

"Jesus Christ will appear again in glory, and, when he does so, the saints will appear with him, and their graces will appear illustrious; and the more they have been tried the more bright they will then appear. The trial will soon be over, but the glory, honor and praise will last to eternity. This should reconcile you to your present afflictions; they work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

- Matthew Henry, Commentary on 1 Peter 1:6

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

VI. Of the Freeness of Salvation

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial penitent, and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation

Isa. 55:1, Rev. 22:17, Rom. 16:25-26, Mark 1:15, Rom. 1:15-17, John 5:40, Matt.23:37, Rom.9:32, Pro. 1:24, Acts 13:46, John 3:19, Matt. 11:20, Luke 10:27, II Thess. 1:8

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

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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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INSPIRATION AND PROFITABILITY

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 2 Timothy 3:16

In much of professing Christendom the scriptures are essentially ignored. The doctrines, the issues, the commandments and the revelations of scripture are picked over as one might do with a plate of food. It reveals much as to approaching scripture in that those who embrace the whole of the Word of God are perhaps fewer now than ever. Cardinal doctrines of the Bible and critical issues of the Gospel are pushed aside in the interest of those things that might be adapted to a human way of thinking. It seems that the thoughts of many indicate that they are to have the final word as to what is truth and what is not and even to question whether truth exists. Where there is no absolute to which we may refer then each has a right to his own and this seems to be the new norm. Thus, the Scripture is often revised, diluted, rewritten and arbitrarily interpreted with the goal of making it more acceptable to the world. Some would say that the Scriptures, the preaching of the Gospel and the insistence on the absolute truth of God's Word is just too hard. That should come as no surprise to the true believer since the Bible is a Spiritual revelation from God. They reject His Son and no wonder that they either reject or corrupt His Word.

To the believer this text anchors all that he claims concerning the truth of God's Word. It is full of meaning and therefore full of authority. If the Bible is, as many believe, a random collection of writings that have been put

together under questionable circumstances, then it may be no more than a mere curiosity and taken lightly. If, however, it is as Paul writes here, divinely inspired then it is the ultimate authority for all that is to be believed and taught concerning Christ Jesus our Lord. Furthermore, it is to be understood as accurate and true in all that it reports. As the inspired Word of God, it is to be trusted, believed and followed. After all, our Lord declared that “they are they which testify of me.” We are not directed to the scriptures only on the advice of men. We are called to the message of the scriptures as though God Himself was speaking and after all, this is what divine inspiration means.

The words here rendered “given by inspiration of God” imply that they are “God breathed.” This is more than just saying that Paul and the others were impressed to put down some things they found interesting. Men often do this to the profit of others. The fact is that God moved in such a way as to cause these men to write what He had personally inspired within them. So, we understand that Holy men of Old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. And, so they wrote. If the Bible is the mere writing of men, then put it on the shelf and treat it as any other book. If it is “God Breathed” then fear for the Words contained therein. It is further implied that this inspiration is “verbal.” That is, they wrote the exact words in the original that God intended. We further believe them to be “plenary.” That is to say it is

complete. John, in the Book of Revelation warned of the danger of adding to or taking from the Word of that Book. We are inclined to believe that a precedent was declared there that applied to all the Books of the Bible. So, then it is from God, exactly as He said it and it is the complete message for all time.

If then, these things are true, what shall we say of trifling with the Word of God? We know that we do not have the original scriptures. We have translations. Even our beloved King James Version is a translation and translations are done by men. Yet, the essential message is there, and it has endured because Godly men and scholars have translated it and confirmed the truth of it. Its durability could only come from God. Many, who vehemently proclaim that they believe the Bible to be the Word of God and that it is divinely inspired, do not really believe that after all. They advance teachings that are not to be found in the Word of God. An example is invitations in which people are entreated to let God save them. There is neither mandate nor example anywhere mentioned. Thus, it is something added to the Word.

