

What could an unsanctified man do in Heaven, if by any chance he got there? -- J. C. Ryle
No man can possibly be happy in a place where he is not in his element, and where all around him is not congenial to his tastes, habits and character.
When an eagle is happy in an iron cage, when a sheep is happy in the middle of a lake, when a fish is happy on the dry land-- then, and not until then, will I admit that the unsanctified man could be happy in Heaven!
The book of Revelation says expressly, "Nothing impure will ever enter it." Revelation 21:27

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)

VIII. Of Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Saviour

Mark 1:15, Acts 11:18, Eph. 2:8, I John 5:1, John 16:8, Acts 2:37-38, Acts 16:30-31
Luke 18:13, Luke 15:18-21, James 4:7-10, II Cor. 7:11, Tim. 10:12-13, Ps.51, Rom. 10:9-11, Acts 3:22-23, Heb. 4:14, Ps.2:6, Heb. 1:8, Heb. 7:25, II Tim. 1:12

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsi@msn.com

Website: www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com

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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THE APPLE OF HIS EYE

Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them. Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings, From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about. (Psalms 17:7-9)

Charles Spurgeon commented that “the smell of the furnace” is upon this Psalm. The observation was that such a prayer as this was surely born out of persecution and personal trial. It is well that all such earthly trials and concerns be appealed to Heaven for resolution. This is an example of David as a man of prayer. The Lord identified him as “a man after His own heart.” Spurgeon further observed that David flew to prayer in all times of need and his prayers were so frequent that it is not possible to date and entitle them all. So, here this Psalm is simply called “A Prayer of David.”

We have all rejoiced in reading of the exploits of David in the service of the Lord. His enemies were often formidable, and he saw them as enemies of God. The tendency with many might have been to develop a sense of self-sufficiency at such success. Not so with David nor should it ever be with any of the Lord’s people. The battle is the Lord’s and so is the success and the glory that pertains to it. David’s dependence was fully upon the Lord. He prayed because He believed in the Lord and fully trusted in the love and care that He alone could give. Martyn Lloyd-Jones once heard some say that they believed in prayer. He replied that he did not believe in prayer; he believed in the Lord and so appealed to Him in all things. Sadly, many folks think of prayer as being no more than words offered up out of duty rather than to see it as the expression of the heart in appealing

to God. What David prayed for hear speaks much about his own sense of weakness and the nature of God’s care for His own.

The word here translated as “apple” refers to the pupil of the eye. This is the opening of the eye through which light is directed to the retina. The eye is most sensitive to danger and subject to pain. The pupil is the most sensitive part of the eye. The Hebrew refers to it as the “little girl of the eye.” We ought to be amazed at this figure to which David points in seeking divine protection. The wisdom of the Lord is clearly seen in the design of the human body. The eye is surrounded by bony structures and is further protected by the eyebrows from falling matter, the eyelids to shutter them closed, and the eyelashes to further ward off foreign matter. It is to be observed that we by nature place great value on and are very protective of our eyes and will quickly react to any threat coming toward them and will avoid anything that poses a danger to them. Spurgeon even quoted Socrates in his observation of the design of the eyes: “Does it not appear to thee to be a work of providence, that considering the weakness of the eye, he has protected it with eyelids, as with doors, which whenever there is occasion to use it are opened, and are again closed in sleep? And that it may not receive injury from the winds, he has planted on it eyelashes like a strainer; and over the eyes has disposed the

eyebrows like a penthouse, so that the sweat from the head may do no mischief.”

It is these protections that David desires from the Lord. Not for his eyes; rather for his whole being. He looks to the weakest of body parts to confess his own weakness and then looks to the protections of the Lord and His sensitivity to the plight of His children. His plea is for the Lord to take our case as His own. So, was the expression of the Lord in His care for Jacob: *He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. (Deuteronomy 32:10)*. The expectation is that the Lord will react to our needs as His own, and so they are. *For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. (Zechariah 2:8)*.

