

God uses sinners so that he will get the glory and so that he will get the glory in the vivid, repeating imagery of turning ashes to beauty. —Jared C. Wilson

Spurgeon's Catechism
Compiled by Charles Haddon Spurgeon
[1834 -1892]

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

23.Q. How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?

A. Christ executes the office of a prophet, in revealing to us (Jn. 1:18), by his Word (Jn. 20:31), and Spirit (Jn. 14:26), the will of God for our salvation.

24.Q. How does Christ execute the office of a priest?

A. Christ executes the office of a priest, in his once offering up himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice (Heb. 9:28), and to reconcile us to God (Heb. 2:17), and in making continual intercession for us (Heb. 7:25).

25.Q. How does Christ execute the office of a king?

A. Christ executes the office of a king in subduing us to himself, (Ps. 110:3) in ruling and defending us (Matt. 2:6; 1 Cor. 15:25), and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

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 16, No. 27

July 2, 2023

NO LAW HERE

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. (Galatians 5:22-24).

To say that there is no law would be to err greatly. Paul did not hesitate to declare to Timothy that the Law is good if it is used lawfully. Paul acknowledged to the Romans that the Law is spiritual. Even here in this epistle Paul declared the value of the Law as being “our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith.” It is through the Law that sin is defined for us. In the same sense that the just demands of a Holy God were codified in the giving of the commandments, we have our own sin called out to us and revealed with killing effect. Paul wrote, *But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. (Romans 7:8-10).* There is a similar discovery made in the God-consciousness of all who come to Christ. They are awakened to two facts. First, they are found to be lacking in anything that would recommend them to the favor of God. Then, they are made to see that the Law has no ability to save them. So, it is not that the Law has ceased to exist; rather it is of no effect where the fruit of the Spirit is fully functional and thus, we are encouraged to crucify the flesh.

The fruit of the Spirit is well-defined both to us and in us. It only follows that our lives would

manifest the evidence of such to ourselves and to others. It is folly to claim that you have something without being able to produce it. But then, such is the case with many who are led to an empty profession with no evidence as is clearly defined here. That one should experience regeneration and remain essentially unchanged is patently inconsistent with the claims of grace. Yet, many persist in their claim to salvation in the absence of these things and essentially are unaffected by the Law as they were before. By virtue of the work of the Spirit full identity with Christ is sought after by all true believers and that is seen in them in both word and deed. The first evidence of salvation is made visible to us and that is followed by this being made visible in us as we act to crucify the flesh.

Where the fruit of the Spirit is fully functional there will be nothing the Law might condemn. Paul wrote to the Corinthians that, *Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (2 Corinthians 3:17).* The meaning of liberty is that one can do as he pleases. The Galatians were returning to the same bondage they had known when they were in bondage to sin. That is, they had endeavored to keep the Law in the absence of any ability to do so. They were then the servants of sin. They were exhorted at the beginning of this chapter to, *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). This would have included being subject to ordinances and such as had been fulfilled in Christ. They were being directed away from the grace of God and the faith of God's elect.

Some might contend that apart from a servile obedience to the law that there would be license. But Paul had warned earlier that they "use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love to serve one another." Further, there is the contention by many that the Law is necessary to kill, and that the Gospel makes alive. While it seems that there is an element of truth in this, as we look to Christ, we see Him who knew no sin made sin for us. In the previous chapter we read that He was both "made of a woman, made under the Law." Thus, perfect obedience made Him the perfect sacrifice and taking our sins on Him subjected Him to the full condemnation of the Law. Certainly, when sin occurs in our lives the Law reminds us of its existence. But our lives receive full direction as we look to Christ.

Those who are Christ's, those who have truly been born again, they who have fully embrace Him as Lord and Savior have recognized the futility of looking to the flesh. In fact, they have crucified the flesh and all that pertains to it – the affections and lusts. This is not a reference to all the elect; it is rather those who have been called out into the experience of salvation and have borne the evidence of salvation.

