

God is God; you are but one of His creatures. Your only joy is to be found in obeying Him, your true fulfillment is to be found in worshipping Him, your only wisdom is to be found in trusting and knowing Him.

--Sinclair Ferguson

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

XIII. Of a Gospel Church

We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only scriptural officers are bishops or pastors and deacons whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

I Cor. 1:1-3; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; Acts 8:1; Acts 11:21-23; I Cor. 4:17; I Cor. 14:23; III John 9; I Tim. 3:5; Acts 2:41-42; II Cor. 8:5; Acts 2:47; I Cor. 5:12-13; I Cor. 11:2; II Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; I Cor. 11:23-24; Matt. 18:15-20; I Cor. 5:6; II Cor. 2:17; I Cor. 4:17; Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; John 15:12; I John 14:21; I Thess. 4:2; II John 6; Gal. 6:2; Eph. 4:7; I Cor. 14:12; Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; Acts 15:22; I Tim. 3; Titus 1

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsi@msn.com

Website: www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com

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

Volume 12, No. 18

May 5, 2019

OUR ADVOCATE

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:1-2

The idea of ongoing issues with sin is foreign to many professors of faith in Christ. They have been convinced that some initial actions or reactions in response to religious stimulations is enough to relieve them of any further concern. Yet, Scripture reveals sin to true believers in such a way as to warrant continuing repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

The love of John for those to whom he wrote is evident in using such terms as “my little children.” These would be those in whom he had a vested interest no doubt having been the instrument God used to bring them to faith in Christ. There is no word of harshness or condemnation here. He senses that they are aware of sin in their lives and would rather bring them to the means of addressing it and the assurance needed where they have been moved to repentance. There is no place provided for presumption on the grace of God. These are rather words of consolation for those grieving over sin. Thus, he would lovingly direct them, and us, to the means of approach to God and the assurance of One who would be there for them. Little children facing an unknown situation will often plead with someone to go with them. We, as His dear children, have an Advocate to go with us.

John taught that sin was not to be tolerated and that *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and*

he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 1 John 3:9. Two things are evident here. One that the practice of sin is no longer the way of life for one born again of the Spirit of God. The second is that being born of incorruptible seed, that new creation in us cannot sin. For this reason, there is a sensitivity to sin in a believer that others cannot know. When that sensitivity is aroused in us it must be addressed and we have no means other than Christ to do so.

Often, chapter divisions result in missing important connections. This could occur here. The last three verses of chapter one of this epistle lead to the matter addressed in the text. To say that we have no sin is to be deceived (v. 1:8). Confessing our sins leads to an end desired by both the petitioner and the Lord (v. 1:9). To claim that we have not sinned is to call God a liar and confirms an unregenerate heart (v. 1:10). In our text we are given the grounds whereby we may be assured of being forgiven.

Noting then the inevitable presence of sin and the required response in us, John supplies the word of consolation. Why consolation? It is because sin appears as such a grievous matter to believers and even more so in them. Having a consciousness of sin and the presence of our Holy Father, feelings of condemnation appear. Forgiveness is sought and found in Christ our Lord: *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: Acts 13:38.* He

advocates for us.

The same word used here for “advocate” is translated “comforter” in referring to the Holy Spirit (John 16:7). Thus, we have the One who comes along side to help present with us in the world and the One who comes along side in Heaven. *For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Hebrews 9:24.*

In secular situations we are aware of the right of the accused in this country to an attorney. At times one will foolishly opt to defend themselves. It is unlikely that they have either sufficient knowledge of the law or of the required manner of proceedings to function well. The believer is bidden to avail Himself of the most qualified of advocates. Christ is here depicted as our legal defense in the matter of our sin. It is He who well knows that divine justice is unbending and must be fully satisfied to obtain an acquittal. His understanding of it all is perfect and it was with that knowledge that He answered to it at Calvary. So, it was that He offered the perfect sacrifice, that which covered all that could ever come against one of His own, and left justice without a complaint. Not only was justice satisfied, but the accusations of our adversary are met and rebuffed at every turn. *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the*

kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. Revelation 12:10.

