

Some want a Christ who rescues from the guilt of sin but not its tyranny over them. They want to escape hell but not their sin. --Monergism

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

XVIII. Of the World to Come

We believe that the end of the world is approaching; that at the Last Day Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

I Peter 4:7; I Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35; I John 2:17; Matt. 28:20; Matt. 13:39-40; II Peter 3:3-13; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:21; I Thess 4:13-18; I Thess. 5:1-11; Acts 24:15; I Cor. 15:12-58; Luke 14:14; Dan. 12:2 John 5:28-29; John 6:40; John 11:25-26; II Tim. 1:10; Acts 10:42; Matt. 13:49; Matt. 13:37-43; Matt. 24:30-31; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 22:11; I Cor. 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; II Peter 2:9; Jude7; Phil. 3:19; Rom. 6:23; II Cor. 5:10-11; John 4:36; II Cor. 4:18; Rom. 3:5-6; II Thess. 1:6-12; Heb. 6:1-2; I Cor. 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:2-16; Rev.20:11-12; I John 2:28; I John 4:17; II Peter 3:11-12

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

Volume 12, No. 23

June 9, 2019

JESUS AND HIS FRIENDS

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. John 15:13-15

Men are given to using overly familiar tones in speaking of our Lord. They describe a relationship which places them on equal footing with our Lord. One profane songwriter expressed it as “me and Jesus have got a good thing going.” Such an idea is devoid of any hint of recognition of who Jesus is and what He has done in bringing about the redemption of His people. This is but an example of the concepts which originate in the minds of the many who would endeavor to deal with our Lord on their own terms and place themselves in the position of defining how they would have things to be. His declared purpose is neither known nor sought after and His true identity as God manifest in the flesh is nowhere to be found in the vision they have of Him.

Here, however, we are brought to the concept of friendship as He uses it. The endearing term used here incorporates the work of redemption, the result of divine friendship, and the enduring prospects to be enjoyed forever in Him. Believers are comfortable with the thought of calling Him “Master and Lord” in that they desire to be subservient and submissive to Him. They worship, as did Thomas, in saying “My Lord and My God!” They delight to know Him as King of kings and Lord of lords as He is the Captain of their Salvation. With all who truly know Him they fall down before Him and join the heavenly chorus, *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the*

Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Revelation 5:12. The friendship of Christ considered in the light of such lofty concepts is most humbling. Yet, it is He who has declared that we who love Him are His friends.

In a context of encouraging and equipping His disciples Jesus used the term in this way: *And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. Luke 12:4.* We are first stricken with the tenderness of Jesus in addressing them. He called them His friends. The tone here is that of a friend giving good advice to those he loves. We would understand that such a one sensed both danger and trial to be faced. The danger of which Jesus spoke was that of the Pharisees and in the first verse of Luke 12 His advice was to “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” No mystery here in that all would understand what hypocrisy is. In verse 4, the exhortation is to be brave in that the care of God for them is such that no detail would be neglected and that they who would sound the most threatening were limited by the care of the Father for His own. In verse eight of Luke 12, they are encouraged to confess Him before men and so to honor their identity as His friends. Three pieces of advice from the greatest friend of all were: beware, be brave, and be true.

The divine use of the term friend should be familiar to us. In referring to the relationship with Israel of old the prophet distinguished them thusly: *But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Isaiah 41:8.* James seizes on that thought in extolling the works of Abraham and looking to his faith seems to quote both Moses and Isaiah. *And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. James 2:23.*

Jesus seems to draw on concepts of friendship the disciples would understand. The implication is that owing to the love of a friend one might do much and even sacrifice much. The comparison made here is the extent that one would go for his friends. In this case we understand the ultimate sacrifice to be made for the objects of friendship. Clearly, there was more in view here than that of merely dying. It is indicated elsewhere that some might do just that. But in considering the reason that He laid down His life, our sinful and rebellious estate, the use of the term friends humbles us once more. There is no greater love than that which Christ has for His friends.

