

Soldiers have never been so admired for their victories as the saints have been for their sufferings. —Thomas Watson

The Baptist Catechism (Keach's Catechism)

1677

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

Q. 14. 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. 1:27; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; Gen. 1:28)

Q. 15. What are God's works of providence?

A. God's works of providence are His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures, and all their actions.

(Neh. 9:6; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3; Ps. 103:19; Matt. 10:29-30)

Q. 16. What special act of providence did God exercise towards man, in the estate wherein he was created?

A. When God had created man, He entered into a covenant of works with him, upon condition of perfect obedience, forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death.

(Gen. 2:16-17; Gal. 3:12; Rom. 5:12)

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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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### CONSIDER HIM

*For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. (Hebrews 12:3-4).*

The course of evil seems to be unfolding at a faster pace than ever before. To remain undaunted at what we are confronted with would not be possible apart from faith and the assuring presence of our Blessed Lord. If we think in quantitative terms, we are greatly outnumbered. The precepts of righteousness are being shouted down and the pride of man seems to prevail in every corner of the land. There is indeed a famine of the hearing of the Word of God. We are witnessing things that many of us believed could never happen and yet, here we are in the midst of moral collapse as well as the collapse of all aspects of a well-ordered society. These things surely are not new. It is certain that the writer of Hebrews sensed such opposition toward them and against Christ whom they preached. And so, he would encourage in citing the example of Christ. The writer here directs their attention to Christ Himself as the only means to head off such weariness and fainting in their minds. They are directed to “consider Him.”

The intent of the evil one is to distract the attention of the masses in such a way as to prevent them from receiving the seed that falls by the wayside. It is rather the evil intent to flood the mind with personal issues and to direct them in the way of immoral outrage. It is the evil design to make these things to be primary in thought and action. Therefore, we have those marching the streets, justifying

criminal behavior, and defying any rule of law, let alone God’s Law. With the anger exhibited by such as these they would not be deterred from shedding the blood of believers and feeling justified. It has happened before.

As believers, we have the gift of discernment whereby we can sense that which is clearly not of Christ. We are not “ignorant of Satan’s devices.” We do not see these things as merely wrong, we see them as offensive to God and their intent is frightening. I have heard many say that they just “do not follow the news because it is too distressing.” That doesn’t make the bad things go away. It is important that we know of the movements of the enemy but more important that we consider the remedy provided by our Lord.

John Gill, in commenting on this passage, first directed attention to the many ways that Christ is to be considered. He would have us consider Him and His greatness as He is identified to us as God, as the Son of God, as the heir of all things. Then Dr. Gill directed attention to His offices as prophet, priest, and King. He would further see Him as the exclusive Savior of lost sinners. He is to be seen as the commander of the people and as the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. He would then have us to see Him in His human nature and His conversation in this world and what He suffered for men. He was witnessed to be pure and holy in all His ways as well as harmless and innocent. He was

meek and lowly, and He went about doing good to the souls of men. He then suffered and died and is now glorified. This is a wonderful description of things to consider as to our Lord's person and work.

The word here translated "consider" is used only here in our KJV. It is distinguished from the word used in Hebrews 3:1 where the thought is to observe fully, to behold, to discover, to perceive. Here the word means to analyze as it relates to the objective of the writer. Thus, we do well to look to Gill's treatment above and then to analyze what transpired in the life of Jesus our Lord.

The word is very clear here that the contradiction of sinners was against Himself. The writer is then telling us to compare our lives with that of Jesus and notice what He had to contend with in the pursuit of our salvation. Kistemaker wrote: "The writer reveals himself to be an excellent pastor. He knows the tendency to look at the Christian and not at the Christ. Introspection causes spiritual weariness and discouragement but looking at Jesus renews the Christians strength and boosts his courage." It is of great importance that we notice here that Jesus "endured" the contradiction of sinners. He was not as one unaffected by what He suffered.

