

For it is not what a church practices, but what is warranted to practice: not what it holds for a truth, but what it is warranted to hold as the word of truth. The Word was written after the church; but as it is the Word of God, it is before it. –John Collins

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 LXXIII. What is the law of Christ?

Answer. The law of Christ is the gospel of His grace, which is the law from Zion, called the law of faith, the law of liberty, and the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Isa. 2.2-3; Jer. 31.31-34; Mic. 4.1-2; Rom. 3.27 & 7.21-25 & 8.1-4; Gal. 6.2; Heb. 1.8 & 8.6-13; James 1.25.

Question LXXIV. What is the gospel?

Answer. The gospel may be taken in a limited or in a more extensive sense.

Mark 1. 14-15; Jn. 1.17; Rom. 1.16; Eph. 3.6; 1 Tim. 1.11,14-15.

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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

Volume 13, No. 10

March 8, 2020

CHRIST AND HIS BRETHREN

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare they name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Hebrews 2:11-13

Some time ago I heard a preacher describe another preacher as being a “name-dropper.” I understood that he meant that the man liked to refer to notable acquaintances in order to promote his own credibility or standing. I heard of another who hearing a man talk of famous people he knew replied simply with “I know Jesus.” I, for fun, have referred to the fact that I once played basketball with NBA great, Jerry West. I might inspire wonder in the minds of some if I left it at that. In fact, I did attend the same high school as Jerry West, but not at the same time. He had graduated the year before. He visited a basketball practice and played on second team (which I was on) in a scrimmage. I am sure that he has no memory of that day or of me as a gangly sophomore. I mention it only to demean myself in comparison, not as any claim to fame. The most famous of all, He who has a name above them all does know me and remembers me from all eternity.

I fear that there is a lack among many in that they do not invoke the name of Jesus in all that they do even though they are told to do so in the Scripture. There is no greater privilege than to claim an eternal relationship with our Blessed Lord. We do well to realize that though this world will not long remember us, that we are eternally remembered in the presence of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We should realize that the nature of what we enjoy in Christ far exceeds any earthly relationship. Earthly brothers often engage in sibling rivalries and part ways. Even in the best of relationships there is much lacking that is given us in the relationship we know with Christ. The very thought that He should so identify with us is a source of amazement. And that He is “not ashamed” of us is a wonder. When I know with Paul that there is no good thing dwelling in me, I am made to question how this could be. It is He that has made it so. In the work of regeneration and sanctification He has brought us into a likeness with Him. We have been made partakers of the same nature. It is well declared that He and the Father are One. We then are born from above, of incorruptible seed and derive our spiritual identity from Him as well. We are viewed as having received the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). The writing of His laws in our hearts and the incorporation of the “fruit of the Spirit” in us has left us, in His sight as “...holy and without blame...” It is not because of anything in us, but that Christ has been made all things to us and in us that it can be said “He is not ashamed to call them brethren.” Not only do I know Jesus, but He knows me.

When Jesus sent Mary Magdalene with a message to the disciples He said “...go to my

brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God." In effect He declared to her and to them what is cited here in Hebrews 2. I know that Jesus is my Elder Brother, but I am constrained to call Him Master and Lord. But, among the most treasured titles reserved for the children of God is "brethren."

He calls us brethren owing to the merits of His own blood. But He is, also, active in declaring the name of the Father unto us with the endearing term my Brethren. The words of Christ are realized in Psalm 22 and in it (v. 22) He declares "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." In reading this Psalm we realize Christ speaking as from the cross and so in the course of His suffering comes this declaration of praise to the Father. So, was His manner in the course of His earthly sojourn. His brethren are then seen as the congregation (assembly) of His people in the world and beyond.

This same constitution to which we are brought as brethren is seen in the trust that He exhibited toward the Father. He was fully cast on the Father as He surrendered to the death of the cross. In Isaiah 8:17 we see the words of Christ declaring that He would wait for the Lord and that He would look for Him. That Jesus was so trusting the Father is indicated again from

these words from the cross: "But thou art He that took me out of the womb: Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts." (Psalm 22:9). Were this found elsewhere we might attribute it to David. Here, the words are taken to the lips of Christ our Lord in His suffering for us.

