

From Monergism

On his deathbed, Scotsman, David Dickson (c. 1583-1662), well-known for his commentary on the Westminster Confession of Faith, was asked by the friends gathered around him, what he was thinking.

Dickson replied, "I have taken all of my bad deeds and put them on a heap, and I have taken my good deeds as well, and I have put them on the same heap. And I have run away from that heap into the arms of Jesus. I die in peace."

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)*

76. Q. What is required in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment requireth the preservation of our own and our neighbors chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior (1 Cor. 7:2, 3, 5, 34, 36; Col. 4:6; 1 Pet. 3:2).

77. Q. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions (Mt. 15:19, 5:28; Eph. 5:3, 4).

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsj@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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GRACE FOR GRACE

And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. (John 1:16)

The cry of the prophet Jeremiah was a pitiful one. “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow (Lam. 1:12).” Here was a man that had begun his ministry with great expectation for Judah and Jerusalem. He rather lived to witness the utter destruction of it all. Thus, he is found in the depth of despair. Yet, in the midst of overwhelming sorrow a marvelous revelation is given to him. He was made to remember the faithfulness of the Lord. And so, he acknowledges that which is so important to us all – “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning...” Morning by morning the Weeping Prophet awoke to ever increasing realizations that the compassions of the Lord were still there and were still effectually engaged in his behalf.

The words of John here give us an even greater perspective on that which was revealed to Jeremiah. Not only has the Lord pitied us as a father pities his children, but He is also full of grace and truth (v. 14) and there is no limit to be found to that supply. The reference to the cry of John the Baptist gives added emphasis to the Deity of Christ and to the consideration of His fulness. Paul reminds that “It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.” It is He “In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge Col. 2:3.” And further that, “For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).”

Paul challenged the Corinthians by asking them what they had that they had not received. We do well to so challenge ourselves in that the inevitable conclusion is that all that we have is from Him and is derived from His fulness. In vv. 12 and 13 of this chapter reference is made to those who received Him, who His own, the Jews, had rejected. They were given power to become the sons of God. But then, John assures us that it was not of us – it was rather that those receiving Him had been born of God. And in receiving Him we are made recipients of the fulness that is in Him alone. All of this is of grace and most assuredly not of merit. R. C. H. Lenski points out that there is an active component in receiving of Him. First, there is the gift, then the ability to receive, and then the inducement to receive. An order is thus established. Christ is the gift of God. The Spirit quickens that ability to receive. It is then, by the operations of the Spirit in conjunction with the preaching of the Word that He is, by faith, received.

In endeavoring to comprehend the fulness of Christ, we find much more than we can wrap our poor minds around. But we are assured that this is “...all that dwells in Christ for men (JFB).” We are made partakers of the fruits of His fulness. We would understand it as “electing, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and regenerating grace, and eternal life (Gill).” Who is able to plumb the depths of these things? The Apostles recognized that they were not only preaching the grace of God in Christ; they were receiving of that enabling grace to do so. They

looked to the perfecting of grace in others, so they preached unto them Christ Jesus and the fulness that is in Him. Gill further commented that "all grace is received in order to perfect grace."

Paul wrote to the Romans of the superabundance of grace: "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:" (Romans 5:20). To the Corinthians he wrote reminding of the ability of God to administer His grace: And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (2 Corinthians 9:8). They knew the grace of God in salvation, they knew it in continuation, and they knew it as a never-ending supply. Some have characterized this as wave after wave of Grace. Indeed, it just keeps coming. Most agree that it could read "Grace upon grace." The thought here (according to several scholars) is that it is grace in the place of grace. Some explain it in this way, that as soon as the grace provided is gone, there is more grace to take its place. Others would expand that thought to include the infinite supply. Lenski used the sun as an illustration – just as the sun is not darkened by the whole world enjoying its light... Neither is the fulness of Christ diminished in the slightest by the outpouring of grace and mercy on the whole of His elect children.

Our Lord used the thought of a fountain. And, that fountain is always overflowing. Such was the realization of the Psalmist – "My cup

runneth over." The woman at the well was given an overflowing source of living water and she was never to thirst again. MacLaren observed that not only is the fulness of the divine nature in Christ, the Incarnate Word, but also such fulness dwells in Him in order that men may get at it. Thus, every overture of His kindness towards us bids us to come drink of the water of life freely.

MacLaren continued with this, "Think of that solitary figure of the Christ reared up, as it were, before the whole race of man, as able to replenish all their emptiness with His fulness, and to satisfy all their thirst with His sufficiency. Dear brother! you have a great gaping void in your heart-an aching emptiness there, which you know better than I can tell you. Look to Him who can fill it and it shall be filled. He can supply all your wants as He can supply all the wants of every soul of man. And after generations have drawn from Him, the water will not have sunk one hairsbreadth in the great fountain, but there will be enough for all coming eternities as there has been enough for all past times. He is like His own miracle-the thousands are gathered on the grass, they do 'all eat and are filled.' As their necessities required the bread was multiplied, and at the last there was more left than there had seemed to be at the beginning. So, of His fulness have all we received'; and after a universe has drawn from it, for an Eternity, the fulness is not turned into scantiness or emptiness."

May we rejoice together in the knowledge of grace compounded and compounding. *bhs*

"What is contentment?

It is the being satisfied with the sovereign dispensations of God's providence. It is the opposite of murmuring, which is the spirit of rebellion—the clay saying to the Potter, "Why have You made me thus?" Instead of complaining at his lot, a contented man is thankful that his condition and circumstances are no worse than they are. Instead of greedily desiring something more than the supply of his present need, he rejoices that God still cares for him." - A. W. Pink

True Fellowship

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His son Jesus Christ.”

1 John 1:3

John begins this verse by reminding us that he was an eyewitness for he was declaring or preaching what he had seen and heard of Jesus Christ the Word of Life along with the other apostles. John concluded that believers “have fellowship with us.” Human fellowship is especially important. Our Lord said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” (Gen. 2;18). When man was created, he had a relationship with his Creator and after that there was established a human relationship. Man needed a connection with others physically and spiritually. Man is born into this world with a close connection to his mother through the umbilical cord and then there proceeds a maternal and paternal connection. Then in marriage there is a connection that God placed great restrictions on to protect. Then spiritually when a person is regenerated by God the Holy Spirit and then brought to repentance of sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ there is an establishment of an unbreakable relationship with the Lord. There is then to be a relationship with a New Testament Church. These connections or relationships are fellowships.

The local church is sometimes called “a fellowship of believers.” This is Biblical, of course, for that is an accurate description of a local church. The Greek word for “fellowship” is *koinonia*. This word in Classical Greek referred to the marriage relationship in that it referred to a shared life. Hermann Cremer explained “fellowship always denotes a relation, as between persons based on Christian unity.” In a fellowship, believers are a part of and have a part in that fellowship. This is the word that John used in our text which refers to a communion or partnership among believers in a called-out assembly of worshippers of the God of heaven and earth.

When Adam fell, the fellowship with God was broken between God and man. Only an act of the offended God the Father sending God the Son to make a substitutionary atonement, and God the Holy Spirit applying that atonement to one, can there be a re-establishment of fellowship with God by salvation. John also concluded that the origination of that fellowship relates to our relationship with the persons of the Godhead, for God the Holy Spirit led John to write, “Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His son Jesus Christ.” “Our fellowship” could be translated “the fellowship, that which is ours.” Our relationship with God the Father is totally related to our relationship with Christ. Our access to this fellowship is by faith in Christ (Rom. 5:2).

--Dr. Ron Rumburg