

The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

October 2009



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The **Purpose** of the *Berean Bible Society* is to help you understand and enjoy the Bible. The **Mission** of BBS is to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ by proclaiming the whole counsel of God according to the revelation of the Mystery. Our **Goals** are to *evangelize* the lost, to *educate* the saved in “rightly dividing the Word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15), to *energize* their Christian lives, and to *encourage* the local church.

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From the Editor to You

Dear Friends in Christ,

Not long after our good friend Alan Neubauer married a woman serving as an American Christian worker in China, he and Diane began to pray about translating Pastor Stam's classic work *Moses and Paul* into Mandarin Chinese, the majority dialect of the world's 1.6 billion Chinese speaking peoples. Although proficient in Mandarin, Diane enlisted the aid of Merry Duan, a native Chinese, and a grace believer attending Pastor Rick Owsley's *St. Louis Theological Seminary*. Anyone involved in translation work can tell you that the accuracy and readability of a translation benefits when two bilingual translators are involved, one whose native tongue is the language of the copy, and the other whose native tongue is the language into which the copy is being translated.

Finally, after many a setback and hindrance by our adversary, we are pleased to be able to announce that the fruit of Merry and Diane's combined efforts is now available in the world's most prevalent language, in the simplified Chinese script employed in the People's Republic of China and Singapore.

Our initial outreach with this new work is via the border-busting power of the internet. Thanks to the coordinated work of Bob Cat, web designer for Pastor John Kirkwood's *Grace Gospel Fellowship* in Bensenville, Illinois, and our own BBS webmaster Pastor Richard Church, visitors to www.bereanbiblesociety.org can now click on a link that will take them right to the text of Pastor Stam's words in Mandarin Chinese. Pastor Stam always said that *Moses and Paul* was one of the two books he'd written that he recommended most to introduce people to the grace message (the other being *The Twofold Purpose of God*), and now 160 million professing Christians in mainland China will have unrestricted access to this important introductory work. To assist this access, we are working to ensure that major Chinese search engines can find us.

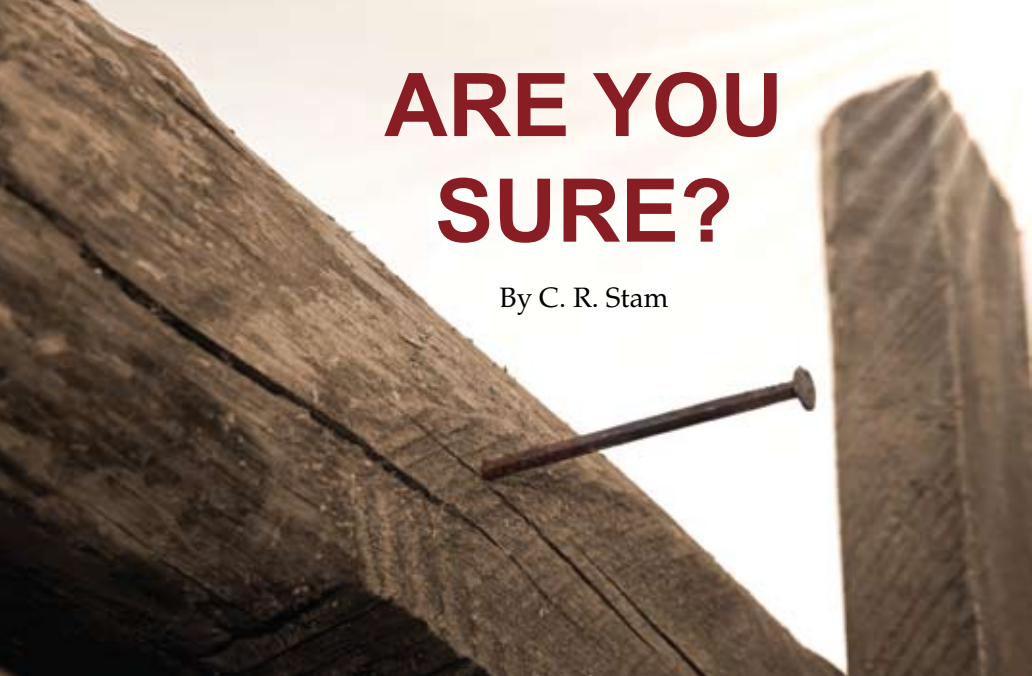
Our next step, of course, will be to get this Chinese rendition published in a hard copy printed version for distribution in China. This is no easy proposition, for only books printed in China can be legally distributed there. Thus we are seeking publication and distribution by either the official Chinese Protestant church, or by an approved private publishing house inside China. Needless to say, we are much at prayer about this, and would invite all of our readers to join with us in keeping this endeavor before the throne of God's grace.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Ricky Kurth



ARE YOU SURE?

By C. R. Stam



Would you like to have the *knowledge*, the *assurance* and the *joy* of sins forgiven? Would you like to be *sure* of heaven?

Well, the first step to heaven is to realize that you cannot get there by trying. You can't walk there. You can't climb there. You can't fly there. Only God can take you there. Many try to earn heaven. They try to climb there on a ladder of good works. They talk about "adding another rung." But look out for that good works ladder! It's not anchored at the top and the higher you climb the farther you will fall.

God's Word says that salvation is *"the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast"* (Eph. 2:8,9). He is not going to have boasters in heaven—there are enough of them on earth and nobody likes them.

All of us should realize that even the best of us are not good enough for heaven, for *"all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"* (Rom. 3:23), but in this same statement the Apostle Paul declares that believers in Christ, who died for our sins, are *"justified freely by His [God's] grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"* (Rom. 3:24).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1).

So, friend, it is not by trying, or crying, or praying, or paying, or doing anything that you will reach heaven: it is only by believing. God says He loves sinners, and that Christ died for our sins. Will you believe this and trust Christ as your Savior? The terms are stated very plainly in John 3:35,36:

"The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Studies in the Book of Revelation

Revelation 2:1-7

By Paul M. Sadler

“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.”

—Revelation 2:1

“The following story is told of pioneers who were making their way across one of the central states to a distant place that had been opened up for homesteading. They traveled in covered wagons drawn by oxen, and progress was necessarily slow. One day they were horrified to note a long line of smoke in the west, stretching for miles across the prairie, and soon it was evident that the dried grass was burning fiercely and coming toward them rapidly. They had crossed a river the day before but it would be impossible to go back to that before the flames would be upon them.

