

God is the God of the unsuccessful, of those who have failed. Heaven is filling with earth's broken lives, and there is no bruised reed that Christ cannot take and restore to glorious blessedness and beauty. —J.R. Miller

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)*

66. Q. What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment forbiddeth the omission or careless performance of the duties required (Ez. 22:26; Amos 8:5; Mal. 1:13), and the profaning the day by idleness (Acts 20:7, 9), or doing that which is in itself sinful (Ez. 23:38), or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly employments or recreations (Jer 17:24-27; Is. 58:13).

67. Q. What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?

A. The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment, are God's allowing us six days of the week for our own lawful employments (Ex. 20:9), his challenging a special propriety in a seventh, his own example, and his blessing the Sabbath day (Ex. 20:11).

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsi@msn.com

Website: www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com

WXTH-LP 101.7 FM— In Richwood

Services:

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 LESSONS OF HISTORY

*Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.
(1 Corinthians 10:11-12)*

It has been stated in several forms and attributed to different sources that “those who refuse to learn from history are condemned to repeat it.” There is certainly an element of truth to be understood here even in the secular realm. It seems that it is being proven again in our day. Men continue to look to man for the answer to the ills he perceives to exist and only succeeds in confirming what Solomon wrote so long ago – “...all is vanity...” and “there is no new thing under the sun.”

Much of the Old Testament is taken up with the history of the failures of men in general and of Israel in particular. In the course of events the Lord showed Himself powerfully and often and manifested His mercy and grace toward all who call upon Him. Yet, we note the repeated and final failures of the people who had been favored with the oracles of God. Paul wrote: *What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. (Romans 3:1-2).* They fell miserably despite the years of warnings by the prophets who declared the holiness of God and that redemption was in Him alone. That they were a rebellious people became apparent soon after their deliverance from Egypt.

In setting before us a powerful warning against pride and presumption the Apostle focuses on just one period in the history of Israel. He begins with the crossing of the Red

Sea. He points to this as a type of baptism unto Moses. To be at the bottom of the sea, one should be dead. But a glorious picture of passing through death unto a new life cut off from the old was given them. They soon became witness to one miracle after another whereby the Lord provided them sustenance in the wilderness that was manifestly not of their doing. An enormous group of people were given water in the desert and were miraculously fed for forty years. In verse 5 of this chapter Paul reminds us that “with many of them God was not well pleased.” It was not long before the murmuring began and many succumbed to idolatry and followed after their own lusts. After the unbelief of the spies sent to survey the land, the fate of that generation was sealed. But even as they were nearing the end of the wilderness journeys, having witnessed the overthrow of all enemies that opposed them, they again gave place to horrible wickedness and 23,000 of them died as a result. As a result of their wickedness and rebellion some were “destroyed of serpents” and some were “destroyed of the destroyer.”

Most students of the Scripture have read of all this and might well think, “shame on them.” But in addressing believers, Paul declares that these things have been written for us, for our admonition. We are warned that God has not changed concerning His hatred for sin. “They were recorded that we might have the benefit

of these dispensations, so that we might be admonished to avoid the sins that brought such judgments upon them (Charles Hodge).”

Paul makes this an even stronger warning by identifying who we are. We are they “upon whom the ends of the world are come.” We would note the plural (ends) here and would consider that there have been many significant periods in biblical history. But as to God’s dealing with men, Christ has always been in view. Not only has there ever been the visible evidence of the being and existence of God in the universe, but there has also been the types and shadows pointing to redemption in Christ our Lord. We might be inclined to think of Jewish dispensations or some other time frames, but the coming of the Lord into the world ushered in the age to end them all. Charles Hodge wrote: “Or what in this case may be more natural, the meaning is that we are living during the last of those periods which are allotted to the duration of the world, or the present order of things.” Christ’s coming into the world began the consummation of all things and the witness of His suffering, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension are ever before us. Paul would not leave us then to presume. He wrote in v. 9, “Neither let us tempt Christ...”

