

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume IV

Issue 12

*Published occasionally for Zion's mourners*

*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*

---

## THE TRUE VINE

*I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. John 15:5*

The LORD JESUS CHRIST was the master of illustration. HE compared himself to a door, a shepherd, a rock, water, and bread just to name a few of the earthly objects which HIS hearers could relate to. Each time HE did so HE did not merely say "I am like a door, or I am like a shepherd, etc, but rather HE said I am the DOOR, or I am the GOOD SHEPHERD. The truth is that though he used these concepts to illustrate himself yet HE is the epitome of those illustrations. If one would like to see the perfect shepherd then let a man look at the care that HE gives to HIS sheep. Or if one would like to know what bread should truly be like then let him look at HIM who is the BREAD of LIFE, the sustenance and sustainer of HIS people.

If one were to summarize the gospel and reduce it to its lowest common denominator it would be JESUS CHRIST. HE is the sum and substance of all that the FATHER has revealed unto the sinners which inhabit planet Earth. When Simeon beheld the infant CHRIST he said he could now die in peace because "*mine eyes have seen thy salvation,*"(Luke 2:30) Joseph was instructed to call HIM, JESUS, "*for he shall save his people from their sins.*" (Matt 1:21) HE is exactly suited to meet the needs of those HE came to redeem. HE is efficient (i.e.; effective and capable) and sufficient (i.e.; ample and satisfactory) for all that his people lacked and could not perform. HE is that one who has fought our battles and well deserves the crown of praise which is the delight of HIS people to render unto HIM. "*Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;*" (2 Cor 3:5) "*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 2:9-10)

One of the underlying errors which causes a multitude of false doctrine to be proclaimed is that of thinking that the primary purpose of the work of redemption by the LORD was the benefit that it would bring to men. In reality the primary purpose of CHRIST's work was to bring glory to the FATHER. HIS elect surely benefit from being the objects of HIS love, and the recipients of HIS amazing grace and mercy, yet HIS fundamental purpose in the scheme of redemption is HIS own glory. (see Eph.3:21; 1 Tim.1:17; Rev.5:9-14) If we fully understand that, then we can rejoice in HIS sovereign grace and delight to see HIM exalted in the earth in the proclamation of the gospel rather than turning it into an exercise of trying to produce results and persuading men to believe it. HE came into the world in order to magnify HIS glory in the redemption of sinners and HE accomplished exactly what HE came to do. The proclamation of that truth is what HE sends HIS preachers into the world to do. HE said if HE were lifted up HE would draw men to himself and that is precisely what HE is doing in the present hour. HIS hand is not shortened to save by many or by few and all that the FATHER hath given HIM will come to HIM and no power in heaven, earth, or hell can overturn HIS purpose nor tarnish HIS glory.

HE said HE was THE VINE, therefore every vine on earth is placed here to bear witness unto HIM. Every time a grape is picked there is a testimony to that work which HE came to accomplish. Every time a bottle of wine is enjoyed or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich is eaten, HE is magnified as the ONE who is the producer of fruit.

The VINE is the source of all life for the branches. The branches receive their sustenance from HIM and would soon wither and be worthless if cut off from HIM. We are the branches and have no strength nor life of our own. HE said that without HIM we could do nothing. Yet in HIS strength we can do all things (see Phil.4:13)

The branch cannot attach itself to the VINE. A branch must either grow out from the vine or be grafted into it by the skillfull hands of a Husbandman. In either case it is the VINE which controls the connection. *"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* (1 Cor 1:30-31)

The branch cannot stay attached nor strengthen its attachment by its own power. Only the vine has the necessary power and life to sustain this affection. *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:"* (Phil 1:6) HE is faithful to maintain HIS vineyard being both the VINE and the VINEDRESSER. (see John 15:1)

All fruit, though seen on the branches, is the produce of the VINE. There are many who are convinced that the fruit of the SPIRIT springs from their own volition. But HE who works in us both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure is the producer of such. Keep in mind that it is called the "fruit of the SPIRIT" and not the fruit of the believer. This fruit is the evidence of HIS work in us and not vice versa. (see Phil.2:13)

Any branch that does not produce fruit is useless and only worthy of destruction. Let no man think himself to be connected to the VINE if there is no fruit being produced. Those branches which are attached by HIM and to HIM will produce fruit. All others will be cast away. Multitudes believe themselves to be "Christians" because they have made a "decision" to be or have made a public profession of faith. One cannot become a true follower of CHRIST except by the divine work of the SPIRIT of GOD in quickening and rebirth. *"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* (Luke 6:45-46)

mam