

We are the most broken nation that we've ever been in history. We've more broken homes, We've more broken hearts over those broken homes. We've more broken little kids because of those broken homes. We've more minds broken by drugs, We've more bodies broken....we've put more than 10 million babies to death before they left their mother's wombs (in a Christian country... My Lord, what happens in a heathen country!) Do you think God Almighty is going to wink at our sin much longer? I don't... And the legislators can't help us, and the banks can't help us, and the government can't help us, and money can't help us. Our help cometh from the Lord! And the only way is in submission and brokenness. That we get and say, many of us, "Lord, I don't have the vision I used to have. I don't have the passion I used to have. I don't have the concern I used to have," not for America, for lost souls....Lost souls first, America second. ~ Leonard Ravenhill

SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

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

42.Q. Which is the first commandment?

XLII. A. The first commandment is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

43.Q. What is required in the first commandment?

XLIII. A. The first commandment requires us to know (1 Chron. 28:9) and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God (Deut. 26:17), and to worship and glorify him accordingly (Matt. 4:10).

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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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SIN SHALL NOT HAVE DOMINION

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Romans 6:14

The commentator A. R. Faussett wrote that the dominion here mentioned is that of a “tyrant lord.” Of course such thoughts as this are hateful to proud but fallen men since they think themselves to be free in every way. The Pharisees challenged our Lord in declaring that they were never in bondage to any man when in fact they were in bondage to Rome and their legalistic form of religion. Freedom in the minds of men is a cruel illusion and true freedom can only be experienced when the “Son shall make you free...” In verse 16 of this passage Paul identifies sin as just such a “tyrant lord” in that one is the slave of whom you obey. This is not a matter of equivocation; a life of obedience to sin ends in death. To true believers, the words written here are precious indeed in that they sense their deliverance from the bondage of sin and death and know of its incessant efforts to re-enslave.

The words here are not to be taken as an admonition or an exhortation. It is rather a declaration of that assured result where we are brought under the reign of grace. It does not free from temptation nor elevate us above the reach of our old sinful nature. Else why would John make such provisions for confession and forgiveness? But, we may understand that our fallen nature no longer has the right of rule and domination. It is essentially disenfranchised. It has a voice but not authority. But, we are provided with the needed resources by “the God of all grace,” and are reminded that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”

Earlier in the passage Paul did exhort that we “Let not sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.” Grace brings awareness and without it there would be no sense of such things to be resisted or the ability to do so.

The implications concerning the Law here are obvious. Under the Law, sin does have dominion over us. Under the Law the requirement is absolute and entire obedience is demanded. This is presented with no ability to conform to it. At best, outward compliance with the absence of inward righteousness is all that can be produced. Many, as the slaves of sin, simply reject the Law and all it claims. Some think that they can attain to justification before a Holy God by their feeble attempts. Still others would attempt to mingle Law and Grace with the horrible idea that they contribute to that which only the Cross of Christ could merit. Any claim to serving the Law admits to the fact that sin has dominion over the claimant. Grace produces what the Law demanded and more.

This passage exposes the error of many who reject the idea that a life in pursuit of Christ and His righteousness is necessary. None should be so foolish as to claim that they have no sin (1 John 1:8). But, the willful pursuit of sin and a sinful way of life has no claim to grace; rather, it exposes the very lack of it. It is the likes of these that have led many to use the phrase “once in grace always in grace” with such contempt. Observing the life of one who claims to be under grace but is the servant of sin justifies the

contempt on such a claim. Paul described the grace that saves us in this way: *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Titus 2:11-12.* With this in mind, if by the thought of “always in grace” means that we are under grace in such a way as to produce a life of true Faith and Godliness then we understand it to be true.

To many the idea of being under grace is an escape hatch that allows them to pursue sinful ways with impunity and retreat to the thought of grace when confronted. If indeed we were under the dictates of a cruel “tyrant lord” apart from grace, is it not sweet to think of being under the reign and guidance of grace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Is the thought of “dominion” present as we think of ourselves to be “under grace?” It is more than deliverance from punishment. While that is a precious thought there is much more. Sin guides and directs the life and conscience of the unregenerate and rebellious. Appetites are defined, lusts are pursued, and all with debilitating effects on mind, soul and body. The end result is well known. Many lament the awful

and enslaving effects of drug abuse. The enslavement to sin is no different. It is done because their “tyrant lord” demands it.

Under grace, we have defined for us appetites and desires. We are furthermore given the liberty to fully pursue them. Consider again, *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17.* There are no restrictions placed on how much love we may have and how much joy we may experience. Christ, His love and fellowship, are not rationed. All that we experience in Him leads to even greater satisfaction and delight. James reminds us: *But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. James 4:6.* And, the wonder of it all is that our Lord is glorified in all that we enjoy in Him. The world, the flesh and the Devil will always demand more, while Grace will always give more.

