

'A life of obedience is not only our duty but our comfort. The divine wisdom has so determined that whatever promotes His glory shall also advance the good of His people. Therefore as He has inseparably connected sin and misery, so He has holiness and happiness.' - A.W. Pink

"The Spirit is that tie whereby Christ lays hold on us, and ties us to himself. Faith is the tie whereby we lay hold on Christ, and apply him to ourselves." – William Ames

SPURGEON'S CATECHISM

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

47.Q. Which is the third commandment?

XLVII. A. The third commandment is, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain."

48.Q. What is required in the third commandment?

XLVIII.A. The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use of God's names (Ps. 29:2), titles, attributes (Rev. 15:3-4), ordinances (Eccl. 5:1), Word (Ps. 138:2), and works (Job 36:24; Deut. 28:58-59).

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Sunday Morning 11:00 AM

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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A SIMPLY PROFOUND PROFESSION

For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Acts 27:23

The substance of what Paul professed of his relationship to the Lord is the basis for peace and assurance in all who truly know the Lord. It erupted from Paul in the midst of the most trying of circumstances. Most Bible students are aware of the record of the shipwreck in this passage. The story has provided powerful lessons and material for many sermons. That which is profound is the simple description of the faith of the Apostle. Two brief statements (*Whose I am, and Whom I serve*) portrayed in Paul such calmness and assurance that the man who had started the journey as a prisoner was now giving orders and the heathens on board with their commanders were now obeying him.

The ship had set sail against Paul's advice and at this point the reasons for the advice were apparent. None on board had any hope that the ship could survive the storm. The lives of those on board were another matter. There were 276 souls and no doubt many were already convinced that they would not survive. Paul's was the only voice of hope. Of course, by following Paul's directions all survived without exception. Such is the case always with those the Lord determines to save. He loses none!

We read of other accounts of our Lord appearing to and reassuring Paul. In this one, however, the profession seemed spontaneous and is inserted along with the message of the Lord's intent for Paul. It had been the design of the Lord to bring Paul to Rome to appear before Caesar and the simple fact is he wasn't there yet and could never get there if he died in this

shipwreck. It was as if Paul were saying, I am going to Rome and you may go with me. We know that there was more than simple reason that settled on the occupants of the ship and their commanders. It would seem that in their minds Jupiter was not such a big god after all. Could it be that as they beheld the countenance of Paul they sensed that he was the only one on the ship who showed no fear? Were they astounded that he was able to lay out a plan with full conviction? Were they amazed when he prepared a meal and bid them to do also? Of course they did not know the words of the Psalmist who wrote: *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Psalms 23:5.*

The simple statement, "Whose I am..." brought to Paul's mind the fact that this was not about him. It was about the Lord's purpose for him. We never lose sight of the fact that the Lord's people are more than those that are on His side. They are His possessions. The Lord had invested much in Paul and the divine intent was not to be thwarted; it was rather being worked out in complete detail as planned. This which seemed to be uttered offhand was a fact that Paul had been in possession of since the Damascus Road. His first words, on being accosted, were "who art thou Lord?" There was immediate submission and the sense of belonging to the Lord only increased as he went along. This fact remained central to Paul as he contemplated this journey to end at Rome.

Paul clearly understood that which he had in common with all the Saints. He was the possession of God by divine choice made before the foundation of the World, and in that it was God's choice it could not fail to come to the designed end. He had been redeemed by the blood of Christ and he was fully aware of the awful price that was paid for his redemption. God will have that for which He has rendered payment. Paul knew that he had been regenerated by the Holy Spirit in such a way as to infallibly put the seal and superscription of Christ upon him and the life he would live before God. Furthermore, he knew that it had "pleased God" to separate him unto the Apostolic calling and office and that as such he was the ambassador of Christ wherever he was. "Whose I am..." was in the mind and heart of Paul an irrefutable fact for all eternity.

But, it is to be further understood that there was a sense in which the Apostle communicated a loving identity with the Lord and that he was delightfully constrained by the love of Christ. Alexander MacLaren wrote: "The divine ownership of us is only realized when we are consciously His, because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ." It was the ownership of Christ that

moved in Paul to confidently assert that the things before them would not stand in the way of the divine purpose. The second part of the profession could only follow. This was the life of the Apostle. The loving service rendered up to the Lord was validation of divine ownership. The confidence of the King to Daniel (as he was going to the Lion's den) was "Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee." Paul had, no doubt, been under observation and what they had seen produced confidence in the ability of his God.

