

You ask me how I gave my heart to Christ, I do not know; There came a yearning for him in my soul so long ago. I found that all earth's flowers would fade and die, I wept for something that would satisfy. And then, and then, somehow I seemed to dare To lift my broken heart to God in prayer. I do not know, I cannot tell you how; I only know he is my Saviour now. —Author unknown

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION OF FAITH

By J. Newton Brown -- 1833

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

II. Of the True God

We believe that there is one, and only one living and true God, an infinite intelligent Spirit, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

John 4:24; Ps. 83:18; Heb.3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer.10:10; Ex.15:11; Ps.147:5; Isa.6:3; I Pet.1:15-16; Rev.4:6-8; Mark12:30; Rev.4:11; Matt.10:37; Jer.2:12-13; Matt.28:19; John 15:26; I Cor.12:4-6; I John 5:7; John10:30; John 5:17; John 14:23; John 17:5&10; Acts 5:3-4; I Cor.2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6; Eph. 2:18; II Cor.13:14; Rev. 1:4-5.

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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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 GREATNESS OF HIS MERCY

He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. (Psalms 103:10-12)

Like many biblical terms, the word “mercy” has come to be used carelessly and contemptuously by those who have no knowledge of the deep significance true believers attach to it. In a reaction to something that excites an individual or produces fright, men may be heard to exclaim, “Lord, have mercy.” Often the word is uttered with no seeming connection to matters at hand. What is obvious is that they have no sense of needing mercy and do not really want it. “Mercy,” such as the Lord alone can give is the cry of everyone who is brought to an awareness of their sinful estate and the fact that they have offended a holy God and have nothing to offer in the way of atonement or restitution.

Men, apart from a work of grace in their hearts, hate mercy. They want to lay claim to merit in some way and such ways are often distorted. Where mercy is desired, pride must be completely abandoned, and full surrender must be made to the One being sought after for it. There must be the acknowledgment that the offended One can do as He wills and so it is declared, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.” There is no recourse given to the offender who must recognize that he does not deserve any clemency whatsoever. Men have rather come to believe that God owes them something and sin is not an issue at all with them.

In the fall men were ruined at the very core of their being. Sin came into the world and its

effect fell on all the offspring of Adam. Men are declared to be dead in trespasses and sin. The result is that they are accepting of sin as a way of life. They witness the same things in others and are comforted. If their world and their way of life is not disturbed, they are content to live a life apart from God. Others are openly contemptuous of the things of God and live in open opposition to the rule of common decency and of the claims of God. Although creation testifies to them of the being, the existence, and the claims of God upon them, they shake their collective fists in the face of God and declare, “we will not have this man to reign over us.” Others have gone from indifference and rebellion to asserting that the ways of God are to be rebelled against and have declared a standard of their own making. Such are many of the perpetrators of intolerance and violence against any opposing them. Paul spoke of those having their consciences seared with a hot iron. (1 Timothy 4:2).

We would then compare the love of sin in men to the divine hatred of sin as it is witnessed in the Word of God. I am often drawn to the first chapter of the prophet Habakkuk and these words: *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)*. The prophet accurately depicts just how hateful sin is to the pure and

Holy One. But the divine view of sin does not end with the mere deeds. The Lord looks on the heart and He declared through Jeremiah just what He would expose there. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9)*. Thus, when we read “thou hatest all workers of iniquity,” the Lord is fully justified. And this was the conclusion of David: *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. (Psalms 51:4)*.

How preciously David speaks here to the hearts of all who fear the Lord. In this case it is not what the Lord has done; it is rather what He has not done. He has not given us what we deserve. He declares the greatness of His mercy in that a truly penitent sinner needs to hear that. And then, as a manner of assurance, has revealed the way it has been accomplished. He has so dealt with the sins of those who fear Him that they can never be a matter of accountability again.

We will remember the divine institution of the Day of Atonement. It was a once a year observance and centered around a unique form of sacrifice. Two goats were used to picture the atonement. By lot, the goats were distinguished. The first, the Lord’s goat was taken to the Altar and there sacrificed. The blood sacrifice points us to the sacrifice of the Lamb of God on Calvary. It took a second goat, the scapegoat, to fully picture the work of Christ. It was over this goat that the sins of Israel were confessed by the High Priest thereby indicating that their sins

were passed onto the goat. The goat was then led away into the wilderness by a fit man in such a way as to prevent it finding its way back to the camp again. It is here typified that in the soul-suffering of Christ that our sins were so dealt with as to put them forever out of the sight of God and so satisfy the justice of God forevermore.

