

Endurance in suffering doesn't grab our attention, but it is a response so important that it will have value that lasts beyond death. —Ed Welch

The more the soul is conformed to Christ, the more confident it will be of its interest in Christ. — Thomas Brooks

The Baptist Catechism (Keach's Catechism)

1677

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Q. 49. What is the preface to the Ten Commandments?

A. The preface to the Ten Commandments is, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

(Exodus 20:2)

Q. 50. What does the preface to the Ten Commandments teach us?

A. The preface to the Ten Commandments teaches us, that because God is the Lord, and our God

and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all His commandments.

(Deut 11:1)

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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

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“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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COMFORTING WORDS FOR OUR TIMES

But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:7-8)

A topic that is often mentioned today among believers is the nearing of the second coming of our Lord. It is understandable that it be so in that we who are in pursuit of the holiness of our God find much that in this present world that is so patently offensive to Him and His righteousness. The complaint was once made concerning the Apostle Paul and those with him that “These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.” This was from the Jews in Thessalonica. They referred to the world that they had come to know as they mingled among the heathen of various sorts. What they were hearing was counter to their worldly ways and therefore to be rejected. What we witness today is a turning of all things Godly upside down. And sadly, it is being tolerated by many and even embraced by many in the churches. Knowing of the words of our Lord concerning the end of time, it seems we may be seeing such conditions as He described. Being aware of these things has the effect of making the Lord’s people even more aware. So, it was, however, in the lives of those to whom Peter wrote.

Peter’s emphasis throughout is intended to encourage the believing life in the face of suffering and the assaults against the Gospel. We have the record of many who have suffered greatly because of the Gospel and are aware of many who suffer, even in today’s world. To date, we have been spared much in this country. And we have taken our peace for granted with

the result being a laxity in devotion, prayer, and thanksgiving. Now, we witness growth among the persecuted while we are in decline. From the beginning there was opposition to the Gospel – why not now? It may soon be coming to those who will stand up for the Gospel and for the principles of righteousness that are incorporated therein.

Our greatest example in this is none other than our Lord Himself. In the beginning of this chapter Peter points to Him with a directive for us: *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; (1 Peter 4:1)*. It is with the mind of Christ, which we have, that we are to face these things. It is the imitation of Christ seen in His people that will provoke this present world. They know it when they see it and hate it and will openly challenge it. Peter goes on to say that they “think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot; speaking evil of you.” Depravity is coming more and more into view in this our day. “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”

All those things that bring comfort to believers are found in the promises of God and these are “yea and amen” in Christ. So, Peter invokes a powerful word of comfort here. It is that the “end of all things is at hand...” Here we may question the meaning of the word “end.” One of the definitions given is the aim or goal of

something declared. The most common definition is simply the termination of what ever is in view. In this case it is the “all things” in the understanding of those being addressed. I suggest that both definitions might have application here. The aim of their suffering would come to fruition in their receiving of all that is promised at the termination of this life. Many had already died at the time of this writing (v. 6) having had the Gospel promise preached to them. These were words of anticipation to those who remained. So, we would have it be for we who “Love His appearing.”

Some think that the “end of all things” here may have been in reference to that which come to pass in 70 A. D. The destruction of Jerusalem ended all the practices of Judaism at that time. How this may have affected the Jews who were persecuting believers is uncertain. But it would seem that a more comforting thought of the end of suffering, persecution, and all that afflicts in this present world was here intended. Such seems to better fit the context of what is written here. Two things were ever before them. One was the promise of His coming that is given in so many places. Peter was, no doubt, mindful of the words of our Lord that His ultimate aim was that they be with Him. See John 14. The second thing is that this life was to end in physical death. We are reminded of the words of Paul, “to die is gain.” As is popularly stated – we win either way!

The question is then, how do we contend? The answer is given in three things to be

engaged in as a matter of practice. Sobriety, watchfulness, and prayer are to be the order of the day as we wait. To be sober is to simply be filled with the Spirit and so be conscious of the reality of sin and the grace of our God in this “so great salvation.” It is to be aware of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the righteousness we have in Christ. To be watchful. First, concerning ourselves since we know of our weakness apart from Him. We are to watch concerning that which is about us that we be not led into the snares of the devil. We are to watch for Him with the expectation of His coming or in the expectation of our departure from this world. Either way it is to come into the presence of the Lord. Such considerations, will of a certainty, drive us to prayer.

We would thus be reminded to direct our attention to each other and the fellowship of the saints. “Have fervent love among yourselves.” Nothing gives us more assurance than the manifestation of the love of the brethren. Nothing more honors Christ who commanded such love with Himself as the example. “As I have loved you.” Love is not merely had; it is acted out and motivates our loving actions to others. Christ loved His own until the end in both word and deed.

O for grace to rise above this present world with all its compounding evils, to boldly declare the glorious Gospel of our Risen Lord, to point men to Him and His cross wherein is found the only hope for any, and may we lift our voices in the hope of His coming again to receive us unto Himself. *bhs*

Prayer That Pleases God

We pray. We pray because God tell us to. We pray because we need to. We pray because prayer matters. But do we pray with confidence that God is pleased with our praying? Do we pray with confidence that God is pleased with our praying even when he does not grant our petitions? Charles Spurgeon addresses those questions in this brief excerpt.

We have been pleading with God. Prayer after prayer has knocked at Heaven's gate, entreating for the conversion of souls, and the upbuilding of the church. I have no doubt that our prayer has been, in itself, acceptable with God, through Jesus Christ.

It is in itself a form of worship to which our gracious God hath much respect. The golden vials of the elders before the throne are said to be full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. Prayer is typified by sweet incense, because God delights in it. He loves to see our desires for the accomplishment of His purposes.

It is very pleasing to a father, as you who are parents can testify, to see his child in full sympathy with him, and anxious to help him in his work. Though he can do but little, and that little feebly and faultily, yet his eagerness to work with his father, and for his father, gives his father joy. Even thus does our Heavenly Father take pleasure in us, and in our desires for His glory.

"Thou didst well in that it was in thine heart," said the Lord to David, even when He did not accept what David proposed to do; and I believe there may be glory brought to God, not only by those prayers which are manifestly answered, but by those which for wise reasons the good Lord is pleased to lay on one side. We are nothing better than children even in prayer, and therefore it is not every request that is wise; but yet we are children, and therefore the cries which come from our hearts touch the heart of our great Father in Heaven.

Our desires that souls may be saved, and that the church may prosper, are so much in accordance with the mind of God that they must be a sweet savour unto Him. Therefore, brethren, let us pray on as long as breath remains. If prayer pleaseth God, it should always please us. – Cited by Tim Challies

John MacArthur on Meditation

When you meditate—when you read a verse over and over and contemplate its meaning—it begins to fill your heart. I believe that is why God gave us a book and not a music video. A music video just goes flying by, jumping from one angle to the next, bombarding you with images, and then it's gone. Even the best movie just washes over you like a wave and then recedes. Our experience of it is fleeting. But words on a page are frozen there permanently. You can go back to the same page, the same verse, over and over, and keep meditating on it. You can compare and contrast it to other verses. You can synthesize what several verses say and interpret them carefully. That is meditation—not just a momentary encounter with the truth, but immersion in it. Putting His Word in a book was the best way God could put a tool in our hands that would teach us to meditate.

The erosion of character usually begins with neglect: we stop reading the Word, or worshiping with God's people, or taking time to meditate and pray. —Warren Wiersbe