To fail to acknowledge those scriptures that teach the absolute sovereignty of God is in effect to take them out of the Word of God. They are often systematically ignored. Where is the declaration of Paul that he had not shunned to declare the “whole counsel of God?” How

dare any ever treat the Word of God with contempt, disdain or even indifference? It is to this Word, Breathed of God that we shall be called to account. This is not an optional account of God’s will. As Paul continued here, it is profitable for doctrine (we must be taught from it); for reproof (our errors are exposed); for correction (we are shown right paths) and for instruction in righteousness (we are disciplined in the fact and application of the righteousness of Christ). Christ alone is declared to be the “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

The purpose of God in giving us the scriptures is first and foremost the revelation of Himself. See *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1*. It is the revelation of the will of God to which we are directed to humbly submit. And, this profitability to us is seen in the grace of God conforming us to the image of Christ.

It is not merely the thought that these things are to be preached as disciplinary principles. It is rather that such are incorporated into the design of God for His people and their lives. Thus, all scripture is profitable for us now in that it aims us at the design of God for a people to be eternally in fellowship with Him. In this way joy is promoted now and guaranteed forever in that we shall be like Him. *bhs*

This is a revision of an article from 9/12/2010

The summons to grasp and affirm the sum of the Christian faith

The goal of pastoral instruction issues a summons that compels every Christian: “Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith.” What is “the faith”? The word πίστις (*pistis*), translated “faith” in this verse, occurs some 243 times in the New Testament. It most frequently depicts the grace of personal trust in God and Christ. For example, Paul speaks of: “testifying both to Jews and Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21). Sometimes, as in this text, it denotes the entire collection of verbal propositions about the things of God that Christ and the apostles taught and that true Christians confess. These two uses stand closely connected. Clearly Christ is the special focus and object of saving faith: “faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Saving faith has three essential elements: knowledge, assent, and trust.

It is knowing the story of Jesus, affirming that story to be true, and trusting, personally and exclusively, in the living Jesus of that story, for acceptance with God and deliverance from sin. This knowledge and assent consist in commitment to the set of apostolic assertions concerning the person, life, and work of Jesus of Nazareth. Saving faith involves not only knowing this body of apostolic doctrines, but also affirming that they are true. Thus, even when *pistis* primarily signifies the grace of saving faith, the body of Christian doctrine is always implicitly in view, because saving faith includes knowing and affirming that body of sound doctrine to be true. We use “faith” this way in our doctrinal statements and hymns. We call a compendium of our doctrines a confession “of faith.” When we entitle it, “the things most surely believed among us,” we recognize that our doctrines express the content of our faith. Similarly, we sing of allegiance to “the faith of our fathers.” Therefore, we shouldn’t balk at the idea that the biblical term for the body of sound doctrines is “the faith.”

--Greg Nichols in *Lectures in Systematic Theology: The Doctrine of God*

THE DRY ROT OF NONEXPECTATION

And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. —Acts 6:7 The church is afflicted by dry rot. This is best explained when the psychology of nonexpectation takes over and spiritual rigidity sets in, which is an inability to visualize anything better, a lack of desire for improvement. There are many who respond by arguing, “I know lots of evangelical churches that would like to grow, and they do their best to get the crowds in. They want to grow and have contests to make their Sunday school larger.” That is true, but they are trying to get people to come and share their rut. They want people to help them celebrate the rote and finally join in the rot. Because the Holy Spirit is not given a chance to work in our services, nobody is repenting, nobody is seeking God, nobody is spending a day in quiet waiting on God with open Bible seeking to mend his or her ways.... But more people for what? More people to come and repeat our dead services without feeling, without meaning, without wonder, without surprise? More people to join us in the bondage to the rote? For the most part, spiritual rigidity that cannot bend is too weak to know just how weak it is. *Lord, not more people, but more of You. Let me wait upon You, keep me faithful, send Your Holy Spirit. Amen.*

--Tozer, A.W.. *Tozer on Christian Leadership* (Kindle Locations 3898-3912). WingSpread Publishers. Kindle Edition.

Praise of God and genuine trust in Him go hand in hand. When we praise God we acknowledge how good and faithful He is and much else besides, and that is why we can trust Him so completely. Furthermore, wholehearted trust in God must include trusting Him when He doesn’t choose to reveal the reasons for His prohibitions or His manner of doing things. As man trusts God, without always understanding God’s ways, his fellowship with God grows deeper – and through that deeper fellowship, greater understanding develops (cf. Ps. 73:16, 17). --Derek Prime in *Created to Praise*