It is not here being said that we ought not to let sin have dominion. It is emphatically declared that sin shall not have dominion over any that are under grace. This is to be claimed as a precious promise in Christ. *bhs*

CULTURE AND CONVICTION. I understand that there are different expressions of Christianity in different cultures. Contextualization is essential for the growth and expansion of the church. But there is a difference between contextualization and compromise. Using goat's milk for communion in a culture that has never heard of wine or grapes is contextualization; sacrificing the goat is compromise. Having a Saturday night service because we have run out of room in all four Sunday services is contextualization; having a Saturday night service to accommodate and/or appease people who are “too busy” on Sunday is compromise. Peter and John did not change for the sake of their culture. They simply lived for Christ and preached the gospel. They did not adapt Christianity to the culture, nor did they seek to adapt the culture to Christianity. Their goal was to transform individuals by proclaiming the gospel and making disciples. They realized that there were two incongruent kingdoms at work in the world, and they did not fight that reality. Rather, they embraced it. I am not suggesting that believers completely withdraw from the culture. That would not be a biblical position. I am, however, suggesting that we be in the world but not of the world. The sad truth is that many of us live lives that have been so affected by our culture that we feel completely at home in a place that was not made for us and, quite honestly, does not welcome us. Many of us can't remember the last time our Christian convictions cost us something. Voddie Baucham *The Ever-loving Truth: Can Faith Survive in a Post-Christian Culture?*

REVERENTIAL FEAR OF GOD Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. —Psalm 33:8 When we come into this sweet relationship, we are beginning to learn astonished reverence, breathless adoration, awesome fascination, lofty admiration of the attributes of God and something of the breathless silence that we know when God is near. You may never have realized it before, but all of those elements in our perception and consciousness of the divine Presence add up to what the Bible calls “the fear of God.”... There are very few unqualified things in our lives, but I believe that the reverential fear of God mixed with love and fascination and astonishment and admiration and devotion is the most enjoyable state and the most purifying emotion the human soul can know. *Oh Lord, let me reach these heights in my worship today—astonished reverence, breathless adoration, awesome fascination, lofty admiration, breathless silence—let me experience that “reverential fear of God” this morning. Amen.* A. W. Tozer



NO COMPROMISE WITH SPURGEON

Near the end of his ministry, Spurgeon witnessed churches resorting to carnal means to attract crowds for evangelism. The pulpit was replaced with a stage and the sermon with amusement. With this worldly infiltration, biblical truth was diluted, and there was a severe loss of power in evangelistic preaching. Sensing the urgency, Spurgeon declared: “Everywhere there is apathy. Nobody cares whether that which is preached is true or false. A sermon is a sermon whatever the subject; only, the shorter it is the better.” But Spurgeon refused to cave in or compromise. He remained consumed with a singular passion for biblical truth. Though the day clamored for soothing thoughts, Spurgeon called for sharp-edged truths: “God is my witness—I have eschewed every idea of trying to be eloquent or oratorical in my preaching. I care nothing whatever about the gaudy show of speechmaking. I only want just to tell you these truths in unvarnished speech.” Though the gospel itself was being subverted, threatening the genuineness of conversions, Spurgeon held fast to the simple preaching of divine truth and witnessed countless new births. Steven J. Lawson *The Gospel Focus of Spurgeon*



ON BACKSLIDING

Just as sin is not made less awful or less offensive to God by its prevalence, so our shared bent to backsliding does not render that bent a trivial matter. God surely does promise that wherever he begins the good work of salvation, he will bring it to completion (Philippians 1:6). But this does not allow us to be passive and apathetic in the face of our backsliding tendencies. Thomas Vincent (1634–1678) warned that God preserves his people through their motives and their efforts to use the means of grace God provides. We must avail ourselves of the grace that God grants us. Furthermore, God’s preservation does not guarantee that we will avoid sad falls. Vincent warned his hearers: “Though God will not allow you totally to fall from grace if the good work is in truth begun in you, yet, without great heed, you may fall into great decay of grace; your graces may languish and so be ready to die (Revelation 3:2).”[13] What might that look like practically? Vincent continued, “You may fall foully into sin” so that you shame the name of Christ, wound your conscience, grieve the Spirit, hurt the church, interrupt your fellowship with God, lose your assurance of salvation, and fall under God’s discipline.[14] Frightful, yes, but all of it true. Joel Beeke, *Getting Back in the Race: The Cure for Backsliding*