

A. W. Tozer said, "The Lord will not save those whom He cannot command. He will not divide His offices. You cannot believe on a half-Christ. We take Him for what He is — the anointed Saviour and Lord who is King of kings and Lord of all lords! He would not be Who He is if He saved us and called us and chose us without the understanding that He can also guide and control our lives."

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 LXXXIX. What is the Lord's Supper?

Answer. The Lord's Supper is an Ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, wherein, by partaking of bread and wine, by faith in Christ, the worthy receivers do set forth the broken body and the shedding of the blood of Jesus as their meat indeed and their drink indeed; and as oft as they do it they show forth His death till He come.

Matt. 26.26-30; Mark 14.22-25; Luke 22.15-20; 1 Cor. 5.7 & 10.16-17 & 11.23-27.

Question XC. Who are the proper subjects of this ordinance?

Answer. They who have been quickened by the Spirit, called out of darkness into God's marvellous light, who have repented unto life, believed in Christ unto the salvation of the soul, been brought into sensible union with Christ and been baptized in His name.

Acts.2.41 & 11.18; 1Cor. 5.7-11 & 11.28; Eph. 2.1; Col. 2.6; 1 Pet. 2.9.

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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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PETER AND THE TRIBUTE MONEY

Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee. Matthew 17:27

Many wonderful things are revealed to us in the seventeenth chapter of Matthew. How thrilling and awe inspiring is the account of the Transfiguration. Which of the Lord's people have not tried to imagine what it would have been like to see our Lord in that glorified form. It certainly had a lifelong effect on Peter and the others who were with him there. As they come down from the mountain they are given further revelation about John the Baptist and Elijah. Further down they encounter the grieving father of a demon possessed son. In what transpired there they were made very much aware of their own inabilities. We are often reminded of the agonizing words of the man as he cried "help thou mine unbelief." The disciples were made to understand that personal involvement would be required in the form of prayer and fasting in dealing with the evil in the world. Matthew further inserts at this point that He again declared the necessity of His death and resurrection.

Having returned to Capernaum there remained a further lesson for Peter. It is unclear as to where the others were at this time. They would have later heard of this event and perhaps receive the same blessing as did Peter. There is a real danger of developing a "herd mentality" about some things. In this way of thinking we deal with the commonly accepted precepts without individual interaction. This draws away from the very personal relationship we must have with Christ our Lord. So, our Lord

here deals with Peter, and with us, on a one-to-one basis.

In the preceding verse Jesus posed a question for Peter. It had to do with those who were taxed by earthly kings. Did they collect from their own children, or from strangers? Peter had no trouble answering that question. Peter had been challenged by those who collect the tribute money. Our Lord would have Peter to know that in that He was the Christ, the Lord of the Temple, He did not owe that tribute. It is to be noted that this was not the tax money collected for the Roman government by the publicans. This is the Temple tax that had been assessed long ago. "This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD." Exodus 30:13. The explanation is further given in, "And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls." Exodus 30:16. Jesus would be the atonement to end all atonement.

The Lord chose to forego His right and perhaps offending these people in that He had no problem with obeying a scriptural tenet. It would pose no problem for Him. What is interesting to note is that He did not have the

required money at the time. Matthew Henry observed that for His ordinary expenses He relied upon alms (Luke 8:3) and for extraordinary ones upon miracles. We are ever reminded of Paul's words: "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. But of His power there was no lack. Many have observed, rightly so, that if He simply knew that the coin was there in the mouth of the fish, He was and is omniscient. If He formed the coin and placed it there He was and is omnipotent. Either way the outcome is miraculous.

Men tend attribute fortunate outcomes to luck or fate. Even as believers we may tend to ignore the miraculous nature of much that occurs in our lives. I can recall multiple incidents in which the impossible circumstance was met by the appearance of just the right person at just the proper time and deliverance was accomplished. The fact that they were not life or death events notwithstanding, they were miraculous if we would but see it.

Peter was called upon to both obey the Lord and experience a miracle. And there was a great lesson attached to it all. Peter responded to the Lordship of Christ, the fish responded to the sovereignty of Christ and all was accomplished. We take note of several things here. It is the only record of fishing with a hook. But then it would not be a matter of catching a number of

fish with the hope catching the right one. This was just as designated as was the one prepared for Jonah. A second thing to be noted is that the exact amount required was to be provided. The scholars point out that this was a coin of specific value and would meet the requirement for both. Yet another thing to be noted is that it was one coin and not a coin for each as Christ would have Peter joined to Himself in that which was transpiring. After all, He would be identified with Him in redemption. A. T. Robertson and others here suggest that the meaning of the phrase "for me and thee" should be "instead of me and thee." Looking again at Exodus 30:16 this would be more consistent in that it looked to the atonement of the individual soul and that accomplished in the atoning blood of Christ.

