

The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

December 2000





From the Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

Moses and Paul and the *Two-Fold Purpose of God* have been two of Pastor Stam's best selling books over the years. In fact, we usually recommend the latter of these two volumes for those who are newcomers to the faith. Thus, we are pleased to announce that both of these works are now available on audio cassette tapes. Once again, we want to personally thank our dear brother, David Allen, who graciously volunteered his time. Dave's deep, booming voice brings the messages of these volumes to life. With the holidays just around the corner, you may want to consider giving "Books On Tape" as a *gift*. For additional information, please see page 22.

While we hold those in high regard who do not observe the holidays, we have always agreed with Brother Stam that we should use the occasion to the glory of God. During the years I pastored local assemblies, I took advantage of the opportunity to challenge the traditions of men with a clear presentation of the significance of Christ's birth according to the twofold purpose of God. We no longer know Christ after the flesh. Rather we know Him as the Lord of glory who came to die for the sins of the world.

I vividly recall a series of messages I gave one year on the *Wisemen and Paul*. I shared how the Magi didn't follow "yonder star" from the east, nor did they arrive the night Christ was born. It was nearly two years after the fact that God led them to *Nazareth* where they worshipped the King of Israel who will execute judgment and justice on the earth. But if we compare this with Paul's gospel, he presents Christ in a completely new light. According to Paul's epistles, Christ is the Head of the Church; therefore, we worship Him today as the God of all *grace* who would have all men to be saved and come into a knowledge of the truth.

After the series, one of the brethren, who had recently come to a knowledge of the Mystery, came up to me and said, "Well, Pastor, there goes the Christmas story! For thirty years I have been following tradition, thanks for sharing the truth, it does indeed set you free." Mission accomplished!

From all of us here at the *Berean Bible Society*, may you and yours have a wonderful holiday season in the Lord. Like the Apostle Paul, may we humbly pause to thank Him for "*His unspeakable gift*" (II Cor. 9:15).

In His redeeming grace,

Paul M. Sadler
President

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Editor: Paul M. Sadler

Composition and Layout: Kevin J. Sadler

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

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

Internet: <www.bereanbiblesociety.org>

E-mail: <berean@execpc.com>

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From New York:

"Just a short note to say thank you for sharing the simplicity of the gospel, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. We do enjoy it a great deal. You have a real in-depth view into the Pauline letters. How sad the way our churches have fallen from what was taught in the first century. Christ made it so simple. What a privilege to be able to share with you and be a part of the gospel message. We pray that the Lord will bless you abundantly in your work."

From Wisconsin:

"I look forward each month for the *Berean Searchlight* to enjoy and learn. Thank you for upholding the truth. Keep the faith."

From Massachusetts:

"May autumn bring you many successes and blessings in your work for the Lord. We can do nothing outside of Him. Thanks for faithfully declaring God's marvelous love and grace through the redeeming death of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, whom we serve. I pray that your message of grace may reach many souls desperate for hope." (We have a real concern for the young people of our country along these lines. Sadly, the teaching of evolution has left them in a hopeless state of despair. Ed.)

From Florida:

"I am enjoying Pastor Sadler's lessons on Peter. In September, the section on a *Royal Priesthood* was so good that I made a copy and sent it to a friend."

From Ohio:

"I so enjoy each issue of the *Berean Searchlight*. In the September issue you offered a new salvation tract entitled *An Epitaph*. Please send me a sample."

From Wisconsin:

"May the Lord bless the work at BBS. It is so important to teach the gospel rightly divided."

From Nigeria:

"This is to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to you and the entire staff of the *Berean Searchlight* for God's grace on your illumination of the gospel of grace as revealed through our Brother Paul in his epistles. I want to thank you for the *Berean Searchlight*, which you began sending to me in March. Since July I have read my Bible several times with the dispensational view and I have been blessed tremendously and the Word of God now comes alive and my faith has grown wonderfully."

From Michigan:

"I thank God for you taking time out of your very busy schedule to come and be a part of our conference. We appreciated the messages that you were able to bring to us. They were certainly challenging and caused one to sit back and think on spiritual things."

