

As J. I. Packer has written, “Living becomes an awesome business when you realize that you spend every moment of your life in the sight and company of an omniscient, omnipresent Creator.” –Cited by Jerry Bridges

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

XV. Of the Christian Sabbath

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day or Christian Sabbath; and it is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

Acts 20:7; Gen. 2:3; Col. 2:16-17; Mark 2:27; John 20:19; I Cor. 16:1-2; Ex. 20:8; Rev. 1:10; Ps. 118:15, 24; Isa. 58:13-14; Isa. 56:2-8; Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 11:26; Acts 13:44; Lev. 19:30; Luke 4:16; Acts 17:2-3; Ps. 26:8; Ps. 87:3; Heb. 4:3-11

XVI. Of the Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society;; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

Rom. 13:1-7; Deu. 16:18; II Sam. 23:3; Ex. 18:23; Jer. 30:21; Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13; I Tim. 2:1-4; Acts 5:29; Matt.28; Dan. 3:15-18; Dan. 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20; Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:4; Rev. 19:16; Ps.72:11; Ps.2; Rom. 14:9-13

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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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MANY CALLED BUT FEW CHOSEN

So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen. Matthew 20:16

For many are called, but few are chosen. Matthew 22:14

Two prominent parables end with this terse comment from our Lord and that without further explanation beyond what had been set forth in the parables. Both parables involve the revelation of attitudes expressing indifference to the grace of God. Such serve as a warning to us all to “examine ourselves.” In the parable of the workers in the vineyard a revelation of true character occurs when those who had labored all day resented the equal payment given to those who had labored only an hour. They had been willing enough to agree for a wage, but then presumed to dictate terms to the Lord of the vineyard. In the parable of the Wedding Supper, the guest found without a wedding garment expressed contempt for the dignity of the event and was cast out to an eternity of punishment. In both cases our Lord asserts His complete sovereignty in the matter and so no recourse is given.

There is no place for presumption in the economy of grace. Presumption of human worth and authority is expressed in both parables. This is why Paul would urge fear and trembling in working out our salvation and Peter would exhort us thusly: *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 2 Peter 1:10.* Both calling and choice are taken into consideration and neither are to be taken for granted. It behooves us to carefully examine our salvation in the light of the word and so be assured of its genuineness. In so doing

peace is accorded us and the glory of God in Christ is ever before us.

The call in our texts is to be distinguished from that referenced by Peter. It is often termed the general call in which God and the hope of salvation through Christ alone is declared to all. David Brown wrote: “The calling of which the New Testament almost invariably speaks is what divines call *effectual* calling, carrying with it a supernatural operation on the will to secure its consent. But that cannot be the meaning here; the “called” being emphatically distinguished from the “chosen.” It is certain that many, in expounding these parables, may choose to omit our Lord’s application set forth in these brief words. But these are the only words of explanation given.

It is well that we examine the aim of our Lord in that what was concluded was not unrelated as we have noted above. In referring to the Parable of the Vineyard, William Hendriksen observed that, “The ‘point’ or main lesson of the parable is therefore this: *Do not be among the first who become the last.* This may be subdivided as follows: a. Avoid falling prey to the work-for-wages spirit with respect to matters spiritual. b. Do not fail to see God’s sovereignty, His right to distribute favors as He pleases. c. Be far removed from envy. Was not each disciple’s yearning to be the greatest a next-door neighbor to soul-destructive envy?” The character flaw cited in these men was presented to us that we might be delivered from

presumption. We remember David's prayer: *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Psalms 19:13.*

As we observe the responses of men to many things affecting them (or not) we detect a perverted sense of justice. This issue here is what seems fair. The man at the wedding didn't see that it made a difference. Satan, in concert with the fallen nature of man quickly petitions the court for a change of venue. In other words, this needs to be tried in court of what seems culturally acceptable and advocates for self-righteousness and pride. Justice and Judgment are the habitation of God's throne and there is no other venue in the end. In the quest for equality, essential worth is thrown out of the equation and each will seek his own and demand rather than earn. So, in the minds of men all deserve an equal chance and Christ would most certainly be deemed unfair and unjust in making choice among men. The fact remains – Many are called but few are chosen.

