

A little girl, in the days when the conversion of children was not the subject of as much prayer as now, applied for membership in a Baptist church. "Were you a sinner," asked an old deacon, "before this change of which you now speak?" "Yes, sir," she replied. "Well, are you now a sinner?" "Yes, sir, I feel I am a greater sinner than ever." "Then what change is there in you?" "I don't quite know how to explain it," she said, "but I used to be a sinner running after sin, and now I hope I am a sinner running from sin."

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KEACH'S CATECHISM – Benjamin Keach 1640 - 1704

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

Q. 29. How does Christ execute the office of a priest?

A. Christ executes the office of a priest, in His once offering up of Himself, a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.

(1 Peter 2:24; Heb. 9:28; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 2:17; 7:25; Rom. 8:34)

Q. 30. How does Christ execute the office of a king?

A. Christ executes the office of a king, in subduing us to Himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all His and our enemies.

(Ps. 110:3; Matt. 2:6; 1 Cor. 15:25)

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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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IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. James 4:10

Humility is not a typical attribute of fallen man. His tendencies are toward self-promotion or the promotion of others with whom he might identify. In any event, some form of pride typically is exhibited with men. Humility with most is associated with embarrassment. It may come as a result of the frustration of some design with which they had registered great confidence. Some known weakness in their character may have been exposed. They may have been found out in shameful activity. The list could go on; however, it is sufficient to say that it is not a desirable feeling with men. Necessity may bring men to submission to those of a higher power or authority. But, this does not constitute true humility. Theirs is not the obedience of love.

To think of self-humiliation is not normal for the natural man. Yet, this is the mandate in this passage of Scripture. This, however, is no ordinary humiliation; it is humiliation in the sight of the Lord. This proves to be most difficult since this humiliation is absolute as are all the demands of God. Pride stands firmly in the way of any such action. This humbling cannot occur apart from the grace of God that reveals the very person of God. The gospel warfare is oriented against the pride of man. Consider, *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; 2 Corinthians 10:5.* While the terms of this passage seem harsh, the

victory is realized in a willful submission and self-humbling of the true believer.

Self-humbling comes as a result of several things. The first is the fact of personal sinfulness and the total lack of fitness for coming into the presence of God. At first awakening in the new birth men are made aware of the sinful condition in which they are found. The next thing is the awful contrast drawn between the sinfulness of man and the holiness of God. Yet another thing is the realization that it does not lie within the abilities of men to bridge that great gulf that is between. But, the ultimate humiliation comes when we are afforded a view of our suffering substitute. The cross is an offense to man in his pride; it is received as the mercy of God to one made alive in the power of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, we are made to see the sovereignty of God and the justice of God particularly as it is executed upon Christ. When, we are brought to repentance and faith we realize what we really deserve. How then, could we not be humbled and our pride leveled?

James addressed his remarks to professing Christians. In the first part of this chapter he had challenged their unseemly and self-seeking behaviors. They had evidently succumbed to a way of life that was feeding and encouraging personal pride. He urged them to draw nigh to God, to cleanse their hands and to purify their hearts. While true joy is a fruit of the Spirit, the laughter born out of pride is an offense to God. He would have them rather to be mourning over their sins. Often, when believers are made to

realize that their way of life has begun to conform to that of the world, they must be reminded that this is the very thing from which they have been delivered. They call to remembrance the scenes of Calvary and they are humbled. We note that he does not say to cleanse your hands and purify your hearts and then draw nigh to God. It is in drawing nigh to God that we are cleansed and our hearts are lifted up in the wonder of his mercy and grace. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The delightful outcome of such self-humbling is that "He will lift you up." If we understand that self-humbling is coming to the end of ourselves and seeing God high and lifted up and realizing that it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance, how may we understand what it is to be lifted up? John Gill wrote, "this is God's usual way to lift up the meek, and exalt those that humble themselves; he lifts them from the dunghill, to set them among princes; he gives them a place, and a name in his house, better than sons and daughters; he adorns them with his grace; he clothes them with the righteousness of his Son,

he grants them nearness to himself; and at last will introduce them into his kingdom and glory." This lifting up is not in the sight of men. In fact, such will often result in being ridiculed and persecuted by men. There is no delight in being rejected by men but there is great delight in being identified with Christ who was rejected by men.

