

# 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*

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## ASSURANCE

*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

*Romans 8:14-16*

It is quite common for those who have been born of the SPIRIT of GOD to be concerned with whether or not they are indeed the true children of GOD. Before they are born again by the divine operation of GOD's SPIRIT, there is little more than a passing concern with such a matter in their mind since the natural man is convinced that he is a child of GOD simply by being born into the human race. Some "preachers" have stirred the multitudes by reiterating the words of the LORD to Nicodemus, "*ye must be born again*" (John 3:7). Yet the prevalent message that is heard today (which is purported to be the gospel by these same "preachers" is that while it is true that men need to be "born again", they have it within their own power to bring this to pass by simply ratifying what GOD has said and cooperating with the SPIRIT of GOD by making a "decision" to "let the LORD into their heart". After all HE is standing by each one just hoping somebody will let HIM do what HE wants to do.

Thus the average "believer" (according to this message), can more or less assure himself, that he has been born again by recounting when and where he made a decision to cooperate with GOD and believe the gospel message that he has heard. Those who are "taught" under such a system are made to feel that it is shameful to "doubt" their "conversion" since the key ingredient in such a formula is what they have done in asking to be saved. After all they are told that to doubt such is akin to doubting that GOD is truthful.

When a man is awakened (by the operation of the SPIRIT of GOD), to the depravity of his own heart and made to see the great gulf that is between himself in his natural state and the high and holy place which GOD occupies, he is immediately brought into a place of knowing that unless GOD shows mercy to him he will perish. He is ultimately taught by that same SPIRIT that there must be a work performed in him which he is unable to accomplish or even cooperate in. The charismatics are fond of using the term "slain in the spirit" to describe someone being put into a trancelike state by the touch of a (so-called) "minister's" hand. What we are describing here is not a parlor trick performed by a persuasive showman. Rather a man who is quickened by SPIRIT is truly "slain" before ALMIGHTY GOD without the touch of anybody but the SPIRIT. This slaying of which we speak, has to do with being made naked and bare before a GOD who hates sin and who will not at all acquit the wicked. It is not about being seen by men or being part of a religious performance.

Thus the stage is set and the heart is prepared to hear and believe the gospel which is sent by the SPIRIT of GOD according to the direct purpose of HIM who sends the preached word by those vessels HE has equipped. (see Rom 10:4-17) Those who are now given the gift of faith to believe, embark on an odyssey which takes them from the land of the dead to the realm of eternal life. Their sensibilities have been changed and their concerns, perspectives and fears become totally different than those which dominated their minds when they *“walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.”* (Eph 2:2) They have now become new creatures. *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”* (2Cor. 5:17)

Whereas in time past they either never considered that they might not be a child of GOD or were content to lean upon some action of their own which gave them the comfort and “assurance” they were looking for (even though it was a false hope). Now that they have been fully acquainted with the fact that being a true child of GOD is not something they have the power to control they cannot be comforted by anything but the “witness of HIS SPIRIT”. Neither the assurances of men nor the religious formulas of the “experts” can give them any solace. Their chief desire is now to be found as a true and faithful son of GOD but how to perform it they know not.

They are made to know that the presence of CHRIST’s SPIRIT produces fruit in HIS children and they desire to see this fruit in abundance but alas often only see scraggly limbs which seem unable to bear their own weight let alone any fruit. Thus they often despair that they are perhaps deceived in thinking that they are the true sons of GOD. Yet this very scenario is that which the LORD designs to drive them ever closer to HIS side, to lament their barrenness and long for HIS power which is promised to HIS children. So the LORD continually “chastens” HIS own causing them to linger close to HIM and lean upon HIS bosom. HE is pleased to give assurance and strength unto HIS own in HIS own time according to HIS purpose by making them aware that HE :

**Sends the SPIRIT of a son into their hearts crying Abba, FATHER.** The enemies of the LORD’s children can sometimes rob them of just about everything they own, but this one characteristic can never be removed from them. Regardless of what may befall them they will always cry out to HIM who is their FATHER with filial affection, recognition, and fear.

**Has made the basis of their salvation to be the imputed righteousness of CHRIST rather than any act of faith they may demonstrate.** The “faith” which justifies the elect of GOD is JESUS CHRIST and HIM crucified. Their standing with the LORD is not dependent upon them in any way, but is founded solely on what HE has done in their behalf. Though our heart condemn us GOD is greater than our heart. (see I Jn.3:19,20)

**Gives them a love for the brethren.** (see I Jn.3:14) There is a common bond between all of those who bow before the throne of the ONE who has died to purchase their redemption. It is this very bond which the LORD uses to strengthen and supply the members of HIS body. (see Eph.4:1-17) I am amazed that many who claim to be HIS followers have so little regard to the gathering of HIS saints, often relegating it to secondary status in order to fulfill their worldly desires. (see Heb.10:25) This is not an evidence of HIS SPIRIT. *“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”* (Heb 10:19-22)