

Our high and privileged calling is to do the will of God in the power of God for the glory of God.
—J. I. Packer

Not only will the sorrow of death be forgotten in the joy of heaven, but the joy of heaven will be far deeper and richer because of earth's pain and sorrow. —J.R. Miller

Spurgeon's Catechism
Compiled by Charles Haddon Spurgeon
[1834 -1892]

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

57.Q. Which is the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment is, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

58.Q. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment forbids all unchaste thoughts (Matt. 5:28; Col. 4:6), words (Eph. 5:4; 2 Tim. 2:22), and actions (Eph. 5:3).

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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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EMPOWERED WITNESSES

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. (Acts 1:8-9).

Among the most exciting of biblical narratives perhaps none is more so than the account of the spread of the Gospel during the Apostolic era. I find myself often reading of and meditating on the displays of power through ordinary men with the successes we long to see today. Some of these men had been eyewitnesses to His majesty. They were about to experience the presence of His power. At this point they were still experiencing consternation and wonder as their minds were not fully focused on Christ alone – they were still concerned with anticipated events. The revelation to them at this time was not about a methodology (not a class in “personal evangelism” which men have turned into a science that tends to bondage) but rather of ability to report on Him and His ability to save. We are witnesses to His majesty (that is we are eyewitnesses by faith and experience in our own lives). We would do well to pray for the power they were promised. Salvation and revelation have a profound effect on all who know them, and such knowledge is accompanied by miraculous power.

Their thoughts were still focused on the restoration of the Kingdom. (See verses 6 and 7). They were still envisioning a political kingdom. Jesus quickly informed them that this was among the things which they did not need to

know. It is notable that there is a persistent fascination among us about the last things when we have been given present reality with which we are to be concerned. These tendencies often reach beyond what is revealed to us in the Word of God with the effect of detracting from the Gospel. One could not possibly be right about the future if He does not know of the work of Christ that is now finished. Our Lord declared unto them that, ... *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. (Acts 1:7).* Clearly, these things are in His power and in which we have no role in bringing to pass.

But there are things that they (and we) need to know (see v. 5). Here we read that our Lord directed them to the promise of John the Baptist: *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: (Matthew 3:11).* As an aside, we note that the Holy Spirit had not been inactive but awaited the time of coming into the fulness of His office in empowering the Gospel witness. Christ had been their constant companion and yet they were without ability to put all things into perspective. They had witnessed His miracles. They knew Him to be the Son of God. The crucifixion was etched into their minds. And

He was speaking to them as One alive from the dead. What they did not see was that attention was to be drawn to Him and not just what He would do.

The Holy Spirit would come “upon” them with power – not just to them with a plea for their help in bringing the will of God to pass. The Holy Spirit would first be in them/us and that a matter of experienced salvation. But He would enable and supply them as well with all that is needed to become effective witnesses. Such power and ability would be and still is miraculous indeed.

Having then told them of power and presence yet to come, He tells them to whom they are to go. They were to be witnesses unto Him. A. T. Robertson would render this as “My witnesses” and pointed out that this is the same word used elsewhere for “martyrs.” They belonged to Him as redeemed possessions. They were to be reporting of Him. *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? (Isaiah 53:1)*. They were to be the witnesses of His person – His deity and His Sonship! It behooves us to declare these things as they were commissioned to do. Inasmuch as we know the Lord, we are walking examples of the miracle working power of our Lord. We may point to those performed during His earthly ministry and treat them as historical facts rather than those things which point to salvation. We belong to Him, and we are His witnesses (martyrs). He was sacrificed for us, and we are of the same nature. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1)* So, we bear witness to His life,

His suffering, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, and His present intercessory work. These are things that are manifested to us, and they are living truth within us. How shall we not declare them?

They were to begin where they were in Jerusalem and go to the whole world. It was to continue outward to Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the world. In effect, He gave them the outline of the book of The Acts of the Apostles. At Pentecost and beyond Peter owned the title given to him by our Lord. *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. (Acts 2:32)* and *But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. (Acts 3:14-15)*. This was true of all the Apostles and we further read, *And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. (Acts 4:33)*. Paul, likewise, identified himself as the Lord’s witness and proved it with his life: *Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. (Acts 26:22-23)*.

We serve an immutable God. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is still the same Holy Spirit. These men went forth as empowered witnesses and turned the world upside down. Should we not pray for the same empowering that we might be identified as His witnesses. *bhs*

So completely was Jesus bent upon saving sinners by the sacrifice of Himself, He created the tree upon which He was to die, and nurtured from infancy the men who were to nail Him to the accursed wood. —Octavius Winslow

Summary Thoughts on the Characteristics of a True Child of God – Paul Washer

Test 1: We know that we are Christian because we walk in the light (1 John 1:4–7). Our style of life is being gradually conformed to what God has revealed to us about His nature and will.

Test 2: We know that we are Christian because our lives are marked by sensitivity to sin, repentance, and confession (1 John 1:8–10).

Test 3: We know that we are Christian because we keep God’s commands (1 John 2:3–4). We desire to know God’s will, strive to obey it, and mourn our disobedience.

Test 4: We know that we are Christian because we walk as Christ walked (1 John 2:5–6). We desire to imitate Christ and grow in conformity to Him.

Test 5: We know that we are Christian because we love other Christians, desire their fellowship, and seek to serve them in deed and truth (1 John 2:7–11).

Test 6: We know that we are Christian because of our increasing disdain for the world and because of our rejection of all that contradicts and opposes God’s nature and will (1 John 2:15–17).

Test 7: We know that we are Christian because we continue in the historic doctrines and practices of the Christian faith and remain within the fellowship of others who do the same (1 John 2:18–19).

Test 8: We know that we are Christian because we profess Christ to be God and hold Him in the highest esteem (1 John 2:22–24; 4:1–3, 13–15).

Test 9: We know that we are Christian because our lives are marked by a longing and practical pursuit of personal holiness (1 John 3:1–3).

Test 10: We know that we are Christian because we are practicing righteousness (1 John 2:28–29; 3:4–10). We are doing those things that conform to God’s righteous standard.

Test 11: We know that we are Christian because we overcome the world (1 John 4:4–6; 5:4–5). Although we are often hard pressed and weary, we press on in faith. We continue following Christ and do not turn back.

Test 12: We know that we are Christian because we believe the things that God has revealed concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. We have eternal life in Him alone (1 John 5:9–12).