

# Milk & Honey

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*Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ*

## The Spiritual Battlefield

J. N. Darby, James Denney, H. A. Ironside,

August VanRyn, W. E. Vine

The spiritual battles continue to rage and hopefully, as Christians, we are being made aware of it. "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed." (Rom. 13:11)

**1. We cannot fight the battle with fleshly weapons.** "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God ...." (2 Cor. 10:4) Nobody but an evangelist could have written this sentence. Paul knew from experience that men fortify themselves against God; they try to find impregnable positions in which they may defy Him, and live their own life. Human nature, when God is announced to speak, instinctively puts itself on its guard, as Paul was well aware, with weapons furnished by the flesh. The weapons need to be divinely strong; mighty in God's sight, for God's service, with God's own might. There is an answer in this to many of the questions that are being asked at present about methods of evangelizing. Where the divinely powerful weapons are found, such questions give no trouble. No man who has ever had a direct and unmistakable blessing on his work as an evangelist has ever enlisted "the flesh" in God's service.

**2. We are engaged in a spiritual battle.** "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Eph. 6:12) The strife is a spiritual one, as Israel's was physical. This war is for the possession of spiritual property, as theirs was for physical. After the Christian turns away from the world and its seductions and attractions, after he turns away from the flesh, with its sins and lusts, he is then spiritually fit to fight against his real enemy, Satan and all his hosts. He is never to turn away from Satan, never supposed to flee from him. Many Christians do not even attempt to engage in this spiritual warfare, but are content to live on an earthly plane. Christianity, heavenly in its origin and destiny, and which should be heavenly in its character, has degenerated into Christendom with its worldliness and low spiritual tone. The moment a believer rises to claim his spiritual birthrights, Satan will bitterly oppose him. (August Van Ryn)

**3. We are engaged in a battle to maintain the truths of the gospel.** "This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare." (1 Tim. 1:18) The special object for which Paul had left Timothy at Ephesus, when he went into Macedonia, was that he might watch over the doctrine which was taught. The evil which the enemy sought to introduce, with regard to doctrine, had a twofold character; fables of human imagination, and the introduction of the law into Christianity. At the end of 1 Timothy 1, he commits the charge to him. He had left Timothy at Ephesus in order to command some persons there not to teach other doctrines than the truths of the Gospel. Now the end of the command, of this evangelical commission, was love flowing from a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned. The conditions of victory were in accordance with the nature of the commission. He was to keep the faith and a good conscience. Now faith here is the doctrine of Christianity; yet not merely as doctrine, but as that which the soul held between itself and God as coming from Him. He had to maintain the truth, the Christian doctrine, but to hold it as so revealed by God Himself to the soul that it should be *the truth*. (J. N. Darby)

**4. We are engaged in a battle to live daily for Christ.** "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." (1 Tim. 6:12) We are to be good soldiers; Timothy primarily, but all believers are called upon to fight the good fight of faith. What does the Apostle mean when he says, "Lay hold on eternal life?" It is an exhortation to make it a practical thing as we go through this scene. It is quite possible to trust in Christ and thus to have eternal life in the soul, and yet to drop down to a low spiritual level where one is not living in the reality of eternal life. He exhorts everyone of us to enter into that life which is unworldly and heavenly in character. It is a poor thing to talk about having eternal life while living for the things of the world. (H. A. Ironside)

**5. We are in a battle to make our life count for eternity.** "I have fought the good fight...." (2 Tim. 4:7) There is not expression of regret about the past, no sighing for what might have been, no longing, lingering, look behind. As a warrior his warfare had been well waged. How goodly an example he set us! (W. E. Vine) \*

# THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Mark Kolchin

*“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” 2 Corinthians 8:9*

It is in this verse that the apostle Paul summarizes the salvation work of our Lord Jesus. The One who is pictured elsewhere in Scripture as the nobleman in Luke 19, the great man of wealth in Ruth 2, and referred to as the Heir of all things in Heb 1, is also the One who willingly gave up the blessings of heaven so that we might be “rich” from a spiritual standpoint. As such, He did not count the glories of His position a thing to be clutched to but instead gave them up so that we through His poverty might be “rich.” And rich we are! Because of this wonderful grace which was shed on us abundantly in Jesus Christ (Titus 3:6), we are like Rebekah, who came into a vast wealth by nature of her relationship with Isaac, Gen. 24. In the same way, we too have become rich as heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, Rom. 8:17. We have obtained an inheritance (Eph. 1:10) and likewise are being led across the vast wilderness of this world by the Unnamed Servant who takes no glory for Himself, but glorifies the Master. Eventually, we too will come face to face with the One we love, though we have not seen Him and will at that time enter more fully into our inheritance, 1 Peter 1:4. No wonder it is called “amazing grace”!

