

A great sermon dropped into an audience of hundreds or thousands will do its work; but if this world is ever to be brought to God, it will be through little sermons preached by private Christians to an audience of one. —De Witt Talmage

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)

32. Q. How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us (John 1:11,12) by his Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5,6).

33. Q. How doth the spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. The Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us (Eph. 1:13, 14; John 6:37, 39; Eph. 2:8), and thereby uniting us to Christ, in our effectual calling (Eph. 3:17; 1 Cor. 1:9).

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

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

Volume 17, No. 16

April 21, 2024

THE SIN OF NOT PRAYING

Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way: Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you. (1 Samuel 12:23-24)

It is of great significance that Samuel made this statement despite the treatment he had received at the hand of the Israelites. I am not sure I could have or would have reacted in that way. When Pilate submitted to the will of the people concerning our Lord, he simply washed his hands regarding the matter. Samuel had experienced great hurt and disappointment at the hands of his people but had no liberty to abandon them.

This chapter records Samuel's defense of his integrity before them and before God. He challenged them to find any fault with him. While we know that Samuel was a sinner saved by the grace of God, like others he manifested the righteousness and presence of God in his actions toward them. He further reminded them of the history of failures among the people and so identified them with their fathers. We often marvel at the longsuffering of God in matters dealing with Old Testament Israel in the matters of their disobedience and idolatry. But then, we marvel at our own salvation and His continued manifestation of His grace in keeping us. We are often reminded of the need to be “cleansed from all unrighteousness.”

The fact that Samuel saw this duty as before the Lord speaks volumes to our own approach to praying and those for whom we pray. It is enough that we see that the Bible everywhere sets before us the necessity, duty, and delight of

praying. We are, in times of desperation, driven to seek the Lord with all our hearts and are effectively cut off from all other resources. We are commanded to pray. *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. (1 Timothy 2:8).* And elsewhere, Paul bids us to *Pray without ceasing. (1 Thessalonians 5:17).* The songwriter expressed it well in writing “O the pure delight of a single hour that before Thy throne I spend.” This is in keeping with the words of the Psalmist in writing, *Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. (Psalms 37:4-5).* It would seem that all these things were incorporated into Samuel's commitment here. Here we are shown that it is a sin not to pray.

As for me! It is easy to observe that, both in scripture and our own lives, that God often gives us what we want, and we discover it to be to our hurt. Such was about to be the case with the Israelites in the matter of King Saul. How easy it would have been for Samuel to have reacted in a vindictive and/or uncaring manner. They had rejected the wise leadership the Lord had blessed them with through Samuel and it certainly affected him in a personal way. It is at this point that Samuel was driven to consider his own relationship with the Lord. This would not be to him a matter of resignation. He clearly saw

himself as the servant of the Lord first and thus could not abandon this aspect of his duty before the Lord. It is here that we are reminded of the words of Joshua: “but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” And Samuel accepted his personal accountability before the Lord.

God forbid! Why would Samuel think such a thing to be sin? It was enough that the sense of necessity and duty were laid heavily upon him and, he sensed that this was a special manifestation of the will of God. It would not be a sin against them – it would be against the Lord if he did not pray for them. David would later acknowledge, “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.” He knew that these were the Lord’s covenant people. In the previous verse he had reminded the people of their standing with the Lord: *For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name’s sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people. (1 Samuel 12:22)*. It is a different note in the Lord’s message to Hosea -- *Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone. (Hosea 4:17)*. Samuel was never given leave to cease caring for them and he sensed the same from the Lord. He had a lifelong identity with them and that would continue. The Lord sent an unseasonal thunderstorm to confirm the validity of these things (see verses 17-18). Furthermore, there was some evidence that they had repented and were turning. Should it not be the desire of all who know the mercy and grace of God to desire that others share therein despite what we see of their attitude toward our Lord. How better to express this than to pray for them. Samuel’s

desire was that they have all goodness bestowed on them as he sensed that they needed it.

I will teach you! David had a similar thought in Psalm 51. As a result of his repentance and subsequent forgiveness his commitment was “Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.” Samuel’s commitment to them was to teach them a proper way before the Lord. They were to fear the Lord exclusively. Elsewhere that is confirmed to us as the “beginning of wisdom.” It was the ways in which they had been brought up. In times to come these people would come to fear other things and would abandon the fear of the Lord. We are sweetly reminded that Jesus is the Way, The Truth, and the Life.

They were to serve the Lord from the heart. How easy it is to go through the motions of service and obedience and be far removed from serving the Lord. Again, we are reminded of the words of our Lord: *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. (Matthew 15:8)*.

Incorporated in that way is the matter of thanksgiving. How easily we forget. Thanksgiving and remembrance are an essential part of praying and should be included in our witness and teaching. In Isaiah we read: *Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. (Isaiah 51:1)*.

O that we may be delivered from the sin of not praying. *bhs*

THE GOSPEL PREACHER’S PRAYER

“Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their hearts back again.” (I Kings 18:36-37)

This passage of scripture is underlined in my Bible, and I usually read it before I preach. It is not a mantra or a motto, but rather, for me, a reminder of what I've been assigned to do and a prayer unto God, that He might get all the glory ... that He would reveal Himself in His true character, and that if anything is accomplished, folks would know that He did it.

– Tim James, pastor in Cherokee, North Carolina (Cited by Daniel Parks).

Meditating on Dying

Intellectually we know that dying and death are real and certain, but emotionally and spiritually we are often not able to face it. We postpone making our wills and preparing for our funerals. We find it challenging to stand beside a casket for any length of time to let the reality of death sink deep into us. Even our language betrays us: we speak of passing away or expiring rather than death. We speak of memorial parks rather than graveyards. Have you ever tried to meditate for even ten minutes on the fact that you are dying and on your inevitable death and afterlife? By nature that is nearly impossible to do. Even as Christians, it can be difficult. We can spend scores of hours planning a two-week vacation on another continent, but can scarcely spend one hour planning for a never-ending eternity.

--Joel Beeke and Christopher Bogosh, *Dying and Death*

Uncover and Confess Sin

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. (Proverbs 28:13) Here is the way of mercy for a guilty and repenting sinner. He must cease from the habit of covering sin. This is attempted by falsehood, which denies sin; by hypocrisy, which conceals it; by boasting, which justifies it; and by loud profession, which tries to make amends for it. The sinner's business is to confess and forsake. The two must go together. Confession must be honestly made to the Lord Himself, and it must include within itself acknowledgment of the wrong, sense of its evil, and abhorrence of it. We must not throw the fault upon others, nor blame circumstances, nor plead natural weakness. We must make a clean breast of it and plead guilty to the indictment. There can be no mercy till this is done. Furthermore, we must forsake the evil; having owned our fault, we must disown all present and future intent to abide in it. We cannot remain in rebellion and yet dwell with the King's majesty. The habit of evil must be quitted, together with all places, companions, pursuits, and books which might lead us astray. Not for confession, nor for reformation, but in connection with them we find pardon by faith in the blood of Jesus.

--C. H. Spurgeon, *Faith's Checkbook*