

# 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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## REPROVED, REBUKED, CONVICTED, AND CONVINCED

*And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin,  
and of righteousness, and of judgment. John 16:8*

The most precious promise which the LORD made to HIS disciples as HE told them of the necessity of HIS going away is that HE would send HIS SPIRIT to be their GUIDE and COMFORTER until HE returned to gather HIS purchased possession. *"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."* (John 16:7) *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."* (John 16:13-14)

Apart from this promise (and its fulfillment) the people of GOD would surely be overwhelmed with the darkness of this benighted world. No man, in his flesh, is able to withstand the onslaughts of sin, Satan, and this world system. As Paul recognized, *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."* (Rom 7:18) The LORD HIMSELF told HIS disciples *"without me ye can do nothing."* (John 15:5) Thus the LORD made provision for those whom HE loves and whom HE will never leave nor forsake. Apart from HIS grace (applied by HIS SPIRIT) no man can have any understanding of the glory which is found in the gospel. HIS SPIRIT is the TEACHER of those HE is pleased to awaken from deadness to LIFE. *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."* (Eph 2:1; see also Col.2:13)

In HIS promise to send HIS SPIRIT, the LORD defined HIS role and commented on how HE would apply HIS TRUTH. HE said, HIS SPIRIT would *"reprove"* the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. This English word *"reprove"* is translated from a Greek word which is found 17 times in the KJV NT. This same Greek word is also translated as *"tell him his fault"* (1 time) and *"convicted"* (1 time). It is also translated as *"convince(d)(eth)"* 4 times. It is translated as *"rebuke(d)"* 5 times. The other 7 times it is translated as *"reprove(d)."* I think that we can see all of the nuances of this word in the work which HE has sent HIS SPIRIT to perform in the sons of GOD.

HE said, HE would *"reprove"* the world *"Of sin, because they believe not on me."* (John 16:9) The SPIRIT of GOD bears testimony against the sin of this world as HE shows the work of the law written in the hearts of men. (see Rom.2:15) All men are without excuse before GOD, for even those who are not given the Law of GOD written in tablets of stone, nonetheless know right from wrong and despise the rule of GOD over them, delighting in the lusts of their flesh and finding fault with those who would treat them in the same fashion which they would treat others. Even thieves grow angry when someone steals from them.

The *rebuke* of the SPIRIT *"tells them their faults"* but they will not listen, content to go on in their own way in complete disregard of HIM who demands their obedience. They have crucified the LORD of glory and rejoiced in that which should have been their shame. They bear their iniquity.

HE said HIS SPIRIT would reprove the world, "*Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.*" Though this "reproof" is not hidden from the world, (i.e.; CHRIST has openly displayed HIS righteousness) they cannot see it because of the willing darkness which envelops their mind. HIS children, on the other hand (being in the world but not of it) rejoice in the revelation of HIS perfect righteousness both as a sinless MAN and a SUBSTITUTE for sinners, paying the debt of sin which HIS people owed. HE imputes HIS righteousness to them, and they are "convicted" by HIS SPIRIT of their own sinful condition and "convinced" of HIS completely satisfactory solution to their dilemma of being enemies of GOD which is manifested by their own wicked works. They are ashamed of their record but rejoice in being reconciled unto GOD, throwing down their arms of rebellion and falling at HIS feet in worship. Though they "see HIM not" yet they rejoice in the HOPE which HE has given them.

HE said HIS SPIRIT would reprove the world "*Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.*" (John 16:11) Notice that HE says the "prince of this world **IS** judged". We are not waiting to see his judgment because the LORD has already manifested it in HIS triumph at Calvary and the Garden Tomb. "*And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*" (Col 2:15) HE did this as HE blotted out the handwriting of those ordinances which were against us. "*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*" (Heb 2:14-15) CHRIST's absolute victory in securing the redemption of that elect people for which HE came to save has forever destroyed the capability of Satan to harm one hair of the heads of those for whom HE suffered. He merely awaits his final torment in the Lake of Fire to which he is appointed along with all whose names are not written in the LAMB's book of LIFE. Satan is now only able to breath out empty threats as he awaits the end to which he is assigned. He has been loosed in the earth for a season and does indeed go about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. But he cannot devour even one of the weakest of those lambs for whom CHRIST has shed HIS precious blood.

Thus, we see the SPIRIT's work as given primarily for the benefit of those sons of GOD, the called according to HIS purpose, as HE worketh all things together for their good. They are "reproved" daily as HE applies the WORD of GOD to their hearts and minds. "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" (2Tim 3:16-17) HE teaches them of CHRIST who is their PERFORMER and RIGHTEOUSNESS.

HIS work is seen in HIS gentle "rebukes", as their flesh wars against HIM in the form of pride. HE delivers them from self-righteousness, teaching them of their own weakness and, in contrast, the SOURCE of their STRENGTH. "*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.*" (Rev 3:19) "*the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.*" (Rom 2:4)

When HIS SPIRIT is present, the LORD's people will be "convicted" of their sin and their unworthiness of the least of HIS mercies. When the adulterous woman was brought before the LORD we read that her accusers were, "*convicted by their own conscience.*" (John 8:9) No doubt this was prompted by the SPIRIT, yet it was yet a natural conviction which did not result in true repentance akin to that sorrow which gripped Judas. It was a repentance to be repented of. But when the SPIRIT convicts those whom HE has given LIFE, they are as Job after the WHIRLWIND, and Saul on the road to Damascus. They know themselves to be sinners in dire need.

Yet the work of the SPIRIT is not done by merely bringing the sons of GOD to see themselves as sinners. For HE will "convince" them of the RIGHTEOUSNESS of that ONE in whom HE gives them FAITH to believe. Saul of Tarsus, who once breathed out threatenings and slaughters against the people of GOD is brought to confess. "*I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*" (2Tim 1:12) HE will bring many sons unto glory with this same confession and it is by HIS continual work in the sons of GOD that they are made to rejoice in HIM. "*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*" (Rom 15:13) Are you taught by the SPIRIT of CHRIST? mam