Because of this selfless example, Paul goes on to encourage the Corinthians to exhibit the same attitude in their lives in the grace of giving. He calls it a grace because it is bestowed by the Spirit of God who causes this activity to occur for benefit of others. Just as the Macedonian believers demonstrated this grace to the saints in Jerusalem (vv. 1-2), he exhorts the Corinthians to follow the example of the Lord Jesus, the epitome of grace and glory. He urges them to adopt the same attitude and put aside their own comforts and interests to help meet the practical needs of fellow believers. By doing so, they are exhibiting the same type grace that the Lord Jesus demonstrated in His salvation work.

The grace of our Lord Jesus is evident not only in His salvation work but in other ways as well. It characterized His earthly then and is comprises His intercessory ministry from heaven now. In His earthly ministry, it was expressed this grace through *words*. There must have been something in the tone of His voice that communicated kindness and compassion as well as authority. Certainly, that grace must have been present when He said to the woman taken in adultery, “Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more,”

John 8:11. It was there when He read a portion of Isaiah 6 in the synagogue when He dramatically paused mid-sentence, causing the people wonder at the graciousness of the words that proceeded from His lips, Luke 4:22. On another occasion, the officers of the people openly declared “never a man spake like this man.” John 7:46. They had to admit even though they did not believe in Him, His words had weight and an air of authority to them. In this way, Psalm 45:2 was prophetically fulfilled when David declared centuries before: “Grace is poured into thy lips.” It also answers to the voice of the bride to her Bridegroom in Song 5:15-16 when she says that his lips drop sweet-smelling myrrh, whose mouth... (or words) [are]most sweet. It should be a challenge to us to follow the example of our Savior in learning to be gracious in our response to others.

The grace of our Lord Jesus was also evident in His *walk and work*. Luke 2:40 states: “the Child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him.” The grace or favor of God was always upon the Lord Jesus. Just how that was manifested is not described, but it must have included the manner in which He walked among men. When John, saw Him, he declared, “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” Acts 10:38 states that He “went about doing good and healing all those who oppressed of the devil.” Not only did that kindness show itself in His attitude but in His actions. He healed the sick, raised the dead and did many other good works to many different people. He even demonstrated this grace toward those who rejected or ignored His message. To the rich young ruler who turned away from His offer to follow Him was this grace shown. Instead of chiding him as we might do when someone spurned our overtures, the Word of God says that “beholding him, He loved him.” Mark 10:21. Now that’s grace! When Malchus, the high priest’s servant came with the entourage to arrest Him in the Garden, the Lord healed Malchus’ ear which had been sliced off by Peter. That’s grace! And to Judas, who came to betray Him, He met with the words, “Friend, why art thou come?” Friend? Now that is grace beyond belief! All this pales in comparison however to the grace that was manifested at Calvary. To the crowd at the Cross that mocked, jeered, ridiculed, plucked, spit upon, scorned and did all manner of evil to Him, He did not revile, nor threaten, or open His mouth in retaliation, but graciously replied: “Father, forgive them they know not what they do.” By doing so, He opened the Life gates of seventh and final City of refuge, that all may go in –to them and to all of humanity whom they represented. It is this grace which brings salvation (Titus 2:11) which the Law of Moses could never do. “The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17). This grace is the grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt!

But the grace of our Lord Jesus does not stop there! It continues on in His heavenly ministry to us. "Of His grace have we all received and grace for grace" (literally grace upon grace), John 1:17. It flows freely. We have been forgiven according to the riches of His grace, Eph. 1:7. It has been shed upon us abundantly in Jesus Christ. By it, we have access into the presence of God (Rom. 5:1) being freely justified by it, Rom. 3:24. Consequently, we should never tire of testifying of the Gospel of the grace of God, Acts 20:24. We should sing about it in our hearts to the Lord (Col. 3:16), to the praise of the glory of His grace, Eph. 1:6. Through it, we are equipped to serve Him and His people, 1 Cor. 3:10. Because it comes from Him (Eph. 3:7-8) according to the measure of the gift of Christ, (Eph. 4:7), we should never glory in our abilities, but should give Him the honor, Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 4:7. Through it we are built up and given an inheritance, Acts 20:32. At times, this grace is dispensed freely from His throne of grace as a kindness to us. Other times, we must boldly approach the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, Heb. 4:16. The grace that drives our service and gives us the power and desire to do His will, increases along with peace through the knowledge of Him, 2 Peter 1:3. It is what we are urged to continually grow in as we mature in the faith and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 3:15. We are to be occupied with grace, not externals of the faith which does not profit, Heb. 13:9. It is what should season our words (Col. 4:6) that it may instill a holy desire in others whom we talk with to serve the Lord more fervently, Eph. 4:30. Grace everywhere! "Grace, Tis a charming sound"!

