

When we have sorrow or suffering, our question should not be, “What have I done that God is punishing me for?” but, “What is the mission of this messenger of God to me?” —J.R. Miller

We think of suffering or feebleness as a misfortune. It is not altogether so, however, if it makes us dearer and brings us nearer to the heart of Christ. —J.R. Miller

The New Hampshire Confession of Faith
By J. Newton Brown 1833

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

X. Of Sanctification

We believe that sanctification is the process by which according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means especially

the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer. I

Thess. 4:3; I Thess. 5:23; II Cor. 7:1; II Cor. 13:10; Phil. 3:12-16; I John 2:29; Rom. 8:5; Eph. 1:4; Pro. 4:18; II Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; II Peter 1:5-8; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14; Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 3:18; II Cor. 13:5; Luke 11:35; Luke 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph.6:18; Eph.4:30

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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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WE WOULD SEE JESUS

And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus (John 12:20-21)

It has been more years than I can remember that I stepped into a pulpit only to be stopped by the words on a plaque carefully fastened to it. It simply read “Sir, we would see Jesus.” The impact was profound. That congregation did not want to hear about me, or to be entertained with humorous stories with no point. They wanted to hear the Gospel. They wanted Christ to be at the center of all that was said. I have never forgotten the impact those words had on me. It may not have expressed the desire of those Greeks who desired to see Jesus, but it was nevertheless an expression of desire to experience the preeminence of Christ in the message. I remember being made the more careful that I stayed true to the Word of God. I have never forgotten that experience and its lesson remains with me to this day.

My earliest remembrances of reading this passage left me with some questions. I wondered why Greeks would appear at the time of the Jewish Passover. But then, the way they registered their inquiry was unusual. Why did they not simply look until they found Jesus for themselves. Further reflection indicated that they may have sensed that Philip was one of those following Jesus. When Philip and Andrew presented the request of these men it appears that Jesus did not grant it at that time. He rather launched into a further discourse with an illustration of what must soon come to pass.

Who were these Greeks? Some have thought they were Greek speaking Jews. Others have suggested that they were proselytes to the thought of one God rather than the many the Gentiles worshiped. Or they were mere Gentiles who were permitted to worship in the court of the Gentiles. In any event, they were drawn to this man of whom they had evidently heard. They would have heard of miracles and especially of the raising of Lazarus. They may have heard or may even have witnessed the strange entrance into Jerusalem. They would not have missed the fact that one with such accolades being afforded Him was riding on an ass colt. Nor would they have missed the adoration of those who worshiped as He entered. So, it was that they had a real desire to see Him. It was not mere curiosity as had been the case with many. Even Herod wanted to see Him at His trial hoping that he might be entertained with a miracle. Not so with these men. They desired to see Jesus. They wanted to be introduced and to interview Him. It would seem that there was compulsion to come into His presence and to converse with Him. A little later in the chapter Jesus declared, *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. (John 12:32).*

Jesus answered Philip and Andrew with the announcement that “The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified.” It must have

seemed strange to them at the time. It would become clear to them in the near future. Even as we understand the illustration of the corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying as looking to His own death and resurrection and having due application to all who die to self and are raised to walk in the newness of life. In verse 27, we read that His soul was troubled, further amplifying the effect that the approach of these Greeks had on Him. While there is no record that He spoke to these Greeks at that time, they did hear the thundering of the promise being given Him by the Father. They came seeking Him and none of those who do so are turned away (John 6:37).

We would explore further the actions of these men and the subsequent action of Philip and Andrew. They certainly would have been puzzled by the fact that Greeks were requesting to be brought to Jesus. After all, they had been brought up in strict Jewish culture that despised Gentiles. But they did not react as Peter might have acted. How often have believers been guilty of seeking to qualify some and reject sharing the Gospel with them? Something lead these men to seek out Philip. The fact is they were drawn to seek out Jesus and they believed that Philip could assist them to attain their desire.

