

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

LEAVING THE WATERPOT

The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? John 4:28-29

Once again we visit Jacob's well in the city of Sychar in Samaria. It is interesting that the ONE who made the heavens and the earth and who stands in need of nothing is described as having a "need" to go through Samaria. (see v.4) After all, HE is the one who needed no ship to cross the Sea of Galilee (see Mat.14:25) so it was hardly any sort of geographical expediency nor any physical thirst which brought him to a seat by this well. Yet it pleased the LORD to humble HIMSELF and to subject HIMSELF to the limitations of this sinful flesh in which we dwell that HE might accomplish the very purpose for which HE made the world and all things therein. That being: to manifest the glory of HIS grace in the redemption, calling, and glorification of HIS elect sons and daughters. If a man fails to see that the purpose of creation was to set the stage for this redemption then he cannot possibly understand nor grasp the unfolding of HIS purpose in the proclamation of the Gospel. Most preachers today are mired down with a man centered view of the purpose of preaching. They are convinced that they are supposed to preach in order to "get" men saved or "offer" them the gospel, rather than seeing that the gospel is to be preached for the glory of CHRIST and to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD to the captives. The preaching of the gospel is a revelation of what JESUS CHRIST has done for sinners and not some kind of deal offered to men if they will only cooperate or let HIM "into their heart".

The need that HE had to go through Samaria was a self imposed one and HIS purpose in being there at this particular time was to converse with this Samaritan woman who came to this well on this day with no different purpose in mind than that for which she had come there each day for weeks and perhaps years prior to this particular day. Now most anyone with any sort of scriptural honesty will have to confess that the LORD JESUS predestinated HIS own path to coincide with the arrival of this woman. The further reality is (though some would deny it) that this woman's path and point of arrival was no less predestinated by HIM who rules in the army of heaven than HIS own. HE intended to call this woman out of darkness and did not leave any part of this meeting to chance. I am thankful that GOD carries out HIS intention to seek and to save that which is lost. Of all that the FATHER has given HIM HE shall lose none but shall gather that remnant from the highways and byways of this world where HE has scattered them until such time as HE sees fit to draw them to HIMSELF with cords of love.

HE who made the oceans, the rivers, and brought the flood waters of destruction upon the earth asked this woman for a drink of water, not because HE was faint, but because it was HIS purpose to instruct her about the need which she had that only HE could supply. She was totally ignorant of this water that HE spoke of and could only conceive of thirst being assuaged by the earthly water she came to draw out of this well. Just like Nicodemus she did not have the capability in her flesh to have any comprehension of the spiritual things of which

the LORD JESUS spoke. The LORD in HIS merciful dealings with HIS children first teaches them of their own barrenness and the multitude and magnitude of their sin. HE pointed out her wicked ways and the fact that even as HE spoke she was mired in moral degradation. (see v.16-18) Typical of the flesh, she responded to this conviction by trying to engage in religious talk. Most of the folks we come in contact with day by day are convinced of the value of their religious affiliations and one only has to read the obituaries to discover that it is rare to find someone described in these columns who does not have some "religious" membership or connection. The waterpot which this woman brought to draw water out of this well is typical of those things which men hold onto which are but poor substitutes for the truth of GOD. These waterpots are able to hold the kind of water that is satisfying to the flesh but must be continually filled and emptied by the motions and emotions of the flesh.

It is quite obvious that many shall perish by trusting in false Christs and doctrines of devils. However that deception which is often the most dangerous is that which is closest to the truth. This woman held onto her waterpot until such time as the LORD was pleased to reveal HIMSELF unto her, when that occurred she immediately left her waterpot because she had no need of it anymore. Some empty waterpots that need be discarded are:

Family religious affiliations. Most people wind up walking in the religion of their mothers and fathers. This is not in itself a bad thing as long as a man is not deceived into thinking that it is according to his heritage that he is numbered among the saints. *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* (John 1:12-13)

Preacher worship. This exists in some form among all types of denominations and groups. It is especially prevalent among those who emphasize the teaching of sound doctrine and practice. Any man who has been called and equipped by GOD to preach the unsearchable riches of CHRIST is prone to be lifted up with pride from time to time and to forget that *"we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."* (2Cor. 4:7) It is natural for the saints to rejoice in the fact that these gifts are given to men and to give deference of some type to them, (see I Cor.14:5) but it is unhealthy and even leads to the destruction of some who think that every word that drops from the mouth of a "particular" preacher is to be received without scrutiny. Woe be to the preacher who encourages such admiration and does not admonish his hearers to examine the scriptures for themselves and also to the listener who walks upon this enchanted ground. CHRIST is the SHEPHERD, and HE has made all of HIS children priests and kings in the earth. (see Rev.5:10, I Pet.2:9) There is no hierarchy nor chief seats marked out in the house of GOD even though the sons of Diotrephes (see III John 9) can be found from time to time along with those who boast that they are of Apollos or Cephas. (see I Cor.1:12)

Building worship. We should be thankful if the LORD has provided us a physical facility in which we can meet together. But we must never consider that it is anything more than a convenience for our comfort and carries with it no spiritual significance. Some collect funds to build such facilities under the guise of encouraging men to give as though this was some benefit to the LORD. (see Mat.8:20) Some form a greater attachment to bricks and mortar than they do to the house which is *"built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."* (Eph 2:20) An empty pot to be sure.

Doctrine for its own sake. *"Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.---who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."* (2Cor. 3:3,6) What difference does it make when we can parrot doctrines in our sleep if our heart is cold and we are not doers of the word as well as hearers. *"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."* (Mat 7:21)