

There is great danger, yes, many times most danger, in the smallest sins. Greater sins sooner startle the soul, and awaken and rouse up the soul to repentance, than lesser sins do. Little sins often slide into the soul, and breed, and work secretly and indiscernibly in the soul — until they come to be so strong, as to trample upon the soul and to cut the throat of the soul.

Thomas Brooks

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)

21. Q. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it (Rom. 5:12, to the end; Eph. 2:1, 2, 3; James 1:14, 15; Mt. 15:19).

22. Q. What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. All mankind by their fall lost communion with God (Gen. 3:8, 10, 24), are under his wrath and curse (Eph. 2:2, 3; Gal. 3:10), and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever (Lam. 3:39; Rom. 6:23; Mt. 25:41, 46).

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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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CHRIST FORMED IN YOU

My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, Galatians 4:19

The book of Galatians begins with some harsh words from Paul as he quickly identified a grievous problem with these churches. His words were emphatic and unmistakable as to his meaning and intent. He was always fiercely defending the truth of Gospel and its expression of the person and work of Christ our Lord. He did not hesitate to call out false teachers and their awful teachings and did not hesitate to declare his desire that they be accursed for corrupting the Gospel. His approach bore no resemblance to practices in this present age wherein men are seeking to take the “edges” off the two-edged sword in order to promote a more palatable agenda to the world.

Two things drove Paul. First, was an intense love of Christ our Lord and all that pertained to Him and His glory. The second thing was the great love he had for these people. Either of these was enough to justify urgency and intensity in his message and so he did not spare. His words to them were not with the intent of condemnation; it was rather their salvation being fully expressed that burdened him so greatly. The human reaction to their behavior might have been to write them off as having offended him and his integrity. But, Paul was about the business of seeing the work of the Lord through to the end and being able to present them faultless before the Lord.

Thus, as the epistle progressed, having identified the seriousness of the errors, he expresses a characteristic tenderness for them. “O foolish Galatians” gives way to “My little

children.” It is true that to continue in the deception that had invaded them would be foolish, but Paul remembered initial experiences with them and the suffering he had endured in bringing the Gospel to them. He had travailed as the agent in bringing the Word of Truth to them. We need not rehearse the beatings and stoning that attended Paul’s way as he was driven to preach unto them Jesus and the forgiveness of sins. While none would scoff at the physical sufferings of Paul, there was an evident travail that reflects into the heart of this man who joyfully endured all things for Christ. *But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; Philippians 1:12.* And so, he was travailing again as he realized the damage inflicted to both them and the cause of Christ in them.

We are often reminded of the words of the Apostle to the Colossians concerning the Gospel mystery which is, “...Christ in you, the hope of glory.” The full experience of Christ in us waits the consummation of all things when we shall see Him as He is and be like Him. In the meantime, we go through a formative process as is referenced here. The assumption of Paul here is that he is addressing born again believers who have strayed to the point of losing contact with the reality of their relationship to Christ. Christ formed in them would be manifested first to them and then to those who would witness the “fruit of the Spirit in them.” Christ was in them in that they were born from above and

born of “incorruptible seed.” They had, obviously, succumbed to the appeal of fleshly religion and so sacrificed the awareness of their identity in Christ. The effect was repulsive to Paul and all who love the liberty that we know in Christ Jesus.

Christ formed in us is “In the understanding of man when he receives a truly spiritual knowledge of Christ’s person, offices and benefits, and in the will of man when in regeneration faith is made alive and is then brought to a fit form so that he hangs simply and fully on Christ. Such a faith, in justification, apprehends and puts on Christ and unites itself inwardly with Him (Starke in Lange’s Comm.)” Mr. Starke further stated that the will of man is seen to be “in renewal, when Christ’s divine mind is daily more and more formed in men so that the characteristics of Christ’s image become more discernible.” And so it is that He must be formed in the heart in the full expression of His love to God and us to each other even as He has loved us!

