

“Without God, what am I but a guide to my own destruction?” – Augustine

"Don't measure the love of God by your circumstances, measure it by the bloody cross and the empty tomb." - H. B. Charles

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)*

25. Q. How did Christ, being the Son of God become man?

A. Christ the Son of God became man by taking to himself a true body (Heb. 2:14, 17; 10:5), and a reasonable soul (Mt. 26:38); being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her (Luke 1:27, 31, 34, 35, 42; Gal. 4:4), yet without sin (Heb. 4:15; 7:26).

26. Q. What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?

A. Christ as our Redeemer executeth the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of king, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation (Acts 3:22; Heb. 12:25; 2 Cor. 13:3; Heb. 5:5, 6, 7; 7:25; Ps. 2:6; Is. 9:6, 7; Mt. 21:5; Ps. 2:8-11).

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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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THE LORD’S THOUGHTS TOWARD HIS PEOPLE

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. (Jer. 29:11-13)

There is a strong tendency in many to presume to know the thoughts of others. It is often offensive to have someone say to you, “I know what you are thinking.” It may be what they think you would think as a reaction to something they have said or done. It may be what they would have thought under the same circumstances. For whatever the reason to act toward any regarding to what we think they are thinking is presumptive and disrespectful. The better thing is to just ask. But man does not stop with analyzing the thoughts of others. They are often heard to express in the same way toward God. As they look to circumstances around them, they express a knowledge of why the Lord is bringing something to pass and even presume to know the reasoning of God that has caused Him to act in such a way. The Lord, through the Old Testament prophet declared, *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. (Isaiah 55:8).*

The words of our text forcefully imply that those addressed do not know the thoughts that He thinks toward them. At least, they do not know those thoughts as He does. The expressions of scripture concerning the thoughts of the Lord are such to point us to not only the fact that He thinks on us, but that He does so on a level that produces wonder in His people. Rather we ask, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him?” We witness the sense of awe in the Psalmist as he reflects on the

thoughts of the Lord: *Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. (Psalms 40:5).* The infinite scope of the thoughts of God is expressed by Isaiah in *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: (Isaiah 46:10).* The prophet Micah stated “But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel...”

The thoughts of the Lord involve the purpose and determinations of His heart as we may understand from the tone of the text. The immediate application here was to those who would soon go into captivity. Even this He intended for their good (Jer. 24:5). We may see this text in the immediate sense and may claim it in the broader sense in application to all His people in all time. And so, His thoughts would manifest love, grace, and mercy, applied to sinful men. His electing love as ever in His thoughts, His provision for their welfare, redemption, salvation by the blood, their effectual calling, their adoption, and their eternal life are all understood to be in the thoughts of God.

How sweetly personal this becomes to those who love His appearing. *But I am poor and*

needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God. (Psalms 40:17). And we hear the valuation of David in, *How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! (Psalms 139:17).* And so, we understand the thoughts of the saints concerning the thoughts of the Lord – They are of peace and not evil. John Gill aptly commented here: “...their peace and reconciliation with God, and the manner of bringing it about, by the blood, sufferings, and death of his Son in human nature, with whom he consulted and agreed about this matter; and concerning their inward spiritual peace of mind and conscience now, and their eternal peace hereafter: nor does he ever think of evil for them; whatever evil he thinks towards others, angels or men, he thinks none towards them; and whatever evil befalls them, he means it for good, and it does work for good unto them; he cannot think otherwise concerning them, consistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love to them; since he has designed so much good for them, does so much to them, and has so much to bestow upon them.”

Isaiah wrote that “the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.” The expected end is that for which Christ died and rose again. It is the desire that shall be manifested in the hearts of His people and that for which they will pray. Again, we quote Dr. Gill: “...the end of all God's gracious purposes and designs; the end of the covenant of grace, the provisions, blessings, and

promises of it; the end of Christ's coming into the world, and of his obedience and death; the end of his prayers and preparations now in heaven; and the end of the faith of the saints on earth: this is an end hoped, waited for, and expected by faith; and for which there is good reason; since it is wrought out, prepared, and promised; saints are heirs of it...”

