

"Free will without grace has the power to do nothing but sin ... You call the will free, but in fact it is an enslaved will." - Augustine

Man has a will and he makes voluntary choices. His choices are not coerced. But his will is NOT FREE because he has been taken as a willing captive to sin and sins of necessity (John 8:34, 1 Cor 2:14; Rom 8:7). He loves darkness, hates the light and will not come into the light (John 3:19) unless God is merciful (Rom 9:16) and Christ sets him free (John 8:36) through the quickening work of the Holy Spirit. (John 6:63, 65; Eph 2:1,5) – Author Unknown

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

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35. Q. What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?

A. They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification (Rom. 8:30), adoption (Eph. 1:5), sanctification, and the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them (1 Cor. 1:30).

36. Q. What is justification?

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins (Rom. 3:24, 25; and 4:6, 7, 8), and accepteth us as righteous in his sight (2 Cor. 5:19, 21), only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us (Rom. 5:17-19), and received by faith alone (Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9).

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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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A NECESSARY CONCLUSION

But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. Galatians 3:22

The words of the Psalmist speak volumes regarding the estimation of God in the minds of men. In Psalm 50:21 we read “...thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself...” What folly it is to reference the High and Lofty One to the corrupted reasoning of men. Where there is a lessened view of God in the minds of men there will be found an arbitrary approach to the Scripture. Where such liberty is taken, the absolutes of God become less formidable and are rather a matter for personal interpretation or are simply ignored. The concepts of sin and sinfulness are not so bad after all and neither are the consequences. Sin has not “... become exceeding sinful” to those who think this way and so their need of a savior is a matter of decision or something they can address through their own resources. Thus, many, pretending to preach the Gospel, are in fact encouraging men to act on a faulty realization. As such they are not proclaimers of truth; they are salesmen appealing to pride of men.

The absolute here is that all have been concluded under sin. This would mean to many that all have committed some kind of sin at some time in their lives and so they give mental assent to the oft quoted: *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Romans 3:23*. To them, it means that everybody has messed up and ought to make a change in their lives. Their reaction betrays the fact that they have no real concept of the “Glory of God” nor the hatred that He has for sin. Of further

importance is that they have no idea that the source of that sin is in themselves and neither do they realize the condemnation under which they abide. The word “concluded” means to “shut up” as in a prison. Because of their lessened view, which is tantamount to contempt, they look to their non-existent free will. Neither do they realize that it is the Scripture that makes that declaration.

Paul makes the observation that law works could not give life (v. 21). In v. 23, the apostle declares that “...before faith came, we were kept under the law, “shut up” unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.” It is evident that the Scripture to which he referred included, but was not limited to the Law of the Commandments. It is proved over and over in Scripture that men cannot of themselves, apart from the grace of regeneration and faith, keep the Law. But, it is the Scripture that exposes the condition of the souls of fallen men. John Gill wrote that God has by it (the Scripture) and in it “shown, declared, and proved, that all individuals of human nature, Jews and Gentiles, and all that is in them, and done by them, are under the power and dominion of sin, defiled by it, and involved in the guilt of it...” It is the Scripture that disqualifies all things that they call righteousness for acceptance with God and rather declares them to be filthy rags. So, it is that the “thought and intents of their hearts” are discovered by the Word of God and found to be wanting in every respect. It is the scripture

that declared that “the soul that sinneth, it shall die!”

Many speak apologetically (I have done so) about depravity by saying that “it doesn’t mean we are as bad as we could be.” While that statement may be true as to outward behavior, what could be worse than what the Scripture describes as the state of fallen men? It does not get any worse than to be “without God and without hope in the world.” What can be worse than to be found dead with the stench of “trespasses and sins” all about us? And, what of the inclinations of men? Once again, from Old Testament and New we quote: *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Romans 3:11.* So, it is that men are found guilty, in a state of ongoing corruption, content to trust to their own devices, void of any desire to seek the only remedy which is Christ our Lord. Fallen man is without resource apart from the mercy of God and the Scripture declares it so. C. H. Spurgeon’s message on this text was titled *The Great Jail and How to Get Out of it.*

