

Faith stands or falls on the truth that the future with God is more satisfying than the one promised by sin. Where this truth is embraced and God is cherished above all, the power of sin is broken. —John Piper

Perfect love is perfect self-forgetfulness. Hence where there is love in a home, unselfishness is the law. Each forgets self and lives for others. —J.R. Miller

The Baptist Catechism (Keach's Catechism)

1677

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

Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A. Christ's humiliation consisted in His being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross, in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

(Luke 2:7; Gal. 4:4; Is. 53:3; Luke 22:44; Matt. 27:46; Phil. 2:8; Matt. 12:40; Mark 15:45-46)

Q. 32. Wherein consists Christ's exaltation?

A. Christ's exaltation consists in His rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

(1 Cor. 15:4; Acts 1:11; Mark 16:19; Acts 17:31)

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branhsj@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

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CALLED UNTO LIBERTY

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (Galatians 5:13-14)

The Apostle often referred to the calling of the Lord's people. To the Romans, he reminded them that they were the called of Jesus Christ. He further declared that they were called to be saints. This he wrote as well to the Corinthians. Literally they were called to be holy ones. Also, to the Corinthians he wrote that they were called unto the fellowship of "His Son Jesus Christ." Paul wrote the Thessalonians as a matter of reassurance that they were called to "His Kingdom and glory." To Timothy he reached back into the source of it all and referenced that ours is a "holy calling."

Peter declared that He has called us "out of darkness into His marvelous light." Is it any wonder that Peter exhorted us to "make your calling and election sure?" The work of the flesh would be to distract our attention away from these things to which we are called, and we do well to give diligence in confirming the truth of these things in us.

Paul declares to the Galatians that they have been "called unto liberty." The Apostle's language at times seems harsh. That, of course, is due to the urgency of the matter at hand. They were surrendering to a form of bondage that was so very contrary to the liberty that they had known, and that Paul had preached to them. At this point in the epistle many powerful points had been made to persuade them of their error. In this fifth chapter his tone changes

somewhat and he strongly argues the need to embrace the liberty to which they had been called. He begins the chapter with, *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Galatians 5:1)*. He had expressed in the previous chapter the desire that the evidence of Christ in them be fully realized saying, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you..." It is now that he tenderly addresses them as brethren. Here he reaches back to all that has been said and looks rather to a fresh aspect of the matter of liberty. He deals with the matter of abuse and then shows a more excellent way.

We note here that since this is a matter of calling it is something to be acted upon. That is, we are to be exercised in the matter of exhibiting that liberty. Certainly, this is not in the way of license. In Romans 6, Paul twice addresses the matter of sin in the life of believers. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? His response to such anticipated questions is a resounding "God forbid." The fact is that liberty is there declared in saying, "sin shall not have dominion over you." Kenneth Wuest wrote that, "In Galatians he shows that the believer has come out from under whatever control divine law had over him, and in salvation has been placed under a

superior control, that of the indwelling Holy Spirit who exercises a stricter supervision over the believer than law ever did over the unbeliever, whose restraining power is far more effective than the law's restraining power ever was, and who gives the believer both desire and power to refuse the wrong and choose the right, a thing which the law was never able to do. The believer therefore has passed out of one control into another, from the control of a mere system of legal enactments into the control of a Person, God the Holy Spirit." The Spirit needs no help from the legalists who would impose law on top of grace. There are many who talk of grace but practice various forms of legal restraints so undermining the practice of liberty.

So, we are warned that we do not use this newfound liberty wherein we are free to serve as a basis for sin. William Hendriksen wrote of this that, "The Christian religion resembles a narrow bridge over a place where two polluted streams meet: one is called legalism, the other libertinism. The believer must not lose his balance, lest he tumble into the refined faults of Judaism on the one side, or the gross vices of paganism on the other. He must tread the safe and narrow path. Whether fashionable or coarse, both kinds of evils are products of "the flesh," that is of sinful human nature." While many think of evil only in the way of violations of the moral law, we note that many unbelievers are offended by the same things. But here Paul is addressing the matters of self-righteousness, arrogance, and elitism. Connecting this text with verse 8, "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you," we more fully understand the meaning of the

word "for" in that it strongly contrasts this freedom we have in Christ.

It is rather that we have been given the liberty to "by love serve one another." Many argue the case for freedom of the will. I would assert that man is free only within the confines of his nature. We have been called to such liberty in the confines of a new nature graciously imparted to us in the wonderful work of regeneration. We are reminded of all those fleshly tendencies and that we are free from any constraints in the expression of the love of the brethren. The word serve here is the same word that is elsewhere translated as slave or bondslave. It is ironic that we should think ourselves to be free to be a slave of others. Yet, this is the example given us by our Lord. He took on Himself the form of a servant. In this liberty to which we are called, we are free to be selfless.

So, it is that we have the freedom to act in accordance with all that is set before us in the great love chapter, I Corinthians 13. We are at liberty to give ourselves over to the true worship of God in Christ. Wuest expressed it in this way, "The Galatian Christians were rescued from the slavery which legalism imposed, and brought into a new servitude, that of a loving, glad, and willing service to God and man which annihilates self and subordinates all selfish desires to love. This is the secret of victory over the totally depraved nature whose power over the believer was broken when God saved him..."

Indeed, we are called unto liberty and fully enabled to act freely in all that pertains to life and Godliness. O that we might see and rejoice in our calling. *bhs*

It is because we have such shallow views of God's love—that we have such defective views of God's dealings.
We blindly interpret His providential dealings—because we so imperfectly read the engravings of His heart!

--Octavius Winslow

Saving Faith Loves Forgiveness

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

Saving faith is not merely believing that you are forgiven. Saving faith looks at the horror of sin, and then looks at the holiness of God, and apprehends spiritually that God's forgiveness is unspeakably glorious, beautiful. We don't just receive it; we admire it. We are satisfied with our new friendship with such a great, forgiving God.

Faith in God's forgiveness does not merely mean a persuasion that I am off the hook. It means savoring the truth that a forgiving God is the most precious reality in the universe. Saving faith cherishes being forgiven by God, and from there rises to cherishing the God who forgives — and all that he is for us in Jesus. This experience has a tremendous effect on our becoming forgiving people.

The great act of purchasing our forgiveness is past — the cross of Christ. By this backward look, we learn of the grace in which we will ever stand (Romans 5:2). We learn that we are now, and always will be, loved and accepted. We learn that the living God is a forgiving God.

But the great act of experiencing our forgiveness goes on forever into the future. Our joyful fellowship with the great God who forgives lasts forever. Therefore, freedom for forgiveness, flowing from this all-satisfying fellowship with the forgiving God, lasts as long as we do.

I have learned that it is possible to go on holding a grudge if your faith simply means you have looked back to the cross and concluded that you are off the hook. That's why I have been forced to go deeper into what true faith is — not just a relief that I'm off the hook, but also a profound satisfaction with all that God is for me in Jesus. This faith looks back not merely to discover that we are off the hook, but also to see and savor the kind of God who offers us a future of endless reconciled tomorrows in fellowship with him. Satisfied fellowship with such a forgiving God is crucial for our being forgiving people. —John Piper

DIFFERENT COMMISSIONS

The Lord Jesus Christ commissioned His ministers to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:15).

Therefore, if you desire the salvation of your soul, to learn of Jesus Christ and follow Him in baptism and discipleship, hear and heed His ministers.

Jesus Christ did not commission His ministers to amuse people, enslave them under the law, bind them with regulations, politicize and moralize them, prophesy the future, argue religious issues.

The commission to do such things comes from someone else.

— Daniel E. Parks