

# 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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## THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER

*And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*

*Mark 1:35*

Most preaching in the last one hundred fifty years has primarily been centered on the humanity of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. To say that the majority of the so called Christians of our day have a general consideration of HIM as their friend and confidant would be a kind assessment of the grasp most have of who they think HE is. Most think nothing of addressing HIM in the first person as if HE was just some buddy they had run into on the street. Yet none of HIS disciples ever called HIM "JESUS" in their conversations with HIM. Many think it to be in vogue to repeat HIS name over and over in the place of "prayer" as if it was some good luck charm or some key to unlocking the treasure chest of heaven.

Those who knew HIM best and walked with HIM on a daily basis, sitting at HIS feet and receiving the WORD from HIS very lips, would have never addressed HIM by HIS name without prefacing it with LORD, MASTER, or TEACHER. They had the opportunity to see HIS utter humanity every day but this never overcame the awe with which they esteemed HIM far above themselves. They understood that HE was truly a man yet they were more greatly struck by the fact that HE was the LORD of GLORY even as Peter testified. They saw that HE was GOD in the flesh and not flesh made GOD.

Idolatry is often very close to true worship. Nadab and Abihu were Levites, the sons of Aaron, the great high priest. (see Lev.10:1) They decided to make an offering to the LORD of their own making which HE commanded them not and they were destroyed with the censers in their hands. This ONE who has come down and walked among us in flesh and blood is the same ONE whom the Seraphims cease not to worship day and night saying, "*Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.*" (Isa 6:3, see Rev.4:8) HE is that ONE who is worthy to open the sealed Book. (see Rev.5:9) HE has come down and dwelt among us, but, HE has not at any time ceased to be GOD nor has HE in any sense become less than GOD, nor should any creature ever deign to approach HIM without this due consideration.

It is impossible to have a right observation of HIS true person apart from a clear knowledge of HIS deity and HIS rightful place of glory which utterly transcends creation. It is this contemplation that drives the born again sons of GOD to fall upon their faces in the dust and ashes of repentance whenever they would approach HIM. Our boldness to approach HIM (see Heb.4:16) is because of our confidence in HIS authority and station as our Great HIGH PRIEST and not because of some assumed familiarity with HIM in HIS humanity. We are quite convinced that HE was tempted in all points as we are, being without sin, yet rather than this observation causing us to embrace HIM as a comrade, we are struck with awe and made to revere HIM who endured this ignominy for sinners such as we are. The spotless LAMB of GOD being subjected to bear the sin and guilt of HIS people does evermore cause them to bow at HIS feet in adoring wonder.

Having said all of that and putting HIS humanity in its proper perspective let us state in no uncertain terms that we are rendered speechless and struck with awe and amazement in the contemplation of HIS walking in the earth as a living human being. *"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."* (Phil. 2:6-8) Oh how can it be that HE who created death and administers it according to HIS sovereign purpose, should subject HIS own self to it! The wonder of it is beyond the scope of man's understanding. The one who is the KING of kings became a servant, HE who is the very definition of righteousness hung upon a cross of shame which is reserved for the unrighteous. HE who knows all things *"learned obedience"* (see Heb.5:8). HE who has all power became weak (see II Cor.13:4) for us.

Above all other activities which HE was involved with as HE walked among us as the SON of man, HE was a man of constant prayer. HE personified the exhortation of the apostle Paul, who said *"Pray without ceasing"* (I Thes.5:17) and HIS own words *"men ought always to pray, and not to faint."* (Luke 18:1). HE fainted not in the day of HIS trial because HE prayed and the FATHER heard HIM. I cannot fathom how HE subjected HIMSELF to the weakness of human flesh, groaning and crying in it, tasting death for men, *"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared."* (Heb 5:7) Such wonder cannot be told by men, yet HE has demonstrated it. If HE being the only begotten SON of GOD had need to pray, how much more do we who are of Adam's race stand in such need.

GOD's people must pray because:

**HE has made them HIS sons.** *"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."* (Gal 4:6) Just as surely as an infant of days will cry out for his earthly mother or father, so must the new born sons of GOD call upon HIM. HE has made them acquainted with who HE is.

**They know themselves to be without strength.** *"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."*(2 Cor.12:9) The popular idea of today is that men ought to pray whenever they have a need. They picture GOD as setting around heaven waiting for someone to dial up the prayer line and make a request. Yet the true sons of GOD must cry out to HIM continually knowing that they have no strength of their own and shall fall immediately if left to their own devices.

**They hunger and thirst for HIS presence.** Their desire is that of the apostle Paul who said, *"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."* (Phil 3:10) Religious men are content with some knowledge about the facts of their religion, but the true sons of GOD are starving for HIS fellowship and long to be like HIM. They cannot be content with the leeks and onions of Egypt but desire that BREAD of heaven. *"Lord, evermore give us this bread."* (John 6:34)

**They are beset on every side by those who are their enemies.** *"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."* (2Tim. 3:12) Never before in this world has there been such an amalgamation between those who profess to be "Christians" and the world. Modern "Christianity" has been received into the mainstream and is but a part of American culture. It has become accepted for "churches" (so called) to adopt the ways and practices of the world in their quest to attract more and more members. (see Mat.23:15) This is only possible when the "offense of the cross" has ceased, as it surely has in most modern preaching. Yet the scripture is abundantly clear that *"the friendship of the world is enmity with God?"* (James 4:4) There will always be a witness in the earth of the true gospel and those who follow its precepts will of necessity find themselves at odds with human religion. *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."* (Col 2:8)