

The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

November 2002



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Editor: Paul M. Sadler; *Composition and Layout:* Kevin J. Sadler

Questions, comments, book orders? You can reach us at:

Berean Bible Society
 N112 W17761 Mequon Road
 PO Box 756
 Germantown, WI 53022

Berean Bible Society Main Office: (262) 255-4750
Berean Bible Society Fax Number: (262) 255-4195

Internet: <www.bereanbiblesociety.org>
 E-mail: <berean@execpc.com>

Office hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., CST

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From the Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

The Psalmist says, “Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is His reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them.” They tell me that a quiver in biblical times held about twelve arrows. So, the sense of this passage is, happy is the man that the Lord blesses with twelve children!

Kevin and Jessie have just graced us with our third grandchild. The newest arrival from heaven is little Carissa Judith, who was born on August 9th, weighing in at 8 lbs. 13 oz. If children are the Lord’s reward to parents, then they’re a double blessing to grandparents, who are simply grateful to have lived long enough to hold them on the day of their birth.

When the fullness of time was come, my wife and I watched Cody and Katie for a couple of days while Mom and Dad received this very special gift from the Lord. Cody’s three now, going on twelve! What a memory this little guy has. I’m sure someday he’s going to have something constructive to say about Einstein’s *Theory of Relativity*— $E=MC^2$. He’s the brains of the family. Katie is two, and someday will probably be an Olympic gymnast. She loves to climb, and flies through the air with the greatest of ease! Of course, she might also sing. You see, ever since Katie was born I’ve sung to her. How she loves to sit and listen to Pap-pap sing a few stanzas of *Jesus Loves Me*. Of course, the family thinks she might be tone deaf!!

These two little munchkins have an endless source of energy. What one doesn’t think of the other one does. So when my wife says, “Dear, will you keep an eye on the kids for a few minutes?” it’s enough to strike fear into your heart, because you know what they’re going to do—divide and conquer! Mysteriously things suddenly get quiet, which usually means there’s a renovation taking place somewhere in the house. By the time Mom and Dad brought Carissa home, they had to carry Nana and Pap-pap out in baskets. I’m convinced this is where the saying “basket case” originated!

Soon our third little bundle of joy will be on the heels of Cody and Katie—then we’ll have a threesome! Perhaps I should go lie down for a few minutes while I have a chance. You will notice above that Carissa is about to fold her hands in prayer. We like to begin encouraging the kids to pray as early as possible. Carissa is Greek for *loving*, and it’s our prayer on her behalf that she will love the Lord with every fiber of her being.

Yours in recovery,

Pap-pap & Nana Sadler

From Indiana:

"Praise the Lord for the understanding of the dispensation of the grace of God and the fellowship of the Mystery. Keep up the good work. Never, Never, Never Quit."

From Nayarit Mexico:

"I have been a delighted reader of the *Berean Searchlight* now for more than 15 months after writing to you in April 2001, to request my own copies. I have two complaints (he said, with tongue firmly planted in his check): (1) the *Searchlight* comes only once a month, and (2) the *Searchlight* comes only once a month. But when it does arrive I don't just read it, I devour it from cover to cover, soaking up the rich blessings and teachings that it offers me. Thank you all, and thank God that He lead me to you before I go to be with Him."

From Virginia:

"I have been thoroughly blessed by your ministry and am interested in being placed on your mailing list. Please send me any introductory packets you may have for newcomers."

From Nebraska:

"I am interested in having *Two Minutes With the Bible* published in the *Omaha World Herald*, but I don't know how to go about it....I have no idea if they will print it in the daily paper, in what section, what the cost might be (whether I could afford it or not) or what they would require for input. I suppose in this modern age it could be done on-line. I would like to put my friend's name on the list for the *Berean Searchlight*—the full strength version, not the low calorie." (We only offer full course meals; we're not into the low calorie menu! Ed.)

From Indiana:

"The enclosed check is for Pastor Stam's Commentary on Colossians. I'm so grateful for your light on all God's Word. There aren't very many beacons such as yours, or should I say there are too many shedding very little light."

From New York:

"Many thanks again for your *Berean Searchlight* and the wonderful insights God has shared through you and His Word. You make it so simple for simple folk who really do enjoy it, so thank you again and may the Lord continue to use your ministry."

From Florida:

"I thank God for the blessing of finding the *Berean Searchlight*. I found it in the Post Office and when I opened it I read Acts 17:11. I love to study God's Word and I believe in Jesus Christ, as you do. The person's name on the booklet I found was...and it was in the garbage can, I don't think this person wants your magazine, but I do! Please send me the *Searchlight*. God bless you, Thank you." (The Lord surely works in mysterious ways! Ed.)

From Texas:

"Another prayer answered. For some reason the word Bereans kept coming to mind. In studying the Bible I remembered that these people took the Word readily, but wanted proof of what Paul was preaching was right. They checked everything out. I found the *Berean Bible Society* web site, and there I found what I had been pursuing for many years—rightly dividing the Word of God. Literature and tapes by Pastors Stam and Sadler are heaven sent. Pastor Paul M. Sadler's book, entitled *Exploring The Unsearchable Riches of Christ*, is my most prized possession, outside of the Bible. As Pastor Stam would say, 'It's so simple.'"