There are many dimensions to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, both in His earthly ministry and in His heavenly ministry toward us. Will we ever be able to fully plumb its depths? No wonder Paul prayed that the Ephesians would understand what is the breadth, and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge...." Eph. 3:18-19. Regardless of where we are in our walk with the Lord, surely we can testify with confidence and conviction that "*It is grace that brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home*"! \*

### **Milk & Honey Information**

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### **Continued from page 4 — Tongues...**

in public or private prayer, but is, in fact, encouraging the Corinthians to pray in a language which all will understand.

The laying on of hands was not necessary to receive the ability to speak with tongues.

Speaking with tongues was not always associated with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Cor. 12:10, we see that only some of the Christians had this gift, while in verse 13, all of them were baptized by or in the Holy Spirit.

Tongues were foreign languages. In Acts 2, the crowd heard the message in their own language and dialect. In an effort to avoid the obvious fact that the disciples spoke in foreign languages, some have suggested that the miracle took place in the ears of the hearers. However, Galileans had difficulty speaking their own language, and for them to speak all the dialects mentioned was a marvel to those present. It is very clear that those listening knew that these languages were being spoken to them by the disciples. The miracle was clearly in the speaking of these languages, not in the hearing of them.

There are those today who would teach that tongues are a spiritual or heavenly language. However, the Bible would teach otherwise. In 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, "oneness" is stressed. There is one body, and that body is one unit (v. 12). There is one Spirit Who gives spiritual gifts to the members of the body (v. 11). Now if the gift of tongues was a heavenly language, as some suggest, wouldn't there be only one language of the Spirit? Would not heaven have only one language? However, in verses 10 and 28 of chapter 12 Paul states that there are various kinds of tongues. Clearly Paul had in mind the various languages of the world, such as were spoken at Pentecost.

Tongues were for a sign. We have definite Biblical teaching that this gift was for a sign. We must then look at the various passages where people spoke with tongues and see what the sign was.

At this point it may be helpful to read Mark 16:15-20 and Acts 1:8. We see in Mark that signs followed the disciples to confirm the word. Why was this necessary?

There are two primary reasons for the provision of a sign to confirm the message which the disciples were to take to Israel. First, the nation of Israel expected a sign. On different occasions, God gave His prophets a message for the children of Israel and a sign to confirm that the message was from Himself. This is seen clearly in the coming of the Prophet of God, Christ Himself. The disciples were now going to Israel with a new message from God.

Secondly, it must be remembered that the New Testament Scriptures which contain this message concerning Christ and His redemptive work were not available at that time. Today, we have the Scriptures to confirm any teaching which is given and have no need of a sign. \*

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*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; 2 Cor. 10:4*

July, 2013

## Tongues Are they for today?

Steve Hulshizer

Excerpt from free 13 page booklet

Over the last several decades there has been much said and taught about “speaking in tongues.” However, our primary concern is, “What saith the Scriptures.” Since there are only a few passages of Scripture which deal with this topic, it is suggested that these texts be read before you continue.

Acts 2: 1-11; 10:34-48; 19:1-7; 1 Corinthians 12-14

### Observations

It is immediately apparent that in the book of Acts, which covers approximately a thirty-year period, we are given only three historical accounts of those who spoke with tongues. Interestingly, while all three occurrences took place in a public setting, none of these took place in a local church gathering. The book of Acts never records that tongues were spoken in the early Church.

It is also apparent that Acts gives no instruction on the use of tongues. The three accounts given in Acts are historical and give no explanation or instruction regarding the use of tongues. It is a failure to rightly divide the Word of God to base one’s belief on these historical accounts without considering other Scriptures which give further light on this subject. This teaching is given in the apostle Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians.

Let’s make some other observations concerning the previously noted Scriptures and look at some of them in greater depth.

There is never any instruction given to seek this gift. It will be noted in the three accounts in Acts that the ability to speak with tongues simply came upon those involved, and that they

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were in no way seeking the gift. Scripture teaches us that spiritual gifts are sovereignly given by God, and we do not choose the gift we desire. The exhortation given in 1 Corinthians 12:31 to “covet earnestly the best [better] gifts” is to the local church. The church is to desire those gifts which would build it up. This leads Paul to speak of “love” in chapter 13. Love seeks the good of others, which the saints at Corinth were not doing. They were simply parading their gifts for others to see and admire. Pride, not love, was behind the use of their gifts. Gifts are for building up the church, not for self-edification and pleasure.

There is never any instruction that the gift of tongues is to be used for private devotion or prayer. Again you will note in the book of Acts that the gift was used in a public way. In 1 Corinthians, chapter 14, praying in a tongue is mentioned; however, a study of the text will show that public prayer is spoken of and that no instruction exists for their use in private prayer. The whole chapter is dealing with a public gathering and how various gifts were to be used to edify the local church. In verses 14 through 20 the apostle writes, “if” I pray (publicly) in a tongue and do not interpret it—which apparently was the case at Corinth—it is of no value to those listening. He, therefore, states he will pray so that all will understand him. In so doing, Paul is not teaching that a foreign tongue should be used

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