Thus, we read that they denied His deity and reacted violently at His claim to being the Son of God. They put their own misplaced views of the Sabbath in opposition to His displays of mercy in the healing of the sick and infirmed. They accused Him of working the works of the devil. They were derisive to the thought of His being a prophet and especially of being that One of whom Moses spoke. They accused Him on the

basis of His contacts with sinners refusing to believe that it was to their salvation for which they had no offering. Ultimately, they pursued Him to the cross which opened Him to even more contradiction of sinners – the masses, Pilate, the Roman soldiers.

It is both evident and essential that He "resisted unto blood." The writer of Hebrews is here asking that a comparison be made. And then that we be encouraged to "consider Him" and so not to succumb to weariness and fainting of mind. This chapter begins with some of the most encouraging words. We are first to look to the "cloud of witnesses" that have gone before and have endured. After their example we are to "run with patience the race that is set before us. Hebrews 12:1. As we run, we are to be looking unto Jesus and the objective of joy before Him such that He "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2.

It behooves us then to consider (analyze) every aspect of both His being and existence and the endurance exhibited in His earthly sojourn. We do so that we might realize that our suffering and the contradiction we face is nothing compared to His. We may indeed be called on to resist unto blood, but we may be assured that our Champion has gone before. The songwriter said it well: Oh, the cross has wondrous glory; oft I've proved it to be true. / When I'm in the way so narrow, I can see a pathway through; / And how sweetly Jesus whispers, "Take the cross, thou needst not fear, / For I've trod the way before thee, and the glory lingers near. *bhs*

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The weakest faith gets the same strong Christ as does the strongest faith.

—Sinclair Ferguson

My security as a Christian does not reside in the strength of my faith but in the indestructibility of my Savior. —Sinclair Ferguson

When we lose the excitement of the Christian life, we also start losing the enjoyment of the Christian life and become lukewarm believers like the church in Laodicea (Rev. 3:14–22). Instead of eagerly expecting each new day to be an adventure in faith, we yawn and start searching for something more exciting to do. Our daily devotional life becomes bland and routine, the occasional problems that come along make us impatient and angry, and eventually, blessing is replaced by boredom. Instead of thanking our Father for the good things He sends daily, we complain about what He doesn't send. A. W. Tozer wrote, "A dopey, blear-eyed generation seeks constantly for some new excitement powerful enough to bring a thrill to its worn-out and benumbed sensibilities." Ouch! Once Lot had gotten a taste of the intoxicating life of Egypt, he got tired of Uncle Abraham's life of faith and started moving toward Sodom (Gen. 13). As a result, Lot lost everything he owned when Sodom was destroyed, and he ended up in a cave committing incest with his two unmarried daughters. Lot didn't end well.

--Warren Wiersbe, *He Walks With Me*

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In light of the fact that sin brings all of us to the point that we exhale violence in some form at some time, it's amazing how much peace and cooperation exist in our relationships. What's the explanation for this apparent contradiction? It can be said in one word: grace. There's not a day where you and yours are not protected by the most powerful, protective, and beneficial force in the universe—the grace of God. Every situation, location, and relationship you're in every day is made livable and tolerable by his grace. In the majesty of his love, God causes his grace to restrain us, just as he causes the sun and the rain to fall on both the just and the unjust. Why does he do this? He does it because of his great love and for the sake of his own glory. This means that every day you experience the power of his grace. Every day God keeps us all from being as wicked as we have the potential to be. And if he would for a moment withdraw his hand of grace, this world would explode into chaos and violence unlike anything any of us could conceive. You see, you only ever begin to really celebrate grace when you begin to understand how deep and pervasive the effects of sin are. As Jesus said when that woman washed his feet with her hair, "The one who has been forgiven much, loves much." Take time to consider the ravages of sin on us all, because when you do, you'll leave with a deeper appreciation of grace than you've ever had. And that appreciation won't only cause praise to come out of your mouth, but it will also change the way you live.

--Paul David Tripp, *A Shelter in the time of Storm*

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Oh, if we could not die, it would be indeed horrible!  
Who wants to be chained to this poor life for a century or longer?  
It is the very joy of this earthly life, to think that it will come to an end. –Spurgeon