

A surrendered mind is not one which is no longer in operation. It is, rather, a mind freed from rebellion and opposition. To be Christ's captive is to be perfectly free. — Elisabeth Elliot

Prayer is the surest remedy against the devil and besetting sins. That sin will never stand firm which is heartily prayed against. —J.C. Ryle

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

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

61.Q. Which is the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment is, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

62.Q. What is required in the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man (Zech. 8:16), and of our own (1 Pet. 3:16; Acts 25:10), and our neighbour's good name (3 Jn. 1:12), especially in witness-bearing (Prov. 14:5, 25).

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Sunday Evening 6:00 PM

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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THE BASIC MESSAGE

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. (Mark 1:14-15).

The basic message of Christ remains unchanged. Men must repent and believe the good news of the Kingdom of God and believe in it. And we cannot believe in the Kingdom if we do not believe the King. The Gospel of Mark opens with what might be taken as a title, *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; (Mark 1:1)*. His first reference is to the Old Testament prophet Malachi and the fulfilment thereof in the person of John the Baptist. His description of the ministry of John is very concise but is complete with the declaration of the soon appearing of Christ Jesus the Lord.

We consider first the introduction of Christ in the beginning. The ministry of John the Baptist is unique in every respect. He was prophesied, declared from the womb, prepared throughout his life and his ministry began in a most unusual way. His mission was clear. His was a message of repentance and was seen to be effectual with many. They recognized both the convicting power of the Holy Spirit and thus heard the message of the One that was to come after him. He would be mightier, of majestic stature and One to whom John would gladly bow. This was not the introduction of the Messiah that had been expected. Thus, Jesus comes to be baptized of John. We read elsewhere that John objected but obeyed his Lord. What he saw confirmed the identity of the One now being introduced to the world and those who stood

by. The Holy Trinity was manifested visually as the Spirit appeared in the form of a dove and verbally with the resounding Word of the Father, “Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” And so, the words of the Psalmist were confirmed: *I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (Psalms 2:7)*. All other approvals are subject to this one. No one is approved of God except through Christ Jesus our Lord.

In only two verses Mark gives the account of the wilderness temptation. We would note that this was a further work of preparation. We use the term preparation advisedly in that we are looking to the earthly ministry of the man, Christ Jesus. In His baptism He identified with us. In His temptation He identified with us in the struggles that we would surely face. It was as a man that He faced the enemy and emerged victorious over him. The stones, the pinnacle of the Temple, and the kingdoms of this world spoke of things that appear as temptations to us all. But our Lord declared a Kingdom that subjects all the kingdoms of this world to Him. The reality of this fast and the pain He suffered were real but in our stead He manifested victory.

It is interesting to note that our Lord began His Galilean ministry after John the Baptist was taken off the scene. We are made to think at times that their ministries may have run parallel for a time. In other places we read of

resentment on the part of John's disciples as the disciples of our Lord were also Baptizing. The focus of Mark here is on the basic Gospel expressions of our Lord. "The time is fulfilled..." With that declaration the finality of an old kingdom is declared. All that had been declared of Him from Genesis to Malachi was about to be realized. He challenged elsewhere to, *Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. (John 5:39)*. Every Old Testament type and shadow would be exposed through the appearance of Him to whom they pointed. John had identified Him as the "Lamb of God." This was the Lamb that God had told Abraham of and so Abraham saw His day and rejoiced.

As we take note of the kingdoms of this world, we are reminded of what Satan offered our Lord in the wilderness. Even now as we witness the lessening of the influence of our God and see the chaos which follows it is evident that this was the destructive aim of the enemy all along. Men are certainly walking according to the god of this world, and they are willing to be led in the broad way of destruction and devastation.

Our Lord did not speak here of a coming kingdom. The Kingdom of God was "at hand." This was declared by Him to be Gospel – good news. That it was the Kingdom of God should have been exciting to all who hear the report. We know that was not the case and remains so today. Isaiah lamented in his day – "Lord who hath believed our report?" The Kingdom had come, and the King was present. It was anything but a kingdom of this world. It was in the light of

that revelation that He commands the hearers to "repent ye and believe the Gospel." We might think at this point that the work of redemption had not yet been accomplished. But Christ and the advent of His Kingdom is the Gospel.

The command of Christ to repent is the same as that preached by John the Baptist. The basic message remains – men must be convinced of their sinfulness and the need of salvation and to be suitably affected by what is revealed to them of themselves. This is followed by believing the Gospel. This is not a superficial acknowledgment of the existence of Christ. So, the Gospel is seen in everything from His appearance to Paul's declaration to the Corinthians: *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. (1 Corinthians 15:1-6)*. That God commands all men to repent is a well-known fact. But we rejoice in hearing: *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Romans 10:9)*. And the Good News just keeps coming. *bhs*

Be assured that religion that costs nothing is worth nothing—and accomplishes nothing. Religion that costs you neither time nor thought, nor self-denial, nor sacrifice, nor prayer, nor suffering, nor opposition, nor persecution, nor conflict, will be a religion that will never save your soul. It is a religion that will give you no comfort in the day of adversity. It is a religion that will give you no peace in the day of your death. –Steven Lawson

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. —Matthew 7:13–14

Matthew 7:13–14 describes not only a gate but also a way, both of which are small and narrow. From this we understand that conversion is not defined merely by a gate through which a person passes but also by the way in which he walks. When we survey contemporary evangelical preaching, it seems that often only half the story is presented. By God’s grace, most of the evangelical world continues to hold to the truth that Jesus is the only Savior and Mediator between God and men.¹ We can also praise God that most remain steadfast in the doctrines of sola gratia and sola fide, by grace alone through faith alone.² However, although there is a great deal of preaching about how to enter the kingdom, little is said about the evidences that prove a person’s entrance. We enter into the kingdom by passing through the narrow gate, but the evidence that we have passed through this gate is that we are now walking in the narrow way.³ We are justified by faith alone in the person and work of Christ. However, the evidence of our justification is our ongoing sanctification. The narrow gate and the narrow way are inseparable.⁴ The person who enters through the former will find his life defined by the latter.

--Paul Washer

The best thing we have to offer those around us is the kingdom of Jesus, and the way to earn the right to speak to them about that kingdom is to show them that kingdom. The biggest reason for the ineffectiveness of contemporary Christianity is a failure to take seriously the radical difference that Jesus calls for as we follow him as King. The 21st-century Western evangelical church has too often given in to the temptation to soft-pedal Jesus’ words—to find caveats and loopholes in what he says—in order to offer the world something that sounds more palatable and less demanding. We have spent decades congratulating ourselves for being able to go among our non-Christian friends and say, “You know what? We’re just the same as you.” And they’ve said, “You know what? I think you’re absolutely right!” But if there is nothing different to be seen in the church, people will not see why they should consider listening to the church. We are not called to be like the world, and the world does not need us to be like the world. We have something better to say because we have someone better to follow. That means the call of Christ to you and me is both greatly exciting and deeply challenging. The call is not to be comfortable but to be Christ-like—to discover the surprising means of experiencing real blessing, and in doing so to point others the way to it too. —Alistair Begg

Someone has pointed out that God had sent Moses to instruct His people, Isaiah to proclaim good news, Jeremiah to weep, but then at the right time He came Himself—in person, in the flesh, visible, audible, wooing, warning, pleading, offering rest to all the world’s weary. Geoffrey Thomas