

“We never know what sin really is till we have learned to think of it in terms of God, and to measure it, not by human standards, but by the yardstick of his total demand on our lives.” - J. I. Packer

"If you see yourself as a little sinner, you will inevitably see Jesus a little savior." -
Martin Luther

GADSBY'S CATECHISM

By William Gadsby, about 1800

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

Question XXVII. Is there anything in the covenant of grace of a precarious or uncertain nature?
Answer. No; for it is ordered in all things and sure, and is confirmed by the promise and oath of God.

2 Sam. 23.5; Psa. 89. 33-37; Jer. 33.20-21; Matt. 24. 35; Jn. 17.12, 24; Rom. 11.29.

Question XXVIII. Are the called according to God's purpose to take any consolation from the glory and stability of this covenant?

Answer. Yes; for it contains all their salvation, and all their desire.

2 Sam. 23.5; Isa. 54.10; Jn. 10.28-29; Heb. 6.17-20.

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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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OWNERSHIP OF SIN

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

James 1:13-15

It is the fashion of many today to redefine cardinal doctrine to suit their own concepts of “political correctness.” As a result, repentance becomes a mere change of mind and faith becomes a casual acknowledgement of the being and existence of God. Christ becomes helper rather than Lord and the Holy Spirit is a “feel good” agent. And, sin is dealt with as a conditional issue rather than the emphatic declaration that it is the transgression of the Law of God. If there is no real issue with sin, then mercy will never be sought after in that the human mentality aspires to self-help with only some assistance from God. Certainly, the declaration that “the soul that sinneth it shall die” no longer has relevance and men think only of that with which they are personally uncomfortable. Neither God, nor His Word have changed. And, sin is sin no matter the garb that it dons. James leaves no wiggle room in addressing the matter of sin.

The word “tempted” occurs in two contexts in the Book of James. Early on in the chapter the issue is trials with a reference to suffering of various sorts. Here the matter is the allurements to evil. In the early part we are encouraged in the matter of faith and the working of patience and are taught to “count it all joy.” These things certainly come in accordance with the providence of God and have a wonderfully positive effect. Here the matter is evil. While we

may understand that God may tolerate and even make such things work for His glory, He is not in any way associated with evil. He is infinitely Holy and cannot be touched with sin and wickedness, while men are born into it.

It can never be said that James is subtle in making his point. He would have those being tempted to recognize it for what it is and that the reason it arises is to be found in themselves. Men love to take credit for that which profits them but hate to own their sin. In their minds they seem like Teflon – nothing sticks to them.

There is a myriad of things to which they attribute blame while excusing themselves and their sin. But to point to any other than themselves is, in effect, to point to God. One complains that he is a criminal because of his environment, the influence of friends, perceived oppression, and the list could go on. It is God who, in His wise providence, has set the boundaries for our placement in this present world. Thus, to blame circumstance is to blame God. The classic rebellious response of a disobedient child is that “I didn’t ask to be born.” Whatever has provoked them is the fault of their parents for birthing them. We are all born in sin and shaped in iniquity and the result is the commission of sins.

While on the surface it may seem a minor thing to refuse to take responsibility, in the end it is much more. God did not cause Adam to sin

and He does not do so with any other. The inner workings of God in men are only “will and to do of His good pleasure.” There was nothing in Christ to respond to sin and so, we can understand that such does not exist in the Godhead. Thus, the denial of our guilt is to charge it ultimately to God.

The explanation of James is not of difficult understanding. The sin problem and the active component of it – our lust – lies within us. So, in describing the progression of sin James goes right to the source. Temptation to evil finds a response and it is ours, it is our own lust. John MacArthur wrote, “Man’s fallen nature has the propensity to strongly desire whatever sin will satisfy it.” The issue is not that some external force caused it to arise; it is that the thing presented is a matter of desire. Fallen man finds delight in sin. Literally, one is drawn or dragged away and trapped – caught up. That which began as an allurements is now bought to fruition in commission of sin. And its cause is to be found wholly in the individual and the blame is his alone to bear. There is no relief in either company or circumstance. Children often excuse their sins by pointing to the fact that others were doing it. If mercy is to be had, sin is to be owned!

A passage often quoted by evangelists is, *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is*

eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23. O that it was really believed. God has zero tolerance for sin: *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he? Habakkuk 1:13.* How far man has progressed in his wickedness and refusal to own sin; it is now, to them, a great sin to call out sin for what it is. The Word of God stands – death is the result. The evidences of physical death are all about us and eternal death and suffering is to soon follow.

Perhaps it is because they do not see the result fully played out and they are hardened. But while we await final outcomes, we have the testimony of Jesus and the Cross. If we would know of God’s intense hatred for sin and the fact of His most accurate placement of blame, we look there. When Jesus bore the sins of His elect on the cross, they became the object of the wrath of God and even though they were on His Son, He spared Him not. The full measure of wrath and judgment fell on my Lord. How could I ever forbear to own that it was my sin, arising from within me that sent Him to the cross. The guilt was all mine and He bore it. “Hallelujah, what a Savior.” *bhs*

GIVE NO OFFENSE

“Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, ...” (1 Corinthians 10:32)

“Give no offense ... to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God” is all-inclusive of all persons. (Greeks here represent Gentiles in general.) Our speech and conduct should never be offensive to either God or fellowmen, nor in any way prejudice anyone against the gospel we preach, nor bring reproach to God’s church. We must not express racial prejudice, speak ethnic slurs, deride sinners with derogatory terms, mock the disadvantaged, incite with inflammatory speech, slander brothers and sisters, cause anyone to stumble.

Rather, all our speech and conduct should always have for its goal first “the glory of God” (v.31) and second the profit and salvation of fellowmen (v.33). We therefore should imitate Paul the apostle when, having given the present exhortation, he said “just as I

also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (v.33; cp. v.24; 9:19-23).

If in your speech and conduct you would glorify God, profit fellowmen, and give offense to no one, obey these exhortations:

- "Let your speech always be with grace" (Colossians 4:6);
- "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29);
- "speak evil of no one, ... be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another" (Titus 3:2f);
- "And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will" (2 Timothy 2:24-26);
- "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Jehovah, my strength and my Redeemer" (Psalm 19:14).

– Daniel E. Parks

One reason why the church has so little influence over the world – C. H. Spurgeon
"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind!"
Romans 12:2

I believe that one reason why the church has so little influence over the world--is because the world has so much influence over the church!

It is overwhelming to see the growing worldliness of the visible church. Many professed Christians--the Lord alone knows whether they are true believers or not--give us grave cause for apprehension. We see them tolerating practices which would not have been endured by their fathers; my blood chills when I think of how far some fashionable professors go astray!

When the Church descends to the world's level, her spiritual power is gone. Jesus said, "Preach the gospel to every creature!" But men are getting tired of the divine plan; they are going to be saved by the music, or by the theatricals, or by the amusements! Well, they may try these things as long as ever they like; but nothing can ever come of the whole thing but utter disappointment and confusion: God is dishonored, the gospel is travestied, hypocrites are manufactured by thousands, and the church is dragged down to the level of the world!

An unholy church! It is useless to the world--and of no esteem among men. It is . . . an abomination, Hell's laughter, and Heaven's abhorrence!

"The world has absorbed the Church, and the church is content that it should be so!" Horatius Bonar

"Conformity to the world, in all ages, has proved the ruin of the church!" Rowland Hill

"The spirit of the world is eating out the very heart and life of true godliness!" George Everard

"Refined worldliness is the present snare of the Church of God!" Horatius Bonar