

To love means loving the unlovable. To forgive means pardoning the unpardonable. Faith means believing the unbelievable. Hope means hoping when everything seems hopeless.

—G.K. Chesterton

### 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. 106. What is the invisible church?

A. The invisible church is the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered

into one under Christ the head.

(Eph. 1:10; 1:22-23; John 10:16; 11:52)

Q. 107. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper is a holy ordinance, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, His death is showed forth, and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporeal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.

(1 Cor. 11:23-26; 10:16)

#### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: [branthsi@msn.com](mailto:branthsi@msn.com)

Website: [www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com](http://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 CHURCH

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

Volume 16, No. 12

March 19, 2023

---

---

### OUR BLESSED HOPE

*Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; (Titus 2:13)*

The study of last things has often proven to be a most divisive topic. I have known it to become the reason of heated discussions. It has been made a test of fellowship in other cases. And it has often been pursued with such devotion that the cardinal issues of the Gospel were deemed of lesser importance. While I have had several thoughts along the way, and even adopted particular positions at times, it is only in a way of expectation that constrains me to rejoice in the knowledge that He is coming again. Many years ago I heard a dear Preacher brother respond to a question about the second coming of our Lord. He replied, “I haven’t figured out all about the first coming, let alone the second coming.” What we do find is a multitude of references to His appearing and our relationship to Him when He comes and to the realization of “so shall we ever be with the Lord...”

I have always delighted at reading of the reaction of Simeon at seeing the Baby Jesus. We note, *And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. (Luke 2:25)*. We observe that he was waiting for the consolation of Israel. When he took the Baby Jesus into his arms his reaction was profound: *Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, (Luke 2:28-30)*. He made no mention of

preceding events or of signs of any sort. He saw a person and called Him “thy salvation.” It is now many years ago that I heard a preacher during a message say, with reference to this text, “The Blessed Hope is not an event; it is a person!” We would comment that Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel and we are waiting for the consummation of all things. It will come with the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is certain that the Scripture points us to signs that indicate that our salvation is “nearer than when we believed.” Paul just explained the operations of the grace of God that teaches of a proper way in this present world. It is in the process of pursuing a life of obedience to the “heavenly vision” that we are to be looking for the appearance of our Lord. Paul would certainly make this a matter of priority in the life of a believer. In his parting words to Timothy he wrote, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Timothy 4:8)*. Paul, in writing to Timothy of the eternal purpose of God made reference to the appearance of Christ: *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: (2 Timothy 1:10)*. How often do we find ourselves making mention of the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is God manifest in the flesh. So, it is that we are bidden to, *Keep yourselves in the love of God,*

*looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (Jude 1:21).*

Our Blessed Lord is here characterized as our Blessed Hope. It is a precious truth that the Lord's people lay hold on Him by faith. We are reminded that "faith is the substance of things hoped for..." Hope "Makes not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." Paul wrote to the Corinthians that Jesus is made unto us, among other things, righteousness. Then in Galatians writes, *For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. (Galatians 5:5).* His revelation to us is always as, *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. (Revelation 1:18).* Truly Christ in us is the "hope of glory."

It is further revealed to us in this passage that His appearing is glorious. Kenneth Wuest translates this as "...looking for the blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ..." That it is glorious is enough for us to realize that we are not capable of either describing or comprehending it in this present frame. I don't believe that there will be a single person that will say, "it is just like I thought it would be." As I love the thought of His appearing, I can only be assured that I will experience awe beyond anything I might have imagined. And being taken out of this present frame will see Him as I have never seen before. It will no more be through a glass darkly.

In the meantime, we have ample direction as

to how to conduct ourselves in expectation of this most glorious appearing, the appearance of our Blessed Hope, He who is called "The great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Paul calls our attention to a very important realization in writing, *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Philippians 3:20-21).* John makes a similar implication. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. (1 John 3:2-3).*

We have dealt with only some of the things which we know to be true concerning things yet future. But of one event we are sure, and it is that to which born again believers everywhere have cause to rejoice. The persecuted peoples in Thessalonica were not encouraged to debate the events of the return of Christ; they were told to "comfort one another with these words."

O that we might communicate to many that He is coming as we urge them to fall on His mercy; to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; to flee from the wrath to come. Sadly, some will see something different: *Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; (2 Thessalonians 1:9).* bhs

---

Humility is the only soil in which true unity can grow. Only when Christ is more precious to us than our own reputations will we give up our petty rivalries and personal agendas. Only when his glory eclipses all else will we live for his cause and no other. — Michael Reeves

At the cross, Jesus redeemed sinners. Reconciled rebels. Appeased God. Expiated sin. Purchased forgiveness. Won righteousness. Defeated Satan. —Steven Lawson

## Two Infinitely Strong and Tender Truths

“. . . declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.’” (Isaiah 46:10)

The word “sovereignty” (like the word “Trinity”) does not occur in the Bible. We use it to refer to this truth: God is in ultimate control of the world from the largest international intrigue to the smallest bird-fall in the forest.

Here is how the Bible puts it: “I am God, and there is no other. . . . ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose’” (Isaiah 46:9–10). And: “[God] does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, ‘What have you done?’” (Daniel 4:35). And: “He is unchangeable, and who can turn him back? What he desires, that he does. For he will complete what he appoints for me” (Job 23:13–14). And: “Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases” (Psalm 115:3).

One reason this doctrine is so precious to believers is that we know that God’s great desire is to show mercy and kindness to those who trust him (Ephesians 2:7; Psalm 37:3–7; Proverbs 29:25). God’s sovereignty means that this design for us cannot be frustrated. It cannot fail.

Nothing, absolutely nothing, befalls those “who love God” and “are called according to his purpose” but what is for our deepest and highest and longest good (Romans 8:28; Psalm 84:11).

This is why I like to say that the mercy and the sovereignty of God are the twin pillars of my life. They are the hope of my future, the energy of my service, the center of my theology, the bond of my marriage, the best medicine in all my sicknesses, the remedy of all my discouragements.

And when I come to die (whether sooner or later), these two truths will stand by my bed, and with infinitely strong and infinitely tender hands lift me up to God.

--John Piper From “A Very Precious and Practical Doctrine”

---

Lorraine Boettner: “Nations, as well as individuals, are thus in the hands of God, who appoints the bounds of their habitation, and controls their destiny. He controls them as absolutely as a man controls a rod or a staff. They are in His hands, and He employs them to accomplish His purposes. He breaks them in pieces as a potter’s vessel, or He exalts them to greatness, according to His good pleasure. He gives peace and fruitful seasons, property and happiness, or He sends the desolations of war, famine, drought and pestilence. All of these things are of His disposing, and are designed for intelligent ends under His universal providence. God is no mere spectator of the universe He has made, but is everywhere present and active, the all-sustaining ground, and all-governing power of all that is.”