

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

GLORIFYING CHRIST

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

John 16:13-15

One of the most momentous events to ever occur upon the earth happened the day that the LORD was pleased to send HIS SPIRIT down to lead HIS people into all truth. Now we are quite certain that there has never been a day in the history of the world when the HOLY SPIRIT has not been present in the earth. *"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen 1:2)*

The LORD our GOD is ONE and wherever HE is, then HIS SPIRIT is there as well. David certainly knew something of what it was to be indwelt by the SPIRIT of GOD. *"He raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will." (Acts 13:22)* Of course the LORD there speaks specifically of CHRIST but David is used as an illustration and was a man greatly blessed by the presence of the LORD and we see him express his greatest fear when he prayed *"Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me." (Psa 51:11)*

Yet the LORD promised to send HIS SPIRIT, which HE called the COMFORTER, in a manner which was, heretofore, not specifically and particularly known to HIS disciples. *"But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39)*

Joel prophesied of this occurrence when he said, *"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit." (Joel 2:28-29)*

The LORD prepared HIS disciples for this event when HE met with them in the upper room after HIS resurrection just before HIS ascension. HE announced HIS purpose to send them into the world as HIS apostles, *"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John 20:21-22)*

As of yet they had no clear understanding as to exactly what it was that HE came into the world to accomplish. They were instructed daily while HE was yet with them, still they did not quite grasp the nature of the Kingdom which HE, as the promised MESSIAH and DELIVERER of Israel, had come to establish in the Earth. We see this clouded view (which was according to HIS design and in keeping with the inability and dullness of men by nature to grasp those things which are spiritual) demonstrated on that Judean hillside just prior to HIS ascension. *"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6)*

HE mildly upbraided them, saying *"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."* (Acts 1:7) But then HE immediately gave them this glorious promise which had implications beyond what they could even imagine at the time. *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."* (Acts 1:8) Thus HE described that to which HE was sending them and the fact that HE would provide them with exactly what they needed to perform the task to which HE sent them.

Just prior to HIS ascension HE had met with them one last time (perhaps in the upper room, though we are not told) teaching them more specifically that which HE came to do. *"Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."* (Luke 24:46-49) In spite of this clear instruction (as we see it now) it was not in HIS purpose to send them forth at that moment but to have them "tarry" or wait at Jerusalem until this momentous event would occur, which had never taken place in the Earth, before or since.

Thus *"when the day of Pentecost was fully come"* (not before or after) HE brought to pass that which HE had given Joel to prophesy. And just as suddenly as the LORD JESUS was taken up from them as they stood gazing, so now HE comes to them opening their understanding and giving them languages which they had never spoken, which is an illustration of the fact that they were declaring a "new" message which they had heretofore not spoken.

Peter stood up boldly in the midst of the multitude, (yes this same Peter who not many days before had cowered before a young maiden and denied that he even knew this man JESUS) and declared the gospel, of the glory of the blessed GOD, in no uncertain terms and no equivocation as to the purpose for which the LORD JESUS had come into the world.

Prior to this event, the disciples of CHRIST were still convinced that the MESSIAH would restore the kingdom of Israel politically and geographically. Their understanding caused them to see the nation of Israel (after the flesh) as being at the center of GOD's purpose. Amazingly many teachers and preachers today believe the same thing.

Yet hearkening back to what the LORD told his disciples in John chapter 16 that the SPIRIT would be sent to them to lead them into all truth. HE said the SPIRIT would glorify HIM. That is the exact purpose for which CHRIST came, that HIS NAME might be magnified in the Earth as the REDEEMER of that people which HE loved from before the foundation of the world.

Thus we see the glory of CHRIST as the center of GOD's purpose in the Earth. This is the reason that the gospel is to be proclaimed. For when the SPIRIT is come HE will speak of CHRIST. HE will magnify the SAVIOR's NAME. HE will magnify the SAVIOR's work. HE will magnify the SAVIOR's purpose and accomplishments.

Many who are quick to tell us that we are not concerned with "evangelism", simply misapply the word "evangelism" to mean turning the gospel from a message of the "glory of the blessed GOD" into a system whereby a conditional offer is made to men that if they will accept "CHRIST", then HE will accept them.

The gospel is not an "offer", rather it is a message that declares the righteousness of JESUS CHRIST. It is a message which declares the glory which surrounds this MAN who thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD, yet took upon HIMSELF the likeness of sinful flesh and died in the room and stead of sinners. It is a message about the faithfulness of CHRIST, who having loved HIS own loved them unto the end.

The glory of this gospel is not primarily about the benefits which CHRIST purchased for HIS elect, though these blessings are manifold in their scope and power. The glory of this gospel rests squarely upon the ONE whom Peter declared on the day of Pentecost. For it is HIS glory which must be magnified if the gospel which is taught by the SPIRIT of GOD is made manifest and those who are appointed to hear it receive it gladly.