The profession is simple but effective when claimed in the life of a true believer. I am His possession and His care for His own is perfect. It is a delightful fact to the believer travelling through this present evil world. It is a promise confirmed by His revelations to us and presence with us. It is a promise evidenced to us by our delight in serving. Serving God is not an obligation. It is rather an ongoing privilege and an exceeding great reward!

As we speak of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and as we extoll all the wonders of His person and the greatness of His salvation, may we be careful to add "Whose I am and Whom I serve!" *bhs*

Professions That Are Lacking

"I am afraid that there are a great many professing Christian people nowadays who never, all their lives, have said to any one, 'The God whose I am and whom I serve.' And I beseech you, dear brethren, suffer this word of exhortation. To say so is a far more effectual, or at least more powerful, means of appeal than any direct invitation to share in the blessings. You may easily offend a man by saying to him, 'Won't you be a Christian too?' But it is hard to offend if you simply say that you are a Christian. The statement of personal experience is more powerful by far than all argumentation or eloquence or pleading appeals. We do more when we say, 'That which we have tasted and felt and handled of the Word of Life, declare we unto you,' than by any other means." Alexander MacLaren

"As Grace led me to faith in the first place, so grace will keep me believing to the end. Faith, both in its origin and continuance is a gift of grace. – J. I. Packer

BLESSED ASSURANCE

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28

The Lord says, "I give unto them (that is, my sheep) eternal life;" not, "I will give them in the life to come; but I give it unto them now." We therefore read, "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life"--has it now, as a present, felt, and enjoyed possession. This life is given manifestly when Christ reveals himself to the soul; for eternal life is then received out of his fullness as an enjoyed possession. All, then, who have truly fled for refuge, to lay hold of the hope set before them, embrace in so doing eternal life. They live, as being manifestly in Christ, for he is "our life;" and as they embrace it in him they feel its sweet movements in their breast, in the joy it communicates, in the peace it imparts, in the prospects it opens, in the doubts it removes, in the fears it disperses.

Thus, in real religion, there is something, if I may so speak, tangible, something to be laid hold of; and this distinguishes a good hope through grace from every other hope which is delusive, enthusiastic, or visionary. Depend upon it, there is a reality in vital godliness, a possession for eternity, which, therefore, kills and deadens the living child of God to a perishing world, and the fading things of time and sense. Whenever we get a view of Christ, there is a view of eternal life in him; for he is the eternal Son of God, and when he makes himself known to the soul as such, he shows us that all our life is in him. The work that he accomplished is for eternity; he lives himself forever and ever; and those whom he has redeemed by his blood, justified by his righteousness, and sanctified by his grace, will live forever and ever in his glorious presence. It is the eternity of his love which stamps it with its main value and blessedness; for this life being eternal, secures not only perpetuity, but immutability, prevents it from any change in time as well as from any change in eternity, and secures it firm and stable to all the heirs of promise. As, then, they lay hold of eternal life in laying hold of him who is the life, and as the sweet movements of hope spring up in their breast, it opens before their eyes a vista of immortal joy. – J. C. Philpot



How You Must Fight for Holiness --John Piper

Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14)
There is a practical holiness without which we will not see the Lord. Many live as if this were not so. There are professing Christians who live such unholy lives that they will hear Jesus' dreadful words, "I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness" (Matthew 7:23). Paul says to professing believers, "If you live according to the flesh you will die" (Romans 8:13).
So there is a holiness without which no one will see the Lord. And learning to fight for holiness by faith in future grace is supremely important.
There is another way to pursue holiness that backfires and leads to death. The apostles warn us against serving God any other way than by faith in his enabling grace.
For example, Peter says, "Whoever serves, [let him do so] as one who serves by the strength that God supplies — in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 4:11). And Paul says, "I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me" (Romans 15:18; see also 1 Corinthians 15:10).
Moment by moment, grace arrives to enable us to do "every good work" that God appoints for us. "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8). The fight for good works is a fight to believe in this future grace.