From Oregon:

"My husband and I have received the *Searchlight* for 20 years now and have been extremely blessed by the teaching. Now our oldest daughter is beginning her first semester at BBI. She has been accepted and watched over by the saints in West Bend and Iron Ridge and surrounding areas. We are very thankful!! We will continue to pray for your ministries. Thank you."

From Minnesota:

“I want to thank you for the *Tribute* to Rollin Wilson in the new issue of the *Berean Searchlight* I received Saturday. He was a special mentor to me and a friend too. I miss his tapes and written material I have received from him. I would covet your prayers for us. There is not a Grace Church in our area so our Bible Study is very important to us.”

From Florida:

“Greetings in Jesus’ name once again. The Lord sure has been very good and gracious to me letting me live this long.... God’s grace, love, mercy, goodness and everything else about Him are so full, complete, and satisfying. I don’t know how much time is left for me. So I’m making one more effort with your help to get 50 of those \$100 gift sets out like you sent before. Send them to men of your choice. Hopefully these books will help to establish them in the Word, rightly divided, so they can become workmen of God that need not to be ashamed. God richly bless you dear Brother, as you faithfully proclaim His wonderful message of Grace.”

From Pennsylvania:

“Thank you for the *Berean Searchlight*—it really is informative!”

From Virginia:

“Thank you so much for your work. I am a new Christian and have been exposed to your works through the *Berean Searchlight*. I have recently given my life to Jesus Christ and have accepted Him into my heart. Though my questions were many and hard for me to grasp an answer to, God has introduced your works to me. I know that I need some help in learning to study my Bible. I just have an unquenchable thirst for the knowledge in the Word.” (Congratulations on your new found life in Christ. It’s a decision you will never regret. Help’s on the way! Ed.)

From California:

“I have had radical changes in my life....If God didn’t always stay the same what would we ever do. So though most things change, He is always faithful. Praise His Name.”

From Oklahoma:

“Just recently heard of the Mystery and how it pertains to my Christian walk. Want to know more.”

From Kentucky:

“Thank you for this publication. It is truly a learning tool for me and blessing. I was able to hear Pastor Sadler speak in Goodlettsville, TN this past weekend. His message was enlightening and taught on a level where I could understand. May God bless you in your ministry.”

From Iowa:

“For years I have received and enjoyed your publication, the *Berean Searchlight*. I do not know who put my name on your mailing list, but I want to thank whoever it was. May God use the *Searchlight* to encourage and enlighten the hearts of Christians here and abroad.” (Isn’t it wonderful to have loved ones and friends who care enough to share the Mystery. Ed.)

From Wisconsin:

“God bless the ministry and growth of the *Berean Bible Society*. May you continue to be so blessed under Pastor Paul’s guiding. Thank you for the *Searchlight*.”

From Arizona:

“Thank you very much for the years of soul food, I am thankful now and will be forever thankful for Christ’s work you are doing. I have been blessed spiritually over the years and now I give this donation to the BBS organization with great joy. I will be going on-line to set up monthly donations.”

“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

Laborers Together With God

By Paul M. Sadler

The *Berean Bible Institute* continues to grow by the grace of God. And we are truly grateful that the school is committed to the proclamation of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery. So it is an honor to introduce you to the instructors that God has called to teach this semester. Please pray without ceasing for these dear brethren that God would use them mightily as they train our young people for full-time Christian service.



Dr. Edward Bedore
Executive Director

Classes:

- Bible Exposition I
- Practical Dispensational Theology



Pastor Ricky Kurth
Associate Instructor

Class:

- Dispensational Hermeneutics



Pastor Dan Wolgast
Dean of Students

Classes:

- Biblical Principles of Family Life
- The Tabernacle
- Christian Writing



Pastor Jim Penney
Associate Instructor

Class:

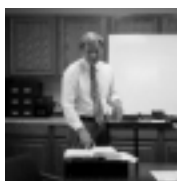
- Basic Greek I



Pastor Mike Keshan
Chairman of Faculty

Classes:

- English
- Music and Song Leading
- Bible Exposition V



Mr. David Brown
Associate Instructor

Class:

- Basic Bible Doctrines I



Pastor Joe Watkins
Associate Instructor

Class:

- Missions and Church Planting



Mrs. Linda Bedore
Associate Instructor

Classes:

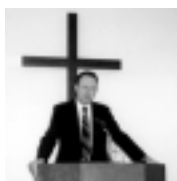
- Study Skills and Personal Finance
- Public Speaking



Pastor Richard Ware
Associate Instructor

Class:

- Personal Evangelism and Follow-up



Pastor Paul Sadler
Associate Instructor

Classes:

- Dispensational Survey
- Pastoral Ministry II

Four Keys to Commitment

By Paul M. Sadler



“Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”
—II Tim. 2:1,2

If we were to ask the average Christian to write down the requirements to be a spiritual leader, the list would probably read something like this: A man of God who must have completed four years of college and three additional years of seminary. He should be eloquent and able to articulate his thoughts well, enthusiastic, insightful, creative, and have a good sense of humor. In addition, he should not have too many shortcomings and be well dressed.

