

Do we believe that nothing—not even our own sin—can separate us from God’s love? This doesn’t mean God winks at our sin like the proverbial indulgent grandfather. Rather it means that He has forgiven our sins because of the atoning sacrifice of His Son. God proved His love to us by sending Christ to suffer in our place. Therefore to doubt His love because of our sin is an affront to Him. It says in effect that the merit of Christ’s death is not sufficient to cover the demerit of our sin. What an insult to God!  
--Jerry Bridges

### BENJAMIN KEACH’S CATECHISM

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

Q. 51. Which is the first commandment?

A. The first commandment is, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." (Exodus 20:3)

Q. 52. What is required in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God, and to worship and glorify Him accordingly. (Joshua 24:15; 1 Chron. 28:9; Deut. 26:17; Ps. 29:2; Matt. 4:10)

#### THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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WXTH-LP 101.7 FM— In Richwood

#### Services:

Sunday Morning Bible Study -- 10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship -- 11:00 AM

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 HIDDEN GOSPEL

*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4*

Much that is revealed in the Word of God pits us against the impossible. The disciples posed the question of salvation itself to our Lord by asking Him who can be saved. His answer was both succinct and profound. *And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible. Mark 10:27.* The divine intent may well be that in both salvation and presentation of the Gospel we are shut up to the mercy of God in all things. This fact is not well received by many professed preachers and Christians in that they believe the resource lies in them to accomplish conversions and that ability resides in the hearts of all to respond to the Gospel and gain acceptance with God. Paul would reveal that such is not so.

The message of Paul in the previous chapter referenced the fact that a veil was placed over the face of Moses, so they could not see the glory of God still affecting the appearance of Moses after having received the Law. His point there was that the veil was removed where there is a turning to the Lord by ability given them to turn to the Lord and behold His glory. Here, Paul addresses a condition of the heart aggravated by the blinding work of Satan. It is not a lack of physical vision; it is rather a condition of the heart that Satan preys upon and exploits to block the Gospel from being shined therein. This presents to us an impossible situation. We are preaching the Word to

unregenerate hearts and being opposed by one against whom Michael the Archangel “durst not bring a railing accusation;” but rather deferred saying “the Lord rebuke thee.”

The Gospel itself is not here characterized as hidden. There is no veil over the Gospel. It is rather the hearts of men that are blinded and so that which is gloriously declared in scripture and preached in the power of the Holy Spirit is not seen. Thus, we find ourselves often frustrated by fruitless appeals to human reason. This does not mean that we should not reason with men of Christ and the Gospel. See Isaiah 1:18. Paul reasoned with the Roman governor Felix of “righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.” But, Felix, like so many others, continued on his way perishing as it were. Nevertheless, we preach to the conscience. Paul in verse 2 declared that they commended themselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.

We have no other recourse. The Apostle here claimed the Gospel as our (mine, his) and it is owned by all who are the beneficiaries of it. God speaks through His preachers and His people and it is an open message. We have no other message and no other method. In the first epistle to the Corinthians Paul defined the Gospel in terms of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. See 1 Corinthians 15:1-6. Later in this epistle he expressed fear for them that they would be corrupted from the

“simplicity that is in Christ.” He vehemently defended the pure Gospel to the Galatians. We then, are bound to get it right.

The prince of this world will do all that he can to obstruct the view of all from this most glorious revelation of Christ and His salvation. In our text it is characterized as light. It exposes sin, reveals needs and illumines the mind to the mercy of God and directs the path to Jesus our Lord and our redeemer. It reveals the very image of God. This is more than a mere rote recitation of something that appeals to human based logic. It impresses the majesty of God on the minds and hearts of the comers. It is aggressive light in that it “should shine unto them.” This is no mere snapshot filed away for future reference. It is a continuous shining into the hearts of those so affected. After all, it is God who commands it to be so and that is acknowledged by both the recipient and the messenger.

