

If you want to see what judgment looks like, go to the cross. If you want to see what love looks like, go to the cross.

—D.A. Carson

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)

50. Q. Which is the first commandment?

A. The first commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before me (Ex. 20:3).

51. Q. What is required in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment requireth us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God and our God (1 Chron. 28:9; Deut. 26:17), and to worship and glorify him accordingly (Mt. 4:10; Ps. 29:2).

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsi@msn.com

Website: www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com

Services:

Sunday Morning 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 17, No. 25

June 23, 2024

FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:14).

And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:16-17).

One of the most difficult doctrines to comprehend is that of the dual nature of Christ. We who are accustomed to dealing in terms of what we see with our natural eyes can believe and receive the facts of the virgin birth and that which occurred in Bethlehem. But to see Him as God incarnate presents a difficulty to finite minds. We who believe may, by His tender mercies believe it and embrace Him as such. This difficulty has led to outright denial of the deity of Christ by many down through the ages and there are those who continue in that way even today. It is not necessary to fully comprehend the union of the two natures of our Lord (it may be impossible to understand it), but we must believe it to be so. It is important that we understand as much as we can as to why He came in the flesh. He is God manifest in the flesh. To fully identify with us in both life and death it was necessary that He dwell with us as one of us and that without sin.

We would be reminded of the connection between v. 1 and v. 14. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1).* Both declare the deity of the Word. The word “dwelt” here is understood as “tabernacled” or tented among us. John Gill remembered the rough outward appearance of the wilderness Tabernacle. But then we consider the fine things that were concealed from view by the outer coverings. We

are afforded a view of the very things that were figurative of the work of redemption that would be carried out through Him of Whom it was said “...there is no beauty that we should desire him.” It was in that Tabernacle that Jehovah manifested His presence with them of old.

The glory beheld by John and other eyewitnesses appeared both in His walk and His transfiguration. That view of Him was hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. The thought of “beheld” is one of intention. They beheld as those seeking to understand and interpret the object they were beholding. While the sight was physical, it extended on to scrutiny, wonderment, and contemplation. As they walked with Him, John’s eye and mind saw more. It is to be remembered that John wrote these things many years later and knew the Gospel outcome. It is as John recalls the experience of walking with Him and the glory began to appear. (Baker’s commentary indicated that they penetrated some of the mystery. They sensed His glory and majesty as that which could have only come from One who came from the Father.

He was full of Grace – not merely graciousness, but the very substance of all that was required for salvation, and Truth as the final reality. John Gill expressed it in this way: “...he dwelt among men, and appeared to have a fulness of each of these: for this clause is not to

be joined with the glory of the only begotten, as if this was a branch of that; but regards him as incarnate, and in his office, as Mediator; who, as such, was full of "grace"; the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit; of all the blessings of grace, of justifying, pardoning, adopting, sanctifying, and persevering grace; of all the promises of grace; of all light, life, strength, comfort, peace, and joy: and also of truth, of all Gospel truths; and as he had the truth, the sum, and substance of all the types and prophecies concerning him in him; and as he fulfilled all his own engagements, and his Father's promises; and as possessed of sincerity towards men, and faithfulness and integrity to God."

It is with great delight that we read that the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily and then to read "And ye are complete in Him..." John reports that they had received the fruitfulness of grace and life from Him, they had been given spiritual identity, and they had God identified to them, and had assurance given them of His interest in them. And so, they had been made partakers of the divine nature. And there was Grace for Grace. The thought is literally of "grace in place of grace." (Some think this to mean the grace that brought the Law being replaced by the Grace of Christ). Another thought is that of grace to enable the graces given. We think of such things as justification, sanctification, repentance, faith, and growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We have assurance that where there is salvation there is a continuous supply of grace to partake thereof. Perhaps our thoughts should turn to the words of Jeremiah: *It is of the*

LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23). It is to be noted that there is a freshness to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Like the manna of old, today's grace carries us over to a new supply for the day to come. Like the waves on the seashore, grace just keeps coming

It is to be noted that the Law is good, and that Moses was graciously provided with that which would declare the holiness of God and would come to find men in absolute need of grace through Christ our Lord. The Law could declare but could not save. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Romans 8:3-4).* What joy we experience as we consider the glory we have beheld in Christ Jesus: *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6).*

How shall we ever do justice to such a passage as this. In attempting to glorify God we are left without dimensions in that He is infinite, without words in that His majesty leaves us speechless. We simply stand in awe and declare with Paul, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (Romans 11:33).* bhs

A DEFINITION OF PRAYER

"...prayer is both conversation and encounter with God. These two concepts give us a definition of prayer and a set of tools for deepening our prayer lives. The traditional forms of prayer—adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication—are concrete practices as well as profound experiences. We must know the awe of praising his glory, the intimacy of finding his grace, and the struggle of asking his

help, all of which can lead us to know the spiritual reality of his presence. Prayer, then, is both awe and intimacy, struggle and reality. These will not happen every time we pray, but each should be a major component of our prayer over the course of our lives.”

--Tim Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy With God*

OUR LAST OPPORTUNITY

After preaching recently in a certain city, the pastor in that place showed to me a picture taken of congregants who heard me preach there on a previous occasion some years ago. He pointed to a certain person in the picture, identified that one as not professing Christ when the picture was taken, and said that one perished in a storm a few hours after hearing me preach. He declared that I had preached the gospel of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to that perishing soul, for he yet remembered the Scripture expounded and the message preached. But to the best of his knowledge, that one perished as an unbeliever, having heard of Christ but not coming to Him for salvation.

Two grave facts arose in my mind. First, I preached to one who perished a few hours afterward. Second, that one perished a few hours after hearing me preach.

Regarding the first fact: What does a preacher preach to a soul about to hear preaching for the last time and afterward die? God's preacher preaches the same thing he always preaches. For he realizes every time he preaches that some hearer may hear preaching for the last time and afterward die. Since God's preacher is concerned for the souls of his hearers, he preaches Jesus Christ and His gospel. Other preachers will preach whatever else they normally preach.

Regarding the second fact: Do you realize that you may die without an opportunity to hear the gospel again? Do not perish outside Christ, an unbeliever in Him. “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 4:7). “Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:6f). --Daniel E. Parks

What We Do Know

In our uncertainty about various particular meanings in the providential circumstances of our lives, we do know with clarity and certainty, from God's word, that there are some purposes he is always pursuing.

We know, for example, that God is always calling the world to repent, and giving opportunity to turn to him (Luke 13:1-5; Acts 17:30). He is always building his church, saving and sanctifying his people, intensifying their worship, shattering hopelessness, strengthening faith and courage, giving joy in affliction, and creating love in their hearts (Matthew 16:18). And he is always humbling the proud (1 Peter 5:6), including putting to shame the principalities and powers (Colossians 2:15).

--David Mathis