

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

JUSTIFIED BY KNOWLEDGE

He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Isaiah 53:11

The prophet Jonah learned a valuable lesson when he was in the belly of the fish for three days. I'm not sure exactly which day it was that the revelation of this truth came to him, but it seems from what we read in the scripture, that whenever he confessed that "Salvation is of the LORD" (Jonah 2:9), he was shortly delivered from this grave he was in. Such must be the confession of anyone who comes into a right understanding of their lost condition as a son of Adam. When the SPIRIT of GOD convinces a man of the lost and helpless state he is in by nature, and reveals unto him the certainty of death and judgement that awaits him, that man will confess that if he is going to be saved it will have to be the LORD who does it. As long as a man thinks in his heart that his acceptance with GOD is in any way enhanced or entered into by something he can do or has done, that man is still a stranger to grace and ignorant of his own deadness in trespasses and sins.

Justification by faith is a biblical truth which is at the heart of true gospel preaching. But like all true concepts, men have twisted and turned this truth and misused it until what some men mean by these terms is not actually what the scriptures mean by them. It is quite common to hear "justification by faith" preached in such a way as to make men think of it as a work of the flesh which they may perform in order to gain eternal redemption. Some teach that faith is the grounds and basis of a man's justification with GOD. They put it like this, when a man believes the gospel, GOD takes notice of his faith and applies righteousness to his account, faith being substituted for righteousness and being the basis upon which the work of JESUS CHRIST is imputed to his account.

The only basis upon which a man can be judged righteous, in the courts of heaven, is the shed blood and righteousness of JESUS CHRIST which is imputed to guilty sinners before they ever drew breath. The only ground of our acceptance in the FATHER's sight is the mediatorial work of the LORD JESUS CHRIST apart from any work that can or shall be done by any of the sons of Adam. We are no more accepted in the beloved (in the courts of heaven) after we have believed than before. The elect sons of GOD have been, and remain, the objects of HIS perfect love and they are honorable in HIS sight solely because of their standing in JESUS CHRIST, their eternal REDEEMER. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (Rom.5:8-9) All other ground is sinking sand.

Now while there can be no equivocation on the fact that the elect are fully and completely justified in the courts of heaven by no action of their own, there is another perspective of justification that does involve the mind of men. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." (Heb 7:19) "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those

sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.” (Heb 10:1-2) The continual offerings under the law, though done in obedience, could never take away sin in the court of heaven, nor in the conscience of man. Because those continual yearly sacrifices only served to testify, that sin was a continual problem that could not be taken away in this fashion. But the bringing in of a better hope did solve this problem. “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; -- For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” (Heb 10:12,14)

The LORD has justified us “by HIS knowledge” as Isaiah wrote. We are made, by HIS grace to comprehend the glorious work which HE has done in our behalf. We are made to rejoice by the work of HIS SPIRIT in us who has caused us to be reconciled to GOD. HE has wrought faith in us that we might believe HIS precious promises and embrace the glorious truth of complete and utter justification in HIS sight. *“For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 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 2:19-20)*

We, who by the grace of GOD have believed the gospel are not only justified in the courts of heaven but also in our mind. The writer of proverbs said that a man is as he thinks in his heart. Paul said, *“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:11)* The gospel message we have been sent with is a message of reconciliation. Indeed we preach that GOD is reconciled to men, but the preaching of the gospel is also to be done in light of that fact, beseeching men , *“be ye reconciled to God” (2 Cor 5:20)*. Paul said *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (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 10:3-5)* *“The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” (Rom.10:8-11)*

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