“One man only seemed to have understanding as to what could

be done. He gave the command to set fire to the grass behind them. Then when a space was burned over, the whole company moved back upon it. As the flames roared on toward them from the west, a little girl cried out in terror, ‘Are you sure we shall not all be burned up?’ The leader replied, ‘My child, the flames cannot reach us here, for we are standing where the fire has been!’”¹

As the fires of Satan’s fury sweep around Israel in the last half of the tribulation, God will move His people to a safe location and provide for her every need, as He did during the wilderness wanderings. To prepare her for the evil days that will lie ahead, at the beginning of the tribulation the Lord *admonishes* the seven churches in Asia to follow the counsel of His will, to ensure they will be overcomers when the fires of Satan’s rage are extinguished.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Most commentators who have written on the Book of Revelation are like sheep following one another down the wrong path. Their claim that John is writing to the members of the Body of Christ in the first four chapters of the record is not only inconsistent with the context, but an outright failure to rightly divide the Word of truth. Needless to say, it has caused a great deal of confusion in the Church today.

If we carefully examine the terms and phrases of the first four chapters of Revelation it is clear that God's prophetic program is in view; the heart of which is the earthly ministry of Christ and the kingdom gospel. A brief comparison of the two programs of God makes this crystal clear:

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John” (Rev. 1:1).

In the Book of Revelation, we have the revelation of Jesus Christ according to *prophecy* where Christ is revealed as the *Judge of all the earth*. The Apostle John, who was one of the twelve apostles of the *circumcision* (Israel), is the one who received this revelation about Christ (Rev. 1:3 cf. 1:12-18).

“But I [Apostle Paul] certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:11,12).

In Paul's epistles, we have the revelation of Jesus Christ according to the *Mystery*, where Christ is presented as the *Head* of the Church, the Body of Christ. The Apostle Paul, the apostle of the *uncircumcision* (Gentiles), was the one who received this revelation from the Lord of glory (Rom. 11:13 cf. 16:25).

“And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:6).

In the Book of Revelation, John's readers are referred to as having been made *kings* and *priests*, a common designation for believing Israelites (Ex. 19:6 cf. I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10).

“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ...” (I Cor. 4:1,2; II Cor. 5:20).

In Paul's epistles, Paul never refers to the members of the Body of Christ as kings and priests, for good reason. We are the *ambassadors* of Christ who represent Christ in His royal exile from the earth. Paul also calls us the *stewards* of the mysteries of God. So then, we are the ambassadors and stewards of God.

“I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan” (Rev. 2:9).

The *synagogue*, in biblical times, was a facility where the Scriptures were read and taught. In the Book of Revelation, at Smyrna, it is said to be corrupted by those who claimed to be Jews,

but in actuality were followers of Satan. The reference to the synagogue in the above passage is Jewish through and through (Luke 4:14-21).

“The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house” (I Cor. 16:19).

“And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house” (Phile. 1:2).

The Apostle Paul never uses the term “synagogue” in any of his epistles. He reveals that the Gentiles met in their *homes* to study the Scriptures. Therefore, the most common meeting place for believers at that time was the *church in their house*.

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name” (Rev. 3:12).

In the Book of Revelation, the overcomers are promised a *prominent position in the millennial temple*, as they rule and reign with Christ on the earth, and they will have the honor of receiving a *new name* when they enter the New Jerusalem in eternity.

“And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6,7).

In Paul’s epistles, we learn that Paul received a *new* revelation from the Lord that the members of the Body of Christ will be seated with Christ in the heavenlies. We have a *heavenly* hope and calling! Throughout eternity God is going to show us the exceeding riches of His grace in the heavens.

Another area where confusion reigns with most commentators who write on Revelation is with John’s usage of the word “church.” Because he frequently uses this term they conclude that he was writing to the members of the Body of Christ. As we know, the Greek word *ekklesia* (church) is a very general expression that simply means “called out ones.” The context will always determine which “called out” group is in view. Israel, for example, in time past, was called the church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38).

During the earthly ministry of Christ our Lord plainly stated that He would build His “church” on Peter’s confession that He was the Christ (Messiah), the very Son of God. We know that Christ came unto His own, that is, Israel, and His own received Him not. Consequently, He took the promise of the kingdom and gave it to the believing remnant within the nation called the “little flock.” “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure **to give you the kingdom.**” These were the charter members of the Kingdom Church. On the day of Pentecost three thousand souls were *added* to this church (Matt. 16:16-18; Luke 12:32; Acts 2:41,47).

After the Rapture, God is going to pick up where He left off shortly after Pentecost when He

temporarily set Israel aside in unbelief. When the prophetic program resumes, in the coming day of the Lord, the Kingdom Church will be *re-established*. The seven churches, then, to whom John is writing are seven local assemblies in Asia that are a part of the greater Kingdom Church. We must carefully distinguish between this church and the Church, the Body of Christ of which we are members. The new entity called the *Church, which is His Body*, is only found in Paul's epistles (Col. 1:18).

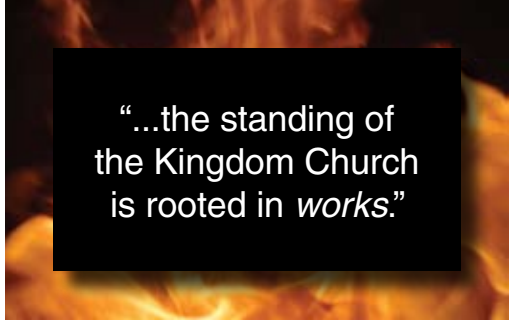
ANGELS IN CHURCH

“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks” (Rev. 2:1).

The seven churches in Asia the Apostle John was instructed to write to are: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. As we have seen, they are kingdom assemblies that will be established under the ministry of the two witnesses and the 144,000. Each of John's messages was intended for the whole. In other words, the letter to Ephesus, while primarily meant for that assembly, was also to be circulated among the other churches and kingdom believers. This is confirmed in verse 7, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the **churches.**” The *Gentile* church at Ephesus the Apostle Paul wrote to in his letter to the Ephesians, should not be confused with the *Jewish* assembly at Ephesus that John addresses. They are two

entirely different churches, being written to at two different times, by two different apostles, under two different administrations.