The second sentence in verse 13 is a direct quote from Isaiah 8:18. The use of the attention-getter "behold" directs all to the wonder at what is being declared. He identifies Himself but not apart from the children given Him by God the Father. (See John 6:37). He declared Himself as the Son of God and introduces the many sons He had brought unto glory. They had been given to Him to redeem, to care for, and to make them presentable to the Father. What a wonder that we should be so accounted. It is as if He was saying here is the fruit of all that He had done, and he had lost none of them. All were present and accounted for and ready to be accepted by the Father.

The fact that this declaration is made in the preserved Word of God should cause us to understand that "Christ in us, the hope of Glory" declares that we are of the immediate family of God and are so being acknowledged as His brethren. There is no greater realization than to know and be known of God in Christ as His brethren. *bhs*

No Strangers in Heaven

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 8:11)

I have often been asked, "Will we know one another in heaven?" Unless I am terribly mistaken in my understanding of Holy Scripture, the answer is obvious. God's saints in heaven are engaged in constant, uninterrupted fellowship with their Triune God, with one another, and with the holy angels. A casual reading of the book of Revelation conveys the idea that God's saints will forever discuss with one another and with the heavenly angels the wonders of covenant mercy, the ministry of the angelic hosts, redeeming love, saving grace, and divine providence. Yes, all God's saints will see and know one another in that glorious world of bliss.

Just before he died, someone asked Martin Luther, “Sir, will we know one another in the other world?” Luther answered, “As Adam knew Eve to be bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh by the revelation of God, though he had never seen her before, so shall the saints of God know one another in heaven.” As the apostles knew Moses and Elijah on the mount with Christ, though they had never seen them, or even seen a picture or description of them before, so shall we know the saints of God in heaven. In heaven we will know parents, wives, husbands, children, and friends far more perfectly than ever we knew them on the earth.

There will be no strangers in heaven. If there were a stranger in the heavenly company, freedom and joy would be greatly hindered. Who is free around a stranger? In heaven’s glory when the bodies of God’s saints are raised up to glory, we shall see and know one another and all God’s saints. When we sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, we shall all see Christ in all his glory and the Bride, the Lamb’s wife, in all the beauty which he has given her. We shall see and know every believer. And we shall love and esteem them all perfectly. –Don Fortner

INCREDIBLE INHERITANCE

To me . . . this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. (EPHESIANS 3:8) Years ago our pastor told about a southern plantation owner who left a \$50,000 inheritance (perhaps equivalent to half a million dollars today) to a former slave who’d served him faithfully all his life. The estate’s lawyer duly notified the old man and told him the money was deposited at a local bank. Weeks went by, and the former slave never called for any of his inheritance. Finally, the banker called him in and told him again he had \$50,000 available to draw on at any time. “Sir,” the old man replied, “do you think I can have fifty cents to buy a sack of cornmeal?” That story illustrates the plight of many Christians today. Paul wrote of preaching “the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Ephesians 3:8) — referring not to financial wealth but to the glorious truths of the gospel. It’s as if each of us has \$50,000 available in the gospel, yet most of us are hoping we can squeeze out fifty cents’ worth. We don’t understand the riches of the gospel any more than the former slave understood his inheritance. Suppose also that the slave was not only poverty-stricken but also deep in debt for back rent. With his inheritance, he could not only pay off the debt but also buy his house. His inheritance far surpasses his debt. This is the truth of the gospel. We owe an enormous spiritual debt to God; there’s no way we can repay it. The gospel tells us Jesus Christ paid our debt, but it also tells us far more: We’re no longer enemies and objects of God’s wrath. We’re now His sons and daughters, heirs with Christ to all His unsearchable riches. This is the good news of the gospel. Jerry Bridges, *The Gospel for Real Life*

Nineteenth-century theologian Archibald Alexander composed a devotional exercise, apparently for his own private use, that included these words: I am deeply convinced that my best duties have fallen far short of the perfection of Thy law, and have been so mingled with sin in the performance, that I might justly be condemned for the most fervent prayer I ever made. Cited by Jerry Bridges