

The Cross not only shows the love of God more gloriously than anything else--it also shows His righteousness, His justice, His holiness, and all the glory of His eternal attributes. They are all to be seen shining together there. –D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

The Baptist Catechism

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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

58. Q. Which is the third commandment?

A. The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain (Ex. 20:7).

59. Q. What is required in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment requireth the holy and reverent use of God's names (Mt. 6:9; Deut. 28:58), titles (Ps. 68:4), attributes (Rev. 15:3, 4), ordinances, (Mal. 1: 11, 14), word (Ps. 136: 1, 2) and works (Job 36:24).

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THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Volume 17, No. 29

July 21, 2024

OUR OBSERVANT LORD

And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: (Mark 12:41-43).

The omniscience of God is both declared and manifested in many places throughout the Word of God. We rejoice that among those things He sees and knows is the condition of our own hearts. As did the Psalmist, we invite Him to expose our hearts that any wicked way in us might be discovered. We note that in several places this same attribute is witnessed in Christ Jesus. At the time that He healed the man with the withered hand we read that He knew of the thoughts of the Pharisees: *But he knew their thoughts and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. (Luke 6:8).* With the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda, He knew just how long the man had laid there. And when the disciples began to murmur at the Bread of Life sermon we read likewise, *When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? (John 6:61).* So, it is interesting to note He beholds some actions of the people. He may have known the heart of them all, but Here He is the Man Christ Jesus observing the actions of men in such a way as to present a living example to His disciples.

At this point in our Lord's ministry, He had gone far and expended much effort in refuting and exposing religious leaders, but here He exposes something far more important that they might be taught the value of true sacrifice and

sacrificial living. This is presented to us so as to seem incidental, but we know that there are neither accidents nor deviations from His plan and purpose. He called His disciples to witness something He deemed critical to their training in both principle and practice. This event in our Lord's earthly ministry is often quoted, but we are made to wonder how often the lessons here are taken to heart. In all that our Lord declared, a Gospel principle is invoked, and this is no exception. We witness here practice, precept, and principle in the believing life.

We would note first what He observed. The treasury was described as a part of the Temple containing thirteen trumpet shaped receptacles. In that it was public it was easy to be ostentatious. He was there because of who would be there and the contrast that He knew would be presented. There were many rich people there and they were giving much. Perhaps this is what James had in mind when he wrote about favoritism and the like. It is apparent that they were making no effort to be discreet in their giving. And He witnessed the action of the widow. Again, we take note of the fact that He knew that what she had given was all that she had to live on. Any could have seen what she did, but the Lord knew her heart and acknowledged it.

Thus, we are reminded of the connection to the Old Testament Law and the matter of

returning the Tithe. It was clearly the design of the Lord that the provision for the Levites and the priesthood as well as the maintenance of the Tabernacle and the Temple would be accomplished when the other tribes brought their required ten percent of all in which they were prospered. The New Testament teaching elevates this principle to a far more spiritual plane. A wise man once said to me regarding giving that "Grace never came behind law in anything."

It was at this point that He summoned His disciples for a critical lesson. By the words "Verily I say unto you," He laid great emphasis on what He had observed. A divine system was about to be revealed. It would not be measured in terms of monetary value; rather it would be measured in the scales of grace and mercy received and applied. The magnitude of her action was seen and should be evaluated in several ways. She gave all her living (not necessarily all that she owned, but certainly all that she had to live on). She was not bound to or excused by a Law governing the amount. She exhibited faith in believing that the Lord would provide. She had evidently trusted Him for her salvation – she could certainly trust Him for earthly needs. She felt no sense of having mattered with regard to the great sums given by others and so it was before the Lord that she acted. She gave without thought of her own poverty –she gave what she had. We are reminded of the role of widows in the Gospel mandate and our responsibility. The value given by the Lord is measured in the heart as opposed

to attachment to and confidence to the things of this world. We are taught to imitate her as an example as opposed to building bigger and better barns.

The ultimate example in all this is Christ Jesus Himself in that He gave all to save His people from their sins. We are reminded of the words of Paul, *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. (2 Corinthians 8:9)*. What He observed as He stood by leads us to ask what He observed concerning Himself. He grieved at the sins of His people. He saw the awful price that was demanded to ransom them. He saw the justice of God and all that it demanded knowing it would fall on Him. He saw the utter helplessness in them to recover themselves. But He saw the determination of the Father that they should be saved. In His heart He experienced an overwhelming desire to please His Father. He experienced an eternal love for His people. And He knew in His heart that only He could merit their salvation. Only He could be the "Lamb of God," the only acceptable sacrifice. It was necessary that He "give all His living." That life that was perfectly lived is imputed to all who come to the Father by Him.

What do we observe concerning ourselves? The lesson of the widow's two mites may seem so very important, but viewed in the light of our Lord's sacrifice, it becomes huge. Even as the widow gave all so should we be so inclined to say, "I surrender all!" *bhs*

The Soundtrack of Heaven

I once heard of a ship that was crossing the Atlantic from Europe to South America, and as it neared the end of its crossing, it escaped a close call that would have sent it to the depths and would have taken the lives of many of its passengers.

After departing Dover, the ship had cruised for many days without incident and without mishap. In fact, the crossing had been so smooth and so unremarkable

that the crew began to grow lax in their duties. As the ship drew close to the South American coast, the man on lookout nodded off, and as he slept his ship began to approach a particularly rocky and ruinous spot.

But as it happened, there was a cricket aboard that ship. Until that point in the journey, no one had noticed its presence, but as the ship drew close to land, the cricket somehow smelled it or sensed it, and set up a shrill call. The lookout awoke, understood that land was quickly approaching, and stopped the vessel before it blundered into the rocks and was lost.

In this case, something as insignificant as the chirping of a cricket saved many lives. And I sometimes wonder what you and I may accomplish with what seems to be the simplest and least significant of sounds. I wonder what heaven will someday reveal—what we will hear in the soundtrack of heaven.

Maybe the scratching of a pen on a notecard will prove to be the means God used to encourage one of his downcast people and strengthen them for another day of love and service.

Maybe the tapping of a keyboard that sounds the writing of an article or email will be shown to have introduced a skeptic to the gospel and won a sinner to salvation.

Maybe the clank of a spoon stirring a pot will eventually be seen to have been used to feed one of God's "angels unaware"—to have displayed a distinctly Christian commitment to love and hospitality.

Maybe it's the click of knitting needles as they create a sweater to clothe one who is cold, the crunch of footsteps in the snow as they approach a home for a time of prayer, the sound of a sob as one Christian weeps with another, sharing a heavy burden and so fulfilling the law of Christ. Maybe it's even the sound of a bell ringing from a church steeple and calling people to turn to Christ that day, that hour, that minute.

God is the master of transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary, the mundane into the miraculous. God is the master of accepting little and multiplying it to much. God is the master of taking our little contributions and making them the great means through which he blesses his people and brings glory to his name. And I am convinced we will one day learn that the soundtrack of heaven is made up of the simplest of sounds that God has joined together into the most stirring of symphonies. —Tim Challies, *Blog From 1/22/24*

Lord Bacon tells us of a certain bishop who used to bathe regularly twice every day, and on being asked why he bathed thus often, replied, "Because I cannot conveniently do it three times." If those who loved the Scriptures were asked why they read the Bible so often, they might honestly reply, "Because we cannot find time to read them oftener."

— Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-92), London, England (Cited by Daniel Parks)