

singing : "Thy mercy my GOD" #11

Welcome friends to another broadcast of "Morsels for Zion's Poor"

One of the greatest stumbling blocks which the Jews faced was what they knew (or at least thought they did), after many years of being steeped in the scriptures, especially, Moses' law. This outcome was prophesied by Isaiah when he said. *"But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken."*

Now, this result was, obviously, not some fault which lay in the word of GOD, nor was it a bad thing for them to read and study the scriptures. We know that the reality was; GOD had simply hid the truth from them, even as the LORD exclaimed, *"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."* And as Paul pointed out to the Corinthians, *"But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart."* This was also prophesied, by Isaiah, *"Behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."*

Due to the innate corruption and natural darkness of man's understanding it is impossible for him to see, even the clearest of truths found in the scriptures. The more that men rely upon their own understanding, the cloudier any grasp of truth is manifested. In this condition the more that they analyze and study the scriptures the less likely they are to arrive at the truth, except that the LORD should open their eyes that they might then see the simplicity of those things which the SPIRIT is pleased to hide from the wise and prudent and reveal unto babes.

This passage (chap.15) in the Gospel of John, concerning the TRUE VINE and HIS branches is often misapplied even though the language is quite clear as to who and what the VINE is as well as how fruit is borne on the branches. The grace of GOD and HIS provision and work in HIS people is not hidden here, except to those who seem to prefer the establishment of their own righteousness and are not quite convinced that HE does provide everything that they need.

I am always amazed when some, who profess to believe in "salvation by grace", nonetheless feel compelled to complicate the simple message of the complete salvation and provision of blessing which is given to the sons of GOD by that grace, and turn it into a system of conditional blessing which depends upon their own activity. CHRIST is the VINE from which the branches receive their life and through which all fruit bearing must come. The branches expend no activity or effort. They do not seek out the VINE nor do they have power to remain attached to the VINE or for that matter to detach themselves from it.

All work in tending to the VINE and the branches is expended by the VINEKEEPER and all fruit is borne by the attachment of the branches to the VINE. The branches only serve as a place where the VINE is pleased to manifest the fruit which stems from the VINE itself. The branches can produce nothing of themselves even as the LORD said, *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."* The fruit is a demonstration of the VINE's viability and not vice versa.

All of the "fruitbearing" which men claim to produce of their own will and determination shall be shown to be as that house which is built upon the sand, and is cast down when tested by that which is true. *"Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place."* CHRIST alone is the RIGHTEOUSNESS of HIS people.

The VINEKEEPER, purges every fruit-bearing branch that it may produce fruit in abundance. This is the very purpose which HE has ordained the creation and redemption of HIS people for. *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* HE will thus produce fruit in those branches which HE has grafted into the vine, and does sustain continually unto this end.

"Thy free grace alone," #11 **If you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at forthe poor@windstream.net ,**