

Welcome friends to another broadcast of “Morsels for Zion’s Poor”

Charles G. Finney began preaching around 1825 in upstate New York. He instituted many of the unscriptural practices of “modern evangelism”. He was of the opinion that men had a completely free will and could influence GOD to pour out HIS blessings upon them by an adoption of morality and a devoted life of prayer. He believed that men were the cause of their own salvation and brought their own faith to GOD rather than receiving it from GOD.

His message was widely and happily received and for a season appeared to usher in a new era of spiritual prosperity. Yet, as in all endeavors of the flesh, the glory of GOD took second place to the glory of men and their accomplishments, and the lasting effects of his errors remain with us today in the rank and file of so-called Christendom. One of his more egregious errors which persists in the minds of many today, is that men can by their own efforts, prayers, and devotion, cause GOD to pour out HIS blessings and send “revival”.

We certainly believe in the constant need of GOD’s people for “revival” and hope to join with Habakkuk in imploring the LORD for such. *“O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.”* We often find ourselves in a cold and indifferent frame of mind due to the weakness and wickedness of our own flesh, and only because HE works in us both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure, do we desire with David, *“to see THEE as we have seen THEE in the sanctuary.”* We delight in the words of the Psalmist who sought the LORD saying, *“Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.”*

Quite in contrast to Finney’s appeals to the natural man to “cause” GOD to hear him through *“much praying”*; the Psalmist makes all of his appeal to the LORD, recognizing that unless the LORD is pleased to *“turn us again”* we cannot even desire HIS presence, much less call upon HIS NAME in such a fashion as to compel HIM to hear us. The man who does not recognize that all of his blessings, faith, obedience, and true prayers are the gift of GOD which are bestowed according to HIS sovereign pleasure, is a man who is not acquainted with the GOD of the Bible. *“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”* Left to himself every man will be consumed by his own corruption.

The Psalmist’s prayer is not to an imaginary deity whose blessing is dependent upon man’s effort and endeavor. Rather his appeal is to the *“LORD GOD of hosts.”* This literally means HE who has all power and is the COMMANDER of the hosts of heaven as well as those of the Earth. As Nebuchadnezzar learned, *“all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”* HE is not a GOD who waits upon the activity of mans “free will”, but rather is the ONE who causes HIS people to be willing in the day of HIS power.

The Psalmist desires the presence of the LORD HIMSELF, as he says, *“Cause THY FACE to shine”*. This is exactly what Paul describes to the Corinthians when he said, *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”* There is no other avenue of blessing to the sons of men than that which arises in and through a knowledge of JESUS CHRIST as the SAVIOR of sinners and the LORD GOD of Heaven and Earth. Paul willingly cast off all of his religious and cultural traditions for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST. *“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.”* Then the Psalmist brings forth the conclusion of that work which he desired for the LORD to perform. *“We shall be saved.”* He understood that what the LORD undertakes to perform will be done and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. One of Finney’s errors was to define salvation as something which men participate in. Yet the Psalmist clearly states, *“But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble.”* *“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it, except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”* Have you been cleansed by CHRIST? *“Thy free grace alone,”* #11 ***if you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at fortheepoor@windstream.net***