

singing : "Thy mercy my GOD" #11

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

Throughout the writings of Paul one clear message shines out in all that he preached and taught. He was completely centered on this one subject that is, itself, the very basis of the gospel, and in fact without which no true gospel can be proclaimed. He summed it up to the Corinthians saying, *"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."*

Over the years many have come along and sought to add to that simplistic message, all types of forms, traditions, and various duties for the sons of GOD, which they consider equally as important.

Yet anything which is "added" to that plain message does not serve to empower the gospel or to strengthen the sons of GOD, but rather to dilute the message and to avert the eyes of the hearers from the one SOURCE of their HOPE and CONFIDENCE, to a system of fleshly works.

Throughout his writings he sets forth many exhortations unto the children of GOD. Yet in every instance, his purpose in doing so is to bring the mind of those he has exhorted back to the very basis of his message rather than to lay a burden upon the back of those who have already felt the lash of the law and are acquainted with the weakness of their own flesh.

He instructs the Philippians about the humility and single-mindedness of CHRIST when he exhorts them to *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."* HE instructs the Romans about the finished work of CHRIST in satisfying the Law when HE exhorts them to, *"Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."*

Likewise he instructs the Colossians of the all sufficiency of CHRIST when he exhorts them to *"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds: And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."*

Paul did not browbeat his hearers, nor did he lay a heavy burden upon them to perform some deeds in the power of their flesh, which will supposedly improve their standing with the LORD or enhance their blessings in spiritual matters. Rather he sets himself forth as an example of that determination that had been given him to run the race set before him.

Quite often parents try to instill their values into their children by instruction only to see those children disregard those values as they reach maturity. The truth is that a parent cannot cause their children to adopt their values, or believe what the parent believes. What they can do, however, is set forth a clear example (that leaves no doubt in their children's minds) of those things which the parents believe and are committed to walk in.

This is what Paul is doing here as he uses the illustration of running a race with the intention of winning, regardless of the cost or amount of effort involved. Paul clearly understood that he had no power in and of himself to perform this. The sons of GOD are thus called to triumph in that victory which CHRIST has won for them. HE has thus set for us an EXAMPLE that we should follow in HIS steps. Therefore, we see Paul, willing to be an example to his "children in the gospel" as he declares unto them his determination to "fight a good fight and keep the faith."

In order to win a fight, one must identify his opponent and then enter the ring and actually fight that opponent. The greatest opponent of the sons of GOD is found in their own bosom. *"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* Paul fought this fight but he also recognized the source of his victory. *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."* CHRIST is the VICTOR and the VICTORY.

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