

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## SOWERS OF PEACE

*And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. James 3:18*

As we mentioned a few weeks ago there are certain principles which cannot be overturned by men. Paul says in the scriptures, *"for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."* (Gal 6:7). This is one of those principles. He goes on to expound and explain this principle as it relates to the fleshly and spiritual realms. If a man sows the corruptible seed of the flesh then he will reap the fruit of the flesh's corruption. If, however, he sows that incorruptible seed of the spirit, then he will reap the fruit of the blessing which is attached to that which is spiritual. A man cannot expect to enjoy the fruits and enjoyments of righteousness when he is continually sowing wickedness and disobedience. (see Isa.48:22) At the same time he can have the expectation of that joyous fruit when the seed of righteousness is continually planted. (see Rom.6:13-21; 8:4-13)

The word peace occurs 111 times in the New Testament. It would be safe to say, then that the scriptures have a lot to say about "peace". The scripture basically speaks of three kinds of peace:

**1. Peace with GOD.** We are brought into a knowledge of this peace which is accomplished totally outside of ourselves by the work of JESUS CHRIST in our behalf. *"For it pleased the FATHER that in HIM should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of HIS cross, by HIM to reconcile all things unto HIMSELF; by HIM, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."* (Col 1:19-20) CHRIST has satisfied the claims of the law which rightly condemned us and has made peace with GOD for us. We have often heard people say that they have made peace with GOD but such an action is impossible for sinful men to accomplish. No amount of contrition or obedience on the part of sinners could ever make peace between an offended, holy GOD and unrighteous worms. The obedience and blood of the precious LAMB of GOD, alone, could produce such a peace. *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST."* (Romans 5:1) Having procured peace with GOD for us without any input on our part, HE then has given us the gift of faith that we might embrace that which HE has done for us. Thus we are reconciled to GOD just as HE is to us. (see John 14:27; Acts 10:36; Eph.2:15; Rom.5:10; II Cor.5:18)

**2. Peace within ourselves.** Having been enlightened by the HOLY GHOST as to that which CHRIST has procured for us we are brought to a place of enjoyment of that peace as the SPIRIT causes us to walk in fellowship with CHRIST. *"And the peace of GOD, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through CHRIST JESUS."* (Phil 4:7) *"But the fruit of the SPIRIT is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."* (Gal 5:22) Not only are we given the gift of peace as it relates to reconciliation with the FATHER but over the course of time we are led into the peace of being able to trust HIS providence. David, a man after GOD's own heart said of the godly man, *"He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD."* (Psalms 112:7) Greater peace is enjoyed as we learn to trust HIM more. *"THOU wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on THEE: because he trusteth in THEE."* (Isaiah 26:3) A fuller revelation of GOD's sovereignty causes a man to be at peace as he comes to a clearer knowledge that the ONE who is our FATHER says, *"I form the light, and*

*create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things "* (Isaiah 45:7) Can anything harm us or keep us back from that which GOD in HIS infinite mercy has ordained for us?

**3. Peace with our fellow men.** Just as surely as GOD is absolutely sovereign, and supplying of the grounds and support of our peace with HIM and also in the working of that peace within us, we are responsible for seeking to walk in peace with our brethren in the flesh. *"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."* (Romans 12:17-18) This is especially true in our relationships with our brethren in CHRIST. *"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."* (Romans 14:19) Paul said this in teaching the Roman Christians that their responsibility to their brethren even transcended their own liberty. For the sake of keeping peace among the saints we should be willing to even be defrauded of our so called "rights". In fact the chief obstacle to peace among brethren, as well as among the people of the world, is a self-centered view of what we are entitled to. *"Put on therefore, as the elect of GOD, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as CHRIST forgave you, so also do ye."* (Col 3:12-13) Humility is the chief ingredient in learning to live in peace with our fellow men. Pride is its chief enemy. Pride will always undermine peace regardless of the supposed willingness of men to dwell in peace, because pride will not allow forgiveness to take place without conditions being met, and pride will not allow conditions to be met without conditions of its own. So goes the cycle of strife. One only needs to look at the turmoil in the Mideast to see this scenario played out over and over again. Sadly, it is also played out day after day among men, some, supposedly, even the children of GOD, here and all over the world. As CHRIST forgave us, so ought we to forgive others. Paul said to the Ephesians, *"I therefore, the prisoner of the LORD, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the SPIRIT in the bond of peace."* (Eph 4:1-3) Peace among men will not happen by itself. Only as SPIRIT led men and women "endeavor" (i.e.; work at diligently) to establish peace by following the example of their LORD will peace be experienced. We must become determined to live in peace with others even if they will not live in peace with us. (see Rom.12:20) *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the LORD."* (Heb 12:14)

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