

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

RECKON, RECKONED, AND RECKONING

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18

Paul was not one who was given to flights of fancy nor did he play games of make believe as many today do when they speak of faith and hope. He used great plainness of speech to declare the reality of the FAITH and the HOPE upon which he stood. *"For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:"* (2Cor 3:11-12) He does not here speak of the basis of his hope as something that may or may not be true, or that somehow depends upon his ability to believe it.

This firm basis of truth is that which buoyed him in the times of great persecution which he endured and as he describes in the text before us he "reckoned" that the manifestation of the glory of GOD revealed in the sons of GOD completely outweighed any inconvenience or suffering caused by these present trials so that no comparison of risk and reward could be made. The Greek word translated "reckon" literally means to "count, compute, or calculate." It is an accounting term which is born out by the use of the same term (in English) in the LORD's parable about forgiveness. (see Mat. 18:21-35).

It is also a word which in some ways is akin to the term, "reconcile" as that term is often used in accounting as "reconciling accounts", which simply means to be sure that they add up. This is what Paul means when he speaks of "reckoning". The Greek word for "reckon" is "logizomai" which has the root word from which we get our English word "logic". True faith is completely "logical" because it has as its basis the LOGOS (true logic) or WORD of GOD. Yet it is completely illogical to the thinking of the natural man, who considers such things as foolish. *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* (1Cor 2:14)

We are not surprised when men count it a waste of time for them to heed the word of GOD, they simply "reckon" it to be unreliable and no amount of teaching or reasoning can change their mind. Yet to those who have been given the gift of "precious faith", the WORD of GOD, is that which is their delight and complete ground of HOPE. They "reckon" it to be more valuable than rubies, diamonds, and gold. *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."* (Psa 1:1-2)

The "faith" which the religious world generally speaks of is a sort of fantasy or make believe. We often hear the hucksters of TV and radio admonishing folks to believe. They tell the gullible that there are many blessings in store for those who can muster up the power to "believe", as though they possess some ability to have faith, which is even intensified when groups of these "believers" come together. They are able to alter the course of history, heal and be healed, and then of course reach in their pocket and send in a "love gift" so that they won't lose their blessing

or healing. I “reckon” such to be a deception and no biblical “faith” at all. The gifts and calling of GOD are without repentance, that which GOD grants can neither be lost nor forfeited.

The concept of true faith has been almost completely sidetracked today by the rise of the concept of “the power of positive thinking”. This dogma which has infiltrated and permeated our society has become the fertile ground of deceivers who have led the masses down the primrose path of “name and claim it” and other related nonsense. I “reckon” that whatever a man believes in which is not spelled CHRIST JESUS the LORD, is a sideshow.

Biblical faith is that which is purely “objective”. By that I mean that it always rests on a BASIS and is not the operation of ones desires, devotion, or ability, but rather is the gift of GOD which causes a man to believe in JESUS CHRIST. HE is the FOUNDATION and BASIS for true faith. HE is our FAITH, we neither have or need any other. This has nothing to do with chain letters or prayer circles. Prayer does not change things, GOD changes men, often through the means of prayer as the SPIRIT of GOD works in them both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure.

Paul goes on to say, *“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom 6:11)* Some tell us that what Paul means here is not completely true. That we are somehow not really dead to sin, but that we are to simply act as though we are dead to sin, by mortifying the deeds of the flesh. Such a thought process is not in keeping with what Paul means by “reckon”. You cannot “reckon” something to be true that has no basis in fact. Paul said, *“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. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” (Gal 2:19-21)* If a man is a new creature in CHRIST then HE is dead to sin and should “reckon” it so, as one calculates the basis upon which he stands.

Paul clearly does not teach that the children of GOD never sin, in fact he goes on to lament the fact that sin is present with him and that he cannot do the things that he would nor often refrain from the things that he would not. (A fine example of “free” will, I might add.) So how are the sons of GOD “dead to sin”? Most importantly in this; that “sin shall not have dominion over them”. When the sons of GOD were unregenerate, they walked according to the course of this world. They were “free from righteousness” and willing subjects unto bondage. Yet CHRIST has now set them free and they are no longer in this bondage.

When the slaves in this country were freed following the War of Northern Aggression (aka the Civil War, a true oxymoron) they were dead to the bondage of their former masters. Yet because most had spent their whole lifetimes subject unto this bondage it took awhile before they would not react to the sound of their former master’s voice, probably most were never completely rid of it. Yet as they “reckoned” themselves to be free from that bondage (their true state) they were able to rejoice in their freedom. Our life is hid with CHRIST in GOD.

The purpose of the preaching of the gospel is *“to preach good tidings unto the meek; ----- to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. (Isa 61:1)* Reckon therefore yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin and alive unto CHRIST, if so be that the SPIRIT of GOD dwells in you. This is not make believe but the true work of GOD in the behalf of HIS own.

“For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted (i.e. reckoned) unto him for righteousness.”(Rom 4:3) His FAITH (i.e. the OBJECT of his faith) was reckoned unto him as righteousness. This is the very definition of imputation, the righteousness of CHRIST was counted by GOD to be his righteousness, the same as all of those chosen in CHRIST.

We are reckoned by GOD as righteous because of CHRIST who is our FAITH. We are presently reckoning ourselves to be the sons of GOD, those who are delivered from sin, and who owe no allegiance to this flesh which does so easily beset us because of its love for sin. But we are more than conquerors through HIM that loved us and gave HIMSELF for us.

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