From California:

"Your articles on Peter's epistles are very timely and well written. There seems to be some confusion among 'Grace People' concerning the significance of his writings to 'the strangers scattered,' and its importance to us. Your articles should clarify that question for many of us. We continue to pray that the Lord will give you the stamina and wisdom to fulfill such a heavy responsibility." (Eventually we hope to address all the Hebrew epistles. Ed.)

From the Internet:

"A wonderful lady at work gave me a copy of your *Berean Searchlight* booklet!!! It rocks!!! Finally, somebody who really knows what the Scriptures mean!! Thanks!! Send me the newest copy!!"

From California:

"I always find my spiritual food in the *Berean Searchlight* as it is scarce in northern California. So glad to know where I find my nourishment by grace tapes, literature, and of course the Scriptures."

From New Jersey:

“Last year you wrote three articles about the Anti-Christ (*The Present Obsession With the Anti-Christ*) that appeared in the *Berean Searchlight*. I would very much like to see those articles put into booklet or pamphlet form. Could you possibly discuss this with your Board of Directors at the *Berean Bible Society*? It would be very much appreciated.” (We have placed your request on the agenda for our spring meeting. Thanks for your interest in the work. Ed.)

From Michigan:

“I praise the Lord for the *Searchlight*. It is so good to have the Spirit bearing witness with my spirit that these things are true. Keep up the good work. Enclosed is my order for a copy of *Growing in Grace* that I plan on using to teach my children the grace message.”

From West Virginia:

“My wife and I enjoyed your sermon Sept. 10th at the Holiday Inn. This was a conference I don’t think any of us will forget. May God’s blessing be on you and your staff for the wonderful work you are doing for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

From California:

“Enjoy the *Searchlight* so much. Enclosing \$5.00 for your offer on the tract just printed, *An Epitaph*. I will be happy to give them out.”

From Michigan:

“Enjoying your book on Ephesians.”

From Pennsylvania:

“Here is a gift for the month of October. Please use it where you need it most. We enjoyed Pastor Sadler and others at White Sulphur Springs and are looking forward to hearing Pastor Sadler once again at *First Grace Gospel Church* the end of this month.”

From Michigan:

“I’m still studying and going over and over again your book *Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians*. Boy, what a book—I never thought anyone had that kind of a brain to put out such a wonderful book. You did a marvelous job. I won’t give this book up.” (Thanks so very much for your thoughtful words of encouragement. By the way, my brain is still recovering from the workout. Ed.)

From West Virginia:

“I am so thankful for the ministry of the *Berean Bible Society*.”

From Colorado:

“May our heavenly Father continue to abundantly bless you and your staff in getting the Word out rightly divided. I have enclosed a check for *Berean Bible Society* to use as you see fit.”

From Wisconsin:

“I praise God for your dedication to the Lord and leadership in guiding the development of *Berean Bible Society* into a very competent and professional organization dedicated to God’s glory. Thank you again for your hard work (keep running the race but please remember to pace yourself) and know that what you have done unto the Lord has not gone unnoticed. Also know that you and your loved ones are in our continual prayers.” (We are unworthy of such praise. We are merely sinners saved by grace, grateful to be an instrument in His hand. Ed.)

From Florida:

“I’ve just started learning about the dispensation of the grace of God and I need to know more for true spiritual growth. A grace believer has told me a few things concerning Paul, something about being an apostle for the Gentiles and a few other things. He let me read one of your materials and I want to learn more.”

“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



The Titanic Passenger Who Was Saved Twice

The ship that was said to be so unsinkable that even God Himself could not take it down did sink in the icy waters of the North Atlantic in 1912....

Of the 1,528 people who ended up in the icy water, only six were eventually rescued. One of those six was actually saved twice that night, according to a little publicized account of heroism published in 1912, published by John Climie of Scotland.

Among the passengers of the ill-fated luxury liner was a Scottish minister named John Harper, who had boarded the *Titanic* with his 6 year old daughter, Nana. He was travelling to Moody Church in Chicago, Illinois, where he had been invited to preach for three months.