Some have conjectured about the height of heaven above the earth and the distance that the east is from the west. In the first instance the infinite greatness of the mercy of God is clearly indicated. In the second instance the infinite distance of our sins from us is such that “There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” In writing of the *The Love of God*, the song writer reiterated these thoughts in these words, “It goes beyond the highest star, and reaches to the lowest hell.”

It is no wonder in contemplating the blessedness of these thoughts that the Psalmist began the Psalm by twice declaring “Bless the Lord, O my soul.” And then, having directed all His created beings to Bless the Lord, he ends the song on the same note: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

May we pause to meditate often on the greatness of His mercy given us in Christ. Without it we would be as far removed from Him as the east is from the west and would in eternity know that great gulf that would be between us and the precious presence of our Blessed Lord. Bless the Lord, O my soul! *bhs*

The Christian gospel says, “If you look into yourself, you will ultimately find only that which disappoints you and confronts you with your own ineptitude and your inability to fix even the simplest of the things that really matter. The problem is inside of you. It’s your fault. And so the answer must come from outside of you and not rely upon you—so it is the most wonderful news that Jesus has come in order to fix your problem. He came to bring down the barrier between you and God, and restore you to the relationship you were made for, enjoying God as your loving Father.” – Alistair Begg

A BEGINNING REALIZATION

It is essential that we begin with this realization—that none of us have the ability to get better apart from the redeeming and restoring work of Jesus in our lives. The first step to fulfillment is acknowledging how unlike Jesus we are. We must not suppress the doubts we have about ourselves. Instead, we must start listening to those doubts and applying the truth about Jesus to them. We must not try to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps. We must not merely think that we have problems. Rather, we must understand that we ourselves are our own biggest problem, our own worst nightmare, our own worst enemy. In one of his messages on the Sermon on the Mount, Dr. David Martyn Lloyd-Jones shares this perspective on our human condition: “The first thing you must realize, as you look at that mountain which you are told you must ascend, is that you cannot do it, that you are utterly incapable in and of yourself, and that any attempt to do it in your own strength is proof positive that you have not understood it.” God’s call on our lives, then, is first and foremost not a call to action but a call to brokenness and contrition, for a broken and contrite heart He will not despise. So how do we come to possess all things? We accept the divine diagnosis that our true condition is that of sinners who are bruised and broken by the fall. This may feel contradictory, but the call remains: in the midst of our being fractured and frail, we run from all we are to put all our trust in everything the Lord Jesus is and all that He has done. Acknowledging our flaws and frailties is itself a mark of grace, a sign of God’s kingdom at work in us. From beginning to end, we get all things that are for our good as loving gifts from God. He is the One who begins a good work in us, and He will be faithful to complete it. – Geoffrey Thomas, *You Could Have it All*

True Christian

It costs something to be a true Christian. Let that never be forgotten. To be a mere nominal Christian, and go to church, is cheap and easy work. But to hear Christ’s voice, follow Christ, believe in Christ, and confess Christ, requires much self-denial. It will cost us our sins, our self-righteousness, our ease, and our worldliness. All— all must be given up. We must fight an enemy who comes against us with thousands of followers. We must build a tower in troubled times. Our Lord Jesus Christ would have us thoroughly understand this. He bids us “count the cost.” ~ J.C. Ryle

(Contributed by Kelly Tyler)

WHICH WILL YOU BE?

The Lord Jesus Christ told of two men who lived close together. Both died about the same time. The first, a believer in Jesus Christ, was carried by angels to heaven, where he will bask in everlasting comfort. The second, an unbeliever in Jesus Christ, descended into Hades, and will suffer everlasting torment (Luke 16:19-31).

These two men are typical of everyone, including you and me. Like them, we live one day and die the next. Like them, we then ascend to heaven’s everlasting bliss if we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, but descend to everlasting torment if we do not.

Which will you be? – Daniel E. Parks

“A man can no more diminish God’s glory by refusing to worship Him than a lunatic can put out the sun by scribbling the word ‘darkness’ on the walls of his cell.”—C. S. Lewis