

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

SANCTIFIED, PRESERVED, AND CALLED

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. *Jude 1:1*

One of the characteristics or evidences of the grace of GOD at work in the lives of GOD's people is humility. To this end we see the words of the Apostle Paul, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Rom 12:3) Thus we see Jude identifying himself as the "servant of JESUS CHRIST". A man cannot be the servant of CHRIST unless he is the servant of his fellow saints.

Even as the LORD had said, "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him." (Mat 20:27-29) Many who are given places of leadership, clamor to occupy the chief seats among the saints, desiring the accolades of men, and to be esteemed highly for their gifts and calling. Some even glory in titles bestowed upon them.

Yet the LORD demonstrated HIS own "mastery", not by demanding servitude, but by girding HIMSELF with a towel and washing the feet of HIS disciples. HE set an example which is completely contrary to the reason of the flesh. Peter, who was a subject of the LORD's demonstration, manifested this reasoning, as he at first balked at having his MASTER stoop to wash HIS feet. The LORD told him that though he did not understand this now, he would at a later time. (see John 13:7). The proof of this happening is seen in his later exhortation to those who were in places of leadership. "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." (1Pet 5:1-3)

Most problems that arise in the assemblies of the saints are solved by the manifestation of GOD's grace, as the SPIRIT moves the saints to demonstrate humility before one another, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Php 2:3-8)

By the same token when the SPIRIT's work of humility is absent from an assembly, there will be a clamoring for position and influence, backbiting (i.e.; criticism) one against another, and a general disregard of the very essence of what it is to walk in a CHRIST-like fashion. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1John 4:20) To love the brethren is to hold them in high esteem, and to regard their needs and desires above our own.

Some think that sound doctrine is a substitute for humility, but any doctrine which does not promote humility cannot be the doctrine of CHRIST. Regardless of what a man “knows”, he cannot be walking in “truth”, if he is not desiring the fruits of righteousness which are bestowed by HIM who has demonstrated a meek and humble SPIRIT. (see I Tim.6:3-11) *“That no one of you be puffed up for one against another. For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”* (1Cor 4:6-7)

Jude goes on to speak of the “sanctification” of the saints by “GOD the FATHER.” Now I am sure that this verse must cause some consternation to the Nicene Trinitarians and those who teach the concept of “progressive sanctification”. Those who hold the “strict” (supposedly orthodox) view of the various “offices” of each member of the “TRINITY” would generally ascribe the work of “sanctification” to the “HOLY SPIRIT”. Yet here Jude clearly says the saints are sanctified by the “FATHER.”

Without getting bogged down in theological jargon, suffice it to say that a proper view of both the GODHEAD and “sanctification” are set forth here by Jude. He does not speak of some ongoing, incomplete work, but rather refers to an action taken by the ONE true and living GOD, to set apart a people whom HE has loved everlastingly, unto salvation. Thus the sons of GOD are completely “*sanctified*” by an activity entirely outside of themselves. Paul refers to this when he says, *“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”* (1Cor 1:30-31)

Then Jude says that these same saints are “*preserved*” in JESUS CHRIST. This preservation is not speaking of some action on the part of GOD which takes place after a man has done something, as though it is limited to the present and the future. This “preservation” is rooted in the past and had its beginning from before the foundation of the world. It does not begin when a man believes, but rather a man will be caused to believe as a result of this preservation. *“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.”* (2 Tim 2:19)

The scripture speaks of the ungodly being “*reserved unto judgment*” (see II Pet.2:9). But the saints are “preserved”, unto the obtaining of glory and then kept from falling by the faithfulness of HIM who is their KEEPER. (see Jude 1:24) We see the manifestation of this principle in those Gentiles who embraced the gospel. *“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”* (Acts 13:48)

The saints are not “preserved” in their own persons, nor do they in anywise stand upon their own, rather, Jude says they are “*preserved in JESUS CHRIST*”. HE is the LIFE of HIS people, he that hath the SON hath life. They are “*preserved*” according to the covenant promise which was given to the SON by the FATHER. They are “*preserved*” from the condemnation of the law, since HE has stood as their SUBSTITUTE in satisfying the justice of a broken law. They are preserved from the darkness of death because HE has triumphed over the grave and they are kept from it, by the imputation of HIS righteousness and HIS resurrection. This rests upon that union of CHRIST, with HIS brethren from before the foundation of the world, thus they are preserved “*in HIM*”. Who can disannul it?

Then Jude says these same saints are “*called*”. When Peter stood on the day of Pentecost, he said, *“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”* (Acts 2:39) It is a great privilege to be among those who are “*called*”. This word literally means “appointed” and “invited”. If a man is appointed to hear this invitation, he, most assuredly, shall come to CHRIST. *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.----- And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”* (John 6:37,39) This is the “calling” of the saints. mam