John marveled at the identity and station that he had been given in Christ. *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 1 John 3:1.* How unseemly it is when men presume to exalt themselves and to lift themselves up even in the name of religion. Pride, in claiming religion, will say "I got saved;" the truly humble will declare, "God has in mercy through Christ saved me." The uniform of the submitted Christian is humility. Consider Peter's remark, *Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 1 Peter 5:5.* Oh, to be found truly humble in the sight of the Lord. *bhs.*

All true believers abide in Christ in a sense; but there is a higher meaning, and this we must know before we can gain unlimited power at the throne. "Ask what ye will" is for Enochs who walk with God, for Johns who lie in the Lord's bosom, for those whose union with Christ leads to constant communion. The heart must remain in love, the mind must be rooted in faith, the hope must be cemented to the Word, the whole man must be joined unto the Lord, or else it would be dangerous to trust us with power in prayer. The carte blanche can only be given to one whose very life is, "Not I, but Christ liveth in me." O you who break your fellowship, what power you lose! If you would be mighty in your pleadings, the Lord Himself must abide in you, and you in Him. Spurgeon

So what I believe about free will is that I am free to do whatever I please, and what I please is to sin. Therefore I'm going to be damned by my free will. I must be rescued from the bondage of my free will in order to see and hear God for who He is. Piper

Conviction of Sin

Robert Murray M'Cheyne (1813-1843)

"He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment!" John 16:8

1. Conviction of sin, by the Holy Spirit, issuing in conversion—is not the mere smiting of the natural conscience. Although man is utterly fallen—yet God has left natural conscience behind in every heart to speak for Him. Some men, by continual sinning, sear even the conscience as with a hot iron, so that it becomes past feeling; but most men have so much natural conscience remaining that they cannot commit heinous sin, without their conscience smiting them. When a man commits murder or theft, no eye may have seen him, and yet conscience makes a coward of him. He trembles, fearing that God will take vengeance. Now that is a natural work which takes place in every heart—but conviction of sin is a supernatural work of the Spirit of God. If you have had nothing more than the ordinary smiting of conscience—then you have never been truly convicted of sin.

2. Conviction of sin, by the Holy Spirit, issuing in conversion—is not any impression upon the imagination. Sometimes, when men have committed great sin, they have awful impressions of God's vengeance made upon their imaginations. In the night-time, they almost imagine that they see the flames of Hell burning beneath them; or they seem to hear doleful cries in their ears telling of coming woe; or they have terrible dreams, when they sleep, of coming vengeance. Now this is not the conviction of sin which the Spirit gives: it is altogether a natural work upon the natural faculties.

3. Conviction of sin, by the Holy Spirit, issuing in conversion—is not a mere head knowledge of what the Bible says against sin. Many unconverted men read their Bibles, and have a clear knowledge that their case is laid down there. They know very well that they are in sin, and they know just as well that the wages of sin is death. One man lives a swearer, and he reads the words, and understands them perfectly: "The Lord will not hold him guiltless—who takes his name in vain" (Exodus 20:7; Deu 5:11). Another man lives in the lusts of the flesh, and he reads the Bible and understands those words perfectly: "No immoral person has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Ephesians 5:5). Another man lives in habitual forgetfulness of God—never thinks of Him, and yet he reads: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17). Now in this way, most men have a head knowledge of their sin and of its wages—yet this is far from true conviction of sin.

What—then, is this conviction of sin?

It is to feel the loathsomeness of sin. A child of God has seen the beauty and excellency of God; and therefore, sin is loathsome in his eyes. But no unconverted person has seen the beauty and excellency of God; and therefore, sin cannot appear dark and loathsome in his eyes.

It is a just sense of the dreadfulness of sin. It is not mere knowledge that we have many sins and that God's anger is revealed against them all; but it is a heart-feeling that we are under sin. It is a sense of the dishonor it does to God, and of the wrath to which it exposes the soul.

Conviction of sin is no slight natural work upon the heart. It is all in vain that you read your Bibles and hear us preach, unless the Spirit uses the words to give feeling to your dead hearts. If we could prove to you with the plainness of arithmetic, that the wrath of God is abiding on you—still, you would sit unmoved. The Spirit alone can impress your heart.

○ Lord, sink me in self that I may rise in Thee. Spurgeon