When the *Titanic* struck the iceberg and began to sink, Harper got his daughter placed into one of the lifeboats. He then began preaching the last sermon of his young life. As water began filling the ship, Harper was heard shouting, "Let the women, children and the unsaved into the lifeboats."

Survivors reported that Harper took off his own life jacket and gave it to another man. "Don't worry about me," he reportedly said, "I'm not going down, I'm going up!"

When the ship began to sink, more than 1,500 passengers jumped or fell into the icy waters. As one by one each gradually drowned or froze to death, Harper was seen swimming from one passenger to another, pleading with them to accept Christ as their Savior.

Only six of the 1,500 people in the water were eventually rescued. One of those six later identified himself as Harper's last convert. This young man had climbed up on a piece of debris. Harper, who was struggling in the water near him, shouted out, "Are you saved?" "No," the man replied. Harper then shouted the words from the Bible: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." There was no answer, and a moment later he drifted away on the waves.

As fate would have it, the current later brought the two men back together again. Harper asked him the second time, "Are you saved?"

Once again, the answer was "no." With his dying breath, Harper shouted, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

John Harper then slipped under the waves for the last time, according to the book *The Titanic's Last Hero* by Moody Adams (The Olive Press, 1997), which quotes the 1912 account by John Climie.

When the man in the water saw Harper go under and stay under he turned his life over to Christ on the spot. Four years later, at a meeting for *Titanic* survivors in Ontario, Canada, this man testified how John Harper had led him to the Lord that night....

The story of John Harper reminds us of a great lesson, the secret of the ages: "There's more to life than mere survival."

—The *Christian Crusade* newspaper staff

The Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter

I Peter 3:1-7

By Paul M. Sadler



“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the Word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.”

—I Pet. 3:1-2

Sometime ago I came across a *Peanuts* cartoon by Charles Schulz that really hit the nail on the head, as they say. Lucy, the one who is forever rambling, and Linus, the profound thinker, are at a window watching it rain:

Lucy: Boy, look at it rain...what if it floods the whole world?

Linus: It will never do that...in the ninth chapter of Genesis, God promised Noah that would never happen again, and the sign of the promise is the rainbow.

Lucy: You've taken a great load off my mind....

Linus: Sound theology has a way of doing that!

Truer words have never been spoken! Sound theology is a product of

a proper hermeneutical approach (the science of interpretation) and right division of the Word of truth. Sadly, many Bible teachers fail to apply this rule to the Hebrew epistles. As we have seen, the first two chapters of I Peter are clearly addressed to the Jewish believers of the dispersion who were scattered abroad after the stoning of Stephen.

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS

Since Peter was not one to change horses in midstream, he writes, “Likewise, ye wives,” that is, ye *Hebrew* wives (I Pet. 3:1). This is substantiated for us farther down in the context where he encourages these women to follow the godly example of Sarah, “whose daughters ye are” (vs. 6). Thus, they were the physical descendents of Abraham and Sarah. This surely could never be said of Gentile women, no matter how spiritually minded they may have been.

The statement “likewise, ye wives” implies that a foregoing thought is being carried over from the previous context. Just as Christ voluntarily submitted Himself to the will of the Father, these wives were to be *submissive* to their own husbands. Peter wasn't one to tiptoe around problems like so many are inclined to do today. It has been said, “He was always contemplating difficulties in the road of the saint, and suggesting how to get along, so as to glorify God in the very midst of them.”

Here Peter rises to the occasion again as he gives some practical

instructions to wives who have unbelieving husbands. “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the Word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.” Keep in mind, these were Hebrew women that had received the Messiah as their Savior, but were married to Jewish husbands who believed Him to be nothing more than an impostor. Boy, talk about a *tense* set of circumstances—this would be akin to a wife trying to talk to an unreasonable husband about the family car she just wrecked!

Inasmuch as believers are never permitted to marry unbelievers, it is probably safe to say that these women were saved *after* they were married. Now it may well be some of these women concluded their marriages were over due to the fact that they were unequally yoked. But Peter, like the Apostle Paul, taught that every attempt should be made to salvage the marriage for the sake of the children and the unbelieving partner.

