

Grace and Stature

Scripture reading: Luke 2:52

Not very long ago, a situation arose in which a child of God behaved very unseemly. On seeking the Lord about the matter, and with much grief of heart, the words came strongly to me, "Grace and Stature." This was followed by greater clarification of the word, "GRACE." Though GRACE in one sense means unmerited favor, which is from God to man, yet it involves a work in man's soul in its more extreme application.

AMAZING GRACE: "'Twas grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me on."

This song speaks of grace as a beginning work, a work of continuation and a work to the end. Through grace comes Salvation, but it also takes grace to love, to forgive, to be patient, to be kind and gentle, to endure all things, to be loyal, etc. It is, therefore, the continuing in the grace of God that leads one into that final bliss, which is the heart's cry of every true believer. There is a standard of inexhaustible fullness set by God for man. For this reason, the true and noble child of God will not rest or be satisfied with his or her own soul attainment until this fullness is achieved, which is divine perfection. The presence and power in the human soul enables man to be delivered from the human nature (earth bound) to the divine (heavenly).

Christ must reign through grace in the hearts of believers until all enemies (all the contrary and unsubdued nature) are put under foot. Believers who resist this operation in their daily lives frustrate God's plan for their soul's salvation, and fall terribly short of the glory of God. For this glory, the whole creation is waiting.

It is therefore possible to receive forgiveness of sins initially, and not grow IN GRACE; then the ugly attitude of the human soul will manifest very unseemly.

Through God's grace, the believer can say the right words and not offend, but rather love, respect and regard one to another, have proper control over the members of the body, thereby bringing the mind in harmony with the Spirit; then there will be no place for the Devil.

STATURE - Webster's Dictionary: time of life, age or one's height to stand, growth, maturity, development.

There is natural or physical, political, and Spiritual stature.

Luke 2:52, *"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."*

Ephesians 4:13, *"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the STATURE OF THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST."*

Stature depicts a standing and a height in Christ that would put one in a position, not above his brother, but risen above the flesh or carnal nature; standing firmly in the Divine nature; refusing, through His grace, virtues and excellence to return to the weak and beggarly elements. There is a place of integrity in Christ to be attained, maintained and sustained above the rudiments of this world, where the believer will no longer be a tool or an instrument of the enemy in any way. We have been raised up with HIM FAR ABOVE PRINCIPALITY AND POWER, and made to sit in HEAVENLY PLACES. Believers are His workmanship created unto GOOD WORKS. Although stature means time of life, age and maturity - one can be many years a believer or Christian, and experience very little spiritual growth or maturity. Year after year finds him or her going around the same mountain, having the same weaknesses and behaving the same old way; not experiencing much change in character. On the other hand, some show such growth and maturity in a few months that the difference is apparent. Growth and experience should be most important in one's spiritual life. Anything that hinders one's growth and progress should be dealt with before it is too late, when it would become so much a part of that person's nature that separation becomes absolutely difficult or almost impossible.

Spiritual growth is not flourishing in the gifts, or being an outstanding ministry. Paul said he had to be careful, lest after placing many into the Kingdom, he would himself be a castaway. The gifts and ministries and every blessing of the Spirit is to bring the believer into union and harmony with God. The tendency is to glory in the gift and not the Giver.

It takes GRACE to deny the man and let the CHRIST come forth. It takes abiding, not in and out, hot and cold, here and there, back and forth, sometimes up and sometimes down. "Who shall abide?" He that hath clean hands and a pure heart. God will give grace to the humble and succor the weak, that he/she may be able to stand under all circumstances and conditions and glorify his/her Heavenly Father.

One might not be aware of one's own spiritual growth, (which is good, no space for being puffed up), but others with whom you come in contact will surely witness that you have been with the Lord. This is one's testimony.

Each day should bring us closer to that mark of the high calling. The Divine Nature must be engraved deep in our souls, that as the months and years go by, we mellow, not in churchianity or in church politics, but in CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

(Excerpt from *Nuggets for the Needy*, 1997, pages 80-82)

Thought for today: Christ must reign through grace in the hearts of believers until all enemies (all the contrary and unsubdued nature) are put under foot.