

# 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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## DELIVERED FROM DESOLATION

*The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.*

*Pslalm 34:22*

Finding professors of religion, yea even those that claim to be Christians, is not difficult at all. In fact in certain areas of what is called the "Bible belt", it is almost more difficult to find those who do not profess to be "believers" in CHRIST. There are multitudes of faithful church attendees and performers of many good deeds that abound all around us. Yet all men will ultimately testify of that wherein their trust lies when they are faced with certain doom.

The scripture is abundantly clear that there shall be none who have truly fled to CHRIST for refuge and cast themselves upon HIS mercy who shall ever be confounded or disappointed. *"The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee."* (Ps 9:9-10) *"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded"* (1Pe 2:6)

Yet as clear as this truth is there is also clearly set forth in the scripture the fact that there will be some who have an outward profession of faith, a high moral standard, a record of good works and even the evidence of some form of spiritual warfare who shall nonetheless perish in their sins. The LORD set forth this very scenario in Matthew 7:21-23; *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*

These, whom the LORD identified as those HE did not know, each one confessed exactly wherein their trust lay. They identified their good works and acts of spirituality as that which they were confident would gain them favor with the LORD. The vast multitude of those who make some profession of faith seem to fall into this category. They believe that by performing these good works, preaching and prophesying, and casting out demons, they are doing the FATHER's will. They are not ashamed to even bring these "works" before the LORD as if to impress HIM with their faithfulness or at least to expect that they should receive some recompense for having done these things..

Countless numbers (of such professors) over the last one hundred fifty years have imbibed a message which has told them that it lies within their power to believe and obey the truth of GOD. Thus it is not unusual to find them seeking a place of satisfaction in their profession of faith and bolstering their confidence by pointing out their acts of "righteousness".

Yet that man who is taught of GOD knows that even the very best of any activity which he might ever perform in the LORD's name is but filthy rags in the sight of HIM who is of purer eyes than to look upon sin. Not only that but if a man did every thing that he was commanded to do he would still be nothing but an unprofitable servant according to the LORD's testimony *"So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."* (Luke 17:10)

That man who is taught of GOD has no confidence at all in any act which he might ever perform. Even that of confessing CHRIST or making a profession of that faith. Such a man can have no confidence in his own faith but must cry out, *"help thou mine unbelief."* He can find no place of comfort in the methods and verbiage of the "soul winners". He is not interested in being led to make a decision. Rather he is constantly crying out for mercy and knowing that unless the LORD grants him faith to believe he shall surely and rightly perish. Thus he spends the course of his days hungering after even a morsel of food from the LORD's storehouse and finding no help at all in the works of the flesh and the trappings of religion.

The worldly religionist looks at such groanings and pinings, as weakness and even derides it as no faith at all according to his own understanding (or actually lack thereof). Such a work as this must be wrought in a man's heart by the SPIRIT of GOD and is a foreign concept to those who take great pride in pointing to times and seasons wherein they "prayed through", "got saved", or otherwise made a deal with GOD.

Yet this constant weakness and longing for the courts of GOD is the manifestation of that which the LORD said was HIS will and work in the lives of those HE has called from darkness to light. *"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."* (John 6:29) Those in whom this work is performed do not always recognize it in their own selves even though they can often see its fruits clearly performed in others. Such is that which moved John Newton to pen these words:

'Tis a point I long to know,  
(Oft it causes anxious thought),  
Do I love the Lord, or no?  
Am I his, or am I not?-----  
If I pray, or hear, or read,  
Sin is mixed with all I do;  
You that love the Lord indeed,  
Tell me, is it thus with you?

Gadsbys Hymns #283 (first and fifth verses)

The work of true faith (which is the gift of GOD) does not always cause one to clearly see his own title to mansion's in the sky. For the way which the Christian is called to walk is often hedged about on every side with dark forebodings and genuine doubtings of one's own interest in such glories, .because of the convicting power of the the SPIRIT of GOD who gives them no place of confidence in their own flesh and reminds them of those things done in secret.. But it does indelibly print upon the heart with ink which cannot be erased an abiding confidence in HIM who is the AUTHOR and FINISHER of faith and causes those thus given it to confess with Job, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."* (Job 13:15)

Because of this life of chastening to which the sons of GOD are called, the LORD has ordained that the gospel of JESUS CHRIST be preached, that those called by HIS grace might be encouraged and find true rest in the midst of their weary and often trying journey, *"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins."* (Isa 40:1-2) mam