Interestingly, just the opposite was true of the spiritual leaders in the Scriptures. Most of the giants of the faith in biblical times were unlearned and ignorant men by the world's standard. The Bible is a who's who of shortcomings: Noah's drunkenness, Moses' speech impediment, David's adulterous ways, Peter's denials, Paul's repulsive appearance, etc. Nevertheless, God used these souls mightily to the pulling down of strongholds, despite their failures. As it has been said, “God took a handful of nobodies and made them somebodies in His sight.”

While we are an advocate of higher education, intellectualism is not a prerequisite to be used of the Lord. God has accomplished great things through those who merely had a willing heart. Timothy, for example, wasn't educated at the ivy league schools of Jerusalem; nonetheless, God chose him to carry the torch of grace after Paul's martyrdom.

GRACE 'TIS A CHARMING SOUND

“Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”

As Paul prepared to leave this life, he longed to leave Timothy with a few parting instructions to encourage him in the faith. The apostle knew that his young friend was easily discouraged. Of course, some of the circumstances Timothy faced as he defended the faith would be enough to dishearten the most seasoned veteran of the Cross today (Acts 19:23-41 cf. I Tim. 1:2,3).

Paul affectionately refers to Timothy as “my son.” Although Timothy was not Paul's son in the flesh, the aged apostle had led him to the Lord; therefore, he was his son in the faith. As a result, there was a very special relationship between them. Timothy might have had ten thousand instructors in Christ, but he only had one spiritual father who loved him like a son. Thus, Paul challenges him to be strong in grace. Grace is God's unmerited favor toward those who are undeserving.

Before the turn of the last century, Great Britain ruled the world. The throne was synonymous with superiority, royalty, power, and glory. So when the beloved Queen Victoria

instructed her driver to stop the royal carriage, and she stepped down to embrace a commoner by the side of the road, that's *grace!* The commoner did not deserve the Queen's kindness, nor do we deserve the grace of God so freely bestowed upon us. Thankfully, God has stooped down to undeserving sinners in the person of Jesus Christ. As a result, the grace of God does three things for us: it has brought us salvation, it teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and it gives us hope (Titus 2:11-13).

Timothy, "be strong," don't let others rob you of the *grace* that you've freely received. And legalism will do just this if we allow it. It's the enemy of grace. Like the Pharisees, the legalist wants to set the standard, which he decrees to be the measure of spirituality. Legalists love to develop an unspoken list of do's and don'ts for others to follow. You must conform to what they have established as acceptable behavior in regard to how you should dress or act, or what reference Bible you must carry, or how many church services you should attend throughout the week. Failure to conform is a sure indication that you are not very spirituality minded.

Beloved, God has given us the standard we are to follow in His Word; it's called **GRACE!** Today, we are not under the Law, nor are we to submit ourselves to those who believe they are the final authority as to how the Christian life should be lived. Grace teaches us how to live; it is patient, understanding, and tolerant. Grace always leaves room for differences. It's never judgmental (I Cor. 4:5). So then, Timothy was not to allow anyone to rob him of the liberty he enjoyed in Christ, nor should we.

"Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

What "things" had Timothy heard Paul proclaim? Surely it was the teachings of grace that the apostle had received from the Lord of glory—the truth of the one Body, the one baptism, and the one hope of our calling, etc. Since this special revelation was kept *hidden* from ages and generations past, Paul was unable to appeal to the Law and the prophets to validate his message. Again and again, he calls upon God and other witnesses to verify his gospel to be true.

"The same commit thou to faithful men." Notice, the responsibility to proclaim this wonderful message wasn't to be passed along to just anyone. Paul's instruction to Timothy is clear; it was to be handed down to *faithful* men who had the God-given ability to teach others. This precious deposit was only to be entrusted with those who were trustworthy so as to insure its continuance. Mark these words and mark them well, Paul is not teaching apostolic succession here, as Catholicism teaches. Rather, the apostle is making a case that it is the responsibility of one generation to pass the truth of Paul's gospel on to the next generation. If we fail to do so, it will not be long before the message is lost to the ages, humanly speaking. This is why Paul places such emphasis upon "faithful men."

PAUL'S METAPHORS

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth

himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (II Tim 2:3,4).

Young men who desire to enter the Lord’s work initially look at the calling of pastor as being glamorous, honorable, glory—a position of respect! First of all, respect must be *earned*, it is not something that’s handed to you on a silver platter. It takes years to acquire and only one foolish act to destroy it. While the ministry is indeed a high and holy calling it involves a great deal of responsibility, long hours and hard work. Little wonder the apostle chose to use the metaphors of the soldier, the athlete, and the farmer to describe the rigors of the ministry.

“Shall God be well pleased with us at that day if we aid and abet confusion in the Church?”

A metaphor is a figure of speech containing an implied comparison. It’s a short phrase or word that’s used to throw light on the truth. Usually the nature of the metaphor allows for a rapid transition from one topic to another, such as we have before us. Of course, the purpose is to drive home a point. Ten thousand sermons could be preached on each of Paul’s metaphors. Each one contains spiritual riches untold. In the Old Testament, which includes the four Gospels, illustrations are drawn primarily from the natural world. Paul’s, however, are taken from human life and experience, which is another subtle distinction between the two programs of God.

