

“Let us feel that when we speak with God there is reality in it and that God hears us just as surely as we hear one another—and that He is prepared to answer our petitions—I mean, literally to do so, not in some mysterious, unreal fashion, but actually and truly to give us that which is fitting for Him to bestow and right for us to ask. We cannot pray as we ought unless we believe that.”—From a sermon by C. H. Spurgeon

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

X. Of Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the process by which according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer. I Thess. 4:3; I Thess. 5:23; II Cor. 7:1; II Cor. 13:10; Phil. 3:12-16; I John 2:29; Rom. 8:5; Eph. 1:4; Pro. 4:18; II Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; II Peter 1:5-8; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14; Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 3:18; II Cor. 13:5; Luke 11:35; Luke 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph.6:18; Eph.4:30

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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IF YE BE RISEN WITH CHRIST

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Colossians 3:1-2

It is evident that the pursuit of Christ is to be preached to all in that there is salvation in no other. We would preach Him as the One in whom all the will of God is accomplished, and salvation is made complete. We would declare without hesitation that in going to the Cross, death has done all it could do and that He is even now sitting “on the right hand of God.” The wrath of God, appointed unto His people, has fallen on Him and spent itself as His soul was made an offering for sin. Thus, we are brought to the place of rejoicing that He is risen and that we are directed to focus our attention upon Him.

The aim of Paul’s directive to “seek those things which are above” is preceded with a conditional statement. The “if” makes it so that apart from being risen with Christ there will be no reason found within to seek things that are related our resurrected life. In looking to our Blessed Hope, Christ is declared to be our life and it is in that mystical connection that we are found desiring the things which pertain to Him. It is sad that much today speaks of resurrection, but not of life in Christ as the manner of existence for His people. It is for them to be in this eternal relationship with Him that He died and rose again.

A confidence in a bodily resurrection is a precious aspect of the hope of true believers. The thought of ultimate deliverance from pain and death is exciting. It is difficult to imagine but wonderful in its prospects. Such hope is founded

on no less than the bodily resurrection of Christ our Lord. With His resurrection He declared that death had been defeated, atonement for sin had been accomplished and the offering had been accepted by the Father. If indeed He arose under such an awful condemnation of death it only follows that He is able to raise up His own people; *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. John 6:39*

But, as precious as these prospects are, there is a present reality with respect to the resurrection of Christ. Our text speaks of that which has occurred and is evident in the new life in Christ. “If ye then be risen with Christ” is a way of saying “if ye are saved.” We are reminded of the fact that the grace of God finds men dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1, 5). In that same context Paul declares that “you hath He quickened...” So then, the true believer is alive in Christ. He experiences the life that is from above. He is encouraged to “walk in the newness of life...” He truly is in Jesus Christ and that is no mere figure. So then, of a certainty we are risen with Christ. We are now partakers of the divine nature and as such the believing life gives evidence that it is alive in Him and unto Him. Thus, the life of a believer reflects the very character of Christ.

Furthermore, we are made beneficiaries of the death and the resurrection of Christ. When Christ arose, it was without the sins for which

He had died. Therefore, those who by faith claim it are justified. That is, they are as though they had never sinned. In the application of the work of regeneration (born again) they are sanctified through His truth. There is life and purpose given to the recipients of grace. By virtue of the life that He claimed from the dead, we are able to know a certain union with Him. Consider the Vine and the branches. His resurrection removed the barriers to fellowship with God and with Christ who is God the Son. There is a free exchange that is enjoyed by both the Lord and His people. He delights in the relationship He has established with His own people. The hope of glorification is brought to reality in the life that He gives and so we await full union and communion with Him. John declares that we shall be like Him and see Him as He is.

“If we be risen with Christ,” we may go day by day with the expectation this world cannot know. It is also in the fourth verse that Paul declares that “When Christ, our Life, shall appear, then shall ye appear with Him in glory. John makes the thought even sweeter as he teaches us that we shall be freed from that old nature and rather; *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall*

be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3:2.

As a precious result of being with Christ, we are to seek those things which are above. That is, we are to seek those things that pertain to Him Who is at the right hand of God. These are those things that are seen and delighted in through faith, hope, and love. Christ is the object of the believer’s affection and so he desires to please the One he loves. As a matter of fact, the believer loves those things that Christ loves. After all, he is risen with Christ.

This pursuit is not to obtain salvation, but that which defines salvation to us and in us. It is rather that which bears precious evidence to us of being in Him and experiencing that life of God. This pursuit is hindered by the world and the sin which doth so easily beset us. John Newton lamented this fact as he wrote: “Yet I mourn my stubborn will, Find my sin, a grief and thrall; should I grieve for what I feel, If I did not love at all?” He ended that hymn with the thought: “Let me love thee more and more, If I love at all I pray; If I have not loved before, Help me to begin today.” We would thus set our affection (mind) on things above. *bhs*

A true knowledge of God and self is essential in the conversion of the sinner, but it is also equally essential in the ongoing sanctification of the saint. The believer must continue to grow in his knowledge of God and self until he becomes so convinced of grace alone that he would be disgusted at the mere suggestion that his salvation might be the result of his own virtue, merit, or piety. In fact, this is one of the greatest purposes and results of God’s work of sanctification in the life of the believer. Throughout the full course of our lives, He is orchestrating all things to destroy our self-righteousness and self-confidence so that we might rely upon the virtue of Christ’s person and the merit of His perfect work on Calvary. He does this for His glory and our good. Our spiritual welfare and fruitfulness depend on this interchange of self-confidence for reliance upon God alone. The prophet Jeremiah puts it this way: Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is

not inhabited. Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit (Jer. 17:5-8).

--Paul Washer, *The Gospel Call and True Conversion*

In these days, I feel bound to go over the elementary truths of the gospel repeatedly. In peaceful times, we may feel free to make excursions into interesting districts of truth which lie far afield; but now we must stay at home, and guard the hearts and homes of the church by defending the first principles of the faith. In this age, there have risen up in the church itself men who speak perverse things. There be many that trouble us with their philosophies and novel interpretations, whereby they deny the doctrines they profess to teach, and undermine the faith they are pledged to maintain. It is well that some of us, who know what we believe, and have no secret meanings for our words, should just put our foot down and maintain our standing, holding forth the word of life, and plainly declaring the foundation truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon cited by Paul Washer

COURAGEOUS CHRISTIAN

Chrysostom, the ancient Church Father, was a beautiful example of true Christian courage. When he stood before the Roman Emperor, he was threatened with banishment if he still remained a Christian. Chrysostom replied, "You cannot, for the world is my Father's house; you cannot banish me." "But I will slay you," said the Emperor. "No, but you cannot," said the noble champion of the faith again, "for my life is hid with Christ in God." "I will take away thy treasures." "No, but you cannot," was the retort; "in the first place, I have nothing you know anything about. My treasure is in heaven, and my heart is there." "But I will drive you away from man, and you shall have no friend left." "No, and that you cannot," once more said the faithful witness, "for I have a Friend in heaven from whom you shall not separate me. I defy you; there is nothing you can do to hurt me." - COPIED

ON DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

People often question what God does because they don't understand that He can do anything He wants. They ask, "Why did God do that?" I've often replied, "Because He wanted to." He showed His sovereignty-His ultimate control of everything-in showing mercy to some like Isaac and Jacob, while hardening the hearts of others like Pharaoh (Rom. 9:6-21). To those who object to God's right to control such things, Paul said, "Who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, 'Why did you make me like this,' will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? " (Romans 9:20-21). -John MacArthur