How are any brought to Christ? We are quickly reminded of the earlier words of our Lord: *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (John 6:44)*. These men had heard of Jesus. Again, we are reminded of:

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? (Romans 10:13-14). Was it the aim of Philip and Andrew to bring these men to Jesus? On this we are unclear, but they did need to consult Him. What if we were approached in the same way? Are we being asked about our hope that is in Christ? *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: (1 Peter 3:15)*. I have heard many say, "I just wouldn't know what to say." *I am reminded of the words of the Psalmist: Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. (Psalms 66:16)*.

Philip and Andrew sought counsel of Jesus. So, should we. O that our lives were so ordered that we might be asked for an introduction to Jesus because they see Him in us. We would endeavor to tell them of His death, burial, and resurrection as a substitute for us and for all who will call upon His name. We would show them that He is the only way of acceptance with God. We would tell them that He was made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God. We could introduce Him as our Friend, as our loving Lord, as our Redeemer, and our King. We would tell them as Paul did the Jailor: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." O that we might live with the burden that in us men would see Jesus. *bhs*

Homemaker

Jesus had been the disciples' Counselor. Now that role would be continued by the Spirit. But earlier in

the evening, as John remembered, Jesus had also described Himself as a Homemaker for the disciples. If a wife and mother who is not employed outside the home fills in a form that has a line for "Occupation," she writes "Homemaker." It is a much happier description than the now old-fashioned "Housewife." That

described a location (“house”) and a relationship (“wife”). But it did not in itself describe what a person did, her occupation. “Homemaker” does. It describes someone who, in a hundred different ways, is occupied as the person who transforms a house into a home and the person who creates the family atmosphere. Now, think of a situation—after a church service, for example—when a mother says to the rest of the family, “We have guests coming; I will go home just now, before the rest of you, to get everything ready for them.” That is the role Jesus tells the disciples He will fulfill for them! He is their Homemaker: “In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?” (John 14:2). The disciples believe that Jesus is leaving far too early! But Jesus teaches them the reason for His departure: He is going to be their Homemaker in heaven. We can well understand if the disciples thought that this was all very well for the there-and-then; but what about the here-and-now? But Jesus gives them good news: the Spirit will come to be their Homemaker here and now to get them ready for there and then!

—Sinclair Ferguson, *Lessons from the Upper Room*

True faith is connected with repentance of sin. If we are not turned from sin to God, if sin is not made bitter to us, if it does not appear hateful, if our hearts are not penetrated with sorrow, grief, and self-abhorrence on account of it—in vain do we imagine ourselves to be believers in Jesus! Looking unto him whom we have pierced, is accompanied with mourning and bitterness of soul. That faith which leaves the heart impenitent, is not saving; for repentance is absolutely necessary to salvation. Our blessed Redeemer said to a certain woman in the gospel, “Your faith has saved you, go in peace.” But what was the attendant of the faith she possessed? Was it not penitence? She wept at the feet of Jesus, she washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. She remembered her own evil ways, and her sins—and loathed herself in her own sight! Repentance and faith are inseparably united; the one never exists in the mind of a sinner without the other. If we have ever beheld Jesus with sincere delight, as a Savior from sin—we shall mourn heartily that ever we sinned against him. We cannot but repent of sin—while we look for the forgiveness of it, through his astonishing love in dying for us, that so he might deliver us from eternal destruction. Repentance is justly said by some, to be the tear of love dropping from the eye of faith.

—John Fawcett, *Christ Precious to Those Who Believe*

...a prayerless person is ungrateful because he does not thank God, self-righteous because he does not confess his sins to God, self-centered because he does not ask God to bless other people, presumptuous because he does not pray even for his daily needs, irreverent because he does not praise God nor pray for His kingdom to come, and unfriendly to God because his prayerlessness evidences that he does not enjoy being with God. -- Greg Nichols, cited by Joel Beeke