Paul begins with the metaphor of the good soldier. The soldier must leave his family and turn his life over to someone else. As Paul says, “No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” The soldier must be *obedient* simply because his life and the lives of those around him depend upon it. He is trained in battle to fight. Courage is his badge of honor!

My father had the honor during World War II to return with General MacArthur to liberate the Philippines after the Bataan Death March. Although he was reluctant to talk about his war experiences, he did share with me about the time his Commanding Officer sent him to camp to secure the company’s orders. Dad related how he was just about back to the unit when it was ambushed by two Japanese machine gun nests. As he approached cautiously, he could see a number had already been killed and the others were pinned down and dared not move. He knew if he didn’t do something quickly the whole platoon would be massacred.

Dad made a snap decision that fateful day. The only way out was to provide a diversion. He could see the snipers would only be able to swing their machine guns so far before hitting the trees in which they were hunkered down. Furthermore he knew how hard it is to hit a moving target, having hunted small game as a young boy. He took a deep breath, jumped up, and ran as fast as he could to their flank which drew a hail of bullets. As he dove headlong into a shallow ravine, he said he could feel the air being displaced as the bullets whizzed by him. It worked! The maneuver gave

the soldiers in the unit the opportunity they needed to take out the enemy.

Boy, that's enough to make you break out into a sweat just telling the story! I can't imagine actually being there and going through such a thing. But this is the lot of a soldier. It's a life and death struggle to defend freedom's light. In the spiritual sense we, too, are soldiers who are to *obey* the commands of Christ found in the Pauline epistles. These are our marching orders, handed down by the Commander in Chief Himself! Consequently, we're called upon to fight the good fight of the faith—this means we must stand in the defense and confirmation of Paul's gospel (Phil. 1:7). While we're not to be hard, we are called upon to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Here Paul serves as our example. In the face of death, he stood before Felix, the Governor of Caesarea, and courageously preached Christ. With the eternal destiny of this corrupt ruler hanging in the balance, the apostle reasoned with him of righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come. Is it possible to *reason* with the unregenerate concerning spiritual things? Paul did, he knew the Spirit of God could pierce straight through Felix's stony heart of flesh to allow the light of the glorious gospel to shine into his heart that he might be saved (Acts 24:24-26 cf. II Cor. 4:3-6).

“And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully” (II Tim. 2:5).

The next metaphor the apostle uses is the athlete. Seeing that Tarsus was one of the cities where the Greek games were held, Paul was familiar with all the events. To participate in these games the partaker

had to be a Greek citizen. The key to being a good athlete is *discipline*. It is said that the Greeks trained for ten hours a day for a period of ten months. They also spent a great deal of time acquainting themselves with the rules to avoid being disqualified in their particular event.



The high school I attended had a fantastic athletic program. Of course, with a class of over one thousand this is understandable. In addition to the high jump, I ran the four-forty relay. This specific event required precision timing. If you jumped the gun or failed to hand the baton off to the other runner before he crossed the hash mark, the entire team was disqualified. In other words, you had to play by the rules.

Paul draws a parallel between the runner and the Christian life. He says, “if a man also strive for masteries,” that is, if he competes in a competition, he is not crowned unless he abides by the rules. This is also true of the believer. A man must first trust Christ as his Savior and be a citizen of heaven before he can participate in the things of the Lord. The Christian runner must then discipline himself to bring his body and mind into conformity with the image of Christ. But to receive the crown he has to *obey* the rules set forth in Paul's epistles. The pastor who has rejected Paul's gospel because of the

fear of men, and teaches his people to follow the great commission will surely suffer great loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ. I'm sure the look on the Savior's face alone will leave him in tears.

In regard to his own life in Christ, Paul says:

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:12-14).

The apostle's heart's desire was to lay hold of what Christ had called him to achieve. Although he had not apprehended, like the runner who can see the finish line, he was striving for the goal that was set before him. Paul's greatest fear was that he would be disqualified. However, if he finished the course set before him, he was confident the Lord would richly reward him. Beloved, are you running to please men or the Lord?

Finally, Paul uses the farmer, who plows the field, to illustrate another aspect of the Christian experience. “The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits” (II Tim. 2:6). If there is one thing the farmer is known for, it's hard work and long hours. The day begins before dawn and doesn't end until dusk. The farmer must till the soil, sow the seed, fertilize, and water. But farming requires something else—patience, a lot of patience. The crops cannot be harvested until the fruit is mature.

Like farming, the ministry is hard work and long hours. It is not uncommon for a pastor to put in ten or twelve hour days. Then there are those times he's called out on an emergency hospital visit at two o'clock in the morning. As we know, there's a law of nature in farming—whatever you sow is what you reap. The same is true of the Lord's work. If a pastor sows the kingdom gospel, he's going to reap sorrow at the Bema seat. On the other hand if a man of God sows Paul's gospel, he will reap the praise of God.