Jesus Christ in the presence of the Father is the answer to the prayer of Job: *Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both. Job 9:33.* Peter received a preview of that hope after rebuking Christ and hearing this: *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. Luke 22:32.* And now, we who hate sin are reassured in knowing that, *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:25.*

It is armed with this assurance that we plead with David of old: *Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word. Psalms 119:154.* It is a most wonderful vision that we have of our Blessed Lord given us as we read, *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Romans 8:34.*

Again, with David we are made to lift up our hearts in wonder and ask, *What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? Psalms 116:12.* Be reminded that John’s words were first, “that ye sin not.” *bhs*

Robert Hawker On 1 John 2:1-2

Reader! what a blessed subject is here? Oh! what confidence might the faith of it produce, if grace was always in lively exercise, to come with it before God? Who would ever feel deadness, fears, doubts, misgivings, or even heart-straitenings in prayer, if he beheld the throne of grace, the pardon office, the mercy-seat of the Lord, thus encircled with mercy; Jesus, both the Propitiation for sin, and the Advocate for the cause of his people? What shall stop or silence the plea of Jesus Christ the righteous, with the righteous Father? This was our Lord’s own plea, when upon earth. O righteous Father! Joh 17:25. And it is his people’s plea, taught by him, and offered up in him, now he is in heaven. And there is a great degree of blessedness in it, when rightly considered. For, when we thus plead, we plead upon the right and footing of God’s justice. When we look

up to God, simply as we are in ourselves; we can only look up for pardon and grace, as helpless sinners. But, when we look up in the interest of Christ, from an union with Christ; we then plead on the score of justice. And hence, upon this account it was, that Paul called the crown, which he knew was laid up for him, a crown of righteousness; because it was the just earnings of Christ's blood and righteousness. And Paul declared, that when it was given to him, it would be by the righteous Judge; 2Ti 4:8. Reader! what know you of these things? Are you so looking to the throne? Can you hear the awful threatenings of God's holy law against sins; and yet look undismayed, under the consciousness of a broken law, to the Lord's righteous judgment against every single breach of it, because you behold the whole law fulfilled, in the Person of your Almighty Surety, and know your security in Him? If so, then will you enter into a blessed personal enjoyment of this sweet scripture, in stedfastly beholding and resting upon him, who is your Advocate, and with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and who is the propitiation for your sins!

All true believers abide in Christ in a sense; but there is a higher meaning, and this we must know before we can gain unlimited power at the throne. "Ask what ye will" is for Enochs who walk with God, for Johns who lie in the Lord's bosom, for those whose union with Christ leads to constant communion. The heart must remain in love, the mind must be rooted in faith, the hope must be cemented to the Word, the whole man must be joined unto the Lord, or else it would be dangerous to trust us with power in prayer. The carte blanche can only be given to one whose very life is, "Not I, but Christ liveth in me." O you who break your fellowship, what power you lose! If you would be mighty in your pleadings, the Lord Himself must abide in you, and you in Him.

--Spurgeon

Proverb 13:18

Poverty and shame will come to him who disdains correction,
But he who regards a rebuke will be honored.

Poverty and shame will come to him who disdains correction, – This proverb reinforces what is said in 5:7-13 regarding the man who disregards warnings against staying away from immoral women – especially the immoral woman of apostate religion (Revelation 17:1-5). They who disdain correction from the gospel will at the end be the most poverty-stricken and shameful of all. They will have no wedding garment at the final day, and be shamefully speechless as to why not, and cast into outer darkness with contempt (Matthew 22:11-13).

But he who regards a rebuke will be honored. – This proverb is generally true in the physical realm. But it is always and certainly true in the spiritual realm. He who is chastened by God is honored in the present life to know God treats Him as a son whom He loves, and in the next life with the perfect peaceable fruit of righteousness (Hebrew 12:5-11). He who in this life humbles himself under the correcting hand of God will by that same hand afterward be exalted (1 Peter 5:6). – Daniel Parks