David was praying for a living sensitivity to a living unity with the Lord, walking with Him in newness of life. He would be assured of the divine interest in all that confronted him and would expect the reaction given in the Lord. He would further invoke the experience of the loving providential care of the Lord as being hidden under the shadow of His wings. The Psalmist elsewhere caught the theme in writing: *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. (Psalms 91:1)*. In both the thought of the eye and the overreaching wings, David expressed the expectation of a divine reaction

to all that threatened him.

Even as we face threats from all around us, we would do well to pray as did David. Whether it be from a plague or from the threat of religious oppression, the Lord is sensitive to that which affects the soul of His saints. May we be found resting in Him.

David prayed that the Lord would keep him and hide him. Drawing on this thought we might do well to heed the words of Jude in directing us to keep ourselves. For us to keep ourselves we must first be kept. So, Jude would direct us to build on “your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost” and to thereby “keep yourself in the love of God.” Jude would have us to be sensitive to the love of God for His own, witnessed in the glorious gift of His Son. Even so, we are to look for the “mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (not the life of this present evil world). Jude’s epistle ends with these words of assurance: *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25)*.

We do well to pray as David prayed. We would know such identity with the Lord as to understand that our High Priest is touched with the feeling of our infirmities and that He reacts accordingly and supplies to us as our needs demand. It is to us to confess our weakness and defer all care to Him. *bhs*

“If we do not preach about sin and God’s judgment on it, we cannot present Christ as Saviour from sin and the wrath of God. And if we are silent about these things, and preach a Christ who saves only from self and the sorrows of this world, we are not preaching the Christ of the Bible.

We are, in effect bearing false witness and preaching a false Christ. Our message is ‘another gospel, which is not another.’ Such preaching may soothe some, but it will help nobody; for a Christ who is not seen and sought as a Saviour from sin will not be found to save from self or from anything else.

An imaginary Christ will not bring a real salvation; and a half-truth presented as the whole truth is a complete untruth.”

–J.I. Packer, “The Puritan View of Preaching the Gospel,” in Puritan Papers, Vol 1.

An Unshakably Happy God

“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” (John 15:11)

God is absolutely sovereign.

“Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases” (Psalm 115:3).

Therefore, he is not frustrated. He rejoices in all his works when he contemplates them as colors of the magnificent mosaic of redemptive history. He is an unshakably happy God.

His happiness is foundationally the delight he has in himself. Before creation, he rejoiced in the image of his glory in the person of his Son — his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased (Matthew 3:17). Then the joy of God “went public” in the works of creation and redemption.

These works delight the heart of God because they reflect his glory. The heavens are telling the glory of God (Psalm 19:1). “May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works” (Psalm 104:31) He does everything he does to preserve and display that glory, for in this his soul rejoices.

All the works of God culminate in the praises of his redeemed people. “Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness!” (Psalm 150:2). The climax of his happiness is the delight he takes in the echoes of his excellence in the praises of the saints. “His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man, but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love” (Psalm 147:10–11).

But our praise is not only God’s delight, as an echo of his excellence; it is also the apex of our joy. Praise is the consummation of the joy we have in seeing and savoring the greatness of God.

Therefore, God’s pursuit of praise from us and our pursuit of pleasure in him are the same pursuit. This is the great outcome of the gospel of the glory of the grace of God in Christ!

From *Desiring God*, page 53

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones on Sanctification

‘You cannot receive Christ as your justification only, and then, later, decide to refuse or to accept Him as your sanctification. He is one and indivisible, and if you receive Him at all, at once He is made unto you “wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” You cannot receive Him as your Saviour only, and later decide to accept or refuse Him as your Lord; for the Saviour is the Lord who by His death has bought us and therefore owns us. Sanctification is nowhere taught or offered in the New Testament as some additional experience possible to the believer. It is represented rather as something which is already within the believer, something which he must realise more and more and in which he must grow increasingly.’

IF I WERE TO GO TO HEAVEN, AND FIND THAT CHRIST WAS NOT THERE, I WOULD LEAVE IMMEDIATELY; FOR HEAVEN WITHOUT CHRIST WOULD BE HELL TO ME. – THOMAS GOODWIN