Those who “preach the gospel should live of the gospel,” as the Lord has ordained (I Cor. 9:14). In short, the workman is worthy of his hire. If God has blessed us with a knowledge of the Mystery, then do we not have a *responsibility* to support those who faithfully proclaim this truth? Sadly, many of our dedicated grace pastors and missionaries struggle to make ends meet, while some in our congregations support well-known denominational preachers and missionaries who openly *reject* Paul's gospel. Shall God be well pleased with us at that day if we aid and abet confusion in the Church?


While I do not fully agree with Baptist doctrine, I know firsthand they are very dedicated and generous believers in Christ. Baptists only support Baptist causes. This is why there's a Baptist church on every corner. I am a firm believer that grace people should only support grace works! I can assure you that the Southern Baptist Convention is not going to come to our aid in a time of financial crisis, nor should we expect them to.

“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos

watered; but God gave the increase” (I Cor. 3:5,6).

Patience is the watchword when we are doing the Lord’s work. People want to see results, so the world measures success in numbers. Sadly, the Church has fallen victim to the same philosophy. God, however, is more interested in *faithfulness*. Historically, He has passed by the multitudes and has accomplished His greatest work through what some would call insignificant ministries. As we see from the above, Paul left the end result with the Lord. He’s the one who gives the increase. It’s far better to gather with a small group of saints standing for the truth, than a large assembly that’s all too willing to sacrifice the truth on the altar of compromise.

Farmers need plenty of help on the farm. It’s simply too big of a job for one man. Once again the same is true in the Lord’s service. Christian leaders must learn to follow Paul’s example here as well and delegate authority to others. Paul planted, Apollos watered, some weeded, God gave the increase, and others harvested the fruits of their labor. We are all co-laborers together with God.

These are the things that should characterize faithful men who minister the gospel. So then, we are to be committed to the cause, committed to the battle, committed to the rules, and, last but not least, committed to the task at hand! May we, too, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus to the praise of His glory. 

Question Box

“I was wondering what the distinction is, if any, between the ‘faith of Christ’ and ‘faith in Christ’ found in Galatians 2:16? The modern translations seem to suggest that both phrases are one in the same. ‘Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified’ (Gal. 2:16).”

We believe that the King James Version of the Scriptures best conveys the sense of the original language. The modern versions change the phrase “faith of Christ” to “faith in Christ” throughout, which overwhelms the passage with redundancy. Paul never intended the emphasis to be upon what man has done, but what the Savior has accomplished on his behalf.

So then, we’re not justified by keeping the law, rather we are declared eternally righteous by the “faith of Christ.” It is Christ’s faithfulness that is the basis of our justification. He faithfully carried out the will of the Father to provide redemption for us through His finished work. While salvation is a free gift given to all those who place their “faith in” what Christ has accomplished, it is by no means cheap. The payment to rescue us from the eternal consequences of sin is the precious blood of Christ. We are forgiven in Him!
—Pastor Paul M. Sadler

Three Men in the Book of Psalms (Cont'd)

By Cornelius R. Stam

THE FORGIVEN MAN

Ah, but the forgiven man! He, like the Perfect Man, is also called *blessed*. David well knew the forgiven man. He himself was one, and his vivid and exquisite description of the forgiven man is cited by Paul in Romans 4:6-8.

In addition to being the inspired Word of God, Psalm 32 is a classic in literature. It is a poem (in the Hebrew) containing an introduction (Vers. 1,2), four stanzas on the conviction, the confession, the forgiveness of sins, and the new relationship to God (Vers. 3-9), and finally a conclusion, or summation (Vers. 10,11).

It is the introduction to Psalm 32 that Paul cites in Romans 4:6-8, as David's *description* of those to whom God imputes righteousness without, or apart from, works.

It must not be concluded from this that David understood, as Paul later did—and as we should—the finished work of Christ as the basis for such imputation. Nor should it be supposed that he believed that works, in his day, were not *required* for salvation. He rather saw that works did not, *in themselves*, save from sin, but only the mercy of God. David lived under the dispensation of the Law, and had he said, “We are *not* under the Law,” as Paul did in Romans 6:14, or had he, like Paul, *forbade* the offering of blood sacrifices for sins, he would have been stoned to death (Deut. 27:26; Lev. 24:16).

David did, however, see that the works of the Law, as such, could not save, but only the mercy of God, and he, as a sinner, had experienced this mercy. Thus he wrote, with a glad and grateful heart:

“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.¹

“Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile” (Psa. 32:1,2).

Note, he says, “in whose spirit there is no *guile*.” The Psalm concerns an *honest* dealing with sin.

CONVICTION

In Stanza 1 of this Psalm, we find David under intense conviction of sin. Though physically strong and well, he feels and acts like an old man. This is because he is hiding his sin, or seeking to hide it, from God:

“When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring² all the day long” (Ver. 3).

But, king or no king, he is no match for God! He goes on to testify:

“For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah” (Ver. 4).

As long as the king continued in rebellion and pride he felt the heavy hand of God upon him by day and night. That hand, he knew, could crush him. This is doubtless why Peter wrote by inspiration, centuries later:

“God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God” (I Pet. 5:5,6).

David’s sin was finding him out. Acting like a man old long before his time, complaining and grumbling as he felt the pressure of the hand of God upon him, his “silence” began taking a heavier toll. His body began to be dehydrated, his “moisture was turned into the drought of summer.” He found it hard to converse. His throat and lips were parched and dry.