It is to be noted that the desire of Paul was referenced to the grace of God as always. It was not to be a matter of human endeavor; it was that Christ be formed in them. A. T. Robertson wrote: “Paul boldly represents himself as again the mother with birth pangs over them.” His

figure leaves no doubt that he was in pain as such. We must suppose that the prayerful deliverance of this message to them was first and foremost ordered up before the Lord who alone could affect such changes. We are reminded 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.* But, we would note that his desire was for receptivity on their part and a return to the devotion they had once known. Consider: *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Romans 12:2.*

The aim of all false religion and perversions of the Gospel is to involve the fallen will of man to have a significant role in its origination and operation. Such was the intent of those pressing legalism on the Galatians. “Christ in you” admits to no such cooperation with the depraved will of man. *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. Colossians 1:18.* The burden of Paul was for the full reign of Christ in them and us to realized fully and that we might rejoice in Him and His glory only. *bhs*

IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS

Gurnall, in his *Christian Armor*, referring to the words, “In everything give thanks,” says: “Praise is comely for the upright.’ ‘An unthankful saint’ carries a contradiction with it. Evil and Unthankful are twins that live and die together; as any one ceaseth to be evil, he begins to be thankful. It is that which God expects at your hands; He made you for this end. When the vote passed in heaven for your being—yea, happy being in Christ!—it was upon this account, that you should be a name and a praise to Him on earth in time, and in heaven to eternity. Should God miss this, He would fail of one main part of His design. What prompts Him to bestow every mercy, but to afford you matter to compose a song for His praise? ‘They are My people, children that will not lie; so He was their Savior.’ ‘He looks for fair dealing at your hands. Whom may a father trust with his reputation, if not his child? Where can a prince expect honor, if not among his favorites? Your state is such that the least mercy you have is more than all

the world besides. Thou, Christian, and thy few brethren, divide heaven and earth among you! What hath God that He withholds from you? Sun, moon and stars are set up to give you light; sea and land have their treasures for your use; others are encroachers upon them; you are the rightful heirs to them; they groan that any others should be served by them. The angels, bad and good, minister unto you; the evil, against their will, are forced like scullions when they tempt you, to scour and brighten your graces, and make way for your greater comforts; the good angels are servants to your heavenly Father, and disdain not to carry you in their arms. Your God withholds not Himself from you; He is your portion—Father, Husband, Friend. God is His own happiness, and admits you to enjoy Him. Oh, what honor is this, for the subject to drink in his prince's cup! 'Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures.' And all this is not the purchase of your sweat and blood; the feast is paid for by Another, only He expects your thanks to the Founder. No sin-offering is imposed under the Gospel; thank-offerings are all He looks for."

Quoted by D. L. Moody in *Prevailing Prayer*

"I frequently hear persons exhorted to give their hearts to Christ, which is a very proper exhortation. But that is not the Gospel. Salvation comes from something that Christ gives you, not something that you give to Christ. The giving of your heart to Christ follows after the receiving from Christ of eternal life by faith."

- Charles Spurgeon

"Free choice is capable only of sinning, if the way of truth remains hidden. And when what we should do and the goal we strive for begins to be clear, unless we find delight in it and love it, we do not act, do not begin, do not live good lives. But so that we may love it, "the love of God" is poured out "in our hearts," not by free choice which comes from ourselves, but "by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

- Augustine

"God is the highest good of the reasonable creature — and the enjoyment of him is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to Heaven, fully to enjoy God — is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here in this poor world. Better than fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of any, or all earthly friends.

These are but shadows — the enjoyment of God is the substance.

These are but scattered beams — God is the sun.

These are but streams — God is the fountain.

These are but drops — God is the ocean."

Jonathan Edwards

"The great mistake made by most of the Lord's people is in hoping to discover in themselves that which is to be found in Christ alone."

- A. W. Pink