

Christianity is NOT behavior modification, but new life. We are not asking people to try harder to obey and God will accept you. No. We are all sinners by nature, who cannot save themselves, and that is the very reason we need grace in Christ. –Monergism

"At the core of any healthy congregation is a vibrant exposition of God's Word." - Steven Lawson

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 XXXV. Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

Answer. Christ's humiliation consisted in His being born of a woman, made under the law, and becoming a servant, though He was Lord of all; in His undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; and in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

Isa. 53; Matt. 12.40 & 27.46; Luke 22.42-44; 1 Cor. 15.3-4; 2 Cor. 8.9; Gal. 4.4; Phil. 2.5-8; Heb. 5.7-8.

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Services:

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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CRUCIFIED THROUGH WEAKNESS

For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? 2 Corinthians 13:4-5

It seems unfitting to attribute weakness to Christ. It is far more delightful to talk of His sovereignty, His might, and His power. We are more at ease with repeating the words declaring Him to be King of kings and Lord of lords. We love to “tell of His might and sing of His grace.” We are comforted as we consider the position He occupies now and are assured of the appearing of our “Blessed Hope.” Indeed “He lives by the power of God” and He is our man in glory—God manifest in the flesh.

Paul certainly calls attention to the times of His submission to the weakness that subjected Him to the things we must have suffered were it not for Him. Earlier in this epistle Paul had written of His poverty: *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9.* That poverty was as deep as the riches of His glory is high; it was the abject poverty in which we were found being totally lacking in any redeeming virtue or anything that could recommend us to the favor of God.

We note that His weakness was voluntary as we read of Him in the Philippian epistle: *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Philippians 2:8.* By now we will have seen that the weakness to which He submitted was neither forced nor was it in

keeping with His preexistent nature – He is God the Son and so all the attributes of God apply to Him.

What a pitiful scene is shown in the accounts of His agony in the Garden as His soul began to be burdened under the weight of the sins of His people and that which lay before Him as He would suffer the wrath due us. His weakness there was such that we read, *And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. Luke 22:43.* From the time of that final submission men did to Him as they would.

In reference to the power that we know of in Him today it seems far removed that He should have become subject to the petty powers of wicked men. His power was such as to be able to crush them into oblivion in an instant. Of course, we understand the providence of God and the fact that this was the foreordination of God that it should be so.

We understand here that the reason of Paul bringing this thought to the attention of the Corinthians was related to the attacks from some of them directed at his ministry. In verse 3 of this chapter he pointed to fact that they were seeking proof of his ministry. In answer, Paul took the road of identity with Christ in this matter. Christ speaking through him came as he saw himself in that same weakness and living by the same power with which Christ had been

raised and now lived. We are ever reminded of Paul's personal testimony: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20.*

The pictures coming to mind of Jesus hanging on a cruel Roman cross, His lifeless body being taken down and carried to a borrowed tomb portray weakness to multitudes. The idea that this could somehow bring salvation to any was, and is, perceived as foolishness by the unregenerate and rebellious. It would be this same kind of people that would look on the appearance of Paul and hear, what he called, rudeness of speech and think the same thoughts. But he would point them to the power of God on display as the outcome and not any merit in himself. He would no doubt remind them that his intent was that "...your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

The power of God and the ability of God to enforce and accredit His Word is evident. Those offering strange fire had been destroyed without a word. When Moses was challenged both Aaron and Miriam were stricken. More recently Ananias and Sapphira had died before Peter for lying to the Holy Spirit. So, he would not have them to be mistaken that Paul's gentleness in any way suggested a lessening of God's Jealousy for His holiness and the reverence to be given His Son.

Paul would then have them to look to

themselves for the proof they sought. The idea of self-examination should be preached and preached again to all. Here Paul would have them to see that the faith they professed was genuine. They themselves would be the proof of Paul's ministry. He called himself a father to them and would have them question themselves rather than the vessel through whom the Gospel had been preached. They had, no doubt, been influenced by false teachers and the emissaries of Satan, but the real test would be whether they knew Christ and were indwelt by Him. Their assertions had been born out of a false wisdom and enmity toward God. To deny what Paul was preaching was to deny Christ. He had not regaled them with sensational ideas and programs. He had preached the "simplicity that is in Christ." If Christ was in them, they would recognize Him in the preaching of Paul.