A saved wife has an obligation before God to share the gospel with her husband. However, these wives were going about it in every way but the right way. Apparently, they were not submitting themselves to their husbands on the grounds of unbelief. After all, they were now the children of God. They had a new standing. True! But Peter rolls out the cannons of clarification by instructing these women to be in “subjection to their own husbands,” on the basis of creation. “I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (I Cor. 11:3). In the beginning, God

created the woman for the man. According to the Scriptures, her role is that of a *helper*. And the greatest way she can help her husband is to submit herself to his leadership.

Before the fall, Eve willingly obeyed Adam; subsequently, both lived in perfect harmony. Once sin entered, the woman was far more inclined to respond to her husband accordingly, “Who do you think you are?!!! I’ll do what I want, when I want, and how I want. I am just as capable of making decisions as you are!” Since it would be the woman’s natural tendency after the fall to rise up in rebellion against her husband’s authority, God *commanded* her saying, “thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Gen. 3:16).

As we know, the man and the woman were created in the image of God; therefore, they both have an intellect, emotions, and will. A wise husband who is faced with an important decision should always consider the counsel of his wife, who is his intellectual counterpart. If there is an impasse in the decision making process, the final judgment should be left up to the husband. “Wives be in subjection to your own husbands.” This timeless biblical injunction may not be politically correct these days, but it is the *will of God* in Christ Jesus for the marriage relationship. If obeyed, it will bring peace and harmony to the Christian home.

Sometimes a husband’s rebellion against the things of God will leave a wife in an abusive relationship. In such cases, whether it is physical or emotional abuse, she should immediately seek out a godly pastor for assistance. A man who strikes his wife for any reason is to be pitied.

Remember and remember well, he is striking the image of God.

Having cleared up the confusion over submission, Peter now addresses another thorny issue. Namely, how to lead an unsaved husband to the Lord. Once again, these Hebrew wives were going about it in the wrong way. They were so overbearing that they had their husbands fit to be tied. Probably the word that sums up their actions best is *nagging*. Ladies, have you ever nagged your husbands? I didn't think so!

“...many believers seem to be unaware that their words and actions leave a lasting impression on the unbeliever....”

Peter states, “if any obey not the Word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.” These unsaved husbands had heard the good news that Christ was the Messiah of Israel again, and again, and again from their wives, who loved them and wanted them to be saved. In essence Peter says, you know, this isn't working that well, let's try another approach.

“If they obey not the Word.” The term “obey not” (Gr. *apeitheousin*) means, “to be unpersuaded.” The husbands of these Hebrew women *persistently* rejected the claims of the gospel of the kingdom. In fact, they were downright defiant. Little wonder, they were being badgered day and night. As an advocate of peace, Peter argues the following: your husbands have heard the Word whereby they might be saved, but

have rejected it; therefore, he adds, “they also may without the word be won by the conversation [behavior] of the wives.” That is, without any further word from them regarding this matter. Silence is golden! A meek and quiet spirit will sooner win your husbands to Christ as they behold your godly attitude, which is a sweet-smelling savor unto God.

“While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear” (vs. 2). Although many believers seem to be unaware that their words and actions leave a lasting impression on the unbeliever, this passage indicates otherwise. Notice that these Jewish husbands constantly *behold* the purity of their wives who revere the things of the Lord.

J. Vernon McGee once told the story, as only he can do, about a woman in his congregation that was attempting to lead her unsaved husband to the Lord. It underscores the value of Peter's wise counsel.

“A lady came to me when I was a pastor and said, ‘Dr. McGee, I bring my husband to church every Sunday.’ (She was the kind of woman who *could* bring her husband; she had a dominant personality.) She continued, ‘He is not saved, and every Sunday I think he will make a decision for Christ but doesn't. On Monday morning I sit at the breakfast table just weeping and telling him how I wish he would accept Christ. When he comes home from work in the evening, again I just sit there at dinner and weep and beg him to believe the gospel.’

