

"Keep your heart as you would keep a garden. Your heart is a garden (Song of Solomon 4:12); weed all sin out of your heart. Among the flowers of the heart, weeds will be growing: the weeds of pride, malice, and worldliness; these grow without planting and cultivating. Therefore, be weeding your heart daily by prayer, examination, and repentance. -- Thomas Watson

The Baptist Catechism

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813 *(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)*

56. Q. What is forbidden in the second commandment?

A. The second commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images (Deut. 4:15-19; Ex. 32:5, 8), or any other way not appointed in his word (Deut. 7:31, 32).

57. Q. What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?

A. The reasons annexed to the second commandment are, God's sovereignty over us (Ps. 45:2, 3, 6), his propriety in us (Ps. 45:11), and the zeal he hath to his own worship (Ex. 34:13, 14).

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 14, No. 21

May 23, 2021

APOSTOLIC JOY FULFILLED

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. (Philippians 2:1-2).

After having encouraged steadfastness in the faith regarding things that oppose, Paul moves to the manifestation of the grace of God in fellowship among true believers. Where there is spiritual unity there is consistency in the expressions of the teaching and grace of our Lord. Such unity was stated as an objective of Christ during His earthly ministry and is often expressed as the desire of the inspired writers of the New Testament. There are expressions of unity that bind people together in organizations (even churches) that are not based in the truth expressed here. The ties that bind such groups are things that find their origins in the concepts and pride of men and not after the example of Christ. Their focus is on such things as social standing, a pet doctrine, denominationalism, or any other thing held in common. True and lasting unity occurs when the encouragement and consolation in Christ is expressed in our relationship with each other in the church.

Paul here states four objectives as the object of the “therefore” of verse one. They are likemindedness, mutual love, being in true harmony, and in agreement in truth. He begins by stating four spiritual influences that would direct to that end. They are consolation in Christ, comfort to be found in the love of Christ, the fellowship of the Spirit, and the experience and expression of true compassion.

The antecedent of the “therefore is found in the previous chapter: *Only let your conversation*

be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; (Philippians 1:27). It is with the words of our text that Paul specifies both the means and the end of that which would truly fulfill his joy.

It has been my experience that some of my most agonizing times have been where there was discord among the brethren. There are many things that may divide; there is only one means of unity and that is when the focus of all is upon Christ alone. I have grown to treasure seeing harmony around our Lord as one of the greatest of validations of our Lord’s presence in the fellowship. *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! (Psalms 133:1).*

The words “if there be” assumes that these things are true and will be effectual in bringing about the desired end in the church. The word consolation may also be translated as encouragement. It has the meaning of coming alongside to help. This Jesus promised concerning the Spirit. This He often communicated to the Apostles along the way, and it became the experience of Paul. Now he would encourage others. There is unity to be known among those receiving such consolation.

The loving comfort of Christ is precious experienced as an active component of our

Lord's assurances to His people. John MacArthur wrote: "The Greek word translated 'comfort' portrays the Lord coming close and whispering words of gentle cheer or tender counsel in a believer's ear." As we become aware of the loving overtures of our Lord toward us, we are given incentive to love each other – giving the same consideration as our Lord has given us. This is not mere sentimentality; it is rather of purpose as revealed in Christ. His love was specifically directed and so should be ours. Our Lord presented us with the most exacting standard for loving each other. *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. (John 13:34).* As we reflect on what manner of persons we were and confess that we are most undeserving, it was in that state that He loved us. When we consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners and who suffered the wrath of God in our stead we are taken to the heights of true love in Christ. We are directed to act toward each other in the same way.

In 2 Corinthians 13:14 we are directed to the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. That speaks of sweet fellowship with the Spirit; it speaks of joint participation and interaction with Him. This is the same Spirit that inhabits the fellowship of the saints. The interaction of the saints is patterned after that of the Godhead. He, the Holy Spirit, directs us into a patient waiting for Christ in the community of the saints and He sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts.

And we are fully aware of the compassion shown us of God. In Romans 12:1 Paul expresses

the idea of acting in view of God's mercy toward us. How could we act otherwise toward any other? The expression "bowels and mercy" speaks to us of that which is most deeply felt.

Again, we note that Paul assumes these things to be true. To be likeminded would be in claiming that "we have the mind of Christ" and see v. 5. We would be of same mind toward the Lordship of Christ and all that pertains to life and Godliness. We will have the same love toward others in the body of Christ. MacArthur adds, "not because they are all equally attractive, but by showing the same kind of sacrificial, loving service to all that was shown to them by Christ." To be of one accord is to be united in spirit and united in harmony having the same desires and aims. To be of one mind is to be intent on one purpose. It may be better said that they are focused fully on one person and that is Christ Jesus our Lord.

Where these things are in evidence, Christ is declared and exalted in word and deed. Our Lord prayed for just such an outcome: *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. (John 17:21).* John rejoiced at hearing of those in such a way of fellowship: *I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. (2 John 1:4).* We further note: *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (John 13:35).* Paul's joy would be made complete and so would that of any pastor at seeing such unity in Christ among his people. *bhs*

The Lord is the first, and we are his reflection. He is sound and we are echo. He is king and we are servants. We are image, not original—which means we can only understand what it is to be "human" after we have looked at God. —Matt Fuller

HELPERS IN CHURCHES

I heard of a man of self-acclaimed ministerial qualities offering his services to a church in order to “be a help” to them. His offer was wisely declined.

I know of another man who relocated a few hundred miles in order to join a church and “be a help” to her pastor. Instead of being a help, he opposed the pastor and split the church, then relocated to another state.

Brothers and sisters, beware of people who look for a church that they think needs them. For Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, is quite capable of meeting the needs of His churches without their help.

If you desire to find a church, look for one that will be a help to you.

And when you have found such a church, be a helper in it, not a disturber of it.

Be like Phoebe, “a servant of the church in Cenchrea [in Corinth]” (Romans 16:1). She did not join that church in order to “be a help” to it. However, while in that church, “she has been a helper of many” (v.2). – Daniel E. Parks

We must remember above all that salvation is a sovereign work of God. Biblically it is defined by what it produces, not by what one does to get it. “We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). As a part of His saving work, God will produce repentance, faith, sanctification, yieldedness, obedience, and ultimately glorification. Since He is not dependent on human effort in producing those elements, an experience that lacks any of them cannot be the saving work of God. Those who are truly born of God have a faith that cannot fail to overcome the world (1 John 5:4). We may sin (1 John 2:1)—we will sin—but the process of sanctification can never stall completely. God is at work in us (Phil. 2:13), and He will continue to perfect us until the day of Christ (Phil. 1:6; 1 Thess. 5:23–24).

–John MacArthur, *Only Jesus: What it Really Means to be Saved*

God is the God of revival and He will revive us again. God is a God of power and He will find a willing people in the day of His power. The inspiration of the great confidence! Desire is one thing, confident anticipation that the desire will be fulfilled is quite another thing. And I want to point out that the two go together. This is just another way of saying “according to your faith be it unto you.” I am afraid many of us have our expectations fainter than desire. We pray for strength, we pray for holiness, we pray for revival, and nothing seems to happen. Why? For the simple reason that we do not expect it to happen. Why did the widow send for the prophet? Because she expected the miracle to happen. [2 Kings 4:1–7]. –Duncan Campbell, *The Price and Power of Revival*

Along with reading the Bible, we also need to study it. Bible reading gives us breadth, but Bible study gives us depth. –Jerry Bridges

Aim at Heaven and you will get earth ‘thrown in’: aim at earth and you will get neither.

–C. S. Lewis