

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

SINCERE LOVE

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. Ephesians 6:24

There are some phrases that are in common use which are redundant in their terminology. Often we hear men speak of the "absolute sovereignty" of GOD. Now it is true that GOD is absolute and it is true that HE is sovereign. Yet in reality it is not necessary to speak of HIS "absolute" sovereignty because there can be no other type of sovereignty. Either HE is sovereign in all things or HE is not sovereign at all. The same is true when men speak of "absolute predestination"; if GOD predestinates all things (and we most certainly believe that HE does) then that predestination is of necessity "absolute". Some things cannot be left to chance while others are predestinated since all events are related in some fashion. Those who claim to be limited predestinarians (that is those that believe that GOD has only predestinated some things) are no predestinarians at all but believe that blind chance (or fate) must exert the ultimate control. (see Isa.45:5-7; Eccl.7:13; Ps.8:3; 115:3; Am.4:13)

Someone once asked Lester Roloff if he believed in divine healing. His answer was "I didn't know there was any other kind." When I took drivers education back in high school, my driving instructor was always lecturing us about not driving at excessive speeds. He was fond of saying, "if you get in a wreck at 45 miles an hour it will kill you but if you get in a wreck at 70 miles an hour it will kill you dead. The end result was the same in both cases but he did get his point across. So sometimes it is useful to use redundancy in our speech to emphasize a point.

Paul uses this same technique in his letter to Timothy when he says, "*Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.*" (1 Tim 1:5) Now we are quite convinced that there is no "true" faith which is "feigned" (i.e.; faked or false) but he is contrasting this kind of faith (which is of a Divine origin) with that which false disciples produce as a substitute which they purport to be true faith but is the mere product of human religion (see I Tim. 1:6-10)

He does the same here in this passage when he speaks about those that love the LORD JESUS CHRIST in sincerity. True love is always "sincere". "*Charity never faileth.*" (1 Cor 13:8) There is a controversial etymology that says we get our English word "sincere" from the Latin "sincerus" which literally means "without wax". Supposedly this word was used to describe premium sculptures which did not have wax used on them to repair imperfections. When he speaks of those who love the LORD JESUS CHRIST in sincerity, he means that they do so genuinely, without ulterior motive nor out of some laborious duty. A mother loves her child in sincerity, that is, she does not do so because she will gain anything nor does she do so in order to be seen as a good mother. She loves her child because she can do nothing else. It is not a matter of choice but a matter of desire which she cannot escape.

Paul says that grace is operable in all those who love CHRIST in "sincerity" because the only way that a man or woman can do so is that grace has constrained them to. That man who is a recipient of the gift of the new birth cannot decide not to love CHRIST anymore

than the mother can decide not to love her child. GOD has changed the desire of those in whom HE is pleased to work this miracle of new birth. *"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* (Phi 2:13) Those who love HIM in sincerity are those who :

Delight in HIS commandments. HE said , *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* (John14:15) Some have tried to define this as an instruction involving the "Ten Commandments" but HE has reference to all of the things HE has instructed us to do which are much more pervasive than the "ten commandments" which is the embodiment of the old testament law. *"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."* (Mat 5:38-41) This law is more difficult than the "ten commandments" which when spiritually understood will slay all who look at them. (see Rom.7:9-18) Even though we find no comfort in the law and it constantly reveals our innate sinfulness yet we cannot help but delight ourselves in its beauty and rejoice in its holiness. (see Job. 13:15)

Delight in HIS righteousness. *"I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only."* (Psa 71:16) The stumbling block of religious men is that they go about to establish a righteousness of their own. Those who have been born of the SPIRIT are not only quite satisfied with HIS righteousness imputed to their account but they are extremely displeased with any thought that would attribute some acceptance with HIM based on any righteousness discovered in them. A hatred of self righteousness is evident in those who have been given faith in CHRIST alone. Paul said, *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."* (Gal 6:14) That man who is a new creature in CHRIST is well acquainted that *"in my flesh dwelleth no good thing"*. (Rom. 7:18)

Delight in HIS redemptive work. *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."* (1Cor 1:18) One cannot despise what CHRIST has done and love HIM. HE came to save HIS people from their sins (see Mat.1:21) and HE has exactly accomplished that. HE has not provided some generic, cooperative, opportunity for salvation for all men but HE has obtained eternal redemption for HIS elect and they shall never perish because of that which HE has accomplished for them.

Delight in HIS glory as the only true GOD. *"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?"* (John 14:9) We wait for no greater revelation, for HE has revealed HIMSELF. *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* (2Cor. 4:6) HE is the fullness of the GODHEAD bodily.

Delight in HIS resurrection. *"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."* (Phi 3:10) The blessedness of HIS resurrection is not just found in the promise contained therein of the resurrection of our own bodies, but the fact that HE has raised us to the newness of life in the present hour. So that Paul might say, *"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."* (Phil 1:20-21) *"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."* (Rom 14:8) What great and precious promises are delivered unto us!

Delight in HIS return. *"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."* (2Tim 4:8) *"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."* (Rev 22:20-21)