The Lord instructs John to write to the *angel* of the church at Ephesus. According to the Scriptures, the angels of God are ministers to those who are heirs of salvation. Under the kingdom program they carried on a very active ministry among believers and often served as guardian angels. However, we find it highly unlikely that the Apostle John would be writing to an angel. If anything it was the angels who made known God's will to His servants in time past, not vice versa.



“...the standing of the Kingdom Church is rooted in *works.*”

The word “angel” John uses here is the Greek word *angelos* or messenger. In the King James Version of the Bible it is normally translated “angel,” but it should be noted that it is also translated “messenger” and “messengers.” As we are going to see the term is often used of men. For example:

Our Lord said to the multitude, concerning John the Baptist, that the people went out to see a prophet, but John was more than a prophet. “For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger [*angelos*] before thy face, which shall prepare thy

way before thee” (Matt. 11:10). Before entering Jericho, Joshua sent out two spies on a reconnaissance mission to spy out the city. James says regarding the mission, “Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers [*angelos*], and had sent them out another way?” (James 2:25).

In both cases, the term *angelos* was used in relation to men who were the servants and messengers of God. With this in mind, we believe John was writing to the *pastors* of each of the churches in Asia (see Jeremiah 3:14,15). They in return were to deliver the revelation to their local assembly and make sure it was passed on to the other churches. Furthermore, it is important to note that in John’s vision the Lord is holding the *seven stars* or messengers in His right hand which speaks of security. While the security of the leaders of these assemblies will be paramount, this would not be the case for the elect angels of God, who are spirit beings.

THE KINGDOM GOSPEL

“I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove

thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent” (Rev. 2:2-5).

During the Olivet Discourse, the Lord revealed to the twelve apostles that “this gospel of the kingdom” they were serving under “would be preached in all the world” and then the end would come (Matt. 24:14). This is the gospel that will be proclaimed in the future tribulation period, as John substantiates for us in Chapters two and three.

The Lord says to the assembly at Ephesus, “I know thy works.” This statement is found in each of the letters to the seven churches and is an integral part of the kingdom gospel. The standing of the Church, the Body of Christ is in *grace*, but the standing of the Kingdom Church is rooted in *works*. These works include circumcision, repentance, baptism, keeping the Sabbath, etc.

Here it is essential to remember that in the tribulation Israel, nationally, will again be the channel of God’s blessing—she will be the apple of His eye. Since she had a *covenant relationship* with God it will be necessary at that day to call her again to repentance. Today the Body of Christ is only made up of believers who have placed their faith in Christ. However, the chosen nation of Israel was, and will be in the future, made up of both believers and unbelievers (Luke 3:7-9 cf. Rom. 9:6,7). Therefore, the theme of Christ’s message to each of the seven churches in Asia is “repentance” and the necessity for those within these assemblies to do the “works of repentance.”

According to John the Baptist these “works of repentance”

included providing for the poor. If an Israelite had two coats he was to give one of them to someone who didn't have a coat. If a man had food on his table he was to share it with his neighbor who had none. We should pause here a moment to say, the importance of these things cannot be overstated, seeing that many will be driven from their homes and livelihoods in that day due to persecution.²



Those who collected money for the powers that be were not to charge more than what was owed. In accordance with her covenant relationship, the law said: “Thou shalt not steal.” Soldiers were not to take advantage of the people by falsely accusing them, for the law said: “Thou shalt not bear false witness.” Essentially, the Lord is calling attention to the assembly’s selfishness at Ephesus. These are some of the “first works” the Lord speaks of in Revelation 2:5 whereby the assembly could be *restored* to her “first love.” Since Israel is the future bride of Christ, He is her first love, but some within the seven assemblies had inadvertently drifted away from Him due to the cares of this life (John 3:28-30 cf. Rev. 19:7,8). Failure to repent would have serious

consequences, namely, the loss of the Lord’s blessing.

The Lord also commends this assembly for their stand against evil and evil workers. He points out how they could “not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are *apostles*, and are not, and hast found them liars” (Rev. 2:2). Judgment under the kingdom gospel was swift and sure. An example is found in the account of Ananias and Sapphira who sold a piece of land and brought the proceeds and laid them at the feet of the apostles. The problem was they withheld some of the money for themselves. Peter exposed the evil deed and how they had lied to God. The end result was they were both pronounced dead at the scene (Acts 5:1-11).

Of course, today there are no apostles, the office has been completely vacated by God. Interestingly after the Rapture, the office of apostle will again be filled, which is implied by the fact that there will be false apostles who will be exposed for their evil deeds. The true apostles of God, in the coming day of the Lord, like Peter, will have the authority to pronounce judgment under the guidelines of the kingdom gospel.

“But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate” (Rev. 2:6).

Historically there is no evidence whatsoever that there was ever a sect called the Nicolaitans in biblical times. The name Nicolaitans means, “destruction of the people.” Apparently it is some sort of religious sect in the future tribulation that will be tied to the

one-world church (Rev. 17:1-7). The apostate church will be bent on corrupting and destroying the Kingdom Church through the deeds of the Nicolaitans, the doctrine of Balaam and the seduction of Jezebel, as we will see. One thing we know for certain, the Lord *hates* the deeds and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. It is always good to hate what the Lord hates, which will be true of the kingdom believers at Ephesus.

THE PARADISE OF GOD

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Rev. 2:7).

Only those who are born again in that day will have spiritual ears to hear and receive what the Spirit teaches. The overcomers are those who have submitted themselves to their first love. They are those who continue in the “first works” and deplore evil and love righteousness. To them it is promised that they will partake of the *tree of life*, at which time they will receive life and life eternal. What the kingdom saints are promised here we already have in Christ.

In the beginning, God placed the tree of life in the Garden of Eden. After Adam and Eve sinned, the Lord posted Cherubim around it with a flaming sword to ensure no one partook of it. Had they done so, in a fallen state, they would have lived eternally in a sinful state without the hope of redemption (Gen. 3:22). Shortly after the fall, God removed paradise from the earth, placing it in the third heaven where it remains to this

day (II Cor. 12:1-4). While we are not told, paradise and the tree of life will probably be returned to the earth during the millennial reign of Christ, seeing that the curse will be partially lifted. We know for certain it will be a part of the new earth throughout eternity (Rev. 22:1-7).

