

WHAT TRUE CONVERSION DOES

When the Word of God converts a man, it takes away from him his despair, but it does not take away his repentance. True conversion gives a man pardon, but does not make him presumptuous. True conversion gives a man perfect rest in Christ, but it does not stop his progress. True conversion gives a man security, but it does not allow him to leave off being watchful. True conversion gives a man strength and holiness, but it never lets him boast. True conversion brings a man to live for God. He does what he does for the glory of God, not for himself. True conversion makes a man live before God; he desires to walk with God, worship God, and talk to God as a man talks with his friend.

– Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-92), (Quoted by Daniel Parks)



GADSBY'S CATECHISM – William Gadsby about 1800

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

Question XXI. Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

Answer. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Gen. 3. 7-24; Jer. 17.9; Rom. 3.10-12 & 5.12 & 8.22.

Question XXII. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

Answer. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all the actual transgressions which proceed from it.

Psa.51.5 & 58.3; Isa.1.6 & 6.5 & 64.6; Jer. 17.9; Matt.15.19; Rom. 3.10 & 7.14.

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Sunday Evening 6:00 PM

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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AN IMPOSSIBILITY DECLARED

*Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.
Jeremiah 13:23*

The universal tendency to evil in fallen man is well documented in scripture. We are witnesses to this fact by examples in scripture, in the study of history and in personal experience. Men typically resent and deny the declaration of this truth. However, there is a threefold indictment found in Ephesians 2. There men are described as being dead in sin. Not just dead because of sin, but without connection to spiritual life with sin as a way of existence. They are described as being fully in line with the way of this world as opposed to the life as it is in Christ. And, they are found to be in accordance with the leadership of Satan himself. Regenerate people are aware of the fact that they were, by nature, the children of wrath even as others. But, they are conscious of a glorious change accomplished for them and not by them. Jeremiah was extreme with regard to this tendency with the declaration that the heart of man is desperately wicked. The Lord declared in the days of Noah that the imaginations of the hearts of men were only evil from the days of their youth. (Genesis 8:21).

In spite of these and many other references, men rebel at the idea that they cannot change themselves. There is a defense of free-will (so called) wherein men believe that they can change; but that the obligation is theirs to change. In their way of thinking, God is stopped by the will of man and thus limited in His ability to save. This idea denies the sovereignty of God and places men in control over the will of our

Eternal and Almighty God. Paul declares that the Jews erred in that they went about seeking to establish their own righteousness and would not submit themselves to the righteousness of God. If their righteousness was not acceptable to God, it was no righteousness at all. Only that which comes from Christ our Lord is acceptable.

Do men act of their own volition? The answer to that question is a qualified yes since they act with an awareness of what they are doing. Did Judas choose to betray Christ? While his act was fully in accordance with the will and purpose of God, he freely chose to do it. When the outward constraints were removed and Satan was allowed to have at him his true nature was exposed and he willed to do as his nature dictated. Then we ask, was his will truly free? Men do what they want to do and refuse what they will because it is their nature to do so. Cows eat grass because they are cows and lions eat meat because they are lions and men sin because it is their nature to do so.

This text declares two things. One is that will cannot change the nature. Quite the reverse is true. Secondly, what one is accustomed to is in concert with his nature. The KJV margin suggests the substitution of “is taught” for accustomed. Man is sinful because he fell in Adam. David declared that he was born in sin and shaped in iniquity. As a result he responds to the evil of this world and it is only because of divine restraints that all are not as Judas. The potential is there. The text gives two examples

of things we do not question. It is not possible for one to change the color of his skin by an act of will. It is the nature of the leopard to be spotted and he neither can nor desires to change that. Thus follows the declaration that men cannot do good. Christ said to the Pharisees, "ye will not come to me that you might have life." But, we are reminded of man's inability as well. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. John 6:44.* So then, men left to themselves will not come and cannot come. It is only where there is divine intervention that men desire to come to Christ. "You must be born again." As new creatures, men have a new nature that is of divine origin.

