

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 WORK OF GOD

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

John 6:29

This answer of the LORD JESUS was given to those who had sincerely and earnestly inquired of HIM, *"What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?"* (John 6:28) There is no shortage of those who assume that they can "work the works of GOD". In fact most preaching that one hears today, centers on trying to persuade men to be involved in this "work." All sorts of fields of endeavor are presented from which a man may pick and choose the portion of the vineyard of the LORD which he will occupy and serve, and thus "do the work of the LORD." This is an utter impossibility but that is of no consequence to the exhorters to action. Men can work the works of men, only GOD can perform HIS work.

Religious men feel most satisfied when they can look at the labors of their hands and get a certain feeling of accomplishment in this or that "good deed". They feel certain that GOD will be pleased with their efforts and are amply encouraged in such endeavors by their teachers who assure them that to be "busy" is the most sublime activity of the children of GOD. These "busy bees" look down their noses at those who do not think that men can "help GOD".

Because of the emphasis that many place on "tithing" (or as some call it "sowing seed into the ministry") one can only assume that the accountants in the finance section of heaven are busy tallying up the vast amounts of wealth which are thus "given to the LORD". The LORD gave instruction concerning true giving which is completely ignored by these religious "tax collectors." *"But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret."* (Matt 6:3-4) This seems no hindrance at all to those who will parade what they are doing before the eyes of others and speak of giving as if it was an investment in a heavenly stock market, sure to pay big dividends one day.

How foolish of men to consider that corruptible flesh could "work the works of GOD". There is only ONE who can work this work. Rather than exhorting men to perform such work the Psalmist says. *"Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men."* (Psa 66:5) This is essentially the message that the LORD upbraided these religious men with when HE said *"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* HE gave them no hope that they could perform anything that might be pleasing in the sight of HIM who is of purer eyes than to look upon sin. Rather HE told them in no uncertain terms that only GOD could perform HIS work which is to cause HIS own to believe in HIM.

Isaiah plainly says *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."* (Isa 64:6) If the very best works we have (i.e. our righteousnesses) are as a menstruous

cloth, how could it be possible that any of us could ever perform any work that might be acceptable to HIM, let alone, *“work the works of GOD”*?

The preachers of righteousness which the LORD has sent into the earth are declaring the *“work of GOD”*, and the people of GOD are rejoicing in HIS work. *“And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.”* (Psa 64:9-10) This is the work of GOD:

To choose and create a people in CHRIST unto salvation before the world began. *“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.”* (Eph 1:4)

To predestinate them unto good works. *“We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”*(Eph 2:10)

To perform those good works in them. *“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.”* (Phi 2:13)

To make them acceptable in CHRIST. *“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.”* (Eph 1:6-9)

To give them the gift of faith. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*(Eph 2:8-9)

To give them eternal life. *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”* (John 10:27-28)

To call them at the appointed time. *“Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages”* (Isa 49:7-8) *“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)

To keep them safe and secure until the end. *“The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”* (1Th 5:23-24)

To raise them from the dead. *“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”* (Phil 3:20-21)

To prepare for them an eternal dwelling and to personally return to gather them to HIMSELF. *“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”* (John 14:3) *“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”* (1Thess 4:16-18)

May we ever be given grace to be thankful for the work of GOD.

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