

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

OUR HELP

For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 41:13-14

All of us were touched in some way this past week as we heard the news of the miners trapped in a West Virginia coal mine. At first, we were concerned for their safety, then happy to hear that they were found alive. But shortly that proved to be false information. We can only imagine the terrible grief that gripped the hearts of family and loved ones when they discovered that the seeming good news they had rejoiced in turned out to be false. The jubilation of happy expectation was quickly replaced with the darkness of despair, and their grief was compounded by the counterfeit hope which had buoyed their spirits only moments before.

This incident serves to remind us that many religious men and women rejoice in a hope which ultimately has no basis in truth. Despair and grief are the only ultimate result for those whose hopes are built upon a false foundation. *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* (Matt 7:21-23) The preachers of free willism and man centered salvation continue to encourage men to trust in their professions of faith and their ability to allow the LORD to do something for them. Decisionism is the order of the day along with the belief that men can be "taught" how to "experience GOD." We never cease to be amazed at the abundance of "how to" books that are available on every aspect of the "Christian life". The concept of men being totally dependent on the mercy of GOD, with no confidence in the flesh is considered a doctrine only fit for those who are somewhat backward in their thinking. Bigger, better, faster, can be the results when men add their abilities to the LORD's according to this modern philosophy which has one foot in the world and one in the scriptures.

Partial truth can often be as deadly as outright error and is most certain to bring heartache to those who mistake it for the absolute truth of GOD. Any trust that a man has in this sinful flesh, in which we dwell, is certain to be a confidence that proves to be unreliable; whether it be to pray, to study the scriptures, or to resist temptation. The LORD said *"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:"* (Matt 7:24) Too often men think that their performance is the foundation when in reality the performance of HIS sayings is but an evidence wrought in a man whose hope is built on a solid foundation. GOD's children do not build a foundation by their obedience but are obedient because they have a sure foundation already laid for them, which is JESUS CHRIST. *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* (1 Cor 3:11) The true children of GOD can find no comfort in the self-help "gospel" which is preached far and wide. They find themselves hungering for food which cannot be supplied from this kitchen and desiring to eat meat which is not on its menu. When a child of GOD is burdened with his need to pray he can't be

helped by somebody teaching him the methodology of prayer. The LORD our GOD is the only supplier of the kind of help HIS children stand in need of. HE has promised to help them and they can be satisfied with nothing less.

GOD has promised to hold HIS people's hand. When I was a small child there was a time when my mother held my hand crossing the street, but as I grew older she no longer found the need to do that. The LORD's children however never outgrow their need of HIS constant support and aid, and HE is faithful to supply their every need.

The LORD continually reminds us to fear not. Sin has taken a great toll on the children of GOD and we find ourselves in great weakness of mind and spirit from time to time. The terrors of the law sometimes gives us nightmares but the LORD knows that we are but dust and HE has continual pity upon HIS own reassuring them that there is *"therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."* (Rom.8:1)

HE is faithful to remind us of our own frailty lest we should be lifted up with pride. Isaac Watts wrote the hymn "Alas and did my SAVIOR bleed and did my SOVREIGN die, would HE devote that sacred head for such a worm as I." Many modern hymnbooks have changed those five words to "sinners such as I". Some would say it has the same meaning but the LORD himself referred to those whom HE loves as worms. We are the lowest of the low but by HIS grace HE has promised to lift us up. Paul said it like this *"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"* (1 Cor 4:7)

Our HELPER is our REDEEMER, the HOLY ONE of Israel. The LORD is always faithful to supply the exact help that HIS people need. In purchasing our redemption the LORD JESUS CHRIST secured everything HIS elect bride could ever lack. HE has completely justified HIS elect in the sight of the law, taking our sin away by HIS blood. HE has imputed HIS righteousness to us so that our account has been settled in full. HE has sanctified us completely so that we stand without spot or wrinkle before the holy presence of GOD. HIS wisdom has replaced our ignorance so that we are complete in HIM. *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."* (Col 2:8-10)

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