

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 TWO MEN YOU MUST KNOW

Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! John 19:5 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. II Samuel 12:7

There is an old adage that describes the foundation to success in business as being “not what you know but who you know.” There is much truth in this adage and it is primarily the reason that most people who are involved in places of political power generally become enriched by their “service”. While the veracity of this adage may not be proven in all cases having to do with monetary success, it is most certainly true in the realm of becoming rich in the Kingdom of GOD.

Neither of these two men of whom we speak can be known by any but those who are born again, or born from above by the SPIRIT of GOD. Without a close acquaintance of both of these men, however, no man shall inherit the kingdom of GOD. One of these men is described in the scriptures as the first Adam who is born of the flesh and is the purveyor of sin and depravity to his offspring. The other is called the SECOND ADAM, or the LORD from HEAVEN, who has tabernacled among men in flesh and blood, without sin and manifesting the only true and perfect righteousness of men which is accepted in the heavens.

The ministry of the SPIRIT of GOD in the earth is to testify of the glory of JESUS CHRIST. (see John 16:14) In so doing HE convinces those (whom the LORD is pleased to enlighten) of these three things, “*Sin, righteousness, and judgment.*” (see John 16:8) The SPIRIT is pleased to use the word of GOD to apply these truths to the mind and heart of those who are awakened by HIS power.

This power is that which causes a man like Saul of Tarsus, who was intent on destroying those who were preaching the gospel of CHRIST, to fall upon his face and acknowledge the LORDSHIP of CHRIST. A revelation of the utter holiness and exaltation of CHRIST is that which reveals to men their sin and depravity. We see this demonstrated on Mount Calvary as a sudden revelation of HIS stature stopped the mocking of one of the thieves and brought him to repentance. So too is everyone of those elect children of GOD, being called from darkness to LIGHT, made to acknowledge HIS perfect righteousness and in the process to hate his own sinful way. This is manifested in Job's confession when the LORD revealed HIMSELF more fully to Job, “*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*” (Job 42:5-6)

You can tell a man that he is a sinner all day and it will have little effect. In fact most men would acknowledge their own imperfections quite readily. You can even teach some men the doctrine of total depravity with their approval. Yet when the LORD is pleased to reveal to a man the absolute majesty and glory which surrounds the KING of GLORY, he will be slain before HIM and he will then know, not simply in his head, but in his heart, that he is a sinner, unworthy of the least of the LORD's mercies, even as the publican who prayed in the temple. Thus he will become fully acquainted with his own corrupt nature and confess as David did, “*For I*

acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” (Psa 51:3-5)

We might say that although every man is born in sin, comes forth from the womb speaking lies, and has a heart bound in foolishness, none will of his own accord recognize the serious condition that he is in. By nature men believe that they have within their own power and understanding to approach GOD at any time and on whatever terms they might so choose. Some even go so far as to define the finer points of religious doctrine in order to determine their own and other’s standing with GOD. *“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Pro 14:12)*

Just like Cain of old they each assume that they can either worship GOD according to their own desire and will or choose not to. There is really no difference in the standing of a man before GOD, whether or not he is “serving GOD” (as a religious man might describe it) as long as he is of that mind. To consider that man has a free will by which he is able to choose the way of GOD is just as much a deadly error as that which the fool makes in denying the ONE who made him. *“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.” (Psa 14:1)*

One “chooses” to be religious by his own “wisdom” or that which he has been taught by men, even as the Pharisee who prayed thus with himself in the temple (see Luke 18:11-12) while the other casts off such notions as beneath himself being wise in his own eyes. *“For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.” (1Cor 1:22)* Yet whether “religious” or not the scripture plainly says, *“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (Rom 3:10-18)*

So that all men by nature are exactly the same, completely estranged from GOD, and abiding under the condemnation of sin. Unless and until they are awakened by grace and enabled to see themselves in that dire condition they shall not seek the LORD unto salvation. The man who considers himself able and willing to believe, will not cast off all hope in his religious endeavor and reliance on the formulations of men whereby he is persuaded that he can approach unto HIM who is inapproachable. (see I Tim.6:16) The infidel perishes in his own willful ignorance without any love for the truth and the religious man perishes in his own supposed righteousness.

GOD who is rich in mercy is pleased to reveal the glory of CHRIST JESUS the LORD, to sinners, otherwise they could never have any knowledge of HIM or themselves. They would go upon their way as Saul of Tarsus, breathing out threatenings and thinking he was doing GOD a service all the while opposing the very TRUTH which he thought he upheld. *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2Cor 4:6)*

It is in and by this revelation that a man is utterly convinced of his own depravity and inability of approaching unto GOD by any other means than through the redeeming blood and complete righteousness of CHRIST. Though a man may be convicted of his sin prior to that revelation, he cannot see himself for what he truly is until he is enabled to see the perfections which dwell in HIM who is the SAVIOR. He is like Job who said, *“Now mine eye seeth THEE”*.

If a man is unacquainted with the glories which reside in the MAN CHRIST JESUS, he cannot truly know of the depravity which resides in his own imperfect flesh. To know CHRIST in TRUTH is to also be apprised of what we are by nature. Blessed is that man who has come to know himself by having been caused to know HIM who is ETERNAL LIFE. mam