

A Christian is not of hasty growth, like a mushroom, but rather like the oak, the progress of which is hardly perceptible, but, in time, becomes a great deep-rooted tree. —John Newton

The Baptist Catechism
AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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

7. Q. What is God?

A. God is a Spirit (John 4:24), infinite (Job 11:7, 8, 9), eternal (Ps. 110:2), and unchangeable (Jas. 1:17) in his being (Ex. 3:14), wisdom (Ps. 147:5), power (Rev. 4:8), holiness (Rev. 15:4), justice, goodness, and truth (Ex. 34:6).

8. Q. Are there more gods than one?

A. There is but one only, the living and true God (Deut. 6:4; Jer 10:10).

9. Q. How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A. There are three persons in the godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one God, the same in essence, equal in power and glory (1 John 5:7; Mt. 28:19).

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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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A CALL TO FEAR

O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing. Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD. (Psalms 34:9-11).

There is continuing reason to marvel at the expressions of David and the gracious words inspired in his heart as he rejoiced in the fear of the Lord. In the first three verses of this Psalm, we observed his call to praise. It is fitting that this should precede all other directives. In the next five verses we are called to experience the blessedness of the Lord and the Lord Himself – “O taste the Lord and see that He is good.” We now see a call to fear in the sense of acting in a proper manner upon the fear of the Lord. In later verses David issues, a call to awareness (vv. 15-18) and a call to faith (vv. 19-22).

The fear of the Lord appears in many contexts in Scripture. There were certainly many times that fear in the sense of being terrified was the case. But there are many references that are set forth in a more positive way such as Job who was “one that feared God, and eschewed evil.” Most bible students are familiar with such passages that show the benefits of the fear of the Lord such as it being the beginning of knowledge (Proverbs 1:7). Especially do we note such passages as, *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. (Proverbs 9:10)*. But here there is promise and loving benefit attached to the fear of the Lord. Being taught that the “fear of the Lord” is the foundation of wisdom and knowledge, we would learn here that joy and peace are the attending delights to those who

fear the Lord.

We note that this directive to “fear the Lord” appears in the context of both magnifying the Lord and experiencing Him. It only follows that no threat or consequence is issued here. It only follows that we should often visit thoughts on this subject as to what it is. It is the recognition of who God is. Thus, we are drawn to think upon His attributes. This is not limited to but certainly includes His holiness, His Majesty, His beauty, and all that is true about Him. We must be drawn to His work of redemption and that which was displayed in it as He sent His Son into the world to suffer such an ignominious death. But then we are further drawn to His loving attachment to His children. We would note the claim that He has upon them and the loving manner of His approach to them. In experiencing the fear of the Lord, we not only learn true wisdom, but we are also brought into a way of assurance in realizing that all that which is a terror to others is engaged for our eternal good.

So, it is that which the world deems unpleasant, to say the least, and a matter of fright and terror often, is to the child of God a thing to be desired. To see ourselves standing in love and humility before one who could crush us in an instant is a delightful way of life. When our attention is directed to the cross of our Lord, we are made to realize that we might have had

reason to be terrified. Spurgeon once commented that he never knew just how terrible was his sin until he saw it on Christ. But we also see the wrath of which God is capable as we see it poured out on our Lord. How awful must have been the agony which they shall never suffer who fear the Lord in the way David describes it here. As we think of the blackness and outer darkness that our Lord referred to (Matthew 22:13) as a reason to be terrified, we are reminded of the awful abandonment which He endured. And it was that His prayer “was heard in that He feared.” Thus, we are made to understand that “perfect love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18).

It is here then that we who might have had reason to be terrified are rather made to realize that “there is no want to them that fear Him.” Thus, we are made to experience the total care and provision of the Lord. There is certainly no wanting of that which assures us of eternal life. Our Lord promised the Holy Spirit to provide us with that which we would know of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ. We are given through Him the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). What a delight it is to realize all that might constitute want only to find it provided for in Him. This is not a matter of merit; it is rather evidence of our identity with the Lord as belonging to Him and the good promised is understood in every way from material needs to the enabling of true joy and worship in Christ.

David uses young lions to illustrate the contrasting way of those who have no fear of

the Lord. We are aware that predators are always seeking after their prey and are often disappointed in their quest. And they are never satisfied. On the other hand, we are reminded of, *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. (Matthew 5:6)*. So, it is that those who seek Him early shall find Him (Proverbs 8:17). Those who seek after the Lord shall never “want any good thing.”

And so, David would endeavor to teach the fear of the Lord as a matter of faith and practice. The thought of children here may have an interesting significance. The Strong’s definition given for “ye children” includes the idea of being a “builder of the family name.” This would raise the thought of those fearing the Lord being those who would exhibit true praise and worship. They would manifest by their countenance the fear of the Lord as the delightful experience that it is. Spurgeon took this to mean that it should be taught to children and that certainly has precedent in the Word of God (Deuteronomy 6:7). It is evident that such is not the practice in our day. Not only are we mandated to learn the fear of the Lord, but also that we should teach it as we are able.

The Psalmist wrote, *Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. (Psalms 147:1)*. The word “comely” might be thought of as “is fitting.” So, we might conclude the “fear of the Lord” looks good on the Lord’s people. *bhs*

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Christ is the lowly Servant of the Lord. He did not come to earth to do His own will but to do the will of Him who sent Him. Spurgeon said, “You are clear that he went willingly, for since a single word made the captors fall to the ground, what could he not have done? Another word and they would have descended into the tomb; another, and they would have been hurled into hell.... There was no power on earth that could possibly have bound the Lord Jesus, had he been unwilling.” –Joel Beeke and Christopher Bogosh

From: *Tell Me the Stories of Jesus*, Al Mohler

Jesus' parables often end up surprising us by the conclusion of the story, sometimes catching us completely off guard. That is the case with the parable of the rich man and Lazarus found in Luke 16:19–31. This passage appears at first to be about God's judgment upon the self-sufficient rich, but it then turns into a crucial affirmation of the reality of eternal judgment and the justice of God in hell. But then, at the end, it turns out that the main purpose behind the parable is Jesus' revelation of the sufficiency of God's Word.

The name I AM comes from the Hebrew word YHWH. To pronounce this holy name, the Jews used the vowels from the name Adonai (Lord) and turned YHWH into Yahweh (LORD in our English translations). The name conveys the concept of absolute being, the One who is and whose dynamic presence works on our behalf. It conveys the meanings of "I am who and what I am, and I do not change. I am here with you and for you." –Warren Wiersbe, *He Walks With Me*

A New Heart and a New Spirit

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. —Ezekiel 36:26 In Ezekiel 36:26, we find one of Scripture's most picturesque and instructive descriptions of the doctrine of regeneration. It is essential that we not only come to a biblical understanding of this doctrine but that we also comprehend something of its vast importance. It is not an exaggeration to say that our understanding of regeneration will determine both our view of conversion and our methodology in evangelism. The doctrine of regeneration refers to the supernatural work of the Spirit of God whereby the spiritually dead sinner is made alive, his radically depraved nature is transformed, and he is enabled to respond to the gospel call with repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. The Westminster Confession and 1689 London Baptist Confession describe the Spirit's work of regeneration as "enlightening the mind spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away the heart of stone, and replacing it with an heart of flesh; renewing the will,...and effectually drawing [persons] to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace." –Paul Washer, *The Gospel Call and True Conversion*

Those who have not accepted Christ must be content with this world, but the Christian gets this one with the one to come thrown in as a bonus.

Always and always, God must be first. The gospel in its scriptural context puts the glory of God first and the salvation of man second. –A. W. Tozer