

Jesus...never promised to build a campus ministry. There is only one institution on earth that Jesus Christ promised to build, and that's the church. If you want to be into what Jesus is into, you'll get into a church. —Kevin DeYoung

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

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

73.Q. How is the Word to be read and heard that it may become effectual to salvation?

A. That the Word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend to it with diligence (Prov. 8:34), preparation (1 Pet. 2:1-2), and prayer (Ps 119:18), receive it with faith (Heb. 4:2), and love (2 Thess. 2:10), lay it up into our hearts (Ps. 119:11), and practise it in our lives (Jas. 1:25).

74.Q. How do Baptism and the Lord's Supper become spiritually helpful?

A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper become spiritually helpful, not from any virtue in them, or in him

who does administer them (1 Cor. 3:7; 1 Pet. 3:21), but only by the blessing of Christ (1 Cor. 3:6), and the working of the Spirit in those who by faith receive them (1 Cor. 12:13).

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Sunday Evening 6:00 PM

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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IF THOU WILT

And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.
(Matthew 8:2-3)

Deception about salvation begins with the idea being suggested by us or others that we can initiate it or make some contribution to the process. Neither this passage nor others like it are at odds with the fact that salvation is by grace alone. We rather understand that grace works through the comer to manifest the work of the Spirit of God in us. We remember that Jonah was brought through a lengthy outworking of divine providence to bring forth the well-known utterance from the depths -- *But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD. (Jonah 2:9).* So, must have been the case with this poor man who boldly approached the Lord Jesus. We must remember here that we are being taught about the leper and not by the leper. The Lord moves in many ways to manifest the fact of His salvation – as many ways as there are people saved. God’s providence, His grace, and all that we know of Him are employed in salvation and they are brought into focus and fruition in the experience of the believer in being healed or being saved.

C. H. Spurgeon observed that this man came of himself, by himself, and that his faith obtained was rewarded with what he sought after. We note that others were led or were brought to Him, and some were even carried. We are not told how this faith came to him, but we know

that he was confident in the truth of what he said about Jesus.

We would consider first the nature of the disease with which he was afflicted. It was invasive, malignant, progressive, disfiguring, and disabling. Surely, we can see the parallels with sin and sinfulness in these characteristics. Others of the writers use these same terms in describing the existence of sin and depravity. Luke described his condition as dire saying that he was “full of leprosy...” The disease was considered incurable. It is hard to imagine the effects of the required isolation. We are reminded of King Uzziah and that which endured until his death. This man was banned from Jerusalem on penalty of beating. He was banned from other walled cities as well. He was ceremonially unclean and was prohibited from participation in any of the Temple activities and feasts that were important to all who were of faith.

I have heard of lepers in other countries that in their desire to find acceptance in society would knowingly come near to others. Not so here. His approach to the Lord indicates that he knew what his affliction was and all that was upon him as a result. He was unclean in his own sight and knew himself to be unacceptable in the places of worship. But here Luke tells us that he fell on his face. And we note here that “he worshiped Him...” He simply believed that Jesus

had the power to do the impossible – heal him. His approach was not one of presumption. There was no method to his approach. No one had told him that if he would do certain things that Christ Jesus would heal him. His was an expression of hope based on what he knew to be true. He had no doubt as to the Lord's ability. It was only a matter of the will of the Lord. He had nothing to offer and so, cast himself on the Lord's mercy.

The response of Jesus was to do the unthinkable. He touched him. He identified with him in a very personal way. We are not told if there were witnesses to this act. Had there been they would have declared Jesus ceremonially unclean. We are reminded here of the Scripture that declares: *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)*. The necessity here was that the purity of our Lord be imparted to this poor leper. In another place Jesus had reacted to a touch with the words, "virtue is gone out of me (Luke 8:46)." Thus, the man heard the words that answered to his faith. "I will..." As to the will of Christ, we read precious, *For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. (John 5:21)*. And as to the will of God we are always to be reminded that, *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. (Romans 9:16)*. We note here that the actions of our Lord here are from within Himself even though they are displayed in response to faith – "not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

And so, came the pronouncement – "...be

thou clean. He had been brought into full identity with Christ Jesus. This was not merely an ostentatious display of His power. It was an act of love and compassion for one of His own. Here we are afforded a look at the sovereignty of Christ. The infallible result was immediate cleansing. How sad that many would depict Christ as in any way dependent on the will of men. If He wills it, it is sure to be. So, this man would stand the test of any form of examination and so, He is directed to show himself to the priest and provide the testimony that Moses required.

In the following verse Jesus tells him to go directly to the priest. We read of this ceremony in Leviticus 14:2-7. No priest could heal a leper; he could only confirm that one had been cleansed. This was to be a testimony to them, the priests. In all likelihood they would never have had occasion to use this ceremony. The ceremony beautifully depicts the sacrifice of our Lord as being the merit for all. Two birds were involved with one being killed and the other being released. Running water depicting the presence of the new life through the Spirit was involved. The leper was to be sprinkled seven times with the blood of the sacrificial bird. We rejoice as we are reminded that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." The ceremony beautifully reminds us of our own cleansing, the resurrection of Christ and the believer's walk in the newness of life.

May we ever be seeking confirmation that we are cleansed from all our sin and that to the Glory of God through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *bhs*

Charles Spurgeon: "Blessed is that man who is done with chance, who never speaks of luck, but believes that from the least, even to the greatest--all things are ordained by the Lord. We dare not leave out the least event! The creeping of an aphid upon a rosebud is as surely arranged by the decree of Providence, as the march of a pestilence through a nation! Believe this, for if the least thing is omitted from the supreme government--so may the next be, and the next, until nothing is left in the divine hands."

“Had All Things Common”

Acts 2:44

In the Book of Acts we read that “all that believed were together, and had all things common.” There was no precept for the communal living of the Church, which seems to have been what they were practicing at the time. Yet, the principle and attitude of those early believers about their personal property is clearly a gospel principle. These men and women recognized that they were one family in Christ. Whatever God had blessed them with in his good providence, they looked upon not as something given for their personal pleasure and gratification, but as goods entrusted to them for the welfare of God’s family and the furtherance of the gospel of Christ. –Don Fortner

God's most hated attribute! --(Charles Spurgeon)

"Our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases!" Psalm 115:3

"The LORD does whatever pleases Him, throughout all heaven and earth, and on the seas and in their depths!" Psalm 135:6

"All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as He pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth." Daniel 4:35

On the other hand, there is no doctrine more hated by worldlings, as the great, stupendous--but yet most certain doctrine of the Sovereignty of the infinite Jehovah!

Men will allow God to be everywhere except on His throne!

They will allow Him to be in His workshop to fashion worlds and make stars.

They will allow Him to be in His almonry to dispense His alms and bestow His bounties.

They will allow Him to sustain the earth and bear up the pillars thereof, or light the lamps of Heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean.

But when God ascends His throne--then His creatures then gnash their teeth! And when we proclaim an enthroned God, and His right to do as He wills with His own, to dispose of His creatures as He thinks well, without consulting them in the matter--then it is that we are hissed and execrated, and then it is that men turn a deaf ear to us--for God on His throne, is not the God they love!

No doctrine in the whole Word of God has more excited the hatred of mankind, than the truth of the absolute sovereignty of God!

Opposition to divine sovereignty is essentially atheism--and were it not for sovereign grace, none of us would ever have followed the path to Heaven. I am daily more and more convinced that the difference between one man and another, is not the difference between his use of his will--but the difference of grace that has been bestowed upon him.

"Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns!" Revelation 19:6