

Today you will be inconvenienced. People are going to sin against you: get in your way and try your patience. Be ready with this knowledge beforehand and take it to the Lord. Let Him teach your heart how to respond to people and situations with such patience and love that He can use them regularly as opportunities to exhibit the gospel rather than display a complaining, graceless, natural, irritated response of the flesh.

--Monergism

GADSBY'S CATECHISM

By William Gadsby, about 1800

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

Question XXXIII. How does Christ execute the office of a priest?

Answer. Christ executes the office of a priest in His once offering up of Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and to reconcile the elect unto God, and in making continual intercession for them.

Isa. 53.6-11; Rom. 8.34; 2 Cor. 5.19-21; Heb. 2.17 & 7.25 & 9.28.

Question XXXIV. How does Christ execute the office of a king?

Answer. Christ executes the office of a king by subduing the elect to Himself, ruling and defending them, and conquering all His and their enemies.

Psa. 110.1-3; 1 Cor. 15.25; Phil. 2.9-11; Heb. 1.8.

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Sunday Morning Bible Study -- 10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship -- 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

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THE SWEET SAVOR OF CHRIST

For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? 2 Corinthians 2:15-16

These words follow the Apostle's word of thanksgiving in which he makes the claim of continuous triumph in Christ. He acknowledges God as the cause and the knowledge of Christ as always in view and being sensed in everyplace and in all circumstances. It is not enough that men should merely acknowledge the sovereignty of God. It is that such should be a source of delight to those who are the beneficiaries of sovereign mercy and grace and that such should be expressed. For that reason, the term savor is used in that this is something that is sensed beyond mere knowledge.

It is to be carefully noted that it is God that is sensing the “sweet savor of Christ.” *And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. Genesis 8:21.* A further reference to the reception of the offering of Christ our Lord is found in: *But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD. Leviticus 1:9.* Thus, the reference in our text is of that produced as a result of the soul suffering of Christ our Lord and the victory that is manifested in His eternal conquest of death, hell, and the grave. Paul saw all going to God as the offering of Christ with the witness being in

the knowledge of Christ being experienced and preached in every place.

Paul did not hesitate to say that “we,” meaning himself and those who preached the gospel with him, were that “sweet savor of Christ” as he both personally experienced so great salvation and preached the same with fervor and consistency. It was from this that he looked to the result in those that heard what he preached and displayed in his life.

Many allude to the victory marches of conquering armies in which captured leaders were brought back only to make a spectacle of their execution. Others were kept as captives and perhaps enslaved. In any event the celebration spoke of death to the one and life to the other. While we are not certain of the full meaning of Paul here, we do understand his intent as to the effect of the gospel on two classes of people.

Paul's reference to “every place” in verse 14 suggests that he often witnessed the clash of reactions in those to whom he preached. It is impossible that any should be indifferent to the preaching of the Gospel and the witness of Christ in them that preach it. The pure command of the Lord was to “Repent ye and believe the Gospel.” That Gospel was that the Kingdom was at hand and it would be unfolded as to how it would be brought about. Christ is the Gospel. One of two things will occur. Either there will, by the grace of God, be an

enthusiastic embrace of Christ and the salvation that is in Him or He will be defied confirming human depravity and the rejection of divine righteousness as it is in Christ. "Neither is there salvation in any other..."

It is evident, that in many, that which is portrayed as the righteousness of God is anything but that. It is the declaration of pride and lays claim to human merit and endeavor. The "sweet savor of Christ" in any will call immediate attention to Him. It will be seen in both the nature and the manner of those in whom it is manifested. With preachers it will be evident in that their focus will be fixed on Him and the work that He accomplished in redemption. There will be left no space for pride or any assertion of worthiness in him as he preaches. That is why Paul spoke of being a "sweet savor of Christ" unto God and that it would be evidenced in the reaction of those hearing it. A further evidence in them will be the manner in which they embrace their office. Paul did not hesitate to magnify his office, but he identified himself as the "chief of sinners."

Thus, the "sweet savor of Christ" would be first seen in their reception of the gracious words of truth as was the case of the Thessalonians. The nature of Christ would be witnessed in their manner of life. The old nature continues to assert itself and even would lay claim to that which grace alone can produce. But the essence of Christ pours forth where

there is new life in Christ. Ye must be born again. The testimony of a changed life is a powerful witness to the operations of the Spirit of God and is a "sweet savor of Christ" unto God. There is this and much more in them that are saved in that they persevere under all circumstances.

Sadly, the effect of the Gospel is realized in them that are lost. The very words that speak salvation to the true believer speak condemnation to those who are perishing. The testimony of our suffering substitute agonizing under the wrath of God assures that judgment will certain be fully executed upon all who reject the Gospel mandate. The death and resurrection of Christ sealed salvation unto believers and condemnation to those who perish. *And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Acts 17:30-31.*

We do well to ask ourselves of the "sweet savor of Christ" in us. What is sensed, first before God and then by those who witness our life and hear our testimony? What is the message to which we are most attuned? If it does not send forth the "sweet savor of Christ" it is worthless. *bhs*

"SOME THINGS HARD TO UNDERSTAND"

Peter the apostle tells fellow-believers that "our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures" (2 Peter 3:15f).

Peter here referred to doctrines expounded by Paul regarding Christ's return.

But various writers of New Testament books have written "some things hard to understand" on other subjects also.

Here are some examples:

- “[God] made [Christ] who knew no sin to be sin for [His people]” (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- God did so “that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (ibid).
- Believers in Christ are “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4).
- “Whoever abides in [Christ] does not sin” (1 John 3:6).
- “Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God” (1 John 3:9).
- “He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as [Christ] is righteous” (1 John 3:7).

We do not expect unregenerate people to understand these “things hard to understand”. For “the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Nor are we surprised when “untaught and unstable people twist [them] to their own destruction”. They say that such statements do not mean what they say and force other meanings on them.

But we are not surprised that some people do indeed understand these “things hard to understand”. For they are not “things impossible to understand”.

We will understand these “things hard to understand” if we acknowledge that they were written through divine inspiration and intended to be understood. For “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16). God said what He meant and meant what He said. And all that God inspired His writers to write is profitable for making His people complete and perfect in their doctrine and works.

Therefore, let us believe God’s Word and thereby understand it.

– Daniel E. Parks

We do not begin life as believers in God. No natural heritage or bloodline assures us of a place in the kingdom of God. John tells us that being born of blood, by the will of the flesh, or by the will of man cannot secure our status as children of God (John 1:13). Only by being born of God do we become children of God, and that new birth always manifests itself in receiving the Lord Christ, believing in His name (John 1:12). That Jeremiah and John the Baptist may have been subject to some degree of saving or sanctifying influence in their mothers’ wombs (see Jeremiah 1:5 and Luke 1:41) does not in any way suspend the general principle that “I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me” (Ps. 51:5), that my heart and yours are “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9), and that “there is none righteous, no, not one” (Rom. 3:10), for “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). So if we are to have and enjoy life in Christ—not just to understand it in measure but actually to possess it ourselves—we must begin here: “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.... You must be born again” (John 3:3, 7). This is the language of indispensable necessity. No one enters the kingdom without being born from above, without being subject to the enlightening and regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit. –Jeremy Walker