

# 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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## PATIENT WAITING

*And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. II Thessalonians 3:5*

The majority of Paul's teaching to the various churches to which he penned "epistles" (i.e.; letters) centers in the all sufficiency of CHRIST and HIS redemptive work in the behalf of HIS elect bride. In the Roman "epistle" he magnifies the glory of HIS grace in ordaining HIS elect unto salvation through the blood of CHRIST. He is not the least bit equivocal about the Sovereign right of the LORD to ordain some vessels (i.e.; men) unto honor (i.e.; eternal salvation) which they did nothing to deserve, while appointing others to the eternal damnation which they do deserve. (see Romans chapter 9). He sets forth to them the continual struggle that exists in the born again child of GOD wherein he is now engaged in a warfare with his flesh that did not heretofore exist. (see Romans chapter 7)

In his Corinthian "epistles" he addresses many issues which had arisen in the early days of these churches which were established in the midst of the most heathen cultures imaginable. In these letters we are reminded how akin the problems that faced them are to those present in our own pagan culture. Yet in doing so he does not adopt the concept of trying to psychologically deal with these issues, nor to become the morality police, but rather reminds them of the pit from which they were dug and the rock from whence they were hewn, and by whose HAND they were brought out. "*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 4:7) He reminds them that he has but one message and exhorts them not to stray from it. "*For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*" (1Cor 2:2)

To the Galatians he writes with amazement at how quickly they had begun to seek to perfect themselves in the flesh by returning to the bondage of making the "Law of Moses" to be the believers rule of life, rather than the Law of CHRIST. He defined for them the freedom which they are given in CHRIST and how the "FAITH of the gospel" is manifested. "*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) The all-sufficiency of the blood of CHRIST is clearly seen.

He begins his letter to the Ephesians by reminding them of the blessings that are forever theirs in CHRIST. "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*" (Eph 1:3-6) He gives them no place to glory except in HIM who is their CREATOR. "*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*" (Eph 2:10)

To the Philippians he defines the antidote of human vainglory as HE declares the glory which belongs to CHRIST. "*Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is*

above every name: *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*" (Php 2:9-11) He reminds that all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags as he exhorts them to find their all in CHRIST. *"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." (Php 3:8-10)*

He declares the pre-eminence of CHRIST to the Colossians. *"And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."* (Col 1:17-19) He warned them to flee from religious men and those who would establish traditions upon which one would rely upon rather than CHRIST. *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."* (Col 2:8-10)

To the Thessalonians he writes words of encouragement and expressions of joy at the remembrance of their calling from darkness to LIGHT. *"For ye are our glory and joy."* (1Thess 2:20) He does so by reminding them who it is that called them and when HE determined to do so. *"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2Thess 2:13-14)*

Thus, we see him pressing them to be those who *"patiently wait"* upon the LORD. Such exhortations as these which are scattered among all of his epistles are not carnal propositions of "positive thinking" nor attempts at stirring them up to some activity of "faith" in their flesh. Rather his exhortations are given in light of them being the *"called according to HIS purpose."* You cannot put new wine into old bottles. Such urgings are pressed upon the sons of GOD as new creatures who operate in a different realm than the rest of the world which scoffs at the certainty of HIS return and the majesty of HIS law.

He speaks of the day of the LORD coming as a *"thief in the night"*. *"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."* (1Thess 5:2) Yet he clearly tells them that they are not *"of the night"*. *"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (1Thess 5:4-6)*

The scriptures teach us to *"wait upon the LORD."* In one sense we have no other choice, for it is impossible to cause the LORD to "hurry up" or alter HIS ordained purpose. Yet Paul speaks here not of simply "waiting" on the LORD as an inevitability but rather to be those who enjoy the consideration of HIS coming and the glory of HIS precepts. There is a difference between *"waiting"* and *"patiently waiting."* The man who *"waits patiently"* rejoices in the knowledge that when HE shall appear, we shall be like HIM for we shall see HIM as HE is.

The man who "waits patiently" is satisfied with whatsoever HE is pleased to do. Some of the great "prophets" of our day will no doubt be disappointed when HE comes because their prophetic schemes will be overturned, much like the Pharisees who could not believe that CHRIST would come as HE did. Yet those who waited patiently for HIM, as Simeon, rejoiced to see HIM. *"And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him."* (Luke 2:25) He rejoiced saying, *"For mine eyes have seen thy salvation."* (Luke 2:30) In this same fashion did the eighty four year old prophetess, Anna, delight in HIS appearance.

May we be found patiently waiting for HIM who said, *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* (John 14:15) The keeping of HIS commandments is not to view them as a checklist, but rather to be as David who said, *"With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes."* (Psa 119:10-12) This is to *"patiently wait."* mam