It is ever the design of the Apostles to keep us in the way of full dependence on the Lord for all things and especially the keeping of our souls in the way of health and assurance. So, the ever-present “therefore” appears following these words. One is the most in danger of falling when he thinks that he is standing in his own strength. Peter vehemently declared that he would never

deny the Lord, and we know the end of that story. As I grow older, I become more conscious of where my feet fall. A failure to do so has resulted in falls. How much more should we contemplate the fact that we are subject to overconfidence regarding the pursuit of holiness in our lives. Matthew Henry commented on v. 12 in this way: “Others have fallen, and so may we. And then we are most likely to fall when we are most confident of our own strength, and thereupon most apt to be secure, and off our guard. Distrust of himself, putting him at once upon vigilance and dependence on God, is the Christian’s best security against all sin.”

Peter warned of they that are in the world: *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. (2 Peter 2:9-10).* David was fully aware of his own limitations and the tendencies of the flesh and so prayed. *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer. (Psalms 19:13-14).*

Paul did not consider these warnings as something to be taken lightly and neither should we. May we learn the lessons of biblical history. And may we ever seek to honor our Lord in all we do. *bhs*

The Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3–12) reveal the character of true faith as well as any passage of Scripture I know. These traits—poverty of spirit, hunger and thirst for righteousness, purity of heart, and so on—are not just an unobtainable legal standard. These are characteristics common to all who believe. The first of the Beatitudes leaves no doubt about whom the Lord is speaking: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:3). He is describing redeemed people, those who have

believed, those who are part of the kingdom. Here is what their faith is like. Its foundational characteristic is humility—a poverty of spirit, a brokenness that acknowledges spiritual bankruptcy. Genuine believers see themselves as sinners; they know they have nothing to offer God that will buy His favor. That is why they mourn (v. 4), with the sorrow that accompanies true repentance. It crushes the believer into meekness (v. 5). He hungers and thirsts for righteousness (v. 6). As the Lord satisfies that hunger, He makes the believing one merciful (v. 6), pure in heart (v. 7), and a peacemaker (v. 9). The believer is ultimately persecuted and reviled for righteousness' sake (v. 10). That is Jesus' description of the genuine believer. Each of the characteristics He names—starting with humility and reaching fruition in obedience—is a consequence of true faith. And note that the obedience of faith is more than external; it issues from the heart. —John MacArthur, *Only Jesus: What it Really Means to be Saved*.

KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST EVER INCREASES

A lady stopped me in a public place to tell me she recognized me from viewing our television program. I introduced myself to her, and offered to her a tract. She looked at its title, “The Incomparable Christ”, then declined my offer, explaining, “I have been a member of the [name withheld] church for over thirty years. I know all about Jesus Christ.”

I have been a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ for over thirty years. But you will not hear me boast, “I know all about Jesus Christ.” And you would not hear that boast from me if I live to be as old as Methuselah. I hope to spend the rest of my earthly life learning more and more about the infinite glory and eternal existence of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I hope the afore-mentioned lady merely misspoke, and that she did not literally mean what she said. How could a mortal who does not know all about himself – the one he knows best – boast of knowing all about Jesus Christ – whom he has never seen? How could a lowly mortal whose existence on earth is but a short time boast of knowing all about “the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity” (Isaiah 57:15). One may know all about an idol and god made by men – at least all that is practically worth knowing about such a vain and worthless thing, but no mortal will ever in this life “know all about Jesus Christ”.

Believers admit that we know Jesus Christ, for we confess “I know whom I have believed” (2 Timothy 1:12). But we do not boast “I know all about Jesus Christ.” Rather, we desire “that I may know Him” (Philippians 3:10), and to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). We will spend the remainder of our earthly lives searching “the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Ephesians 3:8). We on this earth will “know the love of Christ” but realize also that it “passes knowledge” (Ephesians 3:19). And we confess, “Now [i.e., on earth] I know in part, but then [i.e., in glory] I shall know just as I also am known” (1 Corinthians 13:12).

– Daniel E. Parks

THE WAY TO BE ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING IS TO BE PRAYERFUL IN EVERYTHING.
—HB CHARLES JR