By way of application, there are a number of things we can glean for our benefit from the Lord’s instructions to the kingdom saints. First and foremost, we must guard against drifting away from our “first love” as well. The cares and responsibilities of this world can rob us of the joy we once had when we first trusted Christ. After our conversion, we couldn’t wait to learn more about Him and be in the company of those who loved him, but the years all too often dull our spiritual senses. Perhaps we need to pause a moment and ask ourselves, have I wandered from my first love?

The Lord commended the future kingdom believers for their hatred of evil and for openly exposing those who taught unsound doctrine. Can the same be said of us today? Do we hate evil with the same passion as they did, or do we tolerate it? When faced with unsound teaching do we confront it or are we more inclined to look the other way, out of fear we might offend someone? May the Lord give us the resolve to hate what He hates for His honor and glory.

To Be Continued! 

Endnotes

1. *Illustrations of Bible Truth*, by H. A. Ironside, pgs. 34-35, Moody Press, Chicago, IL.
2. ©iStockphoto.com/Jerry Koch.

Central Indiana Regional Bible Conference

Date: Saturday, October 31, 2009

Location: *Das Dutchman Essenhaus Conference Center*
240 US Hwy. 20, Middlebury, Indiana

Guest Speakers:

Paul M. Sadler, *Berean Bible Society*
Joel McGarvey, *Bible Doctrines To Live By*

For more information or to receive a brochure, contact:
Mike Karnes at 317-984-4799 or r.karnes@insight.com
Jerry Sterchi at 219-326-8705 or jws1391@localnet.com

Northeast Texas Regional Bible Conference

Dates: November 6-7, 2009

Location: *Admiral Hotel*
1507 N. Watson Road, Arlington, Texas

Guest Speakers:

Paul M. Sadler, *Berean Bible Society*
John Fredericksen, *Berean Bible Society*

For additional information or directions, please contact:

Dave Allen at 972-840-3082

For room reservations call: 817-640-7712



The Gospel of Grace in Ghana

By Pastor Dennis Kiszonas

Our church in NYC has had a long relationship with a grace church in Ghana. It began twenty years ago when a young Ghanaian immigrant in New Jersey began listening to our *Grace For Today* radio broadcast. He came to understand the message of grace and began to attend our church in North Jersey. Soon he was sharing the message with Ghanaian friends, and some of them were saved and embraced the message of grace.

But he was also burdened about his homeland, and so he traveled back to Ghana and searched to see if there was a grace church anywhere. By the grace of God, and through some unusual circumstances, he found the only grace pastor in Ghana, Pastor Peter Adjei-Annoh, in Kumasi, the 2nd largest city in the country, who had started “*Grace Bible Church—Ghana*” in a poor urban neighborhood called Ahensan.

For some 25 years Pastor Peter has been the “Apostle Paul of Ghana,” in the face of enormous obstacles, and with great dedication, faithfully preaching the message of grace, planting churches, training workers—without ever having even seen another grace preacher!

Once they had made contact, the Ghanaian grace believers in North Jersey began to sacrificially send financial support to the pastor, which enabled him to start a radio broadcast that covered most of Ghana. That broadcast proved to be very fruitful, and not only did the church in Kumasi grow, but listeners in about a dozen smaller villages within a few hours drive of Kumasi started grace ministries and churches of their own. Every month either the pastors and leaders would come to Kumasi, or Pastor Peter would drive around to the small villages and visit the outlying churches.

Having heard about Pastor Peter for years, reading his letters and emails from Ghana, I thought that perhaps we should visit him and the brethren of the *Grace Bible Church—Ghana*. The plans were in the works for a couple of years, and finally, in February of 2008, Leon Gilchrist and I traveled to Ghana for a two week visit. We were met at the airport in Accra, the capital, by Pastor Peter and a delegation from the church with bouquets of flowers and warm Christian greetings, and set off immediately on a four-hour drive north to Kumasi. The highway passed through many towns along the way, and we saw things that we don't see in affluent America.

Kumasi is the ancient Ashanti capital, where the Asantehene (the king) reigns on the Golden Stool and regularly meets with the chiefs from all over the Ashante region in his palace to govern that region. The guide book describes Kumasi as “daunting Third world urbanity...one of the most hectic cities in Africa...surging throngs of humanity and constant traffic jams. The mood is emphatically modern and positively overwhelming.”

We spent the next 2 weeks preaching—on Sundays in the main church in Ahensan-Kumasi, conducting a Bible conference on weekday evenings, visiting village churches, several hours driving on the paved highways from Kumasi, and then many miles on the red dirt roads into the forest to arrive at villages where we preached in church buildings or in outdoor meetings—Prabon, Nsuta, Bibiani, Patase, Apatisu, Kona, Tano-Dumasi. In some of



these villages there are well established churches, in others just a handful of grace believers are zealously proclaiming the Lord's message of grace for us today.

I will never forget especially the evening meetings with hundreds of people gathered in the “village square,” with singing, drumming, dancing, and preaching in English and Akan, the language of the Ashante people, all under a big golden African moon (the sand blows high in the sky from the Sahara to the north giving the moon a golden glow). When the service got too late for the little children, they curled up asleep on the ground in the grass.

Ghana is located in West Africa, a few degrees north of the equator. It is about the size of Oregon, with a population of 23 million people. Pentecostalism seems to be the dominant religion in Kumasi, but we saw many Muslim mosques in the towns, and there are shrines in the forest, where traditional African religion is practiced (the fetish priest and priestess, possessed by “the deities,” give advice and heal the sick).

Most Ghanaians work as farmers, small landowners, growing bananas, pineapples, casava, and

the best cocoa in the world; Ghana is one of the world leaders in cocoa production. Ghana is rich in minerals, especially gold (the British called it the Gold Coast before Ghanaian independence came in 1957), and in timber.

However, Ghana is one of the ten poorest countries in the world. About a third of its people live on one dollar a day or less; that's "extreme poverty" by United Nations' standards. A farmer works all year on his small cocoa plantation, and then sells his crop, yielding him about \$5 a week for his work and to support his family. The cocoa is shipped to Cadbury's in England, or to Hershey's or to Switzerland and is processed into chocolate, and sold for a good profit to the chocolate companies. Some of the brethren in the churches, and some of the grace pastors, go without adequate food.



