

# 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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## FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST

*And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.      Acts 13:52*

In 1741, Jonathan Edwards preached a sermon entitled "Sinners In the Hands of an Angry GOD." This momentous discourse was given during of a period of time in the early years of this nation, called "The Great Awakening" and seems; by many accounts, to have been used by the LORD to stir some of HIS people up to seek the LORD, while HE may be found in much the same fashion as HE used Peter's declaration on the Day of Pentecost. "*Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*" (Acts 2:37)

The LORD is sometimes pleased to pour out HIS blessings, in like dramatic fashion, sweeping many of HIS children into HIS kingdom, as HE removes the scales from their eyes and brings them from their innate darkness into HIS glorious LIGHT. "*And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them. They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods.*" (Isa 42:16-17)

The essence of both Peter's declaration and that of Edwards is that which is spoken of by the Psalmist (and quoted by the LORD JESUS) concerning CHRIST. "*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.*" (Psa 118:22) Though Edwards spoke very plainly of the Justice of GOD in condemning sinners and the fact that all men by nature are bent upon their own destruction, he did so in order to point men to look unto HIM who alone is the SALVATION of GOD. The results in both cases demonstrate the power of GOD in snatching HIS people as brands from the burning. "*This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.*" (Psa 118:23-25)

This clear declaration is, presently, nearly silent among those who make claims of being "evangelicals", having been replaced by a feel good message which seeks to sooth the conscience of men, when they are merely concerned with their needs in this world, rather than a confrontation with the stark reality of the depravity of their heart, the approaching doom of all those outside of CHRIST, and the total inability of men to solve their problem apart from the mercy and grace of a sin hating GOD.

Multitudes gather together today to clap their hands and sway to musical entertainment and positive reinforcement messages, delivered by smooth talking orators who prescribe medicine which is easy upon the palate, to men and women who have never felt woe at having offended the great and mighty GOD. They assure their hearers that they can solve their problems by the act of "believing" according to their own free will. Not only that, but they prescribe for them ways in which they can be "filled with the holy ghost" and gain joy unspeakable by the activity of the same will. Greater deceivers cannot be found among men.

The LORD will prepare the soil before HE is pleased to sow HIS seed. HIS method in doing this varies according to the good pleasure of HIS will, but HE will break up the fallow ground nonetheless. Sometimes HE will put the plow in deep and break men with the terrors of fear, as HE did with the Philippian jailer. Then sometimes HE will more mildly confront them with their ignorance of HIS truth as HE did with the Ethiopian Eunuch. At other times he will bring them to their knees as HE exposes HIS glory and the vileness of their self-righteous manner as HE did with the Apostle Paul and Job. But in all cases, HE will bring them to a confrontation of their abject need of a SAVIOR and will give them the knowledge of HIM who is that MIGHTY DELIVERER.

There can be no work of Salvation where there is no repentance, wrought in the sons of GOD by the working of the HOLY GHOST. Repentance is as much the work of the SPIRIT in the sons of GOD as is the awakening of the saints, from the deadness of their sins, to life, wherein they are enabled to behold the glory of GOD in the face of JESUS CHRIST. This repentance is not a mere sorrowful confession of deeds which one has committed but is rather a repudiation of the total contrariness of their sinful flesh to the way of GOD.

This repentance is demonstrated in the words of Job as he said, "*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) It is further manifested with David's broken-hearted confession, "*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) This is a far cry from "making a decision to let the LORD into your heart."

There can be no work of Salvation where there is not a "calling". First and foremost, there must be a "calling" which is performed by the LORD HIMSELF. "*For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*" (Acts 2:39) "*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*" (John 6:44) "*Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*" (2Tim 1:9)

Secondly, and I might add, as a result of HIS "calling"; there must be a "calling" upon the LORD by those who are awakened by HIS SPIRIT to hear the WORD of GOD. "*And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.*" (Joel 2:32) "*Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*" (Jer 33:3) It is impossible for those whom the LORD shall "call" to avoid calling upon HIM, just as a baby is compelled to cry out for its parent. "*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*" (Rom 8:15) "*And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*" (Gal 4:6)

There can be no work of Salvation where there is no indwelling of the HOLY SPIRIT. "*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*" (Rom 8:9-11) "*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*" (1Cor 3:16)

Being filled with the HOLY GHOST is not an optional accessory to Salvation but is rather the evidence of it. The sons of GOD are each given a measure of faith according to the pleasure of GOD, yet none is without faith. In like fashion the degree in which the SPIRIT of GOD is pleased to manifest HIMSELF in each of the sons of GOD also varies, yet none is without that SPIRIT. (see I Cor. chap.12) The SPIRIT which causes men to rejoice with joy unspeakable is the same ONE who convinces men of judgment and produces a contrite heart.

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