

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

ONLY

He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved. Psalm 62:2

The first commandment which the LORD gave to Moses for the children of Israel, was "*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*" (Exo 20:3) HE did not mean that it was alright to worship other gods as long as HE was in first place, but rather they were not to have any other objects of worship before HIS face; period. In fact the first three of these ten commandments center around the very fact that HE is "*a jealous God*" (Exo 20:5) who demands respect and will brook no rival in thought or deed among those whom HE calls HIS own. HE explains the extent of this "jealousy" in Deuteronomy 4:24, "*For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.*"

Man, by nature, is "polytheistic" in his worship (i.e.; worshipping many gods, all of his own design) and "anthropomorphic" in his theology (i.e.; attributing human characteristics and limitations to GOD), (see Rom. 1:25) and recoils at the notion of an absolute and unwavering GOD who predestines all things and demands that the affection of men towards HIM be unmixed with that of anything else. Thus men are completely shocked at the teaching of the LORD when HE said; "*If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*" (Luke 14:26)

By nature men desire a god who can best be described as a big lovable puppy dog who is so desirous of their free will affection that he will roll over and wet himself in order to gain it. This god of their imagination will gladly stand by and take any sort of love which they are willing to give him and in whatever measure or rank they are willing to assign to it. They are certain that whatever sort of activity of worship, which they design or desire, is perfectly pleasing to him since he is desperate to gain the devotion of men and their free-will love even if he has to share it with other deities or objects of human desire. They believe he will settle for what he can get.

The god who is worshipped in the majority of organizations calling themselves churches and claiming to be the followers of CHRIST is basically one who exists to ensure their happiness. They have no regard for an absolute GOD who does all things according to the good pleasure of HIS will and who laughs at the calamity of the wicked and mocks when their fear cometh in judgment. They are aghast at the thought of someone pointing these things out in the scriptures and are quick to ignore such matters in favor of their little puppy dog god, who wags his tail and licks their face whenever they take a few minutes out of their busy schedule to pet him.

It is very common to hear men preach that the eternal salvation of men is dependent on the work of CHRIST. It is not very common, however, to hear men preach that this salvation depends on CHRIST "only", or CHRIST alone. The prevalent teaching of our day says that this salvation has two parts. One is performed by CHRIST and the other must be performed by men, making salvation a cooperative effort. How often do we hear men say that men are "justified" in the courts of heaven only after they have "believed" or "received" that which CHRIST has done.

In this fraudulent and heretical scheme, man is said to hold the key to his eternal happiness (making himself a god in the process) in the palm of his own free will. This plan says that a man is not "saved" by the work of CHRIST alone, but by the addition of his acceptance of it which "enables" or "lets" GOD save him by opening the door to his heart and allowing HIM to come in.

This is no salvation at all but is a mere pipe dream concocted in the pit of hell to rob GOD of the glory in salvation and to deceive those who are led captive by him. The very concept of man being able to "let" GOD do anything is totally contrary to the revelation of the HOLY GOD, who says, *"I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."* (Exo 33:19) *"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God."* (Rom 3:11) *"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."* (Psa 65:4)

Three times in Psalm 62 (verses 2,5,6) David declares that the LORD "only" (i.e.; alone) is his defense and salvation. He said he would wait "only" on the LORD for deliverance. This is exactly what Peter confessed when the LORD, (in light of many of HIS disciples turning away from HIM) asked the twelve *"Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."* (John 6:67-69) *"Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him."* (Deu 4:35)

The LORD JESUS demonstrated this pure principle of singular worship during HIS temptation by Satan. Satan (being the god of this world; see John 12:31, 2 Cor.4:4) offered to give HIM the glory of this world if HE would but worship him. The LORD replied with no equivocation, *"Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."* (Mat 4:10) This is exactly opposite of that response which Eve and thus Adam gave.

When the LORD took Peter, James, and John with HIM to the mount of Transfiguration, HE appeared before them with Moses and Elijah, in a glorious state. Peter demonstrated the penchant of natural man towards religion when he sought to equate the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) with CHRIST. Yet there came a VOICE from heaven which clearly said, *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."* (Mat 17:5)

This revelation brought great fear upon them until HE touched them and they heard HIS words, *"Arise, and be not afraid."* (Mat 17:7) When they arose from their prostrate condition, *"They saw no man, save Jesus only."* (Mat 17:8) As glorious and true as the law and prophets are, there must be no mistaking that their only purpose was to bring us to CHRIST, that HE alone (only) might be glorified. *"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."* (John 1:17; see Gal. 3:24,25)

The church has been plagued down through the years, (and still is) by those who, (either through ignorance or a desire to deceive), continue to exalt the law of Moses and who seek to lay it upon the free born sons of GOD as a yoke which they are required to keep. The whole book of Galatians is written to correct such error and to demonstrate the superiority of CHRIST only. HE has not changed the law but rather has demonstrated its complete and perfect fulfillment. There is nothing left undone which the law demanded and it stands as perfectly fulfilled in its jot and tittle for those who are found in CHRIST. We have no law but CHRIST JESUS and HIM crucified. This is that perfect law of liberty and that which Paul describes in this fashion, *"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."* (Rom 8:2)

Then there are those who are enamored with "prophecy" as to its future fulfillment, not understanding that all prophecy is given for the purpose of CHRIST's exaltation. *"For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."* (Rev 19:10) If a man claims to know how the future will yet unfold but does not see CHRIST as the CENTER, SUM, and SUBSTANCE of all prophecy then that man has missed the mark regardless of his credentials or theories. Many claim to be able to define the mark of the beast, who cannot decipher the glory of CHRIST in every prophecy given in the scriptures. *"Sir, we would see Jesus."* (John 12:21)

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