Pastor Dennis, Pastor Peter, & Leon

When we returned home from Ghana, having seen the evidence of God's blessing upon the churches and the faithfulness and dedication of Pastor Peter, his assistant, Brother Boat, and all of the pastors and brethren in the Lord and His message of grace, Leon and

I determined, as the Lord would help us, that *Grace For Today* would send financial resources to help the grace ministry continue to grow and expand, to keep the radio broadcast on the air all across Ghana, and also, in some small way, to help the physical needs of the brethren and the pastors. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever" (2 Corinthians 9:9) and "...let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Ephesians 4:28).

Since we've been back, we have been sharing the videos and the report about the grace churches in Ghana in churches and conferences, and many of the brethren here in America have given generously and regularly in support of the brethren in *Grace Bible Church—Ghana*. As we in America are going through an economic crisis, we need to consider that our brethren living in Third World countries are going to suffer much more than we are from this crisis. They are living much closer to the edge. Even in the midst of this great recession, our refrigerators are still filled with food, but the brethren in Ghana have no refrigerators for the most part, and some do not have even enough food.

The Apostle Paul was diligently raising an offering to help the poor saints in Jerusalem when he wrote to the rich Corinthian grace church encouraging them to give generously:

"For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but

by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality: As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack” (2 Corinthians 8:13-15).


As we in America watch our debt and credit crisis unfolding, we don't know how it is going to work out. No one is sure how to solve the problem. We pray that God would give wisdom to our president and the leaders in government that they might know how to solve this problem. It might be that we're going through the beginning stages of another great depression.

On the other hand, last year oil was discovered in the Atlantic, just off the coast of Ghana, a light oil deposit estimated at 3 billion barrels. Hopefully, as this new oil field is developed in the years ahead, the lives of all the people of Ghana will be improved. Then

it might be that at this time our abundance will supply their lack, but in the future, maybe, as Paul suggested, their abundance will also supply our lack!

At any rate, God says in v. 14, that His goal is that there may be “equality” (He says it twice!), that those who gather too little may have no lack, and those who gather much may have nothing left over. We have a long way to go to fulfill this instruction from the Lord, but we are trying to start.

Grace For Today has set up a separate fund to help the brethren in Ghana, and we've been transferring funds every month for their needs. We welcome all who have this work on their hearts to send their gifts, and we will try to see that every dollar sent is used for the advancement of the gospel in Ghana and the loving care of the pastors and brethren in the grace churches there.

Our address: *Grace For Today—Ghana Fund*, P.O. Box 798, Times Square Station, New York, NY 10108-0798. 



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How to Win...



Your Family and Friends to Christ

Cont'd

By Evangelist Art Fowler

PART III

Your Children Can be Won...

The Bible, in countless examples, encourages parents to teach the ways of the Lord to their youngsters. Proverbs 22:6 gives us this promise: “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

It is especially hard, in today’s culture, to keep our children away from evil and temptation. Hollywood, pop music, TV and other media constantly ridicule Christian values and try to pull our children away from God.

As if that were not enough, it is natural for our youngsters to test the limits and rules. By the time many of them are teenagers, rebellion is a fact of life.

But we are not to give up. Our children are our responsibility, to be sure. Yet, no one wants to see them come to Christ more than God Himself. And, since the hand that guides your child is *yours*, then perhaps some guidelines for successful Christian training will be helpful.

Have a Family Altar

Yes, it is important to take your children to church and Sunday School. But these cannot take the place of a family altar. A family altar is that time which you, as father, mother and children, gather

together in reverent communication. These times need not be “mini-church” services. They can be interesting, lively and topical.

You can enhance these times with Christian music, or videos. You can read from an appropriate book, Bible passage, or other helps—making sure that the tools you use are geared to the ages of your children.

Turn off the TV at mealtimes and use the time to share with each other something of the day’s events, and prayer requests for a brief devotional time before or following the meal.

Why is this important? Experts tell us that the family is under assault as never before. This can be a time of positive reinforcement and for building your children’s confidence.



Sure, Sunday School and church are important. But of the more than 100,000 hours your child experiences from childhood to maturity, only 1,000 hours (1%) are spent in church. Public schools will have your children 7,000 hours—seven times the amount of time they spend in church. Do you want your public schools, with their abdication of moral and spiritual values, to teach your kids about God?

The reason for a family altar is that from childhood to maturity a youngster will spend 97% of his or her waking hours *in the home*—and there is the time to spend in creating a family altar at which to teach your children about God—so that when they are old, they will not depart from it, as Proverbs 22:6 says.

Take Them to Sunday School and Church

While it is true that your children will spend more time in public school and their home than in church and Sunday School, nevertheless it is important that they attend. *Sending* your children to Sunday School and church will certainly help; *taking* them is better, and *taking them with you* is best.

Live Consistently Before Your Kids

Nothing robs a parent of credibility as quickly as a life that is inconsistent or hypocritical. Children and teenagers have a fantastic “radar” to see through such failures on the part of their parents. A parent who says, “Do as I say, not as I do” may control his kids’ behavior for the moment, but at the price of trust and believability.

Yet when Mom and Dad *live* out their faith and Christian values in a consistent, loving and fair way, kids will not be driven from God. Godly parents are the best ways children will judge Christianity.

Set Standards For Your Children

In an effort to “buy” their children’s affections, many parents are afraid to set firm guidelines for their kids, or discipline them when rules are broken. Parents who do not set limits or discipline their kids do everyone a disservice. All are hurt when the children drift away on their own in pursuit of sinful pleasures.

Proverbs 29:15 and 17 remind us: “The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame...Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.”

Meet Your Child’s Needs

Several years ago, no one had heard of the phrase “dysfunctional family.” Today, it is probably the most compelling area of deep-seated family relationship problems and cause of terrible alienation.

Counselors are told, “My dad never had time for me.” That grown child recalls only that Dad spent lots of time at work, and had time for church—perhaps even had some time left over to go fishing with his buddies. But Dad never had time to be a buddy to his boy or girl.

