

When a man truly sees himself, he knows nobody can say anything about him that is too bad. You need not worry about what men may say or do; you know you deserve it all and more. --Martyn Lloyd-Jones

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)

12. Q. What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good (Gen. 1 throughout; Heb. 11:3).

13. Q. How did God create man?

A. God created man, male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures (Gen. 1:26, 27, 28; Col. 3:10, Eph. 4:24).

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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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THE MANNER OF WAITING

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. (James 5:7-8)

This passage is preceded by two warnings. The first is found in the last few verses of chapter four and involves the tendencies of men to plan without acknowledging the providence of God. The second is found in the first six verses of this chapter and addresses one's attachment to the apparent wealth of this present world. In either case or both, James calls us away from such things as occurred with the Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai or the scoffing that Peter referenced in 2 Peter 3. He rather encourages by the figures and examples of patience found in the Word of God. It is not for the child of God to question, to doubt, or to cast any aspersions on the mercy of God and the manner of His administration. It is for us to act in keeping with the Gospel principles of our Lord Jesus Christ and to trust in Him whether we see the reason of it all or not.

We would, at the outset, be reminded of the exhortation to patience in the opening verses of this book: *Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. (James 1:3-4)*. We further note both the source and outcome of patience as set forth in, *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed*

abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Romans 5:3-5). And we would not forget the words of our Lord in reference to the “good ground hearer:” *But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. (Luke 8:15)*.

I have long been fascinated by the references in Scripture to the early and latter rain and their application to the life and sojourn of believers in this world. The husbandman is here presented as a figure of the trusting believer (or servant of the Lord in any capacity). The term invokes the thought of one who is more than a mere farmer raising a cash crop. He is rather one who cares, nurtures, cultivates, and protects that which is given into his charge. The outcomes of his labor are assured in that he knows what he has sown. *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. (Psalms 126:6)*. Such is the nature of a husbandman. He has given himself over to pleasing the one he serves and can be satisfied with nothing less than the desired outcome. He is as tied to his task as is his master. He never loses sight of the anticipated result.

The matter of the early and latter rain refers to his dependence on the Lord. From Paul we read, *I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. (1 Corinthians 3:6)*. Paul's

reference and that of James has to do with a promise that was made to Israel early in the Lord's dealings with them. *And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. (Deuteronomy 11:13-14).* As I understand it, the early rain came shortly after the time of planting. It facilitated the germination of the seed and promoted early growth. The latter rain came just before the harvest, and it served to bring the crops to full maturity. This is not unlike the experience one has with the Lord. I remember that when I first came to know the Lord being so led of the Spirit as to drink of the water of life with wonderful enthusiasm. As I have come into the waning years of my life I find many things being sweetly confirmed and brought to a greater degree of understanding and application. So, it is that we are the husbandmen of that which has been sown in our hearts and we are to attend to it with loving care with the end always in view.

Hosea mentioned another application of the rains in his rebuke of Ephraim. Having bidden them to acknowledge their offense and seek the Lord's face, He urges their return with a promise: *Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. (Hosea 6:3).*

And now James seizes the same figure to encourage patience – “Our Lord Cometh!” Often the beauty of such texts is marred by fascination rather than expectation. Often, we tend to be caught up in the circumstances of His coming more than who it is that is coming. The reward is to them that love His appearing. *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Timothy 4:8).* We are further reminded of Paul's admonition to the Romans: *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. (Romans 13:11).* James may have had reference to the fact that the Lord is always in a way of coming to the relief of His suffering people. Again, we are commanded to be patient and to establish our hearts with the thoughts of His coming. While we may rejoice in the words of the Psalmist, *The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. (Psalms 34:18),* we are most excited by the fact that He is coming and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Compare, *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. (1 Peter 5:10).*

In the end it is the coming of the Lord to which we look and so we pray that we be not distracted from that prospect. *bhs*

PATIENTLY AWAIT THE LORD'S COMING

There are many among the rich who are using money as a sacred trust. Not against these does the Apostle utter his terrible anathemas, but against those who make money by oppression and hoard it for their selfish ends. Riches, which have not been gotten righteously, ever bring a curse with them; and the rust of unused or misused wealth eats not only into the metal but into the miser's flesh. In the light of

this passage, it is as great a wrong to hoard up for selfish ends money entrusted as a stewardship, as it is to obtain it unrighteously.

There is a sense in which the Lord is ever at hand and present. But He shall come again at the end of this age. Then all wrongs shall be righted and the oppressed avenged. Everything comes to him who can wait for it; do not judge the Lord by His unfinished work. Be patient till He unveils the perfected pattern in glory. Await the end of the Lord! –F. B. Meyer

Put Yourself in the Path of God's Grace

It is in this endless sea of his grace that we walk the path of the Christian life and take steps of grace-empowered effort and initiative. It works something like this. I can flip a switch, but I don't provide the electricity. I can turn on a faucet, but I don't make the water flow. There will be no light and no liquid refreshment without someone else providing it. And so it is for the Christian with the ongoing grace of God. His grace is essential for our spiritual lives, but we don't control the supply. We can't make the favor of God flow, but he has given us circuits to connect and pipes to open expectantly. There are paths along which he has promised his favor. As we have celebrated above, our God is lavish in his grace; he is free to liberally dispense his goodness without even the least bit of cooperation and preparation on our part, and often he does. But he also has his regular channels. And we can routinely avail ourselves of these revealed paths of blessing—or neglect them to our detriment. –David Mathis, *Habits of Grace*

The Sacrifice Has Been Accepted

If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have showed us all these things. (Judges 13:23) This is a sort of promise deduced by logic. It is an inference fairly drawn from ascertained facts. It was not likely that the Lord had revealed to Manoah and his wife that a son would be born to them and yet had it in His heart to destroy them. The wife reasoned well, and we shall do well if we follow her line of argument. The Father has accepted the great sacrifice of Calvary and has declared Himself well pleased therewith; how can He now be pleased to kill us! Why a substitute if the sinner must still perish? The accepted sacrifice of Jesus puts an end to fear. The Lord has shown us our election, our adoption, our union to Christ, our marriage to the Well-beloved: how can He now destroy us? The promises are loaded with blessings, which necessitate our being preserved unto eternal life. It is not possible for the Lord to cast us away and yet fulfill His covenant. The past assures us, and the future reassures us. We shall not die but live, for we have seen Jesus, and in Him we have seen the Father by the illumination of the Holy Ghost. Because of this life-giving sight we must live forever.

--C. H. Spurgeon, *Faith's Checkbook*