

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

THE CALL, THE CALLED, AND THE CALLER

Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

II Timothy 1:7-9

The gift of "tongues" was first uniquely demonstrated by the HOLY GHOST on the day of Pentecost. There was a rushing as of a mighty wind and cloven tongues of fire sat upon each of those to whom this gift was given. They spoke the word of GOD in languages which heretofore they had not known. This was such a mighty work of GOD that men of all nations who were gathered in Jerusalem on that day "*heard them speak in his own language.*" (Acts 2:6) The hearers testified, "*Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.*" (Acts 2:11) They could but marvel at this miracle even as we do now.

This particular manifestation was not repeated again and according to Peter's testimony was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel. (see Acts 2:16-21) We know of two other recorded instances, when a gift of tongues was manifested upon new believers, (see Acts 10:46, 19:6), but never another incident like that which took place at Pentecost. Whole denominations have arisen in modern times with a quest to continually duplicate what occurred on that day even though it was never again so demonstrated in the scripture record.

It is common to the religious nature of men to place emphasis on that which is external and carnal and miss that which is truly spiritual. Even though this gift of tongues was given by the SPIRIT of GOD, it was not in itself anything but a sign even as Peter reiterated the words of Joel. The purpose of this gift was not to cause folks to roll around on the floor, hang from the light fixtures, or in general act like idiots, but was for the purpose of declaring the testimony of CHRIST. The most easily counterfeited and falsified spiritual gift is that of "tongues". Paul told us not to forbid others from speaking in tongues but he also said when I became a man I put away childish things.

The declaration of the Gospel by Peter on the day of Pentecost was heard by men from all of the nations and tribes of Israel through this same miracle. Yet this miracle was not an end in itself but rather served a greater purpose. It is that purpose we are concerned with and not the means by which that purpose was carried out. Preaching is not an end in itself but is a blessing given to men for the purpose of exalting JESUS CHRIST and HIM crucified, which Peter plainly did on the Day of Pentecost. GOD was pleased to use that Gospel which Peter preached to the natural ears of his hearers. All men present heard the words which Peter spoke but not all had the same reaction to it. Some were noticeably moved, "*Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*" (Act 2:37)

The preachers of free will tell us that the difference between those who received the word

that day and those who did not was just a choice on their part. Yet Peter plainly declares that something else was involved. *“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”* (Act 2:39) The promises of GOD are not for everyone, but they are clearly reserved for those whom the LORD “calls”.

THE CALL. The LORD JESUS said, *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”*(John 10:27) This call which the LORD gives to HIS sheep is spoken of as a *“holy calling”*. That which is “holy” is set apart from that which is common. It is a special and specific calling and is not in any sense generic or general. HE says in John 10:3 ; *“He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.”*

It is a *“heavenly calling”* (see Heb.3:1) which denotes its origin, to be sure, but also speaks of the authority which accompanies it. When I was but a lad, my mother would often call me in for supper and since I was busy about many things I would often ignore that “call”. However when she used my first, middle, and last name I knew it was time to come, and her authoritative call was effectual to accomplish her purpose. Such is the call of CHRIST to HIS children, it never fails to accomplish HIS purpose.

It is a *“high calling”* (see Phil.3:14) which has reference to that place of blessing to which we are called and the great privilege which is given to those so called. *“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God”.*(1 John 3:1) It is also indicative of the tender and persuasive nature of it. *“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* (Mat 11:28)

THE CALLED. Peter said that the promises of GOD were for all those who are called. Paul speaks in Romans of the same thing. Many quote this verse and leave off the most important part of it. *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are **the called** according to his purpose.”* (Rom 8:28) Those who are “the called” are none other than those who are referred to as the “elect” or those *“ordained unto eternal life”*.(see Acts 13:48) They are not those who fall away but those who *“believe to the saving of the soul.”* (Heb 10:39)

They are those who *“heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold some sixty, some thirty”* (Mat 13:23) *“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)

THE CALLER. The power and effectiveness of any decree stands or falls according to the authority of the ONE who is making the decree. This ONE who will not *“break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax”* issues the tender call to HIS children saying *“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.”* (Isa 55:1-3) is also the ONE who says *“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. Harken unto me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.”* (Isa 46:9-13) HE is indeed “Mighty to save.”

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