And counselors hear, “I could never confide in my mother. She never tried to understand my problems. I always had to do what *she* wanted.” Sound familiar? These are universal complaints.

Tell Your Children About Jesus Early

As soon as your children begin to talk, as soon as they can understand your words, is the time to start telling your children about the Lord. Jesus said we should come to Him as little children. That does not mean we are to be childish, but childlike. Bible stories and stories of Christian truth can be used to illustrate the gospel for young children. My two daughters were able to understand the basic truth of the gospel at the age of three and were won to Christ at even that young age.



You can trust the Holy Spirit to work in their little lives and teach them truth. You will be amazed at how much they can understand and how eagerly they accept it. Lead your children to Christ early, then encourage them in the faith and help them to grow in the Lord.

Keep Them Involved in Christian Activities

Do you remember that old saying that your grandmother used to recite? It went something like this: “Satan finds work for idle hands.”

Sad to say, that is truer than we want to believe. Yet it is just as true that the Lord will inspire and give action to willing hands entrusted to Him.

Church youth programs are where your kids should be when they want something to do. Not just the Sunday events, but boys and girls clubs, vacation Bible school, Christian scouting, and other activities or programs geared for kids. If this is not convenient because your church or community lacks such activities, why not start one? Or, at least spend time with your kids in activities of the family, maybe around a kid's program on Christian radio or TV, a Christian video, or craft assignment.

Respond to Your Child's Habits

Generally, no one knows a child better than his or her parent. Parents need to be aware of their child's traits and habits and respond to them in prompt and positive ways. For the child who displays negative behavior or habits, the parent should deal with the misbehavior immediately, but with firmness, love and patience. It is a good idea to try and help the child to change and overcome bad habits through positive encouragement.

When a parent encourages and rewards a child for good behavior, that child is likely to change in the desired ways. But when a parent erupts in anger, punishes the child in ways that are inappropriate for the mischief, that also produces results. Such outbursts *do* work for the child, who learns bad behavior habits are the ways of getting the attention of Mom or Dad.

Remember, positive action, with firmness, love and patience are better. Christian parents should learn to "accentuate the positive" and make the life of faith one of "do's" rather than one of a lot of negatives and "don'ts."

“...it is never too early,
nor too late, to try and
win our kids to the Lord.”

This guideline is also good for helping your child choose his or her friends. Good choices, made early, can be a positive influence coming from the child's peer group. Remember, the old maxim, "A man is known by the company he keeps" could as easily be phrased, "A child is known by the company he *doesn't* keep."

This principle is true in helping your mature child choose a life partner. We know that the Bible says we should not be unequally yoked. Our children will know it too, and that truth may help them in their own choices as they trust God.

The final word about winning our children to Christ is this; it is never too early, nor too late, to try and win our kids to the Lord. And do not be discouraged. Delays do not mean defeat.

PART IV

Your Parents Can Be Won...

Is it really possible that children can win their parents to the Lord? Yes!

Many churches make special plans to involve youngsters in various activities: Christmas pageants, plays, musicals, father and son banquets, mother-daughter teas, and a wide range of other events. The idea, of course, is that when parents come to these church events with their youngsters, they will hear about Jesus Christ and be challenged to come to Him.

Children can have the same influence on their grandparents. I recall one little boy telling his grandpa that he didn't think Jesus liked it very much that Grandpa smoked cigarettes because they might kill him and the boy would be lonesome for his grandpa. Taken in that spirit, his tender remark had a dramatic effect on Grandfather.

Honor Your Father and Mother

When children demonstrate obedience and good behavior, their life-style and role model is quite effective.

Children who are won to Christ at a young age have a sincere desire to see Mom and Dad also come to the Lord. They know that an obedient spirit will convince their parents that what they believe is true, and it has already made a difference in their young lives.

Older children can also effectively win their parents to the Lord in much the same way. These older kids may be teenagers, or even grown children living away from their parents. Still, the same principles apply. Our lives are the greatest testimony for convincing others. The Scriptural command for us to honor our fathers and mothers is a wise one, and one which paves the way for their interest in things of God.

Your kind, loving and patient attitude will be noticed. No one can overlook such powerful examples of love. Likewise, your faithful living for Christ will show them your firm but uncompromising stand for Him.

Be Always in Prayer

In addition to praying for the salvation of your parents, let them know that you seek God's best for them in other areas. Pray for specific requests you know are their concerns. And, when alone, pray for your non-Christian parent. You might even pray that God will give you an opportunity to speak to them about Him and lead the conversation toward spiritual matters, and salvation.

Perhaps as you pray for your parents, you can also ask the Lord to show you how and when to invite them to attend a gospel service with you. You might try offering to do a chore or favor for them, and in return,

at some later time, in a way that shows your interest in them, ask if they'd like to go with you to a church service or other Christian event. You'll be surprised at how often they might jump at the chance!

PART V

Others Can be Won...

The same principles that are used to win husbands, wives, children or our parents to Christ are the ones used to bring friends and relatives to Him. It is not necessary to repeat them here, but instead, it is perhaps useful if we offer a pattern to follow if you yourself are the one God chooses to lead that person to Christ.



You can seek training in personal evangelism to help you during these opportunities. Your Christian bookstore will have many helps to show you the way. You may also ask your pastor for suggested helps.

Here is my own outline for leading someone to Christ.

Show the Need of Salvation

The Bible is the Word of God, and speaks His truth in power. You should have a Bible for the person to read the passages for himself or herself to make for greater understanding.

The first principle is that all men have sinned and fallen short of God's standards (Read Romans 3:10-12 and Romans 5:12). So the Bible tells us that all men (and women) are sinners.

Salvation is Man's Only Hope

The work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross—His death and resurrection as payment for our sins—is a free gift that only has to be accepted by the sinner in order to be received.

The good news of the gospel is that "Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*" (I Tim. 1:15). And "sinners" do not accomplish this by their own good deeds or merit.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8,9).

God Loves Sinners

There is an old saying that God hates sin, but loves sinners. God loves you. And me. He loves every individual in all the world.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

The Lord Offers Life Everlasting

Eternal life is not an easy concept to understand. But what we do understand is enough to make us thirsty for it. This life is God's gift to mankind, and He offers it to all.

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).