How typical of the experiences of those who have been brought, sometimes quite suddenly, under the conviction of sin!

The word “Selah,” in the Psalms, indicates simply a pause in the music—a time to meditate. Dr. Wm. L. Pettingill, when coming upon the word “Selah” in the Psalms, would read simply, *“Think of that!”* As we read Psalm 32:3,4 we indeed do well to “think of that,” to meditate on the grave consequences of “keeping silent” about our sins when they ought to be confessed to God.

CONFESSION

This dreadful sense of guilt, this conviction of sin and its consequences, however, finally had its effect—a salutary effect—upon David. Hear his testimony:

“I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah” (Ver. 5).

How blessed! Sin no sooner confessed than forgiven! Thus God

“Sad to say, all redeemed sinners do not have their eyes fixed on God for guidance.”

waits only for the sinner to come to the end of himself, to stop defending himself. He does not ask us to *be* anything or *do* anything to be saved. He asks us only to acknowledge our lost and sinful condition, and to *“call upon the name of the Lord”* (Rom. 10:13).

RELIEF

When this writer was a young man the console of a pipe organ included among its “stops” a “relief stop.”

As we come to Verses 6 and 7 of Psalm 32, it seems that a forgiven David has indeed pulled out the “relief stop.” Hear him sing!

“For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in a time when Thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

“Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah” (Vers. 6,7).

For *what* shall the godly man pray? Obviously for a contrite heart and the forgiveness that follows. David had learned by experience that the moment He sought the Lord, confessing his sin, in that moment he was forgiven. For *this* shall godly men pray, and doing so they will find that the floods of sin and guilt will *not* overwhelm them.

Now, rather than David hiding sin, we find *God* hiding *David* from

the consequences of sin, so that he is preserved from trouble and compassed about with songs of deliverance. What relief confession brings! How it turns groaning into a song!

INSTRUCTION

Stanza 4 of this Psalm has God speaking in the first person:

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye” (Ver. 8).

He does not say, “I will *command* thee and *compel* thee.” He says, “I will *instruct* thee and *teach* thee.” This is how God deals with the forgiven sinner. He assumes that the sinner, so graciously forgiven, will now look to Him for guidance. As he does this just a glance will suffice: “*I will guide Thee with Mine eye*”; a sign which only those in close communication with God can interpret.

Sad to say, *all* redeemed sinners do not have their eyes fixed on God for guidance. Hence the closing words of this stanza:

“Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee” (Ver. 9).

Those who are *not* in close communication with God must be led by the painful “bit and bridle.”

CONCLUSION

Finally, the great climax:

“Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about” (Ver. 10).

Let us not conclude from the above that the redeemed do *not*

experience many sorrows. The point is that those who trust in the Lord are “compassed about,” or protected, by God’s mercy. They are not—surely need not be—overwhelmed by outward circumstances, or by the guilt of sin. God has forgiven them and will not impute iniquity to them.

Little wonder the Psalmist closes with the glad refrain:

“Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart” (Ver. 11).

To David, of course, the “righteous” were those who sought to do right, and the “upright in heart,” those who sincerely strove for such righteousness.

The believer today, however, can rejoice in the greater blessings of Romans 3:

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets” (Rom. 3:21).

“Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

“To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith” (Rom. 3:24-27).

Endnotes

1. David did not yet know the blessed truth of II Corinthians 5:21 and Ephesians 1:7.
2. Beautiful rendering! It describes not merely the groaning of one oppressed, but the ill temper of a rebellious king, hiding a serious secret sin.

Our good friend, John Willson, is a frequent contributor to the pages of the *Berean Searchlight*. Longer than anyone can remember, he has served as one of the Bible Correspondence Instructors for *Prison Mission Association*. John and his dear wife, Betty, recently celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary, which is a fitting tribute to the institution of marriage. Congratulations! —Ed.

“Condescend to Men of Low Estate”

By John Willson, Bible Teacher



What does this phrase in Romans 12:16 mean to us? It may mean that we are interested in giving to support the Lord's work in countries where many are living in poverty and ignorance. Or, it may mean that we are concerned with helping missions in our own country which help those who have been destroying their lives with alcohol, drugs, or immoral living. But how about reaching the men and women who are serving time in jails and prisons? We have in America over two million that can be reached in jails by correspondence Bible lessons and literature. Those in city or county jails are usually easily reached in person.

Many years ago, I met with the sheriff at our local county jail and told him I would like to speak to the men there. He was very agreeable, and this began a regular weekly ministry that another brother and I are still involved in. We hold a Bible study, then provide inmates with Bible lessons, New Testaments, tracts, and other things to read. We find that many of these of low estate now have an interest in spiritual things, and they realize that it is their sin that has put them in jail. We tell them that they need the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, that they need to know that Christ died for their sins and that He will give them victory over sin and a new life.

Others can be reached by mail. We have been grading Bible lessons for prisoners and others all over the U. S. and foreign countries, sending out Grace literature to help them grow in understanding God's Word.

