

THE BEREAN

"...EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY..." (Acts 17:11)

GOD GIVETH GRACE

A STUDY OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

PART FORTY SIX OF SIXTY FOUR

Success in living for God depends upon our trusting in Him rather than ourselves. The way to please God is to submit to Him in humility. When a man acknowledges God in all his ways, God directs his steps (Proverbs 3:6). Man is safest when he has the least confidence in himself. We must completely empty ourselves as did our Lord (Philippians 2:5-9). Salvation is to those who realize how far they fall short of the wholehearted service God desires, and who, in turn, rely on Him. It is not enough to realize we are dependent creatures, we must act accordingly. God sets Himself against the self-sufficient man, but to the humble He gives sustaining grace. "Wherefore the Scripture saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (James 4:6). "For though Jehovah is high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly" (Psalm 138:6).

Grace is usually defined as the unmerited favor of forgiveness. Justification and forgiveness truly are ours only by the grace of God. Yet every good gift from God is an unmerited favor. Having done all, we have not earned His gifts. If God gives us strength to overcome the world, it is by His grace. When a man humbly denies self and takes

up the cross of Christ, God works with him. This is God's grace too, and it is always sufficient (II Corinthians 12:9). The greater His people's needs, the greater is His supply.

The humble are those who recognize their insufficiency, are conscious of the shortness of earthly existence and their absolute dependence on God. They are willing to receive from Him alone all that is necessary for salvation. They put not confidence in the flesh (Phil.3:3). Christians should not despair in their efforts to live for Christ. Ever conscious of their weakness, ever struggling against sin; they should be ever receptive to His grace "for by grace have you been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph.2:8,9). God's grace is ever available. With every requirement God gives, He gives the power that enables us to do His will that we may truly say "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (I Cor. 15:10). God demands undivided allegiance, and supplies divine aid necessary to give that allegiance. He giveth more grace. "The humble person he will save" (Job 22:29).

(B. G. Echols)

CHURCH OF CHRIST

412 East King Street

Shippensburg, Pa. 17257