Without seeming to defend the matter of divine choice, we would observe that if God had not made choice it is abundantly clear that none would have chosen the way of righteousness. Of those chosen it is clearly set forth in the Word of God that choice has been made in Christ: *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Ephesians 1:4.* We are careful to note that the

choice of God is without cause in them chosen but certainly with purpose for the same. We may further conclude that those chosen are/will be effectually called. John Gill noted that "...a few of those outwardly called, are inwardly and effectually called by the powerful grace of God, out of darkness into marvelous light, into the grace an liberty of the Gospel, into communion with Christ, and to the obtaining His kingdom and glory, according to the eternal purpose of God."

I once heard a wise old evangelist say that "God has fixed things up so that a man can have exactly what he wants." His reference was, of course, to the fact that God acts sweetly and effectually on the regenerate soul so as to enable and effect the exercise of repentance and faith and the choice of salvation as it is in Christ while the will of fallen man chooses strangling and death.

"But what, it may be asked, has this to do with the subject of our parable? Probably this – to teach us that men who have wrought in Christ's service all their days may, by the spirit which they manifest at last, make it too evident that, as between God and their own souls, they never were chosen workmen at all (David Brown)." So, let us ever be so focused on our Loving Lord that *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: Hebrews 12:28.*
bhs

A Christian's birth described (1 Peter 1:2–3).

This miracle all began with God: We were chosen by the Father (Eph. 1:3–4). This took place in the deep counsels of eternity, and we knew nothing about it until it was revealed to us in the Word of God. This election was not based on anything we had done, because we were not even on the scene. Nor was it based on anything God saw that we would be or do. God's election was based wholly on His grace and love. We cannot explain it (Rom. 11:33–36), but we can rejoice in it. "Foreknowledge" does not suggest that God merely knew ahead of time that we would believe, and therefore He

chose us. This would raise the question, “Who or what made us decide for Christ?” and would take our salvation completely out of God’s hands. In the Bible, to foreknow means “to set one’s love on a person or persons in a personal way.” It is used this way in Amos 3:2: “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.” God set His electing love on the nation of Israel. Other verses that use “know” in this special sense are Psalm 1:6; Matthew 7:23; John 10:14, 27; and 1 Corinthians 8:3. But the plan of salvation includes more than the Father’s electing love; it also includes the work of the Spirit in convicting the sinner and bringing him to faith in Christ. The best commentary on this is 2 Thessalonians 2:13–14. Also, the Son of God had to die on the cross for our sins, or there could be no salvation. We have been chosen by the Father, purchased by the Son, and set apart by the Spirit. It takes all three if there is to be a true experience of salvation. As far as God the Father is concerned, I was saved when He chose me in Christ before the foundation of the world. As far as the Son is concerned, I was saved when He died for me on the cross. But as far as the Spirit is concerned, I was saved one night in May 1945 when I heard the gospel and received Christ. Then it all came together, but it took all three Persons of the Godhead to bring me to salvation. If we separate these ministries, we will either deny divine sovereignty or human responsibility, and that would lead to heresy. –Warren Wiersbe

THE SOURCE OF FALSE TEACHING

In Matthew 15:9 the Lord discloses the source of their false teachings: “in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.” In this text he uses the synonym, *didaskalia*. Clearly, their doctrines are verbal assertions and propositions about religious topics. Again, these doctrines, when considered as a body, distinguish them as a group. In 15:2 Scripture identifies the specific concern with which the Scribes and Pharisees confront Jesus: “Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread.” They have a doctrinal problem with Christ. Jesus responds they have a problem with him because they draw their doctrines from the wrong source. Their doctrines come from men’s traditions, rather than from God’s Word. He calls the source of their teaching “the precepts of men.” In 15:6 he says: “and you have made void the Word of God because of your tradition.” Similarly, he asks in 15:3, “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?” The Pharisees regard the “traditions of the elders” as the proper source of authoritative religious teaching, binding on the conscience. Jesus has a different doctrine of religious authority. He asserts that the Word of God, not the traditions of men, furnishes the sole source of authoritative and sound doctrine. He says boldly that no religious movement can ever honor God, or bring him acceptable worship, as long as it formulates its distinctive doctrines from the poverty of human tradition, rather than from the riches of Scripture: “This people honors me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.” –Greg Nichols *Lectures in Systematic Theology*

A MAN MAY BE SO BOLD OF HIS PREDESTINATION, THAT HE FORGETS HIS CONVERSATION.

–THOMAS ADAMS