“I got to thinking about what she had said. How would you like to have dinner every evening and breakfast every morning with a weeping woman? I wouldn't care for it myself, and I'm sure you wouldn't

want that either. So I called her up and said, 'Suppose that for a year's moratorium you simply do not talk to your husband about the Lord at all?' She said, 'Oh, you mean that I'm not to witness?' I said, 'No, I didn't say that. Peter says that if you cannot win your husband with the Word, then start to preach a wordless sermon.'

"How about your life? What kind of life are you living before Him?" I want to tell you that put her back on her heels because she wasn't living as she knew she should live. But she agreed to my suggestion because she *did* want to win him, and she was a wonderful woman in many ways. I was amazed myself when, in six months' time, her husband trusted Christ one Sunday morning. The wordless sermon had won, my friend."

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO MODESTY

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (I Pet. 3:3,4).

While there are a few exceptions, most men put very little time into their appearance. It's usually a lick and a promise and they're out the door. When it comes to the appearance of a woman, this is another story entirely. Since she came forth from the hand of God with a higher degree of refinement she pays far more attention to detail, sometimes to a fault. Ask any husband and he will tell you that it is not



uncommon to see his wife try on three different outfits before a special occasion.

Peter had his hands full as he sought to deal with the actions of these Hebrew women. Evidently some of them came up with the idea that if they adorned themselves like the world, they would have their husband's undivided attention. It is true, of course, that men can be inattentive due to the fact that they tend to focus on one thing at a time. This is why Dads often hear their kids say, "Dad, Dad, earth to Dad!" Although these women probably did get their husband's attention, their behavior was inappropriate. They were appealing to the sensual, hoping to have an opportunity to influence them with the gospel. In reality, it nullified the testimony of these women in the eyes of their husbands because of their *worldly* appearance.

The Apostle Peter wasn't one to mince words; thus he thunders "whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel." With history as our guide here, it is said that after the women of Rome laced strands of gold and silver through their hair they curled it on top of their heads. Add to this, finely woven silk apparel, ornamented with gold chains and ankle bracelets, and you can see what attributed to the moral decline of Rome.

But this was unbecoming of the child of God. Interestingly, Peter doesn't prohibit hairstyling, jewelry or apparel; he is simply making a case for *moderation*. Obviously, he isn't forbidding the wearing of garments when he says not the

“putting on of apparel.” Peter is merely stressing the importance of avoiding worldly styles, which would draw attention to them. The key word here in all these areas is *modesty*. The rule of thumb is, dress for the occasion—never be overdressed or underdressed. And remember the advice of Alexander Pope, “Be not the first by whom the new are tried, nor the last to lay the old aside.”

Rather than giving so much attention to the outward appearance, the apostle lays emphasis on “the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” Here we see the wisdom of God; nothing manifests the beauty and sufficiency of Christ more fully than a godly woman who has a sweet and gentle spirit. It is *irresistible* to her husband.

“For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands” (vs. 5). Peter effectively illustrates the above by appealing to holy women in time past; such as Sarah, Hannah, and Ruth, who also adorned themselves in like manner and won the praise of God.

It may well have been the tendency of these women to show a greater degree of submission to their spiritual leaders than to their own husbands. Therefore using Sarah as an example, Peter makes it crystal clear again that their first responsibility was to the head of the house. “Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.” Sarah was so devoted to Abraham that it was second nature

“...nothing manifests the beauty and sufficiency of Christ more fully than a godly woman who has a sweet and gentle spirit.”

for her to call him lord out of respect for his God-given position (See Genesis 18).

A WORD TO THE HUSBANDS

“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered” (vs. 7).

Peter now turns his attention to those husbands who had placed their faith in the Messiah. Inasmuch as husbands can be insensitive at times, Peter takes the opportunity to remind them to dwell with their wives according to *knowledge*. Emotionally, women are far more complex than men. Consequently, if a husband takes the time to get to know his wife more intimately it will enhance the marriage relationship. For example, a deeper understanding of your wife will always help you purchase just the right gift for her.

