



Divine Assistance

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb 4.16). A popular religious radio program at one time began its broadcast each day with this passage. What followed was then a blend of social commentary and psychology on solving the day to day problems that people face. Sometimes specific examples were given in order to make a point and much of the “advice” that was given had a sound basis and provided insightful wisdom in dealing with various problems from finance to marital difficulties. Additional passages were sometimes used as well to illustrate a principle but the underlying doctrine that was presented was ultimately not what the Bible taught. Christ told his disciples that they were to go and teach all nations and stated *“...and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” (Matt 28.20).* Much religious teaching in the “Christian” community uses passages such as Hebrews 4.16 out of context and accentuates the variety of false doctrines that exist. When we turn to the scriptures we find that God has promised that he will bless and be with us, providing aid so that we can remain faithful to him. Reading contemporary commentaries on the scriptures, and various study aids found in most Bibles, have a focus on the individual and appeals to a sense of being special in the sight of God. There is some truth in that but we find that the intent of the scriptures becomes lost. I have heard advice given on subjects such as how one may remarry after a divorce that is not in line with scriptural teaching or how to deal with a number of life problems ranging from drug addiction and gambling to financial difficulties. This type of direction is well intended but there appears that there is a shift from focusing on the will of God to doing the will of oneself. We know that mankind has a special place in creation and has been placed over all things in world (**Psm 8.4-8**). Some seem to have the idea that God is there to assist us in our endeavors without having a solid understanding of what it means to serve the Lord. Prayers are offered on behalf

of individuals dealing with various problems but I have never heard the Gospel taught correctly in these situations. Solomon wrote, *“Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.” (Eccl 5.2).* Some have requested prayers to help in finding lost items, do well on job interviews or other things that have a personal value but may lack true importance when it comes to understanding and doing the will of God. When we look at some of the prayers that are recorded in the scriptures, especially those of the apostle Paul, we find that requests were made that had a direct impact on the ability to continue teaching and preaching the word. It appears that some may have gotten the idea that God is there to assist in doing what is important to us but fail to see that this is the reverse of what our attitude should be. This type of attitude, and the resultant misapplication of scripture, lends itself to the formation of social doctrines that serve the desires of man, not the will of God. Doctrines of religious groups are revised in order to meet the “needs” of followers without adherence to what we find revealed in God’s word. Over the years groups, both large and small, have arisen that seek to please the created rather than the creator. The confusion that we see in the religious world around us is the result of trying to make God conform to what we want instead of becoming what God wants us to be. Paul states, *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Rom 12.2).* God is our helper when we do his will and become what he wants us to be. Our task is to find a way to overcome ideas of self in order to accomplish this. Is it any wonder then that so many find the gospel to be somewhat foreign when taught correctly?

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