

There is no point in praying for victory over temptation if we are not willing to make a commitment to say no to it. —Jerry Bridges

The Baptist Catechism

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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21. Q. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it (Rom. 5:12, to the end; Eph. 2:1, 2, 3; James 1:14, 15; Mt. 15:19).

22. Q. What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. All mankind by their fall lost communion with God (Gen. 3:8, 10, 24), are under his wrath and curse (Eph. 2:2, 3; Gal. 3:10), and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever (Lam. 3:39; Rom. 6:23; Mt. 25:41, 46).

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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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### HIS SHEEP DISTINGUISHED

*But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. (John 10:26-28)*

To say that someone looks distinguished is often meant as a compliment indicating that their appearance is out of the ordinary in a positive way. It may refer to how one is dressed. It may refer to how one carries himself. But the main thought here is that of being different in an identifiable manner. So, it is that the Lord's people are made to appear different in that they bear the image of Christ within, and the result is seen in their outward actions. That being said, the Pharisees distinguished themselves as well in the matter of their unbelief.

They had been severely stung by the encounters with the man born blind and had heard as He called them blind and had charged them with being thieves and robbers. Not only did they resent Him and His strong words against them, but the people were listening to Him and the message of love and righteousness rather than to the message of legalism which they advocated and defended. Here, He appeared at the Feast of the Dedication when many were about, and He continued to declare the message of the Kingdom.

Without divine intervention men will persist against all proof in denying God and the deity of Christ and will seek to destroy both Him and His testimony. These things persist today as the world seeks to attack from all corners. Thus, we rejoice in that we have “Heard the joyful sound,” and have experienced the fact that Jesus does

indeed save. His sheep hear His voice!

In the preceding verses we read that Jesus revealed Himself to them as He walked in Solomon's Porch. They came to Him with a challenge (as they often did without success) and certainly had ulterior motives. They asked Him how long He would make them wait before telling them plainly that He was the Christ. Their question was, no doubt, a veiled attempt to entice Him to make a statement for which they might charge Him with blasphemy. In fact, He had told them. He often referred to being sent from God and that presented in such a way as to connect with the prophecies they should have recognized. They did not believe that He is the Word made flesh. They had witnessed overwhelming evidence of His power and ability. Miracles had been performed in their presence. Powerful faith had been evidenced in those following Him. Powerful displays of His ability to discern their intent and defeat their arguments had been shown. And Powerful arguments against their traditions and interpretations of Scripture had been given. They had seen abundant witness to the fact that He was the Son of God, the Messiah. They had heard the same message the disciples heard. This was an act of open disobedience to the command to “repent ye and believe the Gospel.” They went to the opposite extreme and accused Him of having a devil – the height of depravity reached.

So, He replied to them, "...I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." He then proceeded to give them the reason for their unbelief. "Ye are not of My sheep." Their animosity toward Him declared it to be so. The fact of predestination and election is here asserted. This is a much-neglected text because of this statement. The pride of man is confounded by statements such as this.

His sheep are distinguished first by their response to the Gospel call. There is mutual responsiveness between Him and His sheep. It is that effectual call that is here called "His voice," and they, upon hearing that voice, are brought to attention. That call is of "no uncertain sound." It is that effectual work of the Spirit of God brought to bear. They sense themselves to be burdened and heavily laden and come at that loving call. They are further distinguished in that He knows them. He knows them in a way of commitment to their care and security. Has known them from all eternity. *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (Ephesians 1:4).* He knows them in the way of full identity with them in all their earthly sojourn and will know them throughout all eternity. They are further distinguished in their response to Him and His call. They hear His voice and recognize that it is Him. And they follow Him. It is said of some of the disciples that they "straightway left their nets and followed Him." See Matthew 4:19-22. While that illustrated a call to serve, it nevertheless is an indication of the effect that His voice has on His sheep. It is without hesitation and is confirmation to Him and to

them.

They are further distinguished in that the response to His voice is both declared and heard in an unconditional manner. They are not made an offer on the condition of being a good sheep. And He does not solicit them to "let Him" do anything – they follow Him. They are distinguished in their possession of eternal life – the very life He possesses. Their life is secure, and they shall never perish either by oppression or judgment. He, the Good Shepherd has laid down His life for His sheep and ended all ability of any to destroy, the wrath of God is satisfied, and we walk in the "newness of life." They are further distinguished in that they are both secured in the hand of the Son, and the hand of the Father (v. 29). The assurance is that it is the love of Christ that secures, and the greatness of God prohibits any force that might presume to overcome.

We would briefly answer some foolish arguments that invariably arise. I have heard it said that "you can jump out of the Father's hand." We understand that as sheep we have no desire to leave such love and care – such would be against all that which exists by virtue of being "partakers of the divine nature." Our blessed Lord has so identified with His sheep that He and they are inseparable. He is One with us, and He is One with the Father. We hear Him declare, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." God could no more lose one of His sheep than He could lose Christ to whom they are given.

*I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly. (Psalms 85:8). bhs*

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I saw more clearly than ever, that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord.

—George Mueller

Blessed in Christ

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” (Ephesians 1:3)

This little phrase, “in Christ,” conveys a world of doctrinal truth with great blessing to the believer. Positionally speaking, God has actually “raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6). God in effect sees us as “in Christ,” and this wonderful position at God’s right hand implies great honor.

It is well to note similar phrases throughout Scripture. Paul assures us that we were “chosen...in him before the foundation of the world” (1:4), “accepted in the beloved” (1:6), and “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (2:10).

He is the one “in whom also we have obtained an inheritance” (1:11) and “in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (2:22). We have the glorious future promise that God will “gather together in one all things in Christ” (1:10) “according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places” (1:19-20).

Therefore, in our exalted position in Him, in the heavenly places, we do indeed enjoy “all spiritual blessings.” This doctrinal truth provides us with the incentive and power to live a practical Christian life that is genuinely consistent with our high calling and position in Him.

This is the basis of the many New Testament exhortations to the believer to live daily “in Christ.” For example, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him” (Colossians 2:6). Therefore, since “ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God....For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:1-3). --

Henry M. Morris, *Days of Praise*

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The Speaking God Who Listens First sounds his voice. By his word, he reveals himself and expresses his heart, and unveils his Son as the culmination of his speaking. By his word, he creates (Gen. 1:3) and re-creates (2 Cor. 4:4), not just individual members, but a body called the church (which is the means of grace we’ll turn to in part 3). And wonder of wonders, not only does he express himself and bid us hear his voice, but he wants to hear ours. The speaking God not only has spoken, but he also listens—he stops, he stoops, he wants to hear from you. He stands ready to hear your voice. Christian, you have the ear of God. We call it prayer. –David Mathis, *Habits of Grace*

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When we are young we may die; when we are old we must die. Whatever our situation at present may be, we need, therefore, to be always ready to die.

--J. Beeke and C. Bogosh, *Death and Dying*