For the inexperienced, don’t make the mistake of one young man who bought his fiancée a catcher’s mitt for her birthday. He thought he had purchased the perfect gift. After all, she had just shared with him a week earlier that she needed to get a little more exercise. Upon opening the gift, he was amazed at her reaction as tears streamed down her face and she rushed out of the room. At first he thought they were

tears of *joy*, but when she failed to return an hour later, he finally realized she must be upset with him. I have often wondered if this couple ever got married.

“Giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” Even though both the husband and wife are weak, the wife is the physically weaker of the two. God didn’t design her to hold a 2x10 piece of lumber over her head while

her husband nails it in place. She is to be treated like a piece of fine china that’s easily broken. Husbands are to handle their wives with loving care!

Peter adds “being heirs together of the grace of life.” Unlike the members of the Body of Christ who are joint-heirs with Christ, these saints are heirs of eternal life, the promise of which will be fulfilled when the kingdom is established (II Pet. 1:11).

To Be Continued!



Question Box

“If the Anti-Christ demands everyone to worship him, how can they be worshipping these things? And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.” (Rev. 9:20).

Although there are some sequence variations in the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John follows a fairly consistent time line. He meticulously spends the better part of four chapters (11, 12, 13, and 14) describing the events of the middle of the tribulation, which includes the Anti-Christ’s rise to power. Since the reference to idol worship in Revelation 9:20 stands before this point, we can safely conclude that he has not yet declared himself to be God (II Thes. 2:3,4 cf. Rev. 13:11-18).



View of Jerusalem

The Man of Sin will use the one-world religious system to ascend to the throne in Jerusalem where he will make the declaration that he is the Messiah. Thus, in the *middle* of Daniel’s seventieth week the false prophet announces “to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast [Anti-Christ], which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed” (Rev. 13:14,15).

—Pastor Sadler

The Abiding Evidences of Salvation

By Cornelius R. Stam

**Your *faith* in Christ Jesus,
The *love* which ye have to all the saints,
The *hope* which is laid up for you in heaven**

—Col. 1:4,5

Evidently Paul had never yet seen the Colossian Christians when he wrote to them (Col. 2:1). He had only *heard* of their conversion to Christ (Col. 1:4,5).

But *what* had he heard that had convinced him that they were genuinely saved? Our opening passage gives us the answer:

“We heard of your *faith* in Christ Jesus, and of the *love* which ye have to all the saints, for the *hope* which is laid up for you in heaven....”

But was this sufficient evidence that God had worked in their hearts? Would it be evidence enough today?

Some answer: “No. We must have the gift of the Holy Spirit and speak with tongues, or work miracles.” And this writer must admit that this once was conclusive evidence of salvation. Our Lord’s great commission to the eleven clearly states:

“And these signs shall follow them that believe: In My name shall they cast out devils [demons], they shall speak with new tongues;

“They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:17,18).

This is the clear Word of God on the subject, and too many confused fundamentalists and evangelicals run in circles trying to explain it away.

When Peter preached to Cornelius and his household, “*the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the Word*” (Acts 10:44). But how did Peter and his companions *know* that those of Cornelius’ household had received the Spirit? Verse 46 provides the answer: “*For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.*” It was this that settled the matter for Peter according to his own testimony in Acts 11:17:

“Forasmuch, then, as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God?”



“The blessings which are ours in Christ draw us—certainly *should* draw us—closer together. The closer we are drawn to our blessed Lord, the closer we are drawn to each other.”

And it was this that settled the matter for the apostles and elders in Judaea too, for we read in the next verse:

“When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”

Ah, but there has been a change in dispensations since that time. In I Corinthians 13:8 we read:

“Whether there be tongues, they shall cease...”

In this same part of I Corinthians we read of other signs¹ that were to be done away, but the closing verse of I Corinthians says:

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity [love], these three; but the greatest of these is charity [love].”

These, then, are the abiding characteristics of the true Church in this present dispensation.

The problem with our Pentecostal friends and confused fundamentalists in general, is not that they are not *Scriptural* in their teachings, but that they are not *dispensational*; they have failed to “*rightly divide the Word of truth.*”

The first of these three “abiding” characteristics is *faith*. This is of *primary* importance, for, “*without faith it is impossible to please God*” (Heb. 11:6). And faith produces *hope*. In a world of hopelessness and fear, the believer may “*abound in hope.*” And this hope is no mere wish, for it is founded on the Word of God, “*an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast...*” (Heb. 6:19). It is the enjoyment, here and now, by faith, of the blessings which are ours in Christ and shall some day be fully realized.

