

With your pardoned sin behind you, and a successful Christ pleading above you, and a glorious heaven before you, how can you be despondent about anything? —De Witt Talmage

Spurgeon's Catechism
Compiled by Charles Haddon Spurgeon
[1834 -1892]

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

26.Q. Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition (Lk. 2:7), made under the law (Gal. 4:4), undergoing the miseries of this life (Isa. 53:3), the wrath of God (Matt. 27:46), and the cursed death of the cross; (Phil. 2:8) in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time (Matt. 12:40).

27.Q. Wherein consists Christ's exaltation?

A. Christ's exaltation consists in his rising again from the dead on the third day (1 Cor. 15:4), in ascending up into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God the Father (Mk. 16:19), and in coming to judge the world at the last day (Acts 17:31).

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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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SURRENDERED FREEDOM

For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. (1 Corinthians 9:19)

There were several issues that Paul addressed as problems among the Corinthian church. Among these things was that he was being personally questioned as to his conduct of the ministry and the preaching of the Gospel. So, in the first verse of this chapter he makes a strong statement concerning his liberty both as an apostle and as a believer. *Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? (1 Corinthians 9:1).* Their very claim to faith was a validation of the efficacy of his ministry. They had come to faith under his preaching.

As we look at some of what followed that statement, we catch a glimpse of what these things may have been. He mentions eating and drinking as if some particular practice may have been called into question. He asserted that he had the right to marry and notes that some of the other apostles were married. He addresses the matter of ministerial support and cites an Old Testament law prohibiting the muzzling of an ox that treads out the corn. In other words, they seem to have left off the real issues of salvation and the fruits that come because of it and had resorted to practices that were more on the order of “nit-picking” rather than looking to edification. Even though the Lord had ordained that those preaching the Gospel should live of the Gospel, he declares that he had not used any of this to his advantage. It is rather that he attributes all to the calling and provision of God

leaving nothing to personal glory. “...for necessity if laid upon me; yea woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel!”

Our Lord had declared that “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” It is certain that such liberty was an essential part of the Gospel message that Paul preached. He had strongly exhorted the Galatians to *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Galatians 5:1).* He knew the tendency of men to subject themselves to such legalism. He wrote also to the Corinthians that “...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” Yet, it is to be observed that liberty frees one to act contrary to what might seem normal. The sense here is that they had accused him of seeking his own advantage or perhaps an elevated status among them. Twice in the course of this epistle Paul had declared that while all things were lawful unto him, not all was expedient. He had the liberty not to exercise what he was clearly free to do.

Thus, he declares that despite the freedom he had, he had made himself the servant unto all. There is no mistaking the term. It is that he saw himself as a bond slave and dedicated fully to serving all that he might gain more. Paul, in fact, exercised a liberty that many do not have. He had the liberty to lay aside things that are claimed as legitimate rights by others. To the

Romans, he declared himself as indebted to many: *I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. (Romans 1:14)*. And so, we note in what follows here that he subjected himself to several that we may have written off as lost causes.

In verse 20 he states that unto the Jews, he became as a Jew. Certainly, it was not that he reverted or even pretended to revert to Judaism. Yet, he understood their customs and practices and was able to accommodate such things as did not compromise the Gospel. He could have Timothy circumcised who had Jewish parentage, but refused to allow the same with Titus who was of Gentile descent. He could engage in Temple practices and yet ably preach the Gospel to the Jews. Those under the Law as under the Law. No doubt using the same as a door to show the compliance accomplished through Christ our Lord.

As to them without law, he again found a way to maintain a relationship that would allow him to preach truth to them. In any culture there are things that may be engaged in without a moral component or that may not compromise the Gospel. He quickly adds that even in these things he remained under the law of Christ. Must we not be careful that we do not appear offensive to those we would win? We need to engage in conversation if we would have them hear the Gospel.