With the realization of these thoughts of the Lord, as administered to us by the Holy Spirit, and apprehended by the faith of God's elect, things will happen. There are no “ifs” or “ought to's” found in the following two verses. It is rather, “ye shall,” “ye shall,” and “I will.” There is an absolute outcome declared and we may trust therein. In a true Spirit of Prayer, you will call upon Him. You will go (walk) in the way of prayer without ceasing; and the divine interaction will occur. He will hearken. Again, “ye shall seek,” when the impact of the Lord's thoughts is sensed, and He will be found when the heart is fully engaged and so it will be at such a revelation of His thoughts of us. Then will we rejoice as His thoughts of peace are realized.

We are reminded of the words of our Lord in this regard (Matt. 7:7). It is the Lord that we ask for; it is Him for whom we seek; it is at the door of His mercy that we knock. Herein is our confidence and our consolation in troublous times. We rejoice with the Psalmist, *The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands. (Psalms 138:8).* Rejoice, the Lord will be found! *bhs*

Father, may my praying always show me to be one of your children. You are a generous God, giving me abundant blessings. Thanks you that your supreme gift is the gift of yourself. Yet how easily and quickly I forget you, and focus instead on earthly, flimsy treasure. Your word tells me that if I know how to give good gifts to my children, then how much more will you give your children all that we need and far more than we deserve. Thank you that the cross proves the truth of this to me. Please help me to live out that truth today. In Christ's name I earnestly pray. Amen. –Alistair Begg

GOD-CENTERED HOLINESS

You shall be holy, for I am holy. (1 PETER 1:16) If holiness is so basic to the Christian life, why do we not experience it more in daily living? Why do so many Christians feel constantly defeated in their struggle with sin? Why does the church of Jesus Christ so often seem to be more conformed to the world around it than to God? Our first problem is that our attitude toward sin is more self-centered than God-centered. We're more concerned about our own "victory" over sin than we are about the fact that our sins grieve God's heart. We cannot tolerate failure in our struggle with sin chiefly because we are success-oriented, not because we know it's offensive to God. W. S. Plumer said, "We never see sin aright until we see it as against God. . . . All sin is against God in this sense: that it is His law that is broken, His authority that is despised, His government that is set at naught. . . . Pharaoh and Balaam, Saul and Judas each said, 'I have sinned'; but the returning prodigal said, 'I have sinned against heaven and before thee'; and David said, 'Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned.'"¹ God wants us to walk in obedience — not victory. Obedience is oriented toward God; victory is oriented toward self. This may seem to be merely splitting hairs over semantics, but there's a subtle, self-centered attitude at the root of many of our difficulties with sin. Until we deal with this attitude, we won't consistently walk in holiness.

Victory is a by-product of obedience. As we concentrate on living an obedient, holy life, we'll certainly experience the joy of victory over sin. Will you begin to look at sin as an offense against God, instead of a personal defeat only?

—Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness*

THE WRATH OF GOD ON CHRIST

At that very moment, darkness covered the land and the earth shook mightily. In righteous anger, the Almighty had quickly mounted His warhorse and, without hesitancy, with His right hand, He took the spear of the law and forcefully thrust it into the heart of His only begotten Son. As His heart was being pierced, Christ looked into the face of His Father and saw nothing but burning hatred and eyes full of fire staring back at Him. In that dark moment, God's unadulterated wrath was poured out upon the sinless Son of Man. In His flesh, He endured the sins of His people. Without turning aside, for the sake of God's elect, Jesus remained steadfast to His calling and faithfully drank every drop from the cup of God's wrath. Being forsaken and rejected by His Father, Christ was cut off and cursed of God. Christ died! It was finished; the law of God was satisfied. —Jeffrey Johnson and Tom Nettles

Albert N. Martin quoting someone from his past:

"My brother, never forget that if the devil cannot keep you from climbing the hill of any truth, once you have climbed that hill, he will seek your ruin by attempting to push you down the other side." With this same concern in mind he went on to say, "If the devil cannot freeze you out of a truth with indifference, he will seek to burn you up with an imbalanced or fanatical use of that truth."

**WHEN THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD ARE TOPPLING, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT AT RISK.
WHEN ALL THE OTHER KINGDOMS ARE LONG GONE, GOD'S KINGDOM WILL STILL BE STANDING.**

--MONERGISM