“...the genuineness of conversion to Christ is attested by “faith, hope, love, these three,” rather than by miraculous signs or demonstrations.”

And hope, in turn, produces *love*. The very passage we are studying speaks of “the love which ye have to all the saints, *for* [because of]² the hope which is laid up for you in heaven.” The blessings which are ours in Christ draw us—certainly *should* draw us—closer together. The closer we are drawn to our blessed Lord, the closer we are drawn to each other.


Faith, hope and love, then, are the three abiding evidences of salvation. Any local church where these three characteristics abound is a *full* church, even if it is composed of only a few members. Any believer possessing these three characteristics in abundant measure experiences a *full* Christian life.

Water baptism was once *required* for salvation, and miraculous signs were the *evidences* of salvation (Mark 16:16-18; Acts 1:8; 2:38), but let us not create confusion and division by efforts to continue on in a dispensation which God has replaced by something better.

The simplest believer in this dispensation of grace is *complete in Christ* (Col. 2:10), *crucified* (Gal. 2:20), *resurrected* (Col. 2:13), and *seated in the heavenlies* (Eph. 2:6), *IN CHRIST*. And the genuineness of conversion to Christ is attested by “faith, hope, love, these three,” rather than by miraculous signs or demonstrations.

Shall we then seek to restore what God has “done away”? Shall we say, Let us be baptized with water as a testimony and seek the signs for spiritual renewal, even after God has provided something better? Shall we retreat from the substance to the shadows? No! God says: “*When that which is perfect [i.e., complete]³ is come, then that which is in part shall be done away....And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three...*” (I Cor. 13:10-13).

These three abiding evidences of salvation are brought together

in I Corinthians 13:13; Gal. 5:5,6; I Thes. 1:3; 5:8; II Thes. 1:3; Heb. 6:10-12 and many other places in Paul’s epistles. Why not look them up, study them prayerfully, and rejoice in the riches of God’s grace. 

Endnotes

1. In Mark 16:17, *et al*, these miraculous demonstrations are called “signs,” because they confirmed the Messiahship of the Lord Jesus. They were *signs* of the validity of His claims.
2. This is the sense in the Greek.
3. Referring to the full “revelation of the mystery.”

How Do You Say “the Apostle Paul” in Swahili?

By David M. Havard

Watching a slide presentation is okay. Viewing a multimedia presentation is even better. But when it comes to really understanding a mission field, nothing beats being there! And that’s just what I had the opportunity of doing this past summer during a short-term missions trip to Kenya, East Africa.

This trip, organized by *Things To Come Mission* in Indianapolis, Indiana, allowed eleven people from three different grace churches to take advantage of this opportunity to witness missions on a foreign field “up close and personal.” My fellow travelers included six people from *Altoona Bible Church* in Pennsylvania (Randy Bickel, Marsha Wright, Becky Espenlaub, Kristi Ellenberger, Doug Campbell, and Kathy Biddle), three people from *Tipp City Community Church* in Ohio (Stephanie Thornton, Kara Lakes, and Janice Potter); and a fellow member of *Berean Grace Bible Church* in Wisconsin (Tom Kangas).

This trip gave me the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of activities and to get at least a partial taste of what it might be like as a missionary in Kenya.

I was especially privileged to preach numerous times while in Kenya. Regardless of the culture or country, the gospel of the grace of God is still what man needs to hear. My first opportunity to preach was at the town of Runyunjes where we conducted two nights of open-air evangelistic meetings. We praise the Lord for two men who made professions of faith during the second night of meetings.

It was also nice to be able to attend and speak at a pastor’s conference held at *Grace Bible School* in Embu, Kenya. It was an honor to meet the Kenyan pastors who are proclaiming the gospel of the grace of God and taking a stand for Paul’s apostleship and message. There, like here, the

preaching of the mystery brings opposition. It