

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XVIII

Issue 22

*Published occasionally for Zion's mourners*

*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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## STABLISHED, ANOINTED, AND SEALED

*Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. II Corinthians 1:21-22*

The Apostle Paul was, by the grace of GOD, a man with singularity of purpose. He had no time for the games which religious men play. He stuck to the ONE MESSAGE which the LORD sent him to declare. (see I Cor. 9:16) He sought no place of privilege among those he ministered to nor did he minister among them for earthly gain. He did not teach men simply by his words but rather by his example. *"For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us."* (2Thes 3:7-9)

The LORD most certainly makes provision for those whom HE sends to labor in HIS vineyard, and every workman is worthy of his hire. Yet the rise of the notion that the ministry of word and doctrine is a "profession" as opposed to a "calling" which one cannot escape, is a blight upon the church and serves to weaken the fabric from which it is made rather than strengthen it. Ever since the early days of the church there have been those who *"desire to have the preeminence"* and who seek *"filthy lucre"*. They are those who desire to have a following and are one and the same with those whom Paul warned the Ephesian elders would rise from their very midst. *"For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."* (Acts 20:27-35)

The LORD has not raised up a ruling class by putting elders and overseers in HIS churches. Rather HE sends men among HIS flock to be servants who lead by example and exhibit patience and prudence with the knowledge that none of us know anything as we ought to know. Knowledge puffeth up but love edifieth. (see I Cor.8:1,2) Those who are called to be teachers are to do so in a fashion which encourages the body to minister one to another, rather than the notion that "ministry" is singularly carried out by teaching and preaching. *"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."* (1Cor 12:4-7) The Body is a

living organism which has but ONE HEAD, *“From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”*(Eph 4:16)

With this very truth in mind, Paul writes in his second epistle to the Corinthian church, pointing out that all of the saints are *“stablished, anointed, and sealed”* by the same SPIRIT that raised JESUS CHRIST from the dead and does presently dwell in the sons of GOD. He clearly states that his desire is to be their servant and not their lord or taskmaster, *“Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.”* (2Cor 1:24) All of GOD’s children share in that *“ONE FAITH”* which is revealed by HIS SPIRIT and applied to their hearts according to the measure which pleases HIM. (see Rom.12:3)

The first thing that we notice in II Cor. 1:21 is that Paul ascribes the activity of *“stablishing, anointing, and sealing”* completely to the LORD. There is no cooperative effort spoken of. Rather this is an operation which is carried out solely by the LORD, according to HIS will and purpose. Those upon whom HE is pleased to perform this operation are but objects of HIS mercy and tender care. They are not described as having any particular worth or qualities, except that which HE has bestowed upon them. This is called sovereign grace.

Next, he points out that this *“stablishing”* is mutually applied to all of the saints together. *“Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ.”* The Greek word which is translated here as *“stablisheth”* is most often translated as *“confirmed”*. (five of the eight times it is used). There is another Greek word which is translated as *“stablish or establish”*. It is found thirteen times in the New Testament and is also translated as *“steadfastly set”* (Luke 9:51), *“fixed”* (Luke 16:26), and *“strengthen”* (Luke 22:32; Rev.3:2). So, we can gain an understanding that Paul is speaking about being firmly planted upon a solid FOUNDATION. *“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”* (1Cor 3:11) The sons of GOD are all built together upon that ROCK which the LORD said HE would build HIS church, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. *“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”* (Eph 2:19-22)

Then he says, that *“GOD, hath anointed us.”* *“Anointing”* must be applied by someone other than the one being *“anointed”*. This Greek word which is translated as *“anointed”* (five times) in the KJV literally means to *“smear or rub with oil”* which by implication refers to the consecrating or setting apart unto some office or service. The sons of GOD are *“anointed”* by HIM who has called them from darkness to LIGHT. They are each given gifts according to HIS purpose, for the profit of the whole body. *“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.”* (1Cor. 12:7) *“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”* (Eph 4:7-8) Let none say that they have no gifts for the gifts and calling of GOD are without repentance. It is unfortunate that the gifts of many are relegated to a place of non-importance by those who would exalt their own teaching gifts to the exclusion of them in the assembly.

Finally, he speaks of being *“sealed”* and *“given the earnest of HIS SPIRIT”*. While being *“sealed”* is akin to being *“anointed”* they are not identical concepts. This *“seal”* is a stamp of approval which cannot be overturned. CHRIST HIMSELF is ONE sealed by the FATHER. *“for him hath God the Father sealed.”* (John 6:27) As HE is that ONE who is sealed in the courts of heaven, then it follows that all who are found in HIM abide under that same SEAL. To prove that this is so HE has give us an *“EARNEST”* (i.e.; pledge or binder) until HE comes to claim that which is HIS. *“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”* (Eph 1:13-14) Are you sealed in CHRIST?

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