

When Judgment Day comes, we will regret the waste of a single moment not used for the glory of Christ. We will, however, not regret one moment we spent diligently studying God's Word and hiding it in our heart. We will only wish we'd spent more time doing this. —Andrew Davis

The gospel is about being close to God. To do that, Jesus identified with you even to the point of entering into your afflictions. —Ed Welch

The Baptist Catechism (Keach's Catechism)

1677

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

Q. 75. What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment forbids the taking away our own life, or the life of our neighbor unjustly, or whatsoever tends thereto.

(Gen. 4:10-11; 9:6; Matt. 5:21-26)

Q. 76. Which is the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment is, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

(Exodus 20:14)

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

WXTH-LP 101.7 FM— In Richwood

Services:

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

Volume 15, No. 50

December 11, 2022

PEACE AND THE GOD OF PEACE

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7)

Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. (Philippians 4:9)

Most of the New Testament epistles begin with the writer's desire for peace in them to whom they write. And while the very concept of peace remains a mystery to most, it is to be desired as a state in which the things of God are gratefully received with great calmness of mind and heart. Peace is mysterious in that the world knows nothing of true peace. They talk of it in relative terms and often with concern for that which concerns their immediate situation. Here we are taught that the saints are in possession of something that passes their ability to understand. Sinful natures tend to expect peace through compliance – they think that having all their way will result in personal peace. The child of God finds peace in the presence of the Lord and that which is communicated to him from that assuring presence. He, the believer, knows that there can be no peace with any where there is no peace with God. Thus, we learn that peace is an elusive thing and is to be had only by the operations of the Spirit in applying the grace of God. True peace is to be found only in harmony with God and that can be found only through Christ Jesus.

The peace of God (that which God gives) is a continual source of amazement and defies understanding with believers. It has now been several years since we went through the ordeal of my wife having brain surgery. Prior to the

surgery she had thoroughly researched the procedure and was somewhat frightened at the prospect of being awake through it all. In retrospect, the thing she talks about the most is the peace she experienced throughout the procedure. I am sure that most believers have had similar experiences where fear and anxiety was displaced by this precious peace of God.

The desire and need for peace are most acutely felt where sin is revealed to us and in us – it is that above all else that separated between men and God. We read the mournful cry of Jeremiah as he endeavored to bring the issue of the sins of his people to bear: *For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. (Jeremiah 8:11)*. Sadly, these and many others are put at ease with their sin rather than suing for peace with God. True peace is that which comes from God, and it rests with God. The peace of God comes when anxiety is addressed, and requests are made known to God (v. 6). The peace of the false prophets is the granting of self-gratification and is not peace at all.

One wrote of peace that it is “that great quietness of mind which God alone gives in Christ.” This peace is made by the blood of Christ -- *And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things*

unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. (Colossians 1:20). We would here address the peace of God in knowledge, experience, and practice. Thus, such assuring words as we find here define the nature of the work of Christ on the cross, He being the peace offering that brings reconciliation. It is an experienced matter in that the awareness of sin in us cries out for reconciliation with God. It is practiced in the matter of bearing witness in word and deed of this peace in us and the source of it. It is that which is preached in the "Gospel of Peace" as we consider, *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; (Ephesians 6:14-15)*. It is manifested as a peace of conscience and comes from viewing what God has done in Christ. The bringing in of justification (Romans 5:1), Righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21), and Atonement (Romans 5:11).

This peace passes understanding in that it was a determination of the Godhead, in covenant, before the foundation of the World and is therefore a matter of eternal concern with God Himself. It cannot be understood in that it is experienced despite all that conspires to destroy it. (Help thou my unbelief!) The natural man cannot discern that which is the "fruit of the Spirit." Most of us cannot understand why we should have such peace. And along with it comes the ability to meditate on such things as portray true beauty. Sandwiched between these two verses we are given a list of things to think about which would not be pleasant at all were it not for the "peace

of God." Thus, our minds and hearts are kept. The peace of God is to rule or be the way of life in us (Colossians 3:15).

It is the peace of God because He is the God of Peace. Paul bore witness to the things he preached. He was not boasting; rather he was commending to them the same things that had anchored his own joy in Christ. Again, he addresses the matter of such peace experienced as he uses such terms as learned, received, heard, and seen. It is in this way that Paul is saying to them do these things and enjoy a consciousness of the presence of the God of Peace. That entails who He is and what He has done: *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, (Hebrews 13:20)*. It assures us of what He will do: *And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. (Romans 16:20)*. Furthermore, we are told why He will do it: *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)*.

Our Lord preciousy promised that which eludes so many. He assures His own that He is in possession of this peace and will leave it to be experienced by them as well. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27)*. I would end this with the precious benediction that Paul left to the Romans: *Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen. (Romans 15:33)*.
bhs

What other book besides the Bible could be heard in public assemblies from year to year, with an attention that never tires, and an interest that never cloy [becomes uninteresting]? —Robert Hall

"Have you received the Holy Spirit?" Acts 19:2

What are the evidences of having received the Holy Spirit?

If we have received the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus stands high in our estimation, and our views of ourselves are very humbling. And just in proportion to the power and depth of the Spirit's work, will be our conceptions of the glory, grandeur, and excellency of the Savior; and our discoveries of the depravity, pollution, weakness, and misery of our own hearts.

If, therefore, we have heart-affecting views of the glory of Christ and His finished work, and if we lie low in the dust under a sense of our weakness and worthlessness, so that we are brought to depend wholly on Christ, and on Christ alone--we have surely received the Holy Spirit.

Also, if we have received the Holy Spirit, there is in us a deep-rooted, abiding hatred to sin, all sin, especially sin in ourselves. What was once our darling sin, has become the object of our hatred, and against that sin we set a double guard. For nothing do we sigh so often, for nothing do we desire so ardently--as holiness. The Holy Spirit always sets the whole soul against sin, and longing for perfect holiness.

True, our old desires toward sin will sometimes revive, but then we loath ourselves on account of it, mourn over it, and confess it before God. The cry of the soul is, "Holiness Lord, more holiness! Deep, penetrating, all-pervading holiness!"

Now, if we hate sin everywhere, all sin, and especially the sin that dwells in us; and if we love holiness, admire holiness, pray for holiness, pant for holiness, and strive for holiness--then there is no doubt that we have received the Holy Spirit.

Once more, if we have received the Holy Spirit, then we are ruled by God's Word; we do not follow custom, or allow our desires or prejudices to dictate our course. In all times of difficulty, when in any perplexity, something seems to say within us, "To the law and to the testimony," and to the precepts of the New Testament, we turn.

The Word of Christ is the law of the true believer. Everything short of it, or beyond it, or beside it, or contrary to it--is sin! "Only what Jesus commands, all that Jesus commands, and because Jesus commands!" is the language of the soul.

And while we thus make the Word of Jesus our rule, we deny ourselves. We deny our own wills, our own passions, our own desires, our likes and dislikes. We are before Him, as He was before His Father, when He cried out, "Not My will, but may Your will be done." If, then, we make the Word of God our guide, and habitually deny ourselves for Christ's sake--we may rest assured that we have received the Holy Spirit.

Reader, "Have you received the Holy Spirit?" Remember, "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him!" Romans 8:9 – James Smith

It is because we have such shallow views of God's love—that we have such defective views of God's dealings. We blindly interpret His providential dealings—because we so imperfectly read the engravings of His heart!

--Octavius Winslow