

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*

DOETH THIS OFFEND YOU?

*When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it,
he said unto them, Doeth this offend you? John 6:61*

Popularity and religion go hand in hand. As long as the multitudes which followed CHRIST in the early days of HIS ministry were enamored of HIS miracles and fed with loaves and fishes they spoke highly of HIM. The time came however when some of these “faithful” followers started to actually hear what HE was saying. When that occurred they started to go away from HIM in droves even as fast as they originally flocked to HIM.

I believe we live in one of the most (if not the most) religious ages that the world has ever known. Pseudo-christianity has reached epic proportions around the globe and there is a virtual smorgasbord of quasi-christian doctrines and practices from which to choose. This is the day of “designer churches”. Churches of all stripes have sprung up which have the biggest and best of everything. One can find churches that cater to every sort of need, desire, and appetite. It is not difficult to find one that suits a person’s lifestyle and degree of devotion, from the casual to the formal, from the superficial to the fanatical, and all levels in between.

The common denominator of all of them is that each one considers that men have the ability to choose to follow CHRIST and be as faithful as they desire. They believe that GOD is hoping that they will love and obey HIM and that HE is willing to bless each one who makes a commitment to be faithful. They are convinced that the more faith one exhibits the greater GOD’s blessing will be towards each one. Conversely they believe one will forfeit these blessings by disobedience, most especially the neglect of tithes and offerings.

Most view heaven as a gigantic vending machine into which each “christian” (so called) deposits their good deeds, faith, and money and can expect to hold their bag to the slot out of which much abundance will flow. The multitude is convinced that their mission work, visitations, and various forms of “ministry” will count for something in the treasury of heaven.

The LORD JESUS put the axe to the root of human religion when HE said, “*Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.*” (John 6:54-56) This language was very offensive to these religious Jews, who would never think of drinking blood of any sort, let alone that of a human and his flesh to go along with it.

We understand that the LORD was not proposing some form of “cannibalism” but was clearly pointing out that unless a man is in union with CHRIST JESUS, he can have no hope of eternal life. Eternal life is given to those who are in CHRIST JESUS by the operation of the HOLY GHOST, “*Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*” (John 1:13) This is not in man’s ability. Doeth this offend you?

HE went on to further explain HIS meaning when he said *"Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."* (John 6:65) It is impossible that any man can ever know the LORD JESUS CHRIST in saving faith apart from such knowledge and faith being bestowed on HIM according to the sovereign grace and electing love of the FATHER. Doth this offend you?

Men are by nature totally dead in trespasses and sins and cannot even seek the LORD or have any desire thereto. They are every one, helpless sinners, with not one shred of any righteousness which might appease the wrath of GOD against lawbreakers, which each has done at every opportunity. Even more egregious is the supposed goodness that each one by nature assumes that he possesses and would dare to entertain the thought that such "filthy rags" might be pleasing in the eyes of GOD. Every "righteous" activity of men as well as their sin is hated by HIM who is of purer eyes than to look upon it. Doth this offend you?

CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save HIS people from their sins. (see Mat.1:21) HE shed HIS precious blood to obtain eternal redemption for those elect heirs of grace which were given to HIM before the foundation of the earth. Everyone for which HE shed that blood shall inherit eternal glory being made heirs and joint heirs with CHRIST. HE did not shed HIS blood in vain nor has HE attempted and failed to save every man in the earth. HIS blood was not shed for those who are appointed unto wrath. Doth this offend you?

CHRIST JESUS does effectually and irresistibly call every one of HIS sheep which HE knows by name. They hear HIS voice and follow HIM and another shepherd they will not follow. *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* (John 6:37) This is a certain number which cannot be increased or diminished. CHRIST does cause the will of HIS elect to embrace HIS truth, for otherwise they would never come. *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."* (Psa 110:3) It is sheer folly for men to think they can come to CHRIST according to their own volition. Doth this offend you?

CHRIST JESUS does everlastingly preserve HIS elect unto the final day. They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of HIS hand. HE loved them before the foundation of the world and shall present them faultless before HIS FATHER's face in the ages to come. In the present time they are kept by HIS power and cannot in any wise fall, perish, or be ultimately deceived according to the good pleasure of HIS will and HIS faithfulness to preserve them. If left to their own selves they would surely deny HIM and turn away but HE will "keep them from falling" (see Jude 1:24) Doth this offend you?

CHRIST JESUS does presently work in HIS people and they are only able to manifest good works according to HIS performance in them *"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* (Phil 2:13) *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* (Gal 2:20) There is nothing in our lives in the past, present, or future that is of any value that is not the product of HIS mercy and grace revealed towards us by CHRIST JESUS our LORD. *"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"* (1Cor 4:7) Doth this offend you?

Those who are the true followers of CHRIST are made to be so by the grace of GOD. They are made to confess that they have no place to glory except in that which CHRIST JESUS the LORD has accomplished in their behalf. *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."* (Gal 6:14) Doth this offend you?

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