We have focused on the fact that the Scripture shuts men up in their sin. But, Paul is here declaring these things as part of a statement of purpose. It is that (*hina*) “the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given

to them that believe.” Men will compromise with Scripture to a point. It is acceptable to them as long as they can claim any degree of control. Their pride demands it. Surrender to God is, however, unconditional and, again, the Word of God demands it. Salvation is promised and is to be received as just that. There are no conditions to be found in man. Remember, he is confined in the prison of his own fallen nature. There is no decision to be made. It is declared to be by grace through faith and even that faith is the gift of God. We are not capable of sounding the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God. But, with new life in Christ and the faith to believe all that He has accomplished, we find ourselves fully embracing in Him all that God has promised and that to His glory and our good! Our deliverance from out of the prison house has routed us through His Cross and “neither is their salvation in any other.”

Salvation is of the Lord in its origination, its orchestration, its application, and its consummation. All who are found partakers of His salvation will gladly embrace the declarations of the Word of God concerning their sin and shall rejoice in that “love and mercy found them.” They will be delighting in “the promise by faith of Jesus Christ...” and so believing unto eternal life in Him. *bhs*

Is Jesus Christ Your Substitute?

“All have sinned” and “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 3:23 & 6:23). The death we deserve is everlasting punishment for our sins in Gehenna, the “lake of fire”, which is the “second death” (Revelation 20:14; 21:8).

But some sinners will never experience this punishment for their sins. This is true because Jesus Christ is their substitute. He suffered the death they deserve, thereby obtaining their salvation from their sins.

This glorious doctrine is clearly set forth in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah’s prophecy. We here read that the sins of certain sinners were taken from them and laid on Jesus Christ. He bore their sins to the place of His death. He there died as the substitute of these sinners, in their place and stead. He as their substitute suffered the penalty their sins deserve. God then did a marvelous work. He justified or declared

righteous every sinner for whom Jesus died. He also healed them of their spiritual infirmities. And He saved them from the wrath to come. God will condemn no sinner for whom Jesus died. God also exalted Jesus their substitute.

Who are these sinners for whom Jesus Christ died as their substitute?

They are identified in two ways.

First, Jehovah identifies them as “My people” (v.8), His chosen ones. They therefore are “many” sinners (vv.11, 12) – not all sinners nor just a few sinners.

Second, they are all who believe this gospel of Jesus Christ the substitute. They will hear God’s preachers ask “Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of Jehovah been revealed?” (v.1). They will acknowledge that God has revealed Christ to them as their substitute, and that they through God’s power believe in Him. They will confess of Christ: “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (vv.4f).

Sadly, many will deny Jesus Christ the substitute. Some will deny that they are sinners in need of a substitute. Some will read this message but refuse to believe in Christ. Some will deny that Christ is a successful substitute, averring that all who perish in Gehenna do so despite Christ dying in their place and stead.

Is Jesus Christ your substitute? – Daniel E. Parks

Jesus said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? — John 21:17

Have you felt the hurt of the Lord to the uncovered quick, the place where the real sensitiveness of your life is lodged? The devil never hurts there, neither sin nor human affection hurts there, nothing goes through to that place but the word of God. “Peter was grieved because Jesus said unto him the third time....” He was awakening to the fact that in the real true centre of his personal life he was devoted to Jesus, and he began to see what the patient questioning meant. There was not the slightest strand of delusion left in Peter’s mind, he never could be deluded again. There was no room for passionate utterance, no room for exhilaration or sentiment. It was a revelation to him to realize how much he did love the Lord, and with amazement he said – “Lord, Thou knowest all things.” Peter began to see how much he did love Jesus; but he did not say – “Look at this or that to confirm it.” Peter was beginning to discover to himself how much he did love the Lord, that there was no one in heaven above or upon earth beneath beside Jesus Christ; but he did not know it until the probing, hurting questions of the Lord came. The Lord’s questions always reveal me to myself.

The patient directness and skill of Jesus Christ with Peter! Our Lord never asks questions until the right time. Rarely, but probably once, He will get us into a corner where He will hurt us with His undeviating questions, and we will realize that we do love Him far more deeply than any profession can ever show. – Oswald Chambers

"When you forget how merciful God has been to you and think you're deserving, you find it all too easy not to extend mercy to others." - Paul David Tripp