

The world is a flattering enemy, it kills by embracing. Whom the world kisses, it betrays. Is
Heaven in your eye, and Christ in your heart, and the world under your feet?

--Thomas Watson

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)

52. Q. What is forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment forbiddeth the denying (Ps. 14: 1), or not worshipping and glorifying the true God (Rom. 1:21), as God and our God (Ps. 81:10, 11), and the giving of that worship and glory to any other, which is due unto him alone (Rom. 1:25, 26).

53. Q. What are we especially taught by these words before me, in the first commandment?

A. These words before me, in the first commandment teach us, that God, who seeth all things, taketh notice of and is much displeased with the sin of having any other god (Ex. 8:5, to the end).

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Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

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THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

Volume 17, No. 26

June 30, 2024

THE RECORD AND THE CONFIDENCE

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:11-13)

These words are included as John begins to bring this epistle to a conclusion. He has effectually drawn attention to the witness of the Sonship of Christ and the confidence that is to be had through believing the record. So, he addresses the matter of salvation and the nature of it in true belief. We would look to avoiding gray areas as to a proper relationship with Christ and the assurance that may be had in believing the record of His Son. The conclusions that John offers engender hope and encouragement to seek unto God in Christ. There is a tendency in men to debate other issues to the exclusion of this most crucial issue. We do well to return often to the basics as to why I am saved. It was in the beginning as it is in the end: “who do you say that I the Son of Man am?”

John had been moving to a conclusion from the 4th chapter with the warnings about the spirits and evidence of being born again with emphasis. And so, he comes to the matter of “The record.” The word here speaks of evidence given judicially or generally. It is the report, the testimony, the witness. It speaks of the office committed to the prophets of testifying concerning future events. The Record is: God gave us eternal life. According to A. T. Robertson “God gave” is aorist in the Greek meaning that it was once and for all time. Then the guarantee for the future is assured. We are reminded of the words of Jude: *Beloved, when I gave all*

diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 1:3). Again, the thought is of that delivered once and is unchanging. Herein is declared that which we so joyfully repeat from John elsewhere: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16).* And from here we understand that this life given is in His Son. Thus, we read, *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:3-4).* We are as secure as is Christ. We not only experience the sweetness of fellowship with Him, but we also experience life in Him.

In verse 12, this life in Christ is characterized as a possession. Many years ago I read a sermon by J. C. Philpot entitled *Life Given for a Prey.* His text was, *And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest. (Jeremiah 45:5).* The theme of the message was that life would be pursued but attainable. This is a good thought for perseverance. But here we are told that both the Son and the life that is in the Son are a

possession. John Gill saw this as having spiritual and experimental knowledge of Him. He is sensed and embraced in the heart. The life is in the Son, quickened in Him and having eternal life (living) for the future and the earnest of it in evidence now. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)*. “Therefore because of faith, God’s Son and the believer are inseparable.” Without the Son there is none of the above, only condemnation. From the words of John, the Baptist: *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. (John 3:36)*. The songwriter expressed his view of heaven as “where my possessions lie.”

The phrase “we know” occurs twelve times in the first epistle of John. The phrase occurs more than forty times in the New Testament. It is that which all New Testament writers declare concerning all that pertains to “truth and Godliness.” Here it is declared as John’s reason for writing the epistle and especially that which is declared in the previous two verses. Written to believers, it is that he would have them to know the great effect of their believing in the “Name of the Son of God.” Believing in the Name of the Son of God is the confirmation that we have eternal life. Many are depending on something else as their assurance of salvation, but no other means of assurance is given. Believing on that Name is the evidence that one

is born again. A most wonderful book is still available. It is *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, by Henry Scougal. The title says it all. In experiencing the Life of God in us we know that we have eternal life. We will not find assurance in remembrance of past experiences or in one-time actions. Jesus came that we might have life more abundantly. And this life testifies of Him in us.

While these words were written to believers, it was also written to encourage believing on the Name of the Son of God. At my first encounter with this passage many years ago I wondered why there was, what seemed to me, a duplication of thought. But then came the realization that the life of the believer is directed by faith. “The Just shall live by His faith.” Ours is a life of continual belief; it is trusting all to the merits of the blood of Christ; it is living a life of submission to Him as Lord and Christ. It is a continual looking to Him as the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world. It is believing on Him to the point that sin appears exceeding sinful, and we are driven to confession. So it is, that in knowing we are further grounded in the way of embracing the faith of God’s elect. We might say that knowledge begets believing. It follows that we believe unto action and profession.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (John 17:3). bhs

From Isaac Watts on Suffering --

Perhaps one of the most crucial steps in enduring suffering is that of ‘acceptance’. We can bear with suffering for a while, always looking forward to its end. That can be the thought which gives us encouragement and hope – we live for the time it will be gone. Of course, we should look forward to its end (it would be odd not to), but our hope must ultimately be in God, not in recovery. So, what is desperately difficult, but desperately needed, is that we accept our suffering from God’s hand. We need to bow the knee before God in our suffering. –Graham Beynon, *Isaac Watts*

Devotional Thought on Psalm 46

To turn on the television or radio or to drive down a billboard-filled highway is to be bombarded with the message that various products and services are the secret to achieving inner calm. If you can just get the right body, the right education, the right financial structure, the right entertainment system—then you will have achieved that deep “soul-sigh” everyone longs for. Psalm 46 offers an alternative to the world. It says: Be still. Be quiet. Look up. Calm down. God reigns. This psalm does not offer a Pollyanna view of life. This psalm gives us sober realism. Even though the earth goes haywire (vv. 2–3), even though nations assault each other (v. 6), all of this is under the wise and far-reaching hand of God. What troubles you today? What is it about which you think, “If I can just get that sorted out, life will become manageable”? What worries your heart as you lie awake in bed? God says: I, not any circumstantial solution, am your refuge amid your adversities. I am a very present help in trouble. I am God. Be still. –Dane Ortlund, *In The Lord I Take Refuge*

God's jewels are often found buried in the worst filth!
(James Smith, "Exhortation and Encouragement" 1859)

"One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." Acts 18:9-10

What kind of a city was it?

Corinth was one of the most worldly and immoral cities of the east. Here was the temple of Venus, with its degrading and disgraceful services.

What kind of people were they?

"Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were! But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God!" 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

This is the apostle's own reply to the question.

Observe:

1. The Lord's people are often found in the most unlikely places! Who would have expected to find God's chosen people, a multitude of them--in a place so foul, so polluted, so degraded, as Corinth?

God's jewels are often found buried in the worst filth!

2. The Lord chooses the most unlikely people! Who would ever have thought that the Lord would have chosen the sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, slanderers, swindlers--to be saved? But He did!

God's people are picked off the foulest dunghills! –From Grace Gems