

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

WIST YE NOT

And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

Luke 2:49

One of the greatest marvels that has ever been witnessed by men or angels is the incarnation of the eternal SON of GOD. The manner in which the Everlasting GOD, who inhabits eternity, did see fit to reveal HIMSELF, to corrupt men, in the person of JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, is a mystery which cannot in anywise be fully fathomed by any who are mortal, even in this age wherein the full scope of HIS ministry has now been manifested.

That HE who is without beginning or end, should take upon HIMSELF the flesh and blood of a man, and subject HIMSELF to the death of a condemned sinner is still beyond natural comprehension. We do not claim to fully understand how it could be so, but according to the gift of faith, we do cast all of our hopes upon that very fact and repudiate all contrary teaching.

The DEITY of CHRIST was never fully apparent to those who knew HIM, in the flesh, until after HIS ascension. HIS community and family were not completely knowledgeable of the role HE fulfilled as a PROPHET much less as the only begotten SON of GOD who came into their midst as an infant and whom they saw grow up before their very eyes. (see Mat.13:54-58) The fact that HE dwelt with them for approximately thirty years before embarking on the three years of ministry which manifested HIS role as a SAVIOR and defined HIS teaching as the WORD of GOD did not fully convince them of who HE really is.

When we view this account in Luke's gospel of the young LORD JESUS, reasoning and questioning with the biblical scholars and teachers of HIS day, it shows the inability of anyone to know the nature of HIS person and work apart from that particular revelation. If anyone should have known HIM by nature it would be HIS own mother and her husband Joseph. Both had been given a heavenly message concerning HIS birth and NAME, and both had watched HIM as HE grew up to be a fine young lad, of twelve years old. Yet they could but marvel at HIS actions, here in the temple, as HE mildly rebuked them for their lack of perception of GOD's purpose, even as HE did the disciples on the road to Emmaus when HE said, "*O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.*" (Luke 24:25)

This is not to say that they were not, from time to time, astonished at HIS demeanor and conduct as a young child and then an adult. Sometimes we hear parents remark about how well behaved and perceptive their children are. We seldom see them in the same light and often wonder which children they are speaking of. Yet here was the LORD JESUS as a young boy who never lied, was never selfish, was perfectly obedient to HIS parents at all times. HE was indeed a special child and surely Mary and Joseph recognized it.

Yet there was an aspect of HIM which they could not fully see which was out of the realm of the flesh to perceive. This is that which can only be seen by the eye of faith, which sight is not that of the flesh but of the SPIRIT. It is that which is only seen as GOD is pleased to open a man's eye and grant him the gift of faith. All men can see the mighty wonders of creation and can in a

measure praise GOD for it, yet we read in the letter to the Hebrews, *“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”* (Heb 11:3)

We live in an area where it is difficult to find anyone who does not have some knowledge of the fleshly facts of the gospel. That CHRIST was born of a virgin. That HE went about doing good. That HE was wrongly crucified by wicked men. That HE rose from the dead. That HE ascended back to Heaven from whence HE shall return. Relatively few can be found who will openly doubt or deny these things, here in what is often referred to as the Bible Belt.

In fact it is almost as difficult to find great numbers who do not profess some sort of “belief” in what they perceive to be the work of the SAVIOR. Most that we come in contact with would call themselves “believers”. Many confuse a reception of these sort of facts concerning JESUS CHRIST with what the scripture describes as *“believing on HIM”*. It would be an understatement to say that the vast majority of professing Christians in this age believe that they are “Christians” because they have made some sort of choice to be, joined some organization purporting to be “the or a” church, been baptized, catechized, or else instructed to be. They can tell you the time and the hour when “they believed” or joined up. Some even have certificates to prove it. Many will argue for hours to prove that their “church” or “organization” is “the” true one, in the mistaken belief that by being a member of such puts them in an elite and certain position of salvation.

Most base their confession of faith upon the belief that CHRIST died to save each and every man on the planet. Then by acting in their own free will to embrace and ratify what HE has done in making their salvation possible they consider that they have allowed HIM to fulfill HIS will by asking and allowing HIM to “save” them. Their “salvation” in their own mind depends on their “belief” in HIS work or their obedience to HIS commands, rather than in HIS work alone. Only as a man is given the eye of faith by the SPIRIT of GOD can he ever comprehend the difference.

The LORD JESUS said to Mary and Joseph, “Wist ye not”, which means in the current vernacular, “did you not know?” And so we ask each one, “Wist ye not?” -----

That JESUS CHRIST is the ETERNAL LORD of Glory who inhabits eternity and does according to HIS will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that there is none that can stay HIS hand or question HIS doing. (see Ps. 115:3 ; Dan.4:35)

That JESUS CHRIST has loved HIS people which were hidden and chosen in HIM, from before the foundation of the world, with an everlasting and unchanging love. (see Eph. 1:3-12)

That JESUS CHRIST has obtained eternal redemption for those whose names were written on HIS breast, by HIS blameless life, HIS awful, ignominious death, HIS glorious resurrection, and HIS triumphant ascension to sit at HIS FATHER’s side where HE ever liveth to make intercession for them. (see Heb. 7:24-28; 9:11-28)

That JESUS CHRIST did take upon HIMSELF the sin of HIS people as their SUBSTITUTE and has imputed HIS righteousness to them so that HE does present HIS elect bride to HIS FATHER as one without spot or blemish. (II Cor. 5 19-21; Rom. 8:1-3; Eph.5: 25-27)

That JESUS CHRIST does send HIS SPIRIT into the world to give eternal life unto as many as are ordained to it, even as many as the LORD our GOD shall call. In this miracle of the new birth, they are awakened from the deadness of their sins, given faith and caused to hear and believe on JESUS CHRIST whom they gladly embrace, worship, and follow. (Acts 2:39;13:48; John 10:27)

That those who believe are indwelt by HIS SPIRIT and confess that it is not by works of righteousness which they have done but according to HIS grace and mercy that they are saved.

Lo! here is a feast of delicate food, For prodigals dressed, yet costly and good.

Our Father provided this Lamb for a treat; And if you are minded, you freely may eat.

None other repast my spirit would have; Thy flesh let me taste, sweet Lamb, and yet crave;

Thy blood ever flowing my pleasant cup be; Thy fleece on earth growing make clothing for me.

Thus covered and fed at thy proper cost, Thy path I would tread which pleases my host.

Thy patience inherit, thy lowliness prove, Catch all thy sweet Spirit, and burn with thy love.