There is Only One Way to God

In this “new age” of all kinds of religious experience, we hear of many “ways to God.” Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and all kinds of other “isms” say that they can lead to God. But none of the founders of these religions is alive. Only Jesus rose from the dead and lives today. He made the bold statement that there is only one way to find salvation, and that way is through Christ.

“Jesus saith...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me” (John 14:6).


Are You Convinced?

This is the truth of the gospel. It is “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16) and is the only message that can save a person from eternal damnation and lead him to eternal life in Jesus Christ.

Do you believe this? You must. And, when you are convinced of the power and reality of this truth, you will sense the compelling need to share it with your family and friends.

To have successful results in winning your family and friends to Christ, you need to be convinced first, then empowered by love, enthusiasm and motivation you can reach out to others.

The desire to win others must flow out of you. And God will bless your efforts as you seek to be His instrument for winning others who need the Savior.

May God bless you as you respond in faith and obedience to His commission to win those you love. 



Evangelist Art Fowler: About a year ago, our BBS board of directors asked if we could have an article on evangelism in the *Searchlight*. At that time, we contacted grace evangelist Art Fowler, who gave his permission for us to publish his booklet on *How to Win Your Family and Friends to Christ*. Then last month, just

as we were going to press with the first installment of his article, we learned that Art had been diagnosed with a Stage 4b cancer that is not fully covered by his insurance. Thus if you have been blessed by his words, and wish to help him, contributions can be mailed to Pro Impact International, P.O. Box 1234, Castle Rock, CO 80104.

Question Box

“I’m not sure what Christ meant when He said ‘the kingdom of God is within you’ (Luke 17:21).”

Since the Lord here was responding to the Pharisees who had asked “when the kingdom of God should come” (Luke 17:20), those who believe He came only to establish a figurative kingdom “in our hearts” say that the Lord was correcting them for thinking He had come to establish a literal kingdom. However, He was speaking here to “*the Pharisees*” (v. 20), and He would not have told *them* that the kingdom was in *their* hearts!

He rather meant that the kingdom was vested in Himself at that time, and that *He* was within them, or in their midst, as the word “within” is used in Deuteronomy 28:43 and Luke 19:44. When the Lord rode into Jerusalem, some cried “Blessed be *the King* that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Luke 19:38), but others cried “Blessed be *the kingdom of our father David* that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Mark 11:10).

The Lord’s disciples obviously knew He intended to set up a literal kingdom in Acts 1:6. If they were wrong about this, the Lord should have corrected them at that time. The fact that He didn’t proves that He *did* come to set up a literal kingdom on earth.

—Pastor Kurth

Midwest Bible Conference

Location: *Community Bible Church*
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Speaker: Pastor Ricky Kurth

Theme: *History, Mystery and Prophecy*

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Suggestions for Young Pastors...



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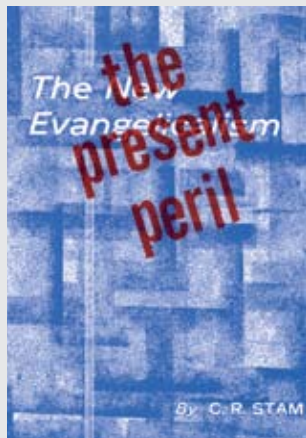
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BBS Letter Excerpts

From Oklahoma:

“I came to the conclusion long ago that there isn’t a lot of sound teaching among us these days; therefore, the *Searchlight* has become a beacon of hope for many of us.”

From Ohio:

“Enjoy the *Searchlight* as always. Rightly dividing the Word is the most essential need today in our churches, but it is not done in many of them around here.”

From Tennessee:

“I have been a Baptist all my life, and I am just blown away by all the errors I have always believed to be the truth. Am thankful I have had my eyes opened and that I’m learning to rightly divide the Word of Truth. It sure puts a different perspective on a lot of issues. I’m trying to share some of these with my pastor, but don’t feel I am getting anywhere. But I plan to keep trying.” (I Corinthians 15:58 is still true!—Ed).

From Myanmar:

“Your *Searchlight* builds faith and opens up our minds...a monumental resource to our life and mission...I wish this wonderful teaching could be shared with all Burmese people.”

From our Inbox:

“I decided I want to start giving more to support the ministry of the Gospel. I could think of no better place to give financially than to the *Berean Bible Society*.”

From our Inbox:

“I am a Bible student taking up AB Theology major in Pastoral Studies at Far East Bible Institute. I just want to thank you for your consistent effort of sending the *Searchlight*. You have been a great help to my personal study of the Scriptures, and your insights have somehow strengthened me in my ministry of expository preaching.”

From Minnesota:

“I finally came to the realization that the mid-Acts position is the most consistent theology of all the theologies out there. I have read and studied many of Pastor Stam’s books as well as Charles Baker and others...I teach a home Bible study every other Sunday night.”

From Oregon:

“Thank you for helping us sort out some of these questions of ours. My wife and I are getting into the word of God together as a couple, and we seem to get more questions from our studies than answers.”

From Wisconsin:

“I thought the *Two Minutes* article entitled *A Coffin for the Law* was very interesting. I’d never thought of the ark of the covenant in this light before. I was so impressed I forwarded it to a number of friends. I was surprised to receive a couple of very negative responses. Can you please comment on them for me?” (Man is religious by nature, and doesn’t like to hear that the Law was DOA.—Ed).

From New York:

“Thank you Pastor Miller for your *Two Minutes* lesson. I too came to a greater understanding of God’s will in coming to see the Mystery. Scripture is now, for me, spiritually logical, and it was this kind of enlightenment that provoked me to share this truth with others. While it is opposed by those who are ‘religious,’ it is a freedom unlike any other to those who see and understand it, and to provoke in them the desire to make all men see what is the fellowship of the Mystery. That, to me, is the only foundation for true unity.”

From Michigan:

“Thank you so much for coming to our conference at Bitely, Pastor Sadler. It was a blessing to hear your messages.” (Thanks to the folks at *Bitely Community Church* for inviting us to participate in this conference that marked the 80th anniversary of their church.—PS).

From China:

“We are a mission group from Singapore working in China. After viewing your *Growing Up in Grace* Sunday School material, we look forward to your Middle School Book 1, *Christ in My Heart* CD. Kindly inform us when this is ready. By the way, can we use your materials to translate them into Chinese for our teaching in China?”