While the thought of the Christ crucified through weakness and the power of God seen in Him and in Paul was focused on the situation at Corinth, it has much to say of all who believe the Gospel. Much has been made of "Examine yourselves." There is a clear objective in doing so. It is that all might be referenced to the identity we have in both the death and resurrection of Christ. There may be religion but none of Christ is one who is reprobate.

As we consider the greatness of His grace and the wonders of His glory – this "So great salvation" it behooves us to examine often and verify the presence of Christ in us. He is our Hope of Glory. *bhs*

The Bible teaches that God not only created the universe but also upholds and sustains it day by day, hour by hour. Scripture says that Christ, the Son of God, "upholds the universe by the word of his power" (Hebrews 1: 3). As theologian A. H. Strong said, "Christ is the originator and upholder of the universe. ...In him it consists, or holds together, from hour to hour. The steady will of Christ constitutes the law of the universe and makes it a cosmos instead of a chaos, just as his will brought it into being in the beginning." –Jerry Bridges

The Herd Mentality

An excerpt from the article by H. Rondel Rumburg

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God,” (Rom. 12:2). Consider the following paraphrase, “Stop letting the immediate world system press you into its way of thinking, but be transformed, or metamorphosed, through the renewing of your thinking; so you may be proved or tested on the good and perfect and well pleasing will of God.”

Is the herd mentality a Biblical mode of doing service for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Is the new push for conformity to the social norms of the world as a supposed attempt to reach the multitudes working? Even if it supposedly worked would it be acceptable to the Lord? Would those religiously culled from the multitudes be a goat harvest instead of the birthing of sheep? Are we so enamored with seeking multitudes that we are willing to violate the will of God? Go into all the world and preach the gospel does not mean we compromise God’s Word of Truth to do so. Are Christians marginalizing themselves by going along to get along? Is the motive the glory of God? Will such service be successful with the Lord who is the sovereign and judge? Who must transform the hearts and minds of depraved sinners? Are we more interested in acceptance with people, the culture, and the multitude than being acceptable to the Lord our God? Is our motive to be accepted in the Beloved?

What is a herd mentality? Lexico by Oxford defines it thus, “The tendency for people’s behaviour or beliefs to conform to those of the group to which they belong.” Those born from above, who claim Christ and Christianity, are not their own for they have been bought with the price of Christ’s suffering and death. So to join the ranks of the herd they must join an alien group where, in reality, they bite and devour one another. This would be joining the world where the father of lies rules. The Lord does not say rejoin the herd after conversion! What He did say was “come out from among them and be separate.” However, God’s Word says, “be not conformed to this world or age.” Are the Lord’s people to become a part of the herd in order to win the herd or should they maintain a Biblical witness of the truth in Christ? There is no winning of souls without the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit! Sow the seed of the Word and it is the Lord’s prerogative to give fruit. What did Paul say? “Be not conformed to this age” or literally “stop being conformed to this world system.” This means that some were already guilty of this conforming to the herd mentality. Why should you stop conforming? It is divinely commanded! They were to stop being conformed to the world system; but they were to continue being transformed by the renewing of the mind. Regarding herd mentality “we do not take other men’s opinions or conduct as a rule for life, but that we wholly renounce this world, and set before us as our mark the will of God as is manifested and revealed to us in his word” [note in the Geneva Bible].

"OUR SINS ARE DEBTS THAT NONE CAN PAY BUT CHRIST. IT IS NOT OUR TEARS BUT HIS BLOOD, IT IS NOT OUR SIGHS BUT HIS SUFFERINGS—WHICH CAN SATISFY JUSTICE FOR OUR SINS. CHRIST MUST PAY ALL—OR WE ARE PRISONERS FOREVER." - THOMAS BROOKS