The initial work of the Spirit is to disenfranchise the flesh. The declaration of grace is that sin shall not have dominion over

you. I heard it illustrated years ago in this way. A factory has been taken over by a new owner and a new supervisor has been appointed. Although the old supervisor has been fired, he continues to come around and tries to return the operation to its former failing manner of operation. In fact, he has no authority to do so, and must be continually silenced.

We would go a step further and note that crucifixion does not mean immediate death and so it is that we continue the struggle. And again, quoting someone from years ago, we are to engage in "dead reckoning." *For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:10-11).* Thus, we continue to pummel that old nature with the aim of full eradication. It will not happen in this life, but it reflects our identity with the life to come.

Thus, we conclude that where one is found being led by the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, and crucifying the flesh, there is no law to condemn us. It is rather found that we love the Law. The blessed man of Psalm 1 meditates in it day and night. He does not see it as that which oppresses; he beholds the glory of God in it. *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. (Psalms 19:7-8). bhs*

There is a needs-be for us to give ourselves for the life of the world. An easy, non-self-denying life will never be one of power. Fruit-bearing involves cross-bearing. There are not two Christs - an easy-going one for easy-going Christians, and a suffering, toiling one for exceptional believers. There is only one Christ. Are you willing to abide in Him, and thus to bear much fruit? –Hudson Taylor

We know that all things work together for good. —Romans 8:28

Safely may the apostle rest his appeal with us. We know it because God has said it. We know it because others have testified to it. Best of all, we know it because we have experienced it ourselves. We can set our seal to the truth that all things under the government of an infinitely great, all-wise, righteous, and beneficent Lord God, both in the world, in the church, and in the history of each member of the church, work together for good. What that good may be, the shape it may assume, the complexion it may wear, the end to which it may be subservient, we cannot tell. To our dim view it may appear an evil, but to God's farseeing eye it is a positive good. His glory is secured by it, and with that end accomplished, we are sure it must be good. Oh truth most divine! Oh words most consolatory! How many whose eye traces this page, it may be whose tears bedew it, whose sighs breathe over it, whose prayers hallow it, may be wading in deep waters, may be drinking bitter cups, and are ready to exclaim, "All these things are against me!" Oh no, beloved of God, all these things are for you! "The LORD sitteth upon the flood" (Ps. 29:10). "The voice of the LORD is upon the waters" (Ps. 29:3). "[He] maketh the clouds his chariot" (Ps. 104:3). Be not then afraid. Calmly stay your faith on this divinely assured truth that "all things work together for good to them that love God." Will it not be a good if your present adversity results in the dethronement of some worshiped idol, in the endearing of Christ to your soul, in the closer conformity of your mind to God's image, in the purification of your heart, in your more thorough suitability for heaven? Will it not be a real good if it terminate in a revival of God's work within you, in stirring you up to more prayer, in enlarging your heart to all that love the same Savior, in stimulating you to increased activity for the conversion of sinners, for the diffusion of the truth, and for the glory of God? Oh yes! Good, real good, permanent good must result from all the divine dispensations in your history. Bitter repentance will end in the experienced sweetness of Christ's love. The festering wound will but elicit the healing balm. The overpowering burden will but bring you to the tranquil rest. The storm will but quicken your footsteps to the hiding place. The north wind and the south wind will breathe together over your garden, and the spices will flow out. In a little while—oh, how soon!—you will pass away from earth to heaven and in its clearer, serener light will read the truth that was often read with tears before: "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28).
--Octavius Winslow

God intends the Christian life to be a life of joy—not drudgery. The idea that holiness is associated with a dour disposition is a caricature of the worst sort. In fact, just the opposite is true. Only those who walk in holiness experience true joy. —Jerry Bridges

Those who understand God's sovereignty have joy even in the midst of suffering, a joy reflected on their very faces, for they see that their suffering is not without purpose.
—R.C. Sproul