

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

SOWING AND REAPING

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Galatians 6:7-8

The apostle Paul, here, reiterates a principle which is taught throughout the word of GOD. (see Rom.2:6; Job 4:8; Prov.1:31; Rom.8:13) The LORD designed the earth and its inhabitants to reproduce after their "own kind". (see Gen 1:11,12, 21, 24, 25) Oak trees beget oak trees, corn begets corn, cattle beget cattle, sheep beget sheep and so on. You cannot plant wheat and expect to reap corn nor would you go into a peach orchard expecting to gather oranges. This is a common principle which the LORD instituted in HIS creation and it will not (nor can it) be overturned by any of HIS creation.

Those who teach the so called "theory of evolution" as if it was proven fact have yet to produce evidence that overturns this principle. It is not possible that an amoeba can produce a fish any more than a monkey can beget a human. Though I will have to confess that some men act more like monkeys than they do humans, especially those in elected office.

This particular principle is the source of great blessing to the true sons of GOD. Yet at the same time it is one which is often wrested (i.e.; twisted) by the unstable and deceivers (see II Pet.3:16) to the destruction of many who are would be followers of CHRIST and the hurt of some who are truly HIS own. One only has to turn on the TV or radio to hear a multitude of such "teachers" turning the grace of GOD into lasciviousness; or an occasion to indulge the flesh. (see Jude 1:4) It has become commonplace to hear those who teach a "health and wealth" message, using this very principle to support their concept of a works based blessing for those who can find within themselves the ability to "have faith" or to "produce good works". They see the blessings of GOD as primarily blessings which accrue to the flesh. They regularly admonish their listeners to "sow seed" into their ministries (which is a nice way of saying, give me your money). For those who are "moved" to obediently cough up their cash, they promise great returns, often exceeding those one can make through normal channels of investment.

Promises of such unexpected wealth and abiding health are regularly set forth as the normal return one can anticipate receiving as a reward for such "faithfulness". This is a contradiction of the very principle which they claim to set forth. Spiritual faithfulness begets its own kind which is spiritual faithfulness. If a man sows to the flesh he will reap of the flesh. The works of the flesh have nothing in common with the works of the SPIRIT in the sons of GOD. The things of this earth shall perish but the blessing of GOD is eternal, this is that which the true sons of GOD hunger and thirst for. Job was a man who knew what it was to have wealth and to have that wealth taken away and he said, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. (Job 13:15)*

The blessing of GOD for HIS children is not "conditional" upon their supposed ability to be faithful or to produce good works; but is based upon those benefits which are forever secured

for them by the LORD JESUS CHRIST. *"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."* (2Co 1:20) We shall reap the blessings of GOD because:

The sons of GOD are HIS offspring. *"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."* (James 1:18) We didn't make ourselves the sons of GOD so it is impossible that we should cease to be the sons of GOD by some action of our own. Neither did we earn HIS favor by any good which was foreseen in us or later produced by us. We reap what HE has sowed. *"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)

Any good works found in the sons of GOD are the product of HIS SPIRIT. *"LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us."* (Isa.26:12) *"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* (Phil 2:13) Those who delight to make a fair show in the flesh (see Gal.6:12) usually grow exasperated by this line of thought because they assume that they possess some ability to make themselves more pleasing in the eyes of GOD by either a greater obedience to HIS commands or a more devoted spiritual life characterized by human endeavor in the pursuit of holiness. Many are convinced that Wesley's teaching on "entire sanctification" must surely be possible. It is apparent to me that anyone who entertains such notions cannot be well acquainted with their own sinful nature which shall plague them until such time as this mortal puts on immortality. Paul quite aptly described himself and subsequently all of mankind when he said, *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."* (Rom 7:18)

The sons of GOD are predestined to be conformed to the image of HIS SON. *"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."* (Eph 1:11) We are presently reaping HIS blessings because HE has appointed us to receive them. Nothing can hinder the sons of GOD from partaking of all of those blessings which the LORD intends them to have. There are no ifs attached to predestination. *"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."* (1Thes 5:24)

Spiritual blessings beget spiritual blessings. Some think a man's faithfulness produces GOD's blessings. This is backward thinking. The reality is that the blessing of GOD produces faithfulness. The blessing of GOD upon HIS children is seen in HIS present working in them. They don't obey HIM in order to secure HIS blessing, rather their obedience to HIS precepts is the result of HIS blessing of them. Some think they would cause HIM to be near if they will pray. Actually the fact that HE is near is what causes them to pray and seek HIM earnestly. HE reveals HIMSELF to those HE is pleased to bless. *"Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence."* (Isa 64:1) As the prophet of old prayed, so say all of the sons of GOD, *"O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."* (Hab 3:2)

JESUS CHRIST has secured for HIS sons all spiritual blessings. *"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) What HE has sowed HE shall surely reap. *"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."* (Isa 53:10-11)