But, what of Peter? Did he not deny our Lord? However, we are reminded in his case that Christ had told him that Satan wanted him and wanted to sift him as wheat. The difference was that in spite of the actions of an old nature, Peter was born again. Jesus told Peter that He had prayed for him. And so Peter soon came to repentance and was restored to faith. There was no place of repentance for Judas or Esau. Both were left to their fallen nature and their "free

will" and they acted accordingly.

It is obvious from scripture that men cannot essentially change themselves because they cannot change their natures. Yet, God requires perfection in salvation and that means there must be change. The mandate of the message is to repent and believe the Gospel. It is man's obligation to change and to obey the Gospel. It is for this that Christ died. We are reminded that "He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy..." Two things are needed by those who come to Him. First there must be atonement for their sins. Secondly, there must be a life consistent with having been made "partakers of the divine nature." Like the leopard and his spots, men can neither effect this change nor do they want to change. *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Romans 3:11.* And see further *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Romans 9:16.* It is not the will of man that brings the change of salvation; it is done by the will of God. *To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; Daniel 9:9. bhs*

It is God's grace, not the believers' faith, which enables them to stand firm in their salvation.

Certainly faith is necessary for salvation, but it is God's grace and not our faith that has the power to save us and maintain that salvation. What God did initially through grace, we cannot preserve through our efforts. That would be a mockery of God's grace and an indication of our lack of trust in His desire and power to preserve our salvation. Paul said, "I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6). John MacArthur

Our only hope is to return to the God of the Scriptures and the truth that the center of all meaning in life is not ourselves but God. God is the center of the universe and the essence of all wisdom and all truth. The purpose of life derives from God's desire to see His own glory and behold His own beauty. Thus it is time for Christians to be called back to the truth, that the meaning of life is to be found in "the glory of God alone".
Author Unknown

“Christ is the end of the law.”

Romans 10:4

“Christ is the end of the law.” It is entirely correct to do with that statement exactly what the whole religious world says we must not do with it. Take it and run with it just as far as possible. There is no sense in which Christ is not the end of the law. He is the fulfilment of the law, the conclusion of the law, the finality of the law, the object of the law, the reason why the law was given, and the termination of the law.

“Christ is the end of the law for righteousness.” There is no righteousness of any kind, justifying righteousness or sanctifying righteousness, to be had by our personal obedience to the law. It is written, “If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain!”

Christ is not the end of the law for everyone. The Son of God did not fulfill the law’s demands for everyone. He is the end of the law for God’s elect, for all who trust him.

“Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.”

Holy, Just, and Good

When the apostle Paul declares, “Christ is the end of the law,” he is not telling us that the law is evil. It is not (1 Timothy 1:8-9). It is an evil thing to misuse the law; but the law is not evil. Writing by divine inspiration, the apostle tells us those apostate religious leaders who try to mix law and grace, who try to put believers under the yoke of bondage, desiring to be teachers of the law, do not know what they are talking about, “understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.” The law was never intended, in any sense, for those who are righteous before God. The law was given for the unrighteous. The law is not evil. It is holy, just, and good. It would be well if all men lived in conformity to the law’s commands, both in outward practice and in inward principle. Indeed, it is ordained of God and used by all civil governments to protect society from those who would otherwise disregard all respect for the rights, property, and lives of others.

Delight in the Law

When the Scriptures affirm, as the New Testament constantly does, that Christ is the end of the law and that believers are entirely free from the law, the Spirit of God certainly is not suggesting that believers are free to break, or disregard God’s holy law. Not only is the believer not free to break the law, he has no desire to do so. To those who believe, God’s commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:1-3). Every child of God in this world truly delights in the law of God after the inward man (Romans 7:22). If we could, we would love God with all our hearts. If we could, we would love our neighbor as ourselves. But we do not have the ability to do so.

But (Blessed be God for his wonderful grace!) Christ fulfilled the law for us, and we fulfil the law in him. Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, we fulfil the law. So declares God the Holy Spirit (Romans 3:31 8:4). DON FORTNER

“Outside the door of our heart Jesus is a stranger; He is no Savior to us—but inside the heart which has been opened, by Divine Grace, to admit Him, His power is displayed, His worth is known and His goodness is felt!” C.H. Spurgeon