F. B. Meyer wrote: "...our Lord sweetly teaches that He is responsible for the expenses of those who have given up other means to livelihood in order to devote themselves to His service. It is as though we are encouraged to go to Him to meet the demands made on us for taxes of one kind and another. He will give us what we need, kindly classing Himself with us, not in two coins, but in one. Make Christ's interest your aim; He will make your taxes His care."

While Meyer wrote of ministry, the principle of personal identity with Christ as His chosen way of salvation realized is not lost to us. It is not recorded, but we are sure that Peter went, and that the fish and the coin were as the Lord said they would be. *bhs*

Not everyone who claims to be a Christian really is. Unbelievers do make false professions of faith in Christ, and people who are not truly Christians can be deceived into thinking they are. That might have been taken for granted a few decades ago, but no more. The cheap grace and easy faith of a distorted gospel are ruining the purity of the church. The softening of the New Testament message has brought with it a putrefying inclusivism that in effect sees almost any kind of positive response to Jesus as tantamount to saving faith. Christians today are likely to accept anything other than utter rejection as authentic faith in Christ. Modern-day evangelicism has developed a large and conspicuous fringe, embracing even those whose doctrine is suspect or whose behavior indicates a heart in rebellion against the things of God.

TRUE FAITH IN JESUS shows itself in a real submission to and an open confession of His lordship, which deepens as the believer matures and grows stronger even in the most adverse of circumstances. The great evidence of salvation is that a person continues on to maturity in this same faith and confession. Commenting on Romans 10:9–10, the renowned Scottish Baptist Robert Haldane (1764–1842) writes: A man becomes righteous, perfectly righteous, through believing God's record concerning His Son. But the evidence that this faith is genuine is found in the open confession of the Lord with the mouth in everything in which His will is known. Confession of Christ is as necessary as faith in Him, but necessary for a different purpose. Faith is necessary to obtain the gift of righteousness. Confession is necessary to prove that this gift is received. If a man does not confess Christ at that hazard of life, character, property, liberty, and everything dear to him, he has not the faith of Christ. In saying, then, that confession is made unto salvation, the apostle does not mean that it is the cause of salvation, or that without it the title to salvation is incomplete. When a man believes in his heart, he is justified. But confession of Christ is the effect of faith, and will be evidence of it at the last day. Faith which interests the sinner in the righteousness of Christ is manifested by the confession of His name in the midst of enemies, or in the face of danger. —Paul Washer, *The Gospel and True Conversion*

The Great Plague (1664-1665)

During the Great Plague the Puritans in England had to deal with a time of plague which issued into a multitude of deaths. It was noted than in a week up to ten thousand died in London. Daniel Defoe, in his *A Journal of the Plague Year*, recorded this providential visitation, “The richer inhabitants fled into the remoter counties: but the calamities of those who stayed behind, and of the poorer sort, are not to be expressed. Trade was at a full stand; all commerce between London and the country was entirely cut off, lest the infection should be propagated thereby. Nay, the country housekeepers and farmers durst not entertain their city friends or relations till they had performed quarantine in the fields or outhouses. If a stranger passed through the neighborhood they fled from him as an enemy. In London the shops and houses were quite shut up, and many of them marked with a red cross, and an inscription over the door, ‘Lord, have mercy upon us!’ Grass grew in the streets; and every night the bellman went his rounds with a cart, crying, ‘Bring out your dead.’ From London the plague spread into the neighboring towns and villages, and continued near three quarters of a year, till it had swept away almost one hundred thousand of the inhabitants.”

Please consider some of the historic accounts. Richard Baxter noted, “How fearful were people, even a hundred miles from London, of anything bought in a draper's shop there, or of any person that came to their houses! How they would shut their doors against their friends, and if men met one another in the fields, how they would avoid each other.” —Ron Rumburg

WE MOURN THE PASSING OF OUR DEAR BROTHER AND FAITHFUL SERVANT OF CHRIST OUR KING, BRO. DON FORTNER. BUT WE REJOICE IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE VICTORY GIVEN HIM IN HIS BELOVED JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.