It may be that you are looking for some way to be directly active in the work of the Lord (I Cor. 15:58). If you would like to get started in a ministry, we can provide you with the Bible lessons you need. I assure you that there are blessings and rewards in reaching those of low estate and obeying our commission as ambassadors for Christ, beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God (II Cor. 5:18-20).

For more information, please contact John Willson at: *Grace Bible Courses*, 407 W. Hickory Street, Neosho, MO 64850. 

THE BBI BYLINE

A Report on Berean Bible Institute

BBI's Current Status

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.
Executive Director, *Berean Bible Institute*



Chapel time led by one of BBI's students

And for this semester, which began August 26th? Well, we were surprised again as the enrollment of eight more students brought the fall 2002 student body up to a total of 32 men and women. This means that this fall we have twice the number of students that we had last fall when school began. We are extremely thankful and praise our Lord for this growth of **BBI**.



Students learning God's Word, rightly divided



Missionary guests from around the world teaching at BBI

defending that message and proclaiming "*Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery*" (Rom. 16:25). **BBI's** mission is to help individual believers prepare themselves to be effective servants within the Body of Christ.

BBI'S HISTORY

Berean Bible Institute was organized as part of the ministry of the *Berean Bible Society* in March of 1996 and held its first classes in September of that same year with eight students. In January of 1999, **BBI** was reorganized as an independent faith ministry with its own Board of Directors.



Students and instructors from BBI's first year

From the beginning, **BBI** worked hard to develop a workable and practical program that would provide our students with balanced Bible teaching and ministry training geared towards helping them gain a solid understanding of the Grace message. Over the years, **BBI** has continued to improve its program to make it as effective as possible. And we will continue to work toward improving **BBI**, while maintaining a proper balance between academics and application. Our goal is to have students who will not be shipwrecked on the “shores of academics,” nor run aground in the “shallows of compromise,” but will be able to navigate safely through the perilous “seas of confusion” over which “every wind of doctrine” blows, in order that they might teach others how to follow the “course of truth” also. **BBI** is now in its 7th year and, by God’s grace, we will continue on the course that has been set in training faithful believers who sincerely desire to serve our risen Lord and Savior.



Each fall semester begins with an Orientation Dinner



Berean Bible Society Entryway

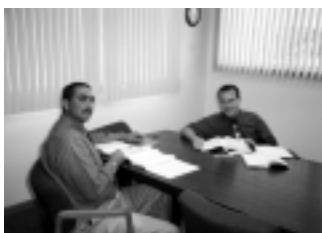


BBI Main Classroom and Library



Second BBI Classroom

Since 1996, **BBI** has been utilizing the facilities of the *Berean Bible Society*. We are extremely thankful that *BBS* has allowed us to use their extra space for our offices and classrooms. But the room they have available is limited. Because of this, if **BBI** continues to grow, and we trust that it will, in the not-too-distant future it will be necessary to find new quarters. The ideal situation would be for **Berean Bible Institute** to purchase or build its own building.



Dave and Dean studying and fellowshiping before class

HOW YOU CAN HELP

As a faith ministry, **BBI** is not underwritten by any denomination or other organization. Since the tuition we charge only covers a portion of our expenses, we are dependent on the gifts of God’s people for the financial support necessary to make this ministry possible. In regards to this there are three important areas of need. First, it is imperative that we have regular monthly support for the general fund to meet the day-to-day operating costs of the school. Second, in the effort to keep tuition as low as possible, **BBI** has established a scholarship fund. All

donations to this fund are used exclusively to reduce the cost of attending **BBI** for our students. Third, because it is obvious that **BBI** is going to outgrow its present location before long, we have established a building fund. While we have not yet zeroed in on a particular property, our hope is that the building fund will grow enough that when the right location is found there will be enough in the “kitty” to make a substantial down payment. We believe that this will give us an edge in our negotiating power when the time comes to make an offer on a suitable piece of real estate.



Julie and Rachel singing at the BBI Award's Ceremony



Some of BBI's student body in song

If you believe that what **BBI** is doing is a worthwhile endeavor, we would like to ask that you give serious consideration to becoming a part of this work through giving. Your financial support for the continuation and expansion of the ministry of the **Berean Bible Institute** would be greatly appreciated. And, because being part of this kind of a ministry can be very challenging for all involved, we would also like

to ask that you regularly remember the staff and students at **BBI** when you come before the Lord in prayer.

Jesus Christ is the reason for everything that *Berean Bible Institute* does and stands for.

He is both the beginning and the end as well as the means by which we exist and function. We do not merely name Christ as a formal facade for otherwise secular or religious pursuits and activities. He is not a figurehead, but the **Living Head** of the Church, which is His Body. The members of the Body of Christ are called to serve Him by making known the Gospel of the Grace of God. At BBI we do this by teaching and preaching “Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery” to our students, in both words and actions, preparing them to go out and do the same (see Rom. 16:25-26; II Cor. 5:14-21; Eph. 3:1-12; II Tim. 2:1-15).

Will you join us in the most noble of endeavors that a man or woman can become engaged in, that of making Jesus Christ known to a lost and dying world? If you won't, who will?

