

Walk with God and you will never take the wrong road, even by mistake. You have His infallible wisdom to direct you, His immutable love to comfort you, and His eternal power to defend you.  
—Charles Spurgeon

### 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. 94. What is repentance unto life?

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

(Acts 2:37; Joel 2:13; Jer. 31:18-19; 2 Cor. 7:10-11; Rom. 6:18)

Q. 95. What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?

A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are His ordinances, especially the Word, Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

(Rom. 10:17; James 1:18; 1 Cor. 3:5; Acts 14:1; 2:41-42)

#### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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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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### REAL AND PRESENT DANGER

*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. (Acts 20:28-29).*

The touching story of Paul’s meeting with the Ephesian Elders brings to bear some issues of concern that continue to our present day. He reminded them that he had testified to all of “repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” But he revealed to them what had been revealed to him; “bonds and affliction were awaiting him. Knowing that this was the last time he would see them in this life he dealt with them with both tenderness and urgency. Their mutual love was evident, and his concern for their welfare after his departure was given in the face of certain dangers that would be coming and was already moving. The charge he gave them here most assuredly finds application for our day. The enemy that threatened then to subvert has now declared open warfare on God and the Gospel, and we are warned.

The first level of warning was to the elders themselves. “Take heed unto yourselves” was a reminder to them and to us that we are not impervious to the operations of the enemy. To take heed means to be ever aware of the intent of the enemy and that our dependence is to be fully established in the Lord alone. If you corrupt at the point of leadership it is soon communicated to those being led. Such effects have been witnessed throughout the Word of God. There were those of the Old Testament who failed to attend to themselves, and the

consequences were soon seen among their subjects. It should be a thing of grave concern to us who minister that we are not the cause of any issue with the faith of those we serve.

The second level of concern is to the flock. We are told much by the use of the term in that it alludes to the thought of sheep. This brings to mind the evident need as we are reminded of our Lord’s reference to His sheep and the fact that He laid down His life for them. He is the “Great Shepherd of the Sheep” and we are but under shepherds called to minister His word to the flock. Quite often the case is that they are subject to more danger from the world than are those who serve them. They are subject to more interaction with the world. It thus behooves us to look carefully and tenderly to their needs and urge upon them the need to take heed concerning the dangers of this present evil world.

Cultures are constantly changing, and it is of the old nature to want to conform. It was for this reason that Paul warned the Romans to be transformed rather than conformed. It is important that error is recognized and identified by seeing the contrast to that which is taught in the Word. So, we would not only take heed concerning such threats, but that we would also bring these things to their attention. By their very nature, sheep are easily led astray, and the warning is therefore given.

Of particular importance is the fact that it was the Holy Spirit that had made them overseers. They were not there because of popularity nor by the ordination of men. Thus, we understand that to oversee a flock is not to be likened to earthly administration; it is rather the Spirit led dissemination of the Word of Truth, The Gospel. We are aware of much that is declared as the Gospel that has no evidence of Spiritual influence. The appeals to human nature are rampant. It is not unusual to hear of those embracing things that are clearly evil being ordained to ministry. The work of the Spirit among us is to teach of Christ Jesus our Lord. It is He who will promote the true worship of God. He will not speak of Himself but will advance the message of redemption by the blood of Christ. He will exalt Christ. Even those things dealing with the outward execution of the church are to be done with the aim that God be glorified, Christ be exalted, and the saints be built up in the faith.

The task given is to feed the church. When our Lord brought Peter to face the task before him, this was the charge given. First was Peter's love for Christ, but then He charges him to "Feed my lambs," to "Feed my sheep," and a third time to "Feed my sheep." Peter never forgot that charge nor should we. He would later communicate that charge to others: *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:2-3).* Paul was communicating that thought to the

Ephesians and to us who now read the inspired word. We would follow the example of Christ our Lord: *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. (Isaiah 40:11).*

Paul would have them and us to remember the value placed upon those whom we serve. They are His purchased possession. We would first emphasize this thought to ourselves and then reinforce to those we serve that they are bought with the greatest of prices. I suppose it is out of the love that I have for those I have been given to serve that I often refer to them as "my people." It is most critical though that I remember that my role with them is as caretaker under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Many years ago, my grandmother baked me a pie. When she gave it to me, she told me to be careful with the plate as it had belonged to her mother. I was hesitating as I took the pie, but I determined that I would exercise the most gentle and tender care of the plate until it was returned. How much more so should I exercise the greatest of care for those having such value to the Lord. The Apostle clearly set a pattern of concern for us all: *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: (Colossians 1:27-28).*

The threat is real, the charge is great, the task is daunting, but His grace is greater. *bhs*

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John Fawcett: When you are tempted to any vanity--set the blessed Redeemer before you, consider His example, and ask yourself, "How would Jesus, my Lord and Master, have acted in such a case? Would He have spent His time upon such trifles? Would He have spoken such and such; or done this or the other thing, which I am solicited to do? And shall I give way to that which would be a manifest deviation from His holy example? God forbid!"

The happy man

(Lachlan MacKenzie, 1754-1819)

The happy man was born in the city of Regeneration in the parish of Repentance unto Life.

He has a large estate in the county of Christian Contentment.

He was educated at the School of Obedience--and often does jobs of Self-denial.

He wears the garment of Humility, and has another suit to put on when he goes to Court, called the Robe of Christ's Righteousness.

He is necessitated to travel through the world on his way to Heaven--but he walks through it as fast as he can. All his business along the way, is to make himself and others happy. He often walks in the valley of Self-Abasement, and sometimes climbs the mountains of Heavenly-mindedness.

He breakfasts every morning on Spiritual Prayer, and sups every evening on the same. He has food to eat, which the world knows nothing of--and his drink is the sincere milk of the Word of God.

Thus happy he lives--and happy he dies.

Happy is he who has . . .

gospel submission in his will, the love of God in his affections, true peace in his conscience, sincere divinity in his breast, the Redeemer's yoke on his neck, the vain world under his feet, and a crown of glory over his head!

Happy is the life of that man who . . .

believes firmly, prays fervently, walks patiently, labors abundantly, lives holily, dies daily, watches his heart, guards his senses, redeems his time, loves Christ, and longs for glory!

"Happy is the man who does not . . .

walk in the counsel of the wicked, or stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers." Psalm 1:1-3

--Copied from Grace Gems (2/01/ 2021)