Then comes another amazing statement: "Ye are my friends." At first reading it might sound as if we would have to obey Him to be

considered His friend. Verse thirteen clearly lays that thought aside. It is rather the mark that identifies His friends. The commandment first given here was that "ye love one another as I have loved you." It is in this way that we are constituted as His friends. Such obedience is not servile and difficult; it is loving and in clear imitation of Christ.

Henceforth we are to be called friends. The prospect of walking through this life with a "friend that sticketh closer than a brother" is sweet to consider. Henceforth with Him means for all eternity we shall enjoy the relationship secured by the blood of Christ and confirmed by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. This is glorious to contemplate.

The Lord shared with Abraham His intentions to destroy Sodom. Jesus has shared and is sharing with us those things that He had heard of the Father. *The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant. Psalms 25:14.* It is in Christ that we have been made to see the fulness of the Godhead and to realize all that God has determined. He is the Truth and the revelation of it and, *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. 2 Corinthians 1:20.* There is no greater love than His and no greater privilege than to be called the friend of Jesus. *bhs*

"The God of Consolation"

Romans 15:5

As he is "the God of patience," the Lord our God is "the God of consolation!" All true, real, solid comfort comes from him. Our Lord Jesus Christ, his dear Son, is "the consolation of Israel." He is our Comfort.

God the Holy Spirit is "the Comforter" sent down from heaven to comfort chosen, redeemed sinners. He comforts by the gospel in his gracious work of saving conviction (John 16:7-11). He comforts believing sinners by the doctrines and promises of his Word, giving strong consolation to the heirs of promise, by the ordinances of divine worship which are the breasts of consolation to his children. And he comforts his people by faithful gospel preachers, the church's "Barnabases," her sons of consolation (Acts 4:36)

O Spirit of God, grand us “to be like minded one toward another.” Paul’s prayer here is that “the God of patience and consolation” might make us patient, longsuffering, and forgiving, and a source of comfort to one another, according to his own example in Christ (Ephesians 4:30 - 5:2).

When I have forgiven every wrong against me, have borne every hard word or thought, and have overlooked every weakness and comforted every fallen friend, I still have not endured one atom of what Christ bore for me and from me (Matthew 18:21-22).

This is how we “may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 15:6). God is glorified when, believing on his dear Son, we are united in his Son and seek to be of help and comfort to one another by our patience and forbearance with one another, and by our forgiveness of one another.

--Don Fortner

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Romans 12:14

“I have said that this is more difficult than to let go revenge when anyone is injured; for though some restrain their hands and are not led away by the passion of doing harm, they yet wish that some calamity or loss would in some way happen to their enemies; and even when they are so pacified that they wish no evil, there is yet hardly one in a hundred who wishes well to him from whom he has received an injury; nay, most men daringly burst forth into imprecations. But God by his word not only restrains our hands from doing evil, but also subdues the bitter feelings within; and not only so, but he would have us be solicitous for the wellbeing of those who unjustly trouble us and seek our destruction.” –John Calvin’s Commentary

From Warren Wiersbe – *Be Hopeful* – 1 Peter

C. S. Lewis, whom many believe to have been one of the greatest Christian thinkers in the twentieth century, strolled in. Lewis had heard the shouting from down the hall, and as he entered the room he asked, “What’s all the rumpus about?” His colleagues told him of their discussions as to what made Christianity unique from the other world religions. Lewis responded, “Oh, that’s easy, it’s grace.” And after further discussion they finally all agreed. Grace sets the Christian faith apart from every other world religion. What is grace? Simply put, grace is God’s unmerited favor. You cannot earn grace; you cannot do anything to deserve grace. It is simply God doing something for you with no strings attached. God’s grace is solely motivated by love: deep, abiding, unconditional, sacrificial love. Phillip Yancey puts it this way: The notion of God’s love coming to us free of charge, no strings attached, seems to go against every instinct of humanity. The Buddhist eight-fold path, the Hindu doctrine of karma, the Jewish Covenant, and Muslim’s code of law, each of these offers a way to earn approval. Only Christianity dares to make God’s love unconditional (What’s So Amazing About Grace, 45).

AS GOD DID NOT AT FIRST CHOOSE YOU BECAUSE YOU WERE HIGH, SO HE WILL NOT FORSAKE YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE LOW – JOHN FLAVEL