

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XII

Issue 17

Published occasionally for Zion's mourners

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

WILLFUL SIN

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.

Hebrews 10:26

The workmongers of the religious world will always try to twist and obscure the scriptures in order to lay burdens of one type or another upon the free born sons of GOD. This particular scripture is often construed to mean that if a child of GOD is found guilty of a sin which he openly knows is sin and voluntarily commits it anyway, then he no longer has any forgiveness which could be applied to him.

If that is true then no man would ever be saved because every man who is born of Adam's race is continually and willfully embracing sin of one type or another on a constant basis. The man who thinks that he refrains from sin is either unacquainted with the depravity of his own heart or has no understanding of what constitutes sin. John clearly states, *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."* (1John 1:8-10)

We are certain that there is now no condemnation to those who are in JESUS CHRIST. CHRIST has paid in full the complete sin debt of HIS elect and they cannot be separated from HIM nor can any be plucked out of HIS hand. HE has obtained their eternal redemption and they shall never perish. The *"willful (i.e.; voluntary) sin"* of which Hebrews speaks is not a state that any who are bought with that precious blood will ever be found.

The point that the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews is making is that if a man disregards the complete work which CHRIST has performed in the redemption of HIS elect then he has absolutely no grounds upon which he might be found justified before a holy GOD. The *"willful sin"* of which he speaks is defined as the antithesis to the declaration and ground of faith which is found in all of those whom the LORD is pleased to call. *"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)"* (Heb 10:23) *"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."* (Heb 10:38-39) The very livelihood of the saints is found in CHRIST, apart from WHOM they perish.

The sands of time are littered with the carcasses of multitudes who have made professions of faith, been baptized, and given some outward indications of becoming the followers of the LAMB, but who have at some point in time *"come short of it"* (see Heb.4:1) and taken up some alternative or additional means whereby they might seek acceptance with GOD, other than the finished work of CHRIST alone. Religion is the burial ground of many who do not enter into HIS rest.

Ever since the days that CHRIST began to preach upon the earth there have been many who, while making a fair show in the flesh of being HIS followers, have nonetheless turned aside and walked no more with HIM. This was especially true among the many Jewish (Hebrew) "converts"

who, while having been steeped in the traditions of their fathers and convinced of their need to adhere to Moses' law, initially rejoiced in the sound of the Gospel and the freedom from sin which it promised to all who believe.

But, just like that seed which fell on the stony ground, they flourished for a season, but, in time, they returned to the dead works of Moses' law (such as circumcision and Sabbath keeping) and continued going about to establish their own righteousness even as those who came before them who had never made any profession of faith in CHRIST nor claimed to be HIS followers. (see Rom. 10:3) They seemingly recognized the weakness of that law initially upon hearing the gospel, but like a sow that was washed returned to their wallowing in the mire, and became as those *"who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"* (Heb 10:29)

This is an awful place to be found. They would have been better off had they never had any knowledge of the truth than to turn from it and embrace that beggarly way from which they at one time professed to be delivered. One does not have to be a Hebrew to fall into this condition, we see many Gentiles who follow the same path to perdition. Nominal professors of faith in CHRIST are almost innumerable, in this religious world in which we live. Yet it is almost impossible to find those who have absolutely no confidence in anything which they might perform in order to make themselves accepted before the LORD.

Those who are true believers in CHRIST have one LORD, one FAITH, and one BAPTISM. The complete grounds upon which they expect to be justified before the face of a HOLY GOD is that which JESUS CHRIST has performed and established in HIS work as their REDEEMER. They have a conscience which is purged from the "dead works" of the law (or their flesh) and hate the very garment which is stained by the flesh. The only GARMENT which they desire to put on is the spotless robe of CHRIST's righteousness.

These exhortations and warnings of the apostle only fall on the deaf ears of those whom the scripture describes as *"clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots."* (Jude 1:12) They will pay no heed but rather scoff at these admonitions preferring their own way or that of whatever religion they have adopted.

They may have a regard to CHRIST in some measure but they also have a regard unto the dead works of their religion and are content to profess a dual confidence in what they do and what CHRIST has done. This is to disregard the work of CHRIST and is to be found among those whom Paul said he was in doubt of. *"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"* (Gal 3:1-3)

There can be no mixture of that which a man has confidence in, for he will cleave to one and despise the other. A double minded man is unstable and true faith must have a clear object. The OBJECT of saving faith is nothing more or less than JESUS CHRIST and HIM crucified. To cling to any other HOPE is to surely perish and to be found among those who voluntarily fall away from grace (see Gal.5:4) and embrace the dead works which CHRIST has fulfilled and purged.

The admonitions (warnings) that are given in the scripture serve to cause the sons of GOD to examine themselves and the basis of their faith. *"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"* (2Cor 13:5) They are certain that there is no acceptable righteousness other than that of CHRIST and they desire to be clothed upon by HIS righteousness.

The reprobate is not stirred by such warnings but is content to have confidence in his flesh. All of the disciples except Judas were fearful as they asked the LORD if they would be HIS betrayer. (see Mat. 26:22). Judas, on the other hand, embraced his role and was content. mam