

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume IV

Issue 46

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 FINISHING TOUCH

God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.
Hebrews 1:1-3

When we speak of something as being “finished” we do not expect that anything else needs to be added. When concrete is poured and the finishers have done their work properly there is nothing left to be done, in fact once the concrete is finished, it cannot be changed. Someone would have to be ignorant of the nature of concrete and the work of the finisher to think that they could somehow enhance that work or add something to it to make it more finished once that work is done. Most all people who call themselves “Christians” proclaim that they believe in the “finished work of CHRIST”. Yet comparatively very few of those who say they are “gospel preachers” actually believe that the salvation wrought by JESUS CHRIST is “finished”. Most of them agree that CHRIST has done all of the work which HE intended to do in the sacrifice of HIMSELF for sin, yet practically all of them believe that something must be added by men in order to complete the transaction of justification and redemption.

The scripture plainly says, HE “*purged our sins*”, HE “*obtained eternal redemption*” (Heb.9:12), and HE hath “*put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*” (Heb 9:26) We can be quite certain that the LORD accomplished exactly what HE intended to accomplish when HE hung on Calvary’s cross and cried out “*It is finished.*” (John 19:30) There is nothing left to be done, nor can anything be added to that work nor taken from it. This is what is called the absolute and definite atonement of our LORD. “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” (Rom 5:9)

This doctrine is not in vogue in the present day since it is at odds with the mindset which permeates the natural thinking of man and has its expression in the worship of man’s supposed “free will”. This “free will” worship causes men to view the gospel as an open ended “offer” of salvation rather than it being the clear declaration of the finished work of CHRIST to redeem the lost sinners given to HIM by the FATHER from the foundation of the world.

If the gospel is an “offer” rather than a declaration, then there would have to be something for men to do in order to take advantage of the “offer”. We could not logically conclude that the salvation of sinners has been made secure if they must yet “do something” in order to reap the benefits of that salvation. What those that preach an “offer” tell us is that CHRIST has done everything HE could to save men and now HE is leaving the rest all up to them as to whether

HE shall be able to accomplish their eternal redemption. They tell us that "faith" is that which men must possess in order to make CHRIST's work effectual.

This line of thinking is to put the proverbial "cart before the horse." Faith is the gift of GOD and cannot be exercised by any whose sins have not been purged by CHRIST. Faith is not the "cause" of salvation, rather it is the effect of it. Those who are saved by the blood of CHRIST are those who believe the declaration of the gospel when they are quickened and given ears to hear it. CHRIST is indeed the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith. The gospel is not about GOD giving men an opportunity to be saved nor giving everybody a square deal and a fair chance, rather it is the plain and glorious declaration that JESUS CHRIST the RIGHTEOUS has died an ignominious death to redeem lost sinners, and that HE has triumphed in that work putting all HIS enemies to flight and securing the eternal redemption of those for whom HE shed HIS precious life's blood. HE has accomplished exactly what the angel told Joseph that HE would do: *"he shall save his people from their sins."* (Mat 1:21)

I can understand how a true believer may struggle with the truth of the doctrine of unconditional election but it is difficult to see how he could not rejoice in the preaching of the absolute finished work of CHRIST. Is this not the believers hope? What would there be for him to believe otherwise? Can a true believer think that he can perfect that which CHRIST has not been able to? Can he who knows himself to be totally lost and undone yet think he can add something to it or "allow" the LORD to do something for him? Is this the mindset of the one whom the LORD said was justified; crying out *"God be merciful to me a sinner."* (Luke 18:13) Those who have fled to HIM for refuge take comfort in the redemption which HE alone has secured. What did HE accomplish and finish for HIS people as HE bled on Golgotha's brow?

HE has purged our sins. Joseph Stalin "purged" Russia of his enemies. So CHRIST has taken away the sins of HIS elect as far as the east is from the west. They are remembered no more. *"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."* (Rom.4:8)

HE has destroyed our enemies. *"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."* (Col 2:15) Nothing can separate us from HIM who loved us and gave HIMSELF for us. Even our accusers are made silent before him. *"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."* (Rom.8:33)

HE has provided our needs. HE has *"led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."* (Eph 4:8) HE has equipped us with everything we need, both in this world and that which is to come. *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"* (Rom.8:32)

HE has sanctified us. *"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."* (Heb 10:14) Some try to tell us that sanctification is a "progressive" work and is a function of "keeping" the law. But how can we who are *"dead to the law"* (see Rom.7:4; Gal.2:19) and married to CHRIST submit ourselves back to the law of sin and death without being adulterers. *"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God."* (Heb 7:19)

HE has glorified us. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ".* (Eph 1:3) This glory is presently unfolding and shall be fully realized in the ages to come. *"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (2 Thess 2:13-14)