Spring Semester begins January 27, 2003

For information or an application contact: Dr. W. Edward Bedore, PO Box 40, Germantown, WI 53022, or phone: (262) 255-4094, fax: (262) 255-4195, e-mail: <berean@execpc.com>.

Grace Singles Conference

Theme: *Becoming a Profitable Grace Believer*



December 28, 2002-
January 1, 2003

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John Fredericksen
Ricky Kurth
Dick Ware
Kevin Dickey
Kevin Mepsted
Mike Keshan
Paul Sadler

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For a brochure and schedule of events, please contact: Pastor John Fredericksen, 23781 Pine Haven Dr., Rockerville, SD 57702, or Phone: (605) 341-9692, E-mail: <JFredFBC@aol.com>.

Hosting this year's conference is:

Kettle Moraine Bible Church

204 South 7th Avenue
West Bend, Wisconsin 53095
Pastor Mike Keshan (262) 338-2049

***We would like to encourage our Grace singles
to make every effort to attend this special event.
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September 20-27, 2003

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Pastor of *Grace Bible Church*, Hendersonville, NC

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Mr. Jim Botner (765) 832-2174

***May God richly bless these meetings
to the praise of His glory in Christ Jesus!***

An Artistic Berean

By Mrs. Barbara Sistelos



Thousands have been touched over the years by the content of the monthly *Berean Searchlight* magazine. One special Berean from Evansville, Indiana, even takes *Searchlight* covers to heart, however, and brings out their beauty

in a powerful way with the stroke of her brush. Mrs. Faye Dority (see photos) specializes in painting landscapes, and more recently, seaside pictures that are exact representations of existing *Searchlights* featured on each cover of this magazine. First, she paints the scene according to the original photograph, making it difficult to tell which came first, the actual lighthouse or the painting of it! Then, she creates other paintings that are variations of the original by changing the position of the sun, placing the ocean to one side or behind the lighthouse, even adding flowers or birds. Her fine-quality paintings are pleasing to the eye and tend to have the effect of encouragement. Best of all, they cause the viewer to reflect and focus in on the beauty of each lighthouse and



the purpose of their existence. Without a doubt, Mrs. Dority uses every opportunity to share the good news that Christ is our shining light and God's Word is beaming down hope to the world in this age of Grace.



Many have benefited from Faye's artistic talent, as she enjoys giving her paintings away as gifts to family and friends on special occasions. You may remember Mrs. Dority as she is a former pastor's wife and has ministered as an evangelistic ventriloquist for children and adults.



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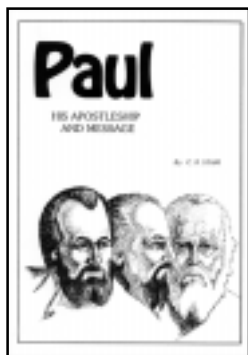
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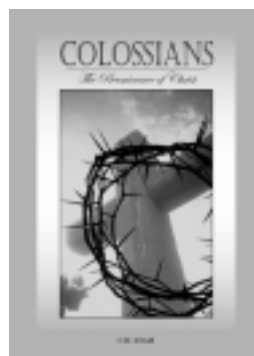
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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER: We are pleased to report that Pastor Mike Keshan is the newest member of our BBS Board of Directors. Mike is the pastor of *Kettle Moraine Bible Church* in West Bend, Wisconsin, where his congregation has grown steadily over the past number of years. He also teaches at the *Berean Bible Institute* and serves as the Chairman of the Faculty. Mike and his wife, Debbie, have two grown children, Jenny and Kevin, both of whom know and love the Lord. Brother

Mike attended his first BBS Board meeting in September and promised to return afterwards, so we thought that was a good sign. Welcome aboard, beloved, you've already been a real blessing.

 **TO OUR CANADIAN READERS:** Our dear Brother Don Potter has retired from his post as the president of BBS Canada due to age. Don will continue to serve on the Board, which has been reorganized in Ontario under its new president, John Peters. We want to convey our sincere appreciation to Brother Don for his faithfulness through the years, and for his willingness to lend his experience to the Board of Directors, as strength permits.

For those who live in Canada, we would like to encourage you to channel your donations through BBS Canada. This serves a twofold purpose: First, it insures you will be given full credit for the amount of your donation for tax purposes. Second, it saves a considerable amount of the Lord's money that must be paid in banking fees. Here in the U.S. we are charged a sizeable fee on *each* transaction.

Brother Peters, the President of BBS Canada, will see that you receive a receipt and make sure your gift is forwarded to us. Our Canadian address is: *Berean Bible Society*, 54940 Light Lane, R.R. #1, Vienna, Ontario N0J 1Z0. In addition, all *book and tape orders* should be sent here to Wisconsin, but please remit in U.S. funds. Heartfelt thanks to our northern co-workers who faithfully help us spread the good news of Paul's apostleship and message.

*The picture of the lighthouse that appears on the front cover was taken by Gail Wilver of Naples, Florida. The *Heceta Head Lighthouse* is located 12 miles north of Florence on Oregon's central coast. It is 205 feet above the waves on the west side of 1000-foot high Heceta Head. This lighthouse was erected in 1894 and it sends out the strongest light on the Oregon Coast, as it can be seen approximately 21 miles out to sea.

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