

As sure as ever God puts his children in the furnace, he will be in the furnace with them. — Charles Spurgeon

If he gives you the grace to make you believe, he will give you the grace to live a holy life afterward. —Charles Spurgeon

The Baptist Catechism (Keach's Catechism)

1677

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Q. 33. How are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us, by His Holy Spirit.

(John 3:5-6; Titus 3:5-6)

Q. 34. How does the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. The Spirit applies to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.

(Eph. 2:8; 3:17)

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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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BELIEVEST THOU THIS?

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

(John 11:25-27)

It is to be feared that many embrace the facts of Scripture in the absence of true faith. I was often intimidated early on when non professors or those lacking believing practice could quote bible facts that I did not know. It is the manifestation of Paul's observation of the Jews who had a zeal without knowledge or the observation in Hebrews of truth heard but not being mixed with faith. Could it be that much of what is professed today is embraced in the same way? Facts are taught and known, and professions are forthcoming, but the evidence of a resurrected life may be absent. Even we may at times be found thinking upon scripture truth apart from the reverence that is due the living Word of God and apart from the faith of life.

It seems this was the case with Martha and even with the disciples. Thomas had referred to the animosity of the Jews and believed that this mission might end in the death of them all. Jesus had told them that this sickness was not unto death. It was rather for the glory of God. The others seemed resigned to go along being confused by the declaration that Lazarus was dead. The aim of Jesus for them was clearly expressed as He said, "I am glad that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe..." He met with a similar tone of resignation from Martha, the sister of Lazarus. She was resigned

to the fact that her brother was dead. But she was clear that she believed that Jesus could have prevented his death. Jesus answered her with the simple but profound announcement, "Thy brother shall rise again."

The answer of Martha betrays a knowledge of fact without faith. She refers to that which she knows to be true from her knowledge of Scripture. Among the Jews this was a disputed issue. The Pharisees believed in a resurrection at the last day while the Sadducees did not. This was not lively fact on her part. It was rather mere acceptance of fact that was part of the belief system she had been taught. At the same time, it was a suppression of hope that might otherwise be seen in His words concerning her brother. She certainly knew the Old Testament references and what she had heard of Him. But a question remained.

He had or would declare several things in reference to His deity. "I AM the Bread of life," "I AM the Light of the world," "I AM the door," "I AM the Good Shepherd," I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life," and "I AM the vine." Perhaps, here is the crowning expression of His divinity – "I AM the Resurrection and the Life." We would note first the order here. There is resurrection and then there is life. This is the only way it could be. Paul having declared that we were dead in trespasses and sins goes on in

Ephesians to declare us as having been raised up together in Christ. This then is followed by the life to which we have been raised. He is not here speaking of His bodily resurrection. His resurrection would be the confirmation and validation of the genuineness of this life in Him. Martha's brother was going to raise as promised. But He would have her and us to know that He is the very personification of both resurrection and life. He is our life. We die with Him, and we live with Him. He is the very essence of life to all who believe in Him.

What a wonderful parallelism we encounter here as we see two precious aspects of the believing life. Men, apart from Christ, are in bondage through the fear of death. The fact of the impending physical death of all is everywhere witnessed. In time it comes to all or in the case of believers, something like death – caught up to meet Him in the air. With Paul, the believer can say that “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” Paul certainly believed the words of our Lord. The believer in Christ, though he dies (physically), lives. His is eternal life in Christ.

Then comes a most pressing question – “Believest thou this?” The question is all embracing. Did she believe that He was the resurrection and the life? Did she believe that whosoever lives and believes in Him shall never die? “Martha's confession here is positive, heroic, and comprehensive [Henriksen].” Indeed, when she declared “I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world she exhibited the elements of true faith. There was a positive expression of

true belief from the heart. She went on past the issue of her brother's death and straight to the being and existence of God in Him. With such a profession comes the desire for the glory of God above all else. It was heroic in that she cast herself fully on Him despite all the threats of the Jews. It was comprehensive in that all else that He had declared is subjected to that essential truth. She had rested all in the confidence of who she knew Him to be. God's grace in her rises to the surface and she lays hold of all in the face of trial.

