

“There’s one thing we need above everything else: it’s something we don’t talk about these days. We need a mighty avalanche of conviction of sin.”
Leonard Ravenhill

“Christianity is decaying and going down the gutter because the god of modern Christianity is not the God of the Bible.”
A. W. Tozer

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)

97. Q. What is baptism?

A. Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament instituted by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized a sign of his fellowship with him, in his death, burial, and resurrection; of his being ingrafted into him (Rom. 6:3, 4, 5; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:27); of remission of sins (Mk. 1:4; Acts 2:38, and 22:16); and of his giving up himself unto God through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3, 4).

98. Q. To whom is baptism to be administered?

A. Baptism is to be administered to all those who actually profess repentance towards God (Acts 2:38; Mt. 3:6), faith in and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to none other (Acts 8:12, 36, 37, 38; 10:47, 48).

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Services:

Sunday Morning 11:00 AM

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 NATURE OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts. Psalms 119:45

For centuries the debate has raged over whether the will of men is free or bound. The scripture leaves little doubt as to the nature of sin and sinfulness in men in describing it as something that men serve. Granted it is a voluntary servitude. The question remains as to whether one can, as a matter of will, extricate himself from his sinful nature. Paul would indicate that such is not possible in that: *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Romans 3:11.* The prophet expressed it as impossible: *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil. Jeremiah 13:23.* Such passages indicate that the issue is not one of will: it is rather a matter of the nature. A man doing as he pleases considers himself doing as he wills. In a sense that is true. What he is not at liberty to do is to change what pleases him. He is bound by his nature and so does what is characteristic of fallen man and contrary to the divine nature. He is not able to do what is described here by the Psalmist.

We often hear the objections of those who hold the grace of God in contempt. They accuse the believers, who hold to the truth of the perseverance of the saints, of claiming salvation while living in the pursuit of ungodliness. Often the complaint is phrased as “you all believe that you can do anything you want.” At one time I would have objected to that charge. But, then, like so many other things in the mouths of the enemies of grace they unwittingly speak the

truth. In fact, in accordance with their “new nature,” having been made new creatures by regeneration, that is precisely what the Psalmist is claiming. What he is doing in seeking “thy precepts” is the manifestation of the liberty he claims. So then, when those things which are described as the fruit of the Spirit become the objectives of a person, can he be said to be bound? Consider again: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23.* Where these things appear this is a partaking of the Divine Nature.

In a sense there is a bondage understood here. Paul would make reference to being constrained by the love of Christ. It is not reasonable to ever think of such love as being unpleasant or contrary to the desires of its possessor. God freely acted out of a love for His own in bringing salvation to them and so we learn that we have been given that same nature. And so we delightfully act as directed: *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Galatians 5:1.* In that same chapter Paul writes that we have been called to this liberty and describes it as a liberty to serve. The terms seem contradictory but only as proud men find no place to reason in this way. To them, freedom is being able to pursue the dictates of their nature and such is nothing less than a cruel bondage.

A Roman officer remarked to Paul that he

had obtained his Roman citizenship and its freedoms at a great cost. Paul answered him, "But I was freeborn." While these things apply to civil liberties, we can identify with both. As believers, our freedom came at the greatest of costs. And yet, when we were born again into the family of God we were immediately in possession of the liberty ordained of God. And so: *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God... Ephesians 2:19.* The liberty known by a child of God is spiritual in both its essence and expression. The precepts of God are comprehended and sought on a spiritual level and thus are not of this present world. We are free to pursue them all and it is the nature of the household of faith to do so.

That which drives the pursuit of the precepts of God is grounded in the covenant that God determined with His people. We read it first in the prophecies of Jeremiah and then twice in the book of Hebrews. *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. Jeremiah 31:33.* It is understood by

this that: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17.* Incorporated in this "new creation" is a mind and heart containing the very things that would characterize such a work. The "new heart" mentioned in Ezekiel 36 comes equipped with a set of affections that are consistent with that which was displayed in Christ our Lord. The Law of God is no longer merely chiseled in stone; they are written "in their hearts" and put into their minds. It is therefore the nature of the child of God to act accordingly and with complete liberty. In pursuing the precepts of God such are "doing what they want to do."

The profession of many is betrayed in that there is no pursuit of true holiness in evidence. *Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 2 Corinthians 3:17.* This is the liberty to "serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear." This is the liberty to freely declare the Gospel and to impress its necessity upon all who will hear. These are not the things we have to do – they are the things we are free to do. May we truly "walk at liberty" in Christ our Lord! *bhs*

BOW DOWN TO WORSHIP? OR RISE UP TO PLAY?

The ancient church sang "Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand" (Psalm 95:6f). The church in glory worships Him in the same manner (Revelation 4:10f; ch.5; 19:1-4).

How different is the worship of many modern congregations embracing a lower view of God and a higher view of themselves! They resemble fans at a rock concert standing with hands raised high, bodies swaying and dancing, and engaged in revelry.

They also resemble the congregation of Israel worshipping around the golden calf at Mount Sinai (Exodus ch.32). We read "the people ... rose up to play" (v.6), and that they were "unrestrained" (v.25) and "dancing" (v.19). Jehovah described them as having "corrupted themselves" (v.7).

Brothers and sisters, let us obey the admonition of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 10:7 regarding those false worshippers: "And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, 'The people ... rose up to play.'"

Our conduct in worship services must be more spiritual than physical, reverential and not sensual, orderly and not unrestrained, holy and not corrupted.

Let us bow down to worship, not rise up to play.

– Daniel Parks

Milk or Meat

“For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Hebrews 5:13-14)

The Scriptures are compared in these verses to our daily food—milk and meat. Milk is the necessary food for babies (1 Peter 2:2), but it becomes grotesque when a baby continues year after year as a baby, still incapable of partaking of anything but milk. This was the case with the Corinthian Christians who were, according to Paul, “babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 3:1-2). It was also true for these Hebrew Christians: “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again . . . the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” (Hebrews 5:12).

Sad to say, this is still the situation with most Christian people today, even in Bible-believing churches. This is indicated not only by the many carnal divisions between them (1 Corinthians 3:3), but even more by the frothy nature of the Christian materials they read, almost always centered on introspective personal relationships rather than on the person of Christ, the deeper truths of Scripture, and the great purposes of God. The time spent in personal Bible study is minimal, and even most sermons repeatedly serve up milk for Christian babes rather than strong meat for spiritually healthy Christians “of full age” whose “senses” have already been strengthened by use to recognize the true and the false, the good and the evil. How urgently we need to heed the last words of the apostle Peter, just before his martyrdom: “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). HMM



IN NEED OF WORSHIPERS

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. —Acts 6:4 Well, we have great churches and we have beautiful sanctuaries and we join in the chorus, “We have need of nothing.” But there is every indication that we are in need of worshipers. We have a lot of men willing to sit on our church boards who have no desire for spiritual joy and radiance and who never show up for the church prayer meeting.... They are the fellows who run the church, but you cannot get them to the prayer meeting because they are not worshipers.... It seems to me that it has always been a frightful incongruity that men who do not pray and do not worship are nevertheless actually running many of the churches and ultimately determining the direction they will take. It hits very close to our own situations, perhaps, but we should confess that in many “good” churches, we let the women do the praying and let the men do the voting. Because we are not truly worshipers, we spend a lot of time in the churches just spinning our wheels, burning the gasoline, making a noise but not getting anywhere. Lord, make the men in our church, especially the leaders, men of prayer and worship. Please don’t allow us to try to lead others where we have not been; don’t let us spin our wheels because we are not worshipers. Amen. A. W. Tozer