

By his secret watering the Spirit makes us fruitful to bring forth the buds of righteousness...For by the inspiration of his power he so breathes divine life into us that we are no longer actuated by ourselves, but are ruled by his action and prompting. Accordingly, whatever good things are in us are the fruits of his grace; and without him our gifts are darkness of mind and perversity of heart” – John Calvin, Institutes 3.1.3

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

XI. Of Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end: that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare, and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

John 8:31; I John 2:27-28; I John 3:9; I John 5:18; I John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt. 13:20-21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9; Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Ps.121:3; Ps. 91:11-12; Phil. 1:6; Phil. 2:13; Jude 24:25; Heb.1:14; II Kings 6:16; Heb. 13:5; I John 4:4

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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HARDER SAYINGS

When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. John 6:61-63

First, they murmured; then they left. John chapter six provides quite a narrative of drastic change in human attitudes toward Christ. It is evident that with the feeding of the five thousand the level of enthusiasm and the willingness to follow heightened greatly. In a day of little or no hope, they thought they had found a hero. But Jesus quickly dashed their hopes of a political kingdom in which He would continue to feed them after the manner they had just witnessed. He did so by exposing their motives. They had seen the miracles and were obviously fascinated. That was not enough to warrant their allegiance to Him. However, multiplying a meager amount of food into a feast for thousands struck a responsive chord. And so, they came.

The Gospel truths which our Lord would declare here were quickly rejected. The Apostle Paul made a simple declaration that puts this reaction into perspective. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14.* The things of our Lord are spiritual in their essence even when they are presented in a fleshly context. That is, all His earthly actions pointed to Spiritual truth. There is no bodily resurrection apart from a spiritual existence in Him. He would ultimately bring them to utter rejection of Him with such a declaration. He would ascend.

The issues with this group became the reason of their departure. Having challenged their motives in following Him He first directed that they should be laboring for things of enduring quality – the meat that is unto eternal life in Him. In saying this He declared Himself to be the source as the Son of Man. In typical fashion they challenged with the question of “working the works of God.” They had no way to relate to His answer: *Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. John 6:29.* Again, true to form, they wanted a sign and cited the manna in the wilderness under Moses. He pressed the fact that He was the Bread given by the Father. The evidence of a weakened attachment to Him began to appear.

Their doubts and resentments must have risen further as Jesus further pressed the necessity of a work of grace in salvation. First, He told them those coming to Him would never hunger or thirst. By now they understood that He was not talking of loaves and fishes. It was then that He made the oft-quoted statement that must have devastated their earthbound hopes: *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. John 6:37.* He clearly set two profound truths before them. First, that there existed then and for all time a people, having been given to Him, that would come to Him in the manner that He was describing to them. To

a people who were leaning to their own understanding and being fueled by their pride these words must have been devastating. Of course, their reaction is that registered by many down through the ages and even now. These coming would embrace Him as the Bread of Life and would joyfully submit to His Lordship and salvation. The second truth cemented the fact that it was not about their wills but was dependent on the keeping power of Christ. None those who truly come would ever be turned away. He would be to them as "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The fact that they were not comers to Him was further enforced by His declaration that none would come unless individually drawn by the Father (v. 44).

Jesus was not finished with pressing the necessity of a spiritual identity with Him. Many have either misunderstood or perverted the teachings concerning His flesh and blood. Such things are to be understood as characterization of the manner of our life with Him. It is to the perfect life lived in the flesh that we look in order to know the righteousness of God. It is to His suffering on the cross that we are pointed wherein we are made to understand with the songwriter, "The bleeding sacrifice on my behalf appears." Thus, it is the faith of God elect, living faith assured by the righteousness of Christ and His sacrifice that we enjoy life and that more abundantly.

Again, we are reminded that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. Their

response in John 6:60 was "This is an hard saying" and by their question as to "who can hear it" they did not believe that any could. He gave them something even harder to consider. What would they think if they saw Him ascend back to Heaven? By this, He plainly declared that He would do so. And referring to Himself as the Son of Man that it would be bodily. As we look to the resurrection and ascension of our Lord our hearts are rejoiced, and our hope confirmed. God given faith brings these realities to us. We are made to see here the effect on those dead in trespasses and sins. Not only do they not respond to such a wondrous prospect; they were angered by it.

One more word and He was done, and they were done with Him. In John 6:65 they were told that they could not come of themselves. It was the Father's discretion as to whether they came or not. From that many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. We are not told how many, but it seems the number was significant, and they never came back.

Of note is that fact that He posed a question to the twelve as to whether they might want to leave. But they fully embraced Him as having the words of eternal life. Revealing that it had been given to them by the Father and that they had been born again.

It is well that this message be faithfully declared in that by it men are cut off from fleshly hope and are shut up to the mercy of God in Christ. *bhs*

We call all people everywhere to repent and believe the gospel. But there is a universal rejection of the outward call of the gospel (1 Cor 1:23), because men love darkness, hate the light and will not come into the light (John 3:19). But to those who are called, the power of God unto salvation (1 Cor 1:24) So it depends not on man who wills or runs but on God who has mercy (Rom 9:16) Monergism

"The gospel will teach a man to feel sin and believe righteousness at the same time. Faith will carry heaven in one hand and hell in the other; showing one deserved and the other purchased." - John Owen

The essential point is not how sin relates to us but how our sin relates to God. Sin is treasonous to heaven and destructive to earth. Consider the sight that Isaiah had of God in His glory. In Isaiah 6:1-8 we are shown why most classify this passage as the main passage on the holiness of the triune God. Isaiah was the prophet of the holiness of God. What is the holiness of God? It means His majesty which transcends or goes beyond all else and it means that He is morally pure. There is no impurity with God yea, not even a shadow of it (Hab. 1:13). God's beauty lies in His holiness. God is Almighty, but He is more often referred to by the perfection of His holiness. God's holiness is the way He is distinguished from all other beings and when we see ourselves reflected in the mirror of His holiness we see ourselves as hopelessly undone and in need of grace.

--Dr. Ron Rumburg

From comment on Titus 2:1

I admire the Apostle's expression, when he calls the great, and distinguishing truths of the gospel, sound: meaning, what is firm to depend upon, in opposition to what is rotten, and deceitful. The doctrines of grace, by which Paul means, the electing love of God to his Church; redemption by Christ; justification by his blood, and righteousness; the regeneration of the Holy Ghost; and the final perseverance of the saints. These are sound, solid, substantial truths; founded in the promise of God, who cannot lie; and such as God will have his people taught, and established in. For to this purpose, the Lord himself hath confirmed the whole, by word and oath. --Robert Hawker

DO NOT BE LIKE FELIX

Felix was a Roman governor of Judaea. "He sent for Paul [the apostle] and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, 'Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you'" (Acts 24:24-25).

Are you like Felix?

Have you heard a gospel preacher speak about "the faith in Christ", but were not ready to trust in Him for the salvation of your soul?

Have you heard him speak about the "righteousness" God requires, and realized that you do not practice it?

Have you heard him speak about "self-control", and knew that your passions and lusts have control over you?

Have you heard him speak about "the judgment to come", and perceived that you are not ready for that day?

Have all these things made you "afraid" in your heart?

Have you procrastinated believing in Jesus Christ until a "convenient time"?

If you are like Felix, then know this also: Felix apparently never found a more convenient time to believe the gospel, and therefore perished forever in his sins.

Do not be like Felix!

– Daniel E. Parks