Paul would add, in verse 5, that he preached “Christ Jesus the Lord.” Oswald Chambers properly observed that “There is a passion for souls that does not come from God, but from our desire to make converts to our point of view.” This may be one of the most effective means whereby Satan lies in wait to deceive. The opposition that has been presented to the Gospel has been fierce and bloody at times and will no doubt continue to be so. Such opposition

is easily identified. Paul reminds us that we are not ignorant of Satan’s devices. One of these may be that referenced above. The smokescreen of popular religion effectively blinds the minds of many in that such religion becomes an end in itself and does not need the Gospel to prosper in the world. The diversion of the focus away from a personal relation with Christ in any form is deadly, even that which defends orthodoxy. Focusing full attention on Christ prevents orthodoxy from being a hindrance. We must preach Christ Jesus the Lord! Any consideration of Christ that minimizes the importance of His Lordship is evidence of deception and blinding. *Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Acts 2:36.*

The Lordship of Christ is joyfully embraced by those into whose hearts the Gospel has shined, and their hearts are fully assured by such knowledge of Him. We hear it as divinely approved in such revelations as: *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. John 13:13.*

Our task seems impossible, but we preach the pure Gospel knowing that blindness is removed when God reveals “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (v. 6). *bhs*

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## AN UNWORTHY CONCEPTION OF GOD – A. W. Tozer

For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD? God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. —Psalm 89:6-7  
Christianity at any given time is strong or weak depending upon her concept of God. And I insist upon this and I have said it many times, that the basic trouble with the Church today is her unworthy conception of God. I talk with learned and godly people all over the country, and they’re all saying the same thing. Unbelievers say, “Take your cowboy god and go home,” and we get angry and say, “They’re vile heathen.” No, they’re not vile heathen—or at least that’s not why they say that. They can’t respect our “cowboy god.” And since evangelicalism has gone overboard to “cowboy religion,” its

conception of God is unworthy of Him. Our religion is little because our god is little.... We do not see God as He is.... A local church will only be as great as its conception of God. An individual Christian will be a success or a failure depending upon what he or she thinks of God. It is critically important that we have a knowledge of the Holy One, that we know what God is like. *O God help me to capture once again a realization of Your greatness. May the God I represent in my ministry be a God worthy of lavish worship. Amen.*

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“John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.” John had preached the truth and laid down his life. John preached a message centered in the Lamb of God. John’s primary purpose as the forerunner of Christ was centered in Christ. John once said that his “joy therefore is fulfilled. He [Christ Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease.” John explained that Jesus came from heaven and thus He “is above all.” John the Baptist preached Christ and therefore he preached the Truth. John appeared to be the last prophet, “and John was clothed with camel’s hair and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey.” He certainly was Elijah-like. Malachi presented the message of the Son of God that He would send His messenger to prepare His way (Mal. 3:1). Now John had finished his course. Oh, John had, “preached, saying, there cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.” He exalted Christ with humility. When Christ appeared John was pleased to disappear for he came to be the voice crying in the wilderness so as to pave the road for the coming Lord Jesus.

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) reminded preachers, “If we can do no miracle and achieve no success, let us at least cry without ceasing, ‘Behold the Lamb of God.’ Though we decrease, it matters not so long as He doth increase....”

--Ron Rumburg

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Nothing so effectually carries off the mind from self-dependence as the atonement,— nothing so exalts grace and humbles the sinner; and on this account, God appointed that acceptance and forgiveness of sin should not be given -without a Mediator, and without a dependence upon His merits. Hence the jealousy of the apostles and of all Scripture on this point. The apparent spirituality of any tendency will be no compensation for this hazard.

--George Smeaton

God has wired you to tell others in a way that allows you to be yourself. Evangelism is not just for extroverts, brainboxes or full-timers. It is your job, and in the Lord’s strength you can do it. Why not put this book down and ask the Lord to show you what kind of person you are, and then ask him to show you how he might use you, as the person you are, to reach out with the gospel to others? – Rico Tice