The weak may well have been those who felt themselves bound to certain religious obligations rather than look to the purely spiritual elements of the Gospel. Anything observed in a believer that finds them without ability to fully walk by faith and not to lean on fleshly understanding may be understood as

weakness. Paul would approach such with understanding rather than condemnation. It is here that we are warned not to be puffed up over what we have been given in the way of understanding. Paul did not imply that he in any way compromised the preaching of the Gospel. It was rather that he saw himself as submitted to the people that he would serve regarding their need. Not all are able to receive truth at the same level. Mention Calvinism to some and they will immediately recoil. Others have “gone to seed” and have a pharisaic approach to it. Spurgeon said that “that which men called Calvinism, I call the Gospel.” Thus, we would carefully examine our own submission to the needs of those to whom we speak.

I have been guilty of hearing someone mention a writer, a theologian, or another believer, and then to ask, “where do they stand on the doctrines of grace?” I was asking if they were five-pointers. I should have been asking rather if they bear evidence of the love of Christ in their lives. As time has gone on, I find myself more inclined to listen as they speak of the Lord. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is to believe that by His death burial and resurrection he/she has been saved and made partakers of the divine nature. I have witnessed many portray in their actions what they cannot articulate in their speech. In the end Paul would write to these people of a “more excellent way” as he would introduce the precepts of love. James goes to the heart of the matter in giving us the definition of pure religion: *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. (James 1:27). bhs*

Hell is a controversial issue in our times. Even in Jesus’ day there were those who rejected the idea of the afterlife and everlasting punishment, such as the Sadducees. But there can be no question that the Bible sets out the reality of hell and the righteousness of God’s judgment in stark terms. With the coming of the modern age,

the doctrine of hell became an embarrassment to those who wanted a Christianity that was culturally sophisticated and inoffensive. Let's be clear—there is no doctrine more offensive to human pride than the reality of hell. One of the first signs of the rapid development of liberal theology in Europe and throughout the English-speaking world was the attempt to subvert the doctrine of hell. By the time we reached the second half of the twentieth century, theological liberalism had infected many denominations, and the denial of hell had become commonplace. For many people in today's postmodern world, the biblical doctrine of hell has become simply unthinkable.

– Albert Mohler, *Tell Me The Stories of Jesus*

We will grow in Christ only as we recognize the ally Jesus Christ is to us, now in heaven. He did not die and rise again on our behalf back then only to stand now with arms crossed seeing how we'll do in response. He continues to work on our behalf—he goes “to the uttermost” for us—advocating for us when no one else will, not even we ourselves. He is more committed to your growth in him than you are. Jesus intercedes.

--Dane Ortlund, *Deeper*

As the Bible shapes you as a Christian, it brings blessing. It promises that if you meditate on the Word, speak the Word, and live the Word, your way will be prosperous and you will have good success. This is the real “prosperity gospel”—not the false message that God wants everyone to get rich quick. God does not promise to make you prosperous just because you want things. God promises to bless your spiritual life and your spiritual endeavors with success through the deep understanding and application of Scripture.

God's revelation of the right way to live and worship and know Him is something to delight in. Psalm 119 uses the word “delight” eight times to describe our attitude toward God's Word. It is a source of joy and satisfaction

– John MacArthur, *The Heart of The Bible*

“Our Father which art in heaven” Matthew 6:9

This opening clause is a suitable preface to all that follows. It presents to us the great Object to whom we pray, teaches us the covenant office that He sustains to us, and denotes the obligation imposed upon us, namely, that of maintaining toward Him a filial spirit, with all that that entails. All real prayer ought to begin with a devout contemplation and to express an acknowledgment of the name of God and of His blessed perfections. We should draw near unto the Throne of Grace with suitable apprehensions of God's sovereign majesty and power, yet with a holy confidence in His fatherly goodness. In these opening words we are plainly instructed to preface our petitions by expressing the sense we have of the essential and relative glories of the One whom we address.

--Arthur Pink, *The Lord's Prayer*