

# 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*

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## THE UNITY OF RELIGION

*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

*Proverbs 14:12*

As a casual and interested observer of the ways of man, I have watched as our President has made a whirlwind tour of three nations (regions) of the earth, which represent vastly different cultures, and which are in fact the seat of three completely different religious persuasions.

Yet there is a common thread which is being promoted by our Leader as a grounds for unity and cooperation, and the hopes of a lasting peace in the earth. As a nation's leader it is an admirable quest to seek peace with other nations and an honorable intention to promote unity and cooperation in order to achieve this goal.

This quest for peace, however, is actually a hopeless endeavor which is ultimately doomed to fail, simply because of the corrupt nature of men that brought about war and division in the first place. But in this world, it is, the desired activity of men and their governments to at least make a show of seeking peace with one another, and I certainly would not oppose that effort. We are exhorted, by Paul to pray for those in places of leadership, *"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."* (1Tim 2:1-3)

Yet there is the notion that such a peace can be realized by appealing to the "common thread" of "morality" and the supposed basic "nobility" of the participants in each religion which is thought to give grounds for unity among them. In fact the average person actually believes that this is a true and fruitful ground to have hope that such a cooperation will bring a measure of peace.

Dogmatic religious fervor of all types has fueled wars and rumors of wars since the early days of man's existence. Many have slain and been slain in a quest to see their particular, "god" or ideology triumphant. So it would make sense to the natural man to try to find a common ground upon which all of these "dogmas" and "gods" could exist in harmony. Such a place is thought by them to exist, since the average man believes that all of these religions are actually serving the same god, but just approaching him in different manners and calling him by different names.

In great measure this is true of practically all "religions" which find unity in a shared "morality" and definition of right and wrong (in a general sense), a shared belief in the free-will of man to determine his standing with god, the concept of punishment for evil-doers and the reward of those that do good deeds, along with the notion that all shall share in some sort of eternal afterlife which might be good or perhaps as awful as continually burning, or coming back as a rat or bug.

The teachings of the LORD JESUS CHRIST go completely contrary to the prevailing notions which are naturally received by men. While it is true that the LORD JESUS was a man of peace and did not so much as breath a threatening word to those who meant to do him harm. *"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."* (Isa 50:6) Yet HE also said, *"Think not that I am come to send peace on*

*earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.” (Mat 10:34-36)*

CHRIST HIMSELF is the very “TOUCHSTONE” of hatred which the world and all of its religions do rebel against. As they did in the days when HE walked the countryside preaching and teaching the precepts of HIS Kingdom, to the present hour when HE has sent HIS emissaries into the world declaring the everlasting gospel of JESUS CHRIST and HIM crucified, natural religious men despise HIM and will choose their religion rather than fall down and worship HIM.

Islam, reveres its prophet and gives homage to a god, whose name is unknown in the heavens, thinking to be heard by much praying. There is but ONE PROPHET who has spoken the final WORD of GOD, since HE is the LIVING WORD. *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (John 1:1-3) “Jesus saith unto him, --- He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” (John 14:9)*

Judaism, reveres Moses law and thinks that they shall inherit the kingdom by abiding by it. *“For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” (Rom 10:3)* The Jews have indeed been a blessed people upon the earth, having been given the law and the prophets, yet they perish for lack of knowledge. *“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” (Heb 1:1-3)* This they cannot and will not acknowledge, being blinded.

Roman Catholicism is a seat of idolatry, exalting men in the place of the ONE TRUE GOD, and appointing priests when CHRIST alone is the ONE MEDIATOR between GOD and men. They would continually offer the blood of CHRIST as a sacrifice, when in reality HE has obtained eternal redemption for HIS people by ONE SACRIFICE. *“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.” (Heb 10:12)* Modern “christianity”, (so called) is so caught up in declaring the work of men and the benefits which he can gain by cooperation with GOD that they consider the work of CHRIST as but a part of man's salvation and they define sanctification as some process in which men play an important role.

I am certain that the lovers of man's esteemed religions will accuse me of speaking words of division and striving to tear down rather than build up. Yet those who love the LORD JESUS CHRIST and acknowledge HIS sovereign rule over all things cannot walk together with any who declare any other message than JESUS CHRIST and HIM crucified. To rightly believe in CHRIST is to reject all other foundations and to rest in HIM and the work which HE has solely accomplished, with no input from men. *“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)*

While religious men may find common ground among the so called “great faiths” of the world, the followers of CHRIST seek no other ground of standing than “JESUS blood and RIGHTEOUSNESS, they dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on JESUS NAME.” As religion unites men in all sorts of carnal causes (some even of benefit in this world) the sons of GOD will march under no other standard than the unfurled BANNER of CHRIST, going into battle arrayed in the “whole armor of GOD” with no weapons other than those fashioned by the SPIRIT of GOD. *“(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Cor 10:4-5)* The only unity that they desire is that for which CHRIST prayed, *“I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” (John 17:23)*

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