

# 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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## THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

*That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.*

*Colossians 1:10*

Paul's love and concern for those churches to which the LORD had called him to nurture is plainly evident in his epistles. This love often caused him to speak quite pointedly and sometimes very sternly to these brethren. Yet by the LORD's grace he faithfully delivered the WORD of GOD to them in a very unequivocal fashion. His message to these churches always centered upon CHRIST and the work which HE was pleased to perform for and in those whom HE had called out of darkness and into the LIGHT. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph 2:8-10)*

By contrast, we live in an age when the vast majority of those who profess to be the followers of CHRIST are more concerned with what they are (supposedly) doing for CHRIST than what HE has done for them. They are exhorted, cajoled, and stirred up by men trained in the art of psychology, all using similar techniques developed by great motivators and shamans. Money (vast sums of it) is at the center of this "work", which all are assured the kingdom of GOD is dependent upon. Much effort is put into gathering funds (for this project or that) which these hucksters assure their followers are needful to ensure that the "gospel" (as they would define it) is proclaimed. Not to mention the blessings which are promised to those who dig the deepest and do the most and various techniques they can employ to guarantee that they have a happy and productive life with a great legacy.

Paul did exhort the people of GOD to action, but the activity which Paul enjoined the sons of GOD to walk in was not in outward deeds of the flesh, but rather in seeking to know the LORD in the fulness of HIS glory and the manifestation of HIS grace, demonstrated in HIS redemptive work for unworthy sinners. His confession was his exhortation, *"what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for 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; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."* (Php 3:7-11)

Thus, we see him desiring that the Colossians be found *"increasing in the knowledge of GOD."* Now on the one hand this is an impossible task for the flesh, as Job so eloquently expressed. *"Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."* (Job 11:7-9) Religious men often think that they can "find out GOD." I have heard many of them say that they have "found the LORD", as if by their own diligence, they had made some discovery which greatly benefitted both them and the LORD. Such

talk is merely an evidence of the folly of men and the penchant of them to make GOD to be as they desire HIM to be. This is idolatry.

Any true "knowledge of GOD" that a man might gain, must be bestowed upon him by the grace of GOD, "*Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting.*" (1Tim 6:16) It is with this in mind that Paul expresses his desire for these brethren at Colosse. He speaks to them of their having heard the WORD of TRUTH in the Gospel which came to them by the power of the SPIRIT; causing them to "know" the "grace of GOD in TRUTH." (see Col.1:5,6) As he says to the Romans, "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*" (Rom 10:17) CHRIST is the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our FAITH, so let no man doubt who is the SOURCE of the "knowledge of GOD" which is brought to the sons of GOD. This is the basis of Paul's prayer for them.

Any true "knowledge of GOD", involves being "*filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.*" (Col 1:9) No man, by his own power, can arrive here. "*There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*" (Rom 3:11) A "knowledge" of HIS will is not seeking to delve into those "secret things" which are not given to men, (see Deut.29:29) but rather into those things which HE has revealed. "*The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*" (John 1:18) JESUS CHRIST is the REVELATION of GOD to men. The man who has seen HIM has seen GOD. HE has come to do HIS FATHER's will, "*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. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*" (John 6:39-40)

The true "knowledge of GOD" is that which causes the sons of GOD to be "*Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.*" (Col 1:11) The joy of the LORD (not ours but HIS), is our strength, as we look to HIM "*who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*" (Heb 12:2) The clearer vision that a man has of HIM who suffered in his behalf, triumphing over all of HIS enemies, the more joyous that man can be, for in the knowledge of HIS redeeming work, the freedom, deliverance, and sanctification of the sons of GOD is distinctly viewed.

The true "knowledge of GOD" is that which produces thanksgiving. "*Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*" (Col 1:12) What do any of us have that we have not received and what greater gift can be bestowed upon a guilty sinner than to be made a "*partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.*" How could such a thing come to pass except that GOD who is rich in mercy should snatch us as brands from the burning and give us eyes to see the glory of GOD in the face of JESUS CHRIST. "*This is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.*" (1John 1:5-6)

The true "knowledge of GOD" is that which serves as a constant reminder to us, of the pit from which we were dug and the rock from whence we were hewn (see Isa.51:1) "*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.*" (Col 1:13) As Abraham was called out of heathen darkness, so too are all of those who inhabit the Kingdom of GOD. "*Ye must be born again.*" Just as those in the valley of dry bones were made to live again, so too is every inhabitant of Zion, through no power of his own. "*Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*" (John 1:13)

The true "knowledge of GOD" causes the focus, of those so blessed, to be placed upon the redemptive work of CHRIST as the center of GOD's purpose in all things. "*In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*" (Col 1:14) CHRIST's redemption of HIS elect is not just one of the benefits of the children of GOD, but rather is the basis upon which all blessings come to them and the purpose for which HE created the world and placed them in it. This is why Paul declared quite plainly. "*For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*" (1Cor 2:2) Oh that we might be filled with the "knowledge of GOD!" Do you know HIM or are you simply satisfied with what you know?

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