

# 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 FOUNDATIONS OF THE RIGHTEOUS

*If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*

*Psalms 11:3*

Satan is a master of subterfuge and deceit, lying in wait to destroy those whom he has been enabled to snare in his web of lies. He is aided by the fact that men are in rebellion against GOD by their very nature, and they would rather believe a lie than to fall down in obedience and worship at the feet of an Almighty GOD.

The greatest weapon in his arsenal is carnal religion and irreligion (which is in reality a religion) to which men to a greater or lesser degree are drawn to. Every society and culture upon the face of the earth have hewed them out such cisterns which are broken and hold no water. Some have the appearance of water just like a mirage that appears in the desert when men's mouths are parched and dry and they seek relief. Yet they are each one dependent upon their foundations of free will and levels of righteousness, relative to morality, prayers, and good deeds which they encourage one another to perform with the expectation of blessing from above.

At the heart of these endeavors are smatterings of truth which in the present day "churches" are set forth in such a manner to appeal to the natural understanding of men without giving great offense or stirring up anxiety in the hearers. Entertainment is more important than substance and encouragement is more greatly desired than searching the heart with biblical self examination.

Then there are others which eschew these false notions and propound the very purest forms of doctrine which for all intents and purposes is exactly in line with the letter of truth as it is set forth in the Scriptures. They cross every "tee" and dot every "i" with great precision, yet they rest upon this "teaching" and "preaching" as the very foundation which they assume will support them in the hour of trial which is to come upon the earth.

To be sure; "sound doctrine" is vital to a proper understanding of the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST, but the soundest of doctrine is not sufficient to rest upon, nor can a man discover CHRIST through it, apart from the application of it to the heart by HIS SPIRIT's teaching. This is the message which the LORD delivered to Nicodemus as he came to JESUS by night. "*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" (John 3:3)

To rest upon one's knowledge of scriptural truth is like the "enchanted ground", Bunyan describes in "Pilgrims Progress". Knowing the scriptures can bring such blessing to the sons of GOD, but resting in this "knowledge" apart from a genuine "love of it" is to be as those Paul speaks of to the Thessalonians. (see II Thess 2:10) There is a fine line between approving of sound theology in the flesh and that which drives one to worship in adoration and praise.

David is used by the LORD to speak forth the words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST in this Psalm, as HE declares the vital nature of the "*foundations of the righteous.*" As JESUS of Nazareth, appointed by GOD to fulfill all RIGHTEOUSNESS, walked among HIS fellow men and brethren after the flesh (as well as those brethren after the SPIRIT), HE was touched with the feelings of our infirmities and was acquainted with the trials of HIS people in body and in mind. There was no point upon which HE was not tried nor any circumstance which could arise in the course of the human existence which HE was not familiar with. (see Heb. 4:15)

HE knew that the arm of the flesh would fail and even though HE was a perfect MAN without defect, yet HE "*learned obedience by the things which HE suffered.*" (Heb. 5:8) Thus we see HIM declare, "*In the LORD put I my trust.*" (Psa 11:1)

HE felt the arrows of distress as HIS enemies snapped at HIS feet, like ravening wolves, mocking HIM and ridiculing HIM because of the audacity (as they saw it) which HE expressed in HIS complete reliance upon HIS FATHER, calling them and their religion into question by the things which HE taught, and they despised. HE was indeed "the UPRIGHT MAN" against whom their arrows were strung upon the bows of their tradition, shooting them at HIM time and again.

How frustrated they were that none of these arrows accomplished their intended purpose, but over and over HE declared to them the "*foundations of the righteous*", which HE knew could never be destroyed, lest those who would flee to HIM for refuge should be swept away with the wicked whose destruction is as sure as the everlasting nature of these foundations.

We read in Paul's letter to the Corinthians, "*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*" (1Cor 3:11) Here HE speaks in the singular as he speaks of the ONE FOUNDATION of the sons of GOD. HE says the same thing to the Colossians, "*Christ is all, and in all.*" (Col 3:11) Yet here in the Psalms the LORD speaks of this FOUNDATION in the plural. Every building is built upon "*one foundation*", yet that foundation is made up of many elements, all of which are useful for the purpose that they serve, yet all are but a part of the whole and all rest upon one another. Thus it is proper to consider the "*foundations*" of the righteous in light of the "*FOUNDATION*" of the righteous.

If any one of the elements of a foundation fails then the building cannot stand if each of these elements is vital. A masonry arch is a good example. Remove one stone and the arch will fall since each rests upon the other and each gives to and receives strength from the arch itself. Yet when one looks at a building with such an arch the beauty of the arch itself is noted rather than the individual stones making it up. So too does Paul say, "*Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*" (Eph 2:19-22)

The work of CHRIST is the only work which is acceptable in the courts of Heaven. HE came to do HIS FATHER's will and HE has accomplished that work which can in no wise be overturned or negated as HE undertook the redemption of HIS people and has satisfied all claims of the law in their behalf, fulfilling every jot and tittle of it. Thus HE is both just and the JUSTIFIER of all who believe in HIM. If it is not so; we have no redemption. What can we then do?

HE continues to perform this perfect work in the present hour as Paul says, "*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" (Php 2:13) He describes the result of this work to the Galatians, "*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*" (Gal 2:20) No work of man, regardless of his pedigree is acceptable to the FATHER except it is "the work of CHRIST". HE is the SANCTIFIER and PERFORMER for HIS children and HIS righteousness is seen in them and for them. Those who are hidden in HIM have a perfect RIGHTEOUSNESS. This is the foundation of the RIGHTEOUS. If it is not so, we have no acceptance with HIM. What can we do?

HE shall remain faithful even unto the very end of all things, and will claim HIS own at the last trump to the consternation of the wicked and the delight of the redeemed. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Php 1:6) As Paul encouraged the Thessalonians, "*But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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.*" (1Thes 4:13-18)

The resurrection of CHRIST from the dead forms the very basis of all that we believe to be true and upon which all of our hopes depend as Paul said, "*For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.*" (1Cor 15:16-17) What could we then do? Thanks be unto GOD that our FOUNDATION standeth sure. mam