experiencing joy through the blessings of another in complete absence of pride.

The force of logic may be resisted; divine love cannot be. It is with such a strong and loving identity with them that he exhorts them to stand. This stand is not on principle; it is with the Lord. It is “In view of their high calling, the blessings they have already received, and the inheritance that awaits them, let them remain ever firm and steadfast, over against hostile pagans, merely nominal Christians such as legalists and libertines, and the promptings of their own sinful hearts. Let them do so by the continual exercise of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (BNT).”

There is no other foundation than Christ. This is not only a statement of fact, but of an experience of hope in true believers as they

stand thereon in the face of all that should oppose. Again, “stand fast” is translated from one word. Its meaning is to be stationary and to persevere. The Greek scholar Thayer offered three definitions of the word. The first was “to stand firm.” This is in the sense of a soldier standing at his post and would be seen as a military command (MacArthur) which agrees with other commands Paul gives. “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” A second definition is “to persevere, to persist.” In that we are dealing with living truth and a Risen Lord and having received a commission from Him we may understand that we are to firmly persist in the pursuit of that which is given us. Yet, a third definition is “to keep one’s standing.” The divine dignity is placed upon those whom He claims for His own. As such, we have standing with Him and in the world. Many have died at the hands of the haters of Christ, but they did not abandon their standing. They were standing in Christ, and they would not be moved.

Do we hear the loving and longing words of our Beloved Brother Paul “and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation (2 Peter 3:15)?” Do we hear his exhortation elsewhere: *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1)?* The threats of the enemy are all about us. There is a manifest hatred of Christ and His righteousness, and He is openly defied. With what tenderness are we made to see these words and so we would pray that such grace be given that we “so stand fast in the Lord, dearly beloved.” *bhs*

All the crazy stuff we are witnessing in our world today; all the political and cultural machinations are not even remotely a setback for the kingdom of God. If you think they are then you may not be looking at the world with the right perspective. All things are falling out according to God's perfect providence, for His glory. Do not fret when evil men appear to prevail. Their acts will ultimately serve God's holy ends. –Monergism

SIMPLICITY

People have always stumbled at the simplicity of salvation. That is why there are so many cults. Each one has a unique slant on the doctrine of salvation—and each one corrupts the simplicity of the gospel revealed in God's Word (cf. 2 Cor. 11:3) by espousing salvation by human works. Each one of the major cults claims to have a key that unlocks the secret of salvation, yet they are all alike in propagating self-righteous achievement as the way to God. From start to finish, God's Word disproves them all, and in a wonderfully consistent way. Its message, woven through sixty-six books, written over a span of fifteen hundred years by more than forty different authors, is marvelously unified and congruous. The message is simply that God graciously saves repentant sinners who come to Him in faith. There is no secret there, no mystery, no obscurity, and no complexity. If Nicodemus had truly understood God's Word, he would have known that much. —John MacArthur

A chameleon kind of religion

(John Angell James, "The Christian Professor" 1837)

"So that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are faultless in a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world." (Philippians 2:15)

Saving religion is not merely an occasional act--but a permanent habit, resulting from an internal principle.

Saving religion is a principle so fixed as to constitute a new moral nature; and so steadily operative, as to form an unchanging character.

A real Christian is a Christian always, everywhere, and in all companies. He carries his piety with him wherever he goes, as an integral part of himself. It is not like his clothes which may be continually altered, or varied to suit his situation, occupation, and company. He needs his piety everywhere, he loves it everywhere, and is commanded to let it be seen everywhere.

But among most professors of Christianity, there is too much of a chameleon kind of religion, which takes its hue from surrounding objects. This is seen most conspicuously in the conduct of those who have a flexible, yielding, easy-going kind of piety--which accommodates itself to changing circumstances, by little sacrifices of principle and consistency.

J.R. Miller: As the summer sunbeams enter into the flowers and reappear in their lovely hues and sweet fragrance--so does Christ enter into the lives of His redeemed people, and permeate and transform them, until they become like Him in spirit, in character, in disposition, in every feature.

"Until Christ is formed in you." Galatians 4:19

"Christ in you, the hope of glory." Colossians 1:27