We are here reminded of the many confessions recorded in the Word of God. John saw Him as the Lamb of God. Andrew declared we have found the Messiah. Philip recognized Him as the One of whom Moses wrote. Nathaniel was constrained to confess, “Thou art the Son of God.” And here Martha declares her submission to the Christ, the Son of God. Such is the confession of all true believers.

What a powerful lesson our Lord had for Martha. Rather than rebuke her for her doubt He brought her faith to the heights of confidence in Him. She did get to see literally the power of God in Him and would be constrained to give God the glory. But her joy would not be realized in merely regaining her brother for a time; it would be forever grounded in the realization that He is the resurrection, and He is the life. Oh, that we might be enabled to evermore look to Him and be drawn out in a living and vital faith and that we might thereby seek that same objective – the Glory of God. *bhs*

GOD'S PASSION FOR HIS GLORY

It is important to note that God's passion for His own glory is a theme that runs throughout the full course of divine revelation. The Scriptures teach that the creation of the universe, the fall of man, the nation of Israel, the cross of Christ, the church, and the judgment of the nations have one great and final purpose: the glory of God. In other words, God does all that He does in order that He might reveal the fullness of all that He is to His creation, and that He might be esteemed,

worshiped, and enjoyed as God. Some of church history's most eminent theologians heartily accept this interpretation of the text. Charles Hodge writes, "Men have long endeavored to find a satisfactory answer to the question, Why God created the world? What end was it designed to accomplish?... The only satisfactory method of determining the question is by appealing to the Scriptures. There it is explicitly taught that the glory of God, the manifestation of His perfections, is the last end of all His works."⁶ Jonathan Edwards writes, "Thus we see that the great end of God's works, which is so variously expressed in Scripture, is indeed but ONE; and this one end is most properly and comprehensively called, THE GLORY OF GOD."

--Paul Washer, *The Gospel Call and True Conversion*

WHAT REALLY MATTERS

What really matters after all? My personal relation to God matters. That takes priority over everything else. A man may be born in a sanitary hospital, receive his education in progressive schools, ride in an air-conditioned car, sleep on a foam rubber mattress, wear synthetic clothing, eat vitamin-enriched food, read by fluorescent lights, speak across twelve thousand miles of empty space to a friend on the other side of the world, lose his anxieties by taking tranquilizing pills, die without pain by the aid of some new drug, and be laid to rest in a memorial park as lovely as a country garden; yet, what will all this profit him if he must later rise to face in judgment a God who knows him not and whom he does not know? To come at last before the bar of eternal justice with no one to plead his cause and to be banished forever from the presence of the great Judge—is that man any better off than if he had died a naked savage in the hinterlands of Borneo?

No man can afford to live or die under the frowning displeasure of God. Yet, name one modern device that can save him from it. Where can a man find security? Can philosophy help him? or psychology? or science? or "progress"? or atoms or wonder drugs or vitamins? No. Only Christ can help him, and His aid is as old as man's sin and man's need. The naked aborigine is as near to God (and as far from Him) as the PhD. Nothing new can save my soul; neither can saving grace be modernized. We must each come as Abel came, by atoning blood and faith demonstrated in repentance. No new way has been discovered. The old way is the true way, and there is no new way. The Lamb of God was slain "from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). – A.W. Tozer, *Born After Midnight*

Three things are essential to acceptable and effectual prayer: fervency, reverence, and confidence. This opening clause is designed to stir up each of these essential elements within us. Fervency is the effect of our affections being called into exercise; reverence will be promoted by an apprehension of the fact that we are addressing the heavenly throne; confidence will be deepened by viewing the Object of prayer as our Father. – Arthur W. Pink, *The Lord's Prayer*