From our Inbox:

“I would appreciate any response you might add to clarify this for me; thanks. I have encouraged a niece of mine who needs ‘grounding in the faith’ to stick with the Berean view. But this question has me stymied as to how to respond.”

From Minnesota:

“I have been getting your magazine for several years. I guess it is my turn to give some money for the magazine. Once in a while we use it for our Bible study. Keep the Word coming, rightly divided!”

From our Inbox:

“That helped so much, bro! So many are attacking me at Youtube when I preach that baptism is not required for today...I shall send this to my good friends to help aid in this topic...I knew in my head that water baptism must have ceased as well as tongues, etc., but so many have called me a hyper-dispensationalist, and I just thought that was rude. Many Baptists have come against me, and it has made me very angry and discouraged, but your clear teachings have been such a blessing to me.”

From Ohio:

“I can’t wait to begin to study from these DVDs. Your ministry has blessed me and helped me learn in so many ways.”

From Kentucky:

“Enclosed is a check for the support of your ministry. It is a blessing to read the letters from so many people who are being blessed from the Word, rightly divided.” (Proverbs 25:25 is still true!—Ed).

From Kenya:

“I thank God for His faithfulness in supporting your ministry of teaching the Word of God rightly divided through the *Berean Searchlight*. Personally I have been blessed and built up in faith...God bless you and keep up the good work that has shed light to many people.”



“These [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”
—Acts 17:11



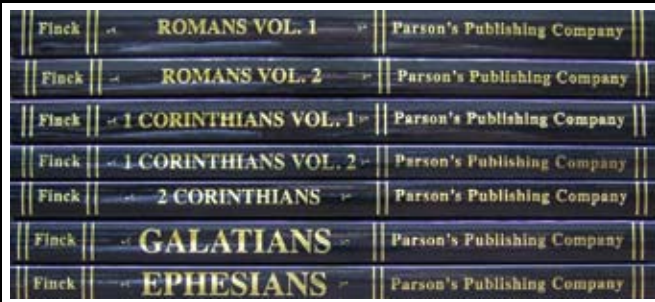
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Distance Studies Update

By Pastor Andy R. Kern, *Distance Studies Coordinator*

As many of you have heard, **Berean Bible Institute** now offers distance studies courses. We would like to take this opportunity to further explain our new distance studies and encourage believers to consider participating in this ministry.

All courses **Berean Bible Institute** offers are designed to fulfill our mission of training believers for the ministry and promoting a greater knowledge of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the Mystery. Therefore, our new distance studies courses are created to be equivalent to our on-campus classes in content and quality as college level courses. Since **BBI** exists to train effective ministers of the gospel of the grace of God, our courses call for the kind of self-discipline that ministry requires. Therefore, it is our desire to help each student develop diligence in studying the Scriptures that each one may better “*know Him*” (Phil. 3:10).

Berean Bible Institute is currently offering four distance studies courses. **101 Dispensational Survey** provides an overview of the Bible from a dispensational perspective in which the student will learn of the various dispensations found in the Word of God and what it means to “rightly divide the Word of truth.” **102 Apologetics** explores the practical evidences that show the Bible to be authentic and completely reliable while equipping the student to defend his or her faith against attacks on the reliability of

God’s Word. **105 Basic Bible Doctrines** is a concise study of twenty of the most important doctrines of Scripture from a dispensational perspective. **109 Dispensational Hermeneutics** concerns proper Bible interpretation with the purpose of enabling students to read, study, and understand the Bible for themselves with an emphasis on personal application. Any of these courses would be of great benefit in better understanding the Scriptures and God’s plan and purpose for believers today.

One way we are seeking to encourage believers to consider enrolling at **BBI** is by providing a scholarship to local Grace Churches that the pastor or church leadership in turn can grant to someone who attends their assembly. This scholarship for new students provides two credit hours at no cost to the student and a 50% discount on required textbooks for either on-campus or distance studies courses. The recipient must apply and be accepted by **BBI** to take advantage of the scholarship.

If you are interested in on-campus or distance studies courses offered by **Berean Bible Institute**, or would like more information on our new scholarship, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Contact Information: P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086, Phone: (262) 644-5504, Fax: (262) 644-5507, Email: bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org, www.bereanbibleinstitute.org.

News and Announcements

Reading the Searchlight Online: Many of our readers have canceled the subscription to their monthly hard copy of the *Searchlight*, opting to read it online at our web site instead. We'd like to make sure that all such readers know that you can receive an automatic email each month letting you know when the most current issue has been posted. Just go to our web site, click on "Monthly Magazine," and check the "Berean Searchlight Monthly Email" box. It's so easy to forget each month, why not take advantage of this simple way to remember.

Missionary Leo Keiper has completed the initial Portuguese translation of the first quarter of Junior year material in our *Growing Up In Grace* Sunday School series. He's now working on the difficult task of revising the translation and adapting it to better suit the Brazilian culture. Leo has also finished translating both our series on *A Guide to Godliness* and *Discerning the Will of God*. If you'd like to help support these and other important projects in this ministry, e-mail him at lkeiper473@gmail.com. You can learn more at www.wordofgracemission.org.

Our Business Reply Envelopes: In our correspondence with our readers, we often include a "Business Reply" envelope. These return envelopes do not require a stamp, as BBS pays the postage due when they arrive here at the office from you. Many of our readers like the convenience of these self-addressed envelopes, and some try to save us the postage by crossing out the "No Postage Necessary" words and affixing a stamp. While we thank our readers for thinking of us in this way, we want everyone to know that the Post Office does not recognize this use of business reply envelopes, and charges BBS even when a stamp is affixed to them. That means we *both* pay for your letter to reach us, and neither of us wants that! We knew you would want to know, so that we can all be better stewards of the money the Lord entrusts to our hands.

Back Cover Quote: Our good friend Guy Greenwald suggested the Bible verse for our back cover, to which we added Pastor Stam's comments on Proverbs 23:23.



Ken & Grace Frizane took our cover photo of *Kenosha Southport Light* in Kenosha, Wisconsin. The light was removed from service in 1906, but on July 4, 1996 it was lit once again. It does not function as a navigational aid but is lit to celebrate anniversaries, birthdays, memorials, and other special occasions.

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