

Prayer is never about asking God to submit his awesome power to your will and plan; prayer is an act of personal submission to the always-right will of God.

—Paul David Tripp

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)

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).

15. Q. What special act of providence did God exercise towards man in the estate wherein he was created?

A. When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him upon condition of perfect obedience: forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death (Gal. 3:12; Gen. 2:17).

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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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THE SONS OF ZEBEDEE

And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:44-45.)

It was at this time during our Lord's earthly ministry that the twelve seemed to sense that significant change was about to occur. They were seeing an increased intensity in the Lord's actions and an increase in the opposition to His message. They were both amazed and alarmed, but not dissuaded from their thought of the Kingdom being at hand in a material and political way. Despite our Lord's declarations about the near future, they persisted in their thoughts of earthly rule and domination over those that were then in power. Previous references to both what was in the future for Him and the way they were to conduct themselves were either not understood or not highly regarded. They were still clamoring for position in a kingdom that was not coming.

Earlier in this chapter we find the reason for this rebuke from the Lord. The sons of Zebedee (James and John) and their mother approached the Lord to ask a favor of Him. Their desire was to be seated next to the Lord in the coming kingdom. They had, no doubt, an understanding of how political kingdoms were organized and were thinking in those terms. Their request, while self-centered, was not without reason on their part. They had been taken with Him to the Mount of Transfiguration and were considered in the inner circle along with Peter. They may have believed that all the twelve were to be in positions of authority. They just wanted to be in the highest positions. Some have thought it

might be driven by their affection for Him. The fact that there was an element of pride and self-promotion was evident from our Lord's reaction to their request. It was obvious that they did not understand the nature of the Kingdom and they did not understand the essence of what was required to obtain full benefit. The only thing that could be said to their credit was the fact that they maintained faith in Him and looked to Him for whatever was to come.

His response to them was quite direct and to the point. “Ye know not what ye ask...” “...can you drink of the cup that I drink of..?” He proceeded to inform them of what must be done and further to show that only He could accomplish it. (v. 38). They did not understand His reference to the cup that must be fully consumed. In fact, when He began to drain the cup most of them fled. They did not know the intensity of the Lord's identity with His people in that He would bear their sins in His body on the tree and that it would be by His stripes that both they and we are healed. They did not know the nature of the Kingdom itself, the vastness of all that was included (they were quite nearsighted in this matter). They manifested the failure of many to contemplate both the eternity and the infinity of God and His domain. Despite His admonition, they insisted that they could meet the requirements.

And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup

that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: (Mark 10:39). What they did not understand was that like Paul, they would come to understand: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)*. It certainly came to pass that they suffered for Christ's sake. James was martyred and John was exiled. Similar things occurred with all of them. But the desire of Paul was to be made conformable to His death and he suffered much as he persisted in preaching the Gospel. Peter, in his advanced years, would relate happiness to suffering. Their request did not sit well with the ten other apostles.

The displeasure of the ten exposed resentment that is born out of competition. Such attempts are looked upon as unseemly by most even among the unregenerate. He continued by contrasting the worldly approach to ruling with that way which He would exemplify. The Gentiles exercise Lordship over their subjects. In contrast He said: *But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: (Mark 10:43)*. Their way was to exercise authority over others compared to the way of the cross which is going down in order to be brought up. He would point to Himself as the greatest of examples. So, it is that greatness in the economy of grace is measured in servitude. He was turning the world upside down for them. Not only would He accomplish their salvation, but He would also

thereby put on display what they would later come to understand. That in going to the cross, He would establish the Gospel principle in the lives of all who come to believe. It is the greatest of errors to serve with a view to reward. Identity with the Lord is its own reward. So, reaching the highest position would mean being the "servant" of all. And those attaining that status do not think themselves worthy. We are honored to serve Him, not in greatness after the example of the world.

We are delighted to honor our worthy Lord. We truly see Him as "God manifest in the flesh." But we must realize that He was truly man and as such represented us in every way. His purpose in coming into the world was not to be served; it was rather that He serve. He would drive this point home in several ways. One glaring incident was the washing of the disciples' feet. "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." But then He proceeded to the cross where He gave "His life a ransom for many." Paul would direct the Philippians to "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Many, in their thoughts of serving the Lord, think in terms of specific acts of obedience. He rather directs us to *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:29-30)*.

Our exalted Lord continues to serve us in that He intercedes for us. To imitate Christ Jesus is to endeavor to be the servant of all. O that the Spirit of Christ might be evident in us. *bhs*

Prayer, for the Christian

Prayer, for the Christian, is not merely talking to God, but responding to the One who has initiated toward us. He has spoken first. This is not a conversation we start, but a relationship into which we've been drawn. His voice breaks the silence. Then, in prayer, we speak to the God who has spoken. Our asking and pleading and requesting originate not from our emptiness, but his fullness. Prayer doesn't

begin with our needs, but with his bounty. Its origin is first in adoration, and only later in asking. Prayer is a reflex to the grace he gives to the sinners he saves. It is soliciting his provision in view of the power he has shown. Prayer is the glad response from the bride, in a joyfully submissive relationship with her Groom, responding to his sacrificial and life-giving initiatives. And so it is stunning grace we find in such a simple statement from the psalmist, which applies to every Christian, "The Lord accepts my prayer" (Ps. 6:9). –David Mathis, *Habits of Grace*

"WE WERE GENTLE AMONG YOU"

In places where slavery has been practiced, some slaveholding mothers had their infants nursed by their slave. The slave therefore nursed two infants, both her own and that of her owner. She nursed them both in a different manner. She nursed her own infant out of love for it and as its mother. She nursed the other infant out of duty to her owner and as her surrogate.

Paul the apostle applies this analogy when speaking for ministers of Jesus Christ in 1 Thessalonians 2:7. God has entrusted the care of His children to His ministers, for which reason we call them "my little children" (Galatians 4:19; 1 John 2:1; 3:18). We nurse them with "the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2).

But we do not do so as a slave, merely performing a duty to someone else and lacking deep affection to those we feed.

Rather, as Paul says in applying the analogy above, "we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children" (1 Thessalonians 2:7).

– Daniel E. Parks

You will never come to the bottom of these depths! -- Robert Murray McCheyne

"Yes, He is altogether lovely! This is my Beloved--and this is my Friend!" Song of Solomon 5:16

Learn much of the Lord Jesus. For every look at yourself--take ten looks at Christ!

Such infinite majesty, and yet such meekness and grace--and all for sinners, even the chief!

Unfathomable oceans of grace are in Christ for you! Dive and dive again--you will never come to the bottom of these depths! Yes, He is altogether lovely!

Live much in His smiles--bask in His beams. Feel His all-seeing eye settled on you in love, and repose in His almighty arms!

Live near to Him--and all worldly things will appear little to you in comparison!

Lord, make me as holy as a pardoned sinner can be!