

Certainly Satan would never make such a fierce and constant war as he doth upon private prayer, were it not a necessary duty, a real duty, and a soul-enriching duty. —Thomas Brooks

Christian! Consider that the trials and troubles, the calamities and miseries, the crosses and losses that you meet with in this world--are all the Hell that you shall ever have! —Thomas Brooks

### The Baptist Catechism (Keach's Catechism)

1677

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

Q. 6. May all men make use of the Scriptures?

A. All men are not only permitted, but commanded and exhorted, to read, hear, and understand the Scriptures.

(John 5:39; Luke 16:29; Acts 8:28-30; 17:11)

Q. 7. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man.

(2 Tim. 3:16-17; John 20:31; Acts 24:14; 1 Cor. 10:11; Eccles. 12:13)

### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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WXTH-LP 101.7 FM– In Richwood

#### 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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### THE LORD OF THE HARVEST

*But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. (Matthew 9:36-38)*

For some time now I have been increasingly made aware of the lostness of our society. Many tend to think of the world in two categories, saved or lost. Even within those two considerations of mankind there are degrees to be noted. Among Christians distinctions such as the weak and the strong are made (Romans 15:1). Likewise, it is to be noted that among the lost we tend to see them relative to how far they are removed from the Judeo-Christian ethic. Many are openly expressive about their ungodliness. Others may seem to be moral and even respectful of others without professing faith in Christ. While I cannot see as our Lord sees, I have noted a generation of young people especially who seem to have no sense of direction and simply live from day to day. Some of this is, no doubt, the result of the drug culture that is so pervasive in our land. Who can ignore the vast numbers of homeless folk in our land? I have witnessed them going about with blank stares even though sober. They may appear to us as untouchable and unreachable. This uncovers a serious lack in we who seek to serve the Lord.

I can only imagine that if the Lord were bodily in our land today, He might be seen to react in the way that is described here. He was going about the area teaching, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every

disease (v. 35). Our text speaks of seeing the multitudes, but in seeing He saw more than mere numbers – He saw lost souls. There was no mere sigh of helplessness or an expression of contempt. He did not respond with the threat of judgment. He had strong feelings of sympathy and concern for them.

It may be difficult to comprehend how the God-Man, possessed of all knowledge, realizing the end of many of these, could still be so affected. Yet, as a man He displays what we may easily miss. As we often witness in our day angry mobs leaving destruction in their paths how many of us could view them through the lens that Jesus gave us and so be moved with concern for their souls. Jesus had compassion on the multitudes and fed them. Of the rich young ruler, it is written that He loved him. We are reminded of His thought toward them who sought to kill Him: *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! (Luke 13:34)*. And then further on in Luke we read these words: *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, (Luke 19:41)*. Even on the cross He prayed for His enemies.

He was acutely aware of their condition and graphically described it. The actions of sheep without a shepherd are easily pictured. He did not here call them His sheep; it is rather that they were as sheep, aimless, subject to all the influence of the world, and helpless. "He did not here make a distinction among them. Knowing of the eternal will and purpose of God, we may be inclined to think that His reference is to the elect. William Hendriksen wrote of this: "There are those who limit the figure of the harvest to those who are "gathered into the heavenly garner," that is, to "all those in whom the work of God's grace succeeds"; or, using different phraseology, to "the limited number of the elect, who were mixed with unbelievers." But so to limit the figure, as used here in Mat 9:37, would seem hardly to be doing justice to the context, in which there is no mention of a separation between two groups: the ultimately saved and the ultimately lost." In time the wheat and the tares, and the sheep and the goats will be separated. While the grace of salvation is selective, the compassion of Christ is not.

Then He directed His disciples as to a course of action. And it was not in evangelistic methodology. First there is to be discerning observation. He used a figure with which they would be familiar. One could look at a wheat field and know that the time for harvest was at hand. He would have them to look at the multitudes and see their desperate need. They would further know that there was an allotted time to accomplish the task. But then, there was a problem. There was a vast multitude of people but limited workers. Again, He does not send them out to recruit. He directs them to pray to

"The Lord of the Harvest." It is His harvest, and it is He who must enable what He has ordained. The word here for "send forth" means "to thrust out, or to put forth." And while it is not the same word, we get the same sense from Paul as he wrote in Romans 10, *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?*

And so, we are reminded of the Great Commission. *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:19-20).* They and we are sent. But not without His enabling presence. It is to be remembered that it is "into His harvest" we are sent.

There is an observable decline in the number of young preachers today. Thus, we are given an urgent reason to pray to "The Lord of the Harvest" to send them. May there be many who see the glory of the Lord and are moved with the compassion we witness in Him. Isaiah saw himself in the "midst of a people of unclean lips" including himself. Upon hearing the question "whom shall I send," having had his lips touched with a coal from the altar, he responded "Here am I Lord, send me." He was there, but he must be sent.

It has been said that desperate times call for desperate measures. Do we see the multitudes without a shepherd? Shall we not pray to the "Lord of the Harvest" to send laborers? *bhs*

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Our perverse mistake is that we demand that God shall explain Himself at every step, instead of waiting for Him to unfold His intricate purposes at His own time and in His own way. —Theodore Cuyler

## God's Word Is Truth

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." John 17:17

Our triune God is Truth: God the Father is the "God of truth" (Isa. 65:16; Ps. 31:5); God the Son is "the truth" (John 14:6 cp. 1:17); and God the Spirit is "the truth" (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13). God's Word is "the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). Jesus said in His High Priestly prayer, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Spurgeon with joy said, "Nothing is truth to me but this one Book, this infallibly inspired writing of the Spirit of God. It is incumbent upon us to show the hallowed influence of this book." Truth is not made up of anyone's opinion for God's Word is truth. "Let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written" (Rom. 3:4).

Jesus was the human expression of truth and the central theme of the body of truth. Yes, He is the incarnate and living truth. John's system of thinking was centralized in Christ, for in Him dwells "the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He is the absolute eternal Truth walking on earth!

God is truth and so is what He says and what He has given us in the Bible. "Truth" (*aletheia*) means not so much what is dependable, as the actual state of affairs, things as they really are! Truth is the light which God in Christ sheds on life, enabling us to know God and to know self (John 8:12, 32). Men cannot discover truth by hard thinking—it is always revealed—"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). Truth is a King who has His eternal throne in heaven and has His authority in the heart of God.

John wrote to the elect lady and her children "For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever" (2 John 2). For the child of God (1) the truth resides in us—"For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us." The truth, which is revealed by Christ, who is truth, is unfolded by the Spirit. Paul spoke of the truth of Christ (2 Cor. 11:10), the truth in Christ (Rom. 9:1) and John declared that the truth is Christ (John 14:6). The truth resides or "dwells in us." The indwelling truth refers to that which permanently abides. The permanence of truth is the assurance of the abiding love which John has and expresses. Christ the truth is always with us—"And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt. 28:20). Yes, the ever-abiding truth is "in us." The truth has taken up permanent residence in the child of God as the branch abides in Christ (John 15:4 ff.). We abide forever in Christ the Truth, and He abides forever in us by His Spirit. (2) The truth remains in us—"and will be with us for ever." Not only is there present permanence but there is prophetic permanence (future tense). This is a confident assertion—"will be." This is a companion—"with us." Not only is Christ the Truth "in us" but He is "with us." Christ sent the Holy Spirit to be "with us"—"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16-17). The Truth dwells in us and shall be with us forever. —Dr. Ron Rumburg

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**BUT GO YE AND LEARN WHAT THAT MEANETH, I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND NOT SACRIFICE: FOR I AM NOT COME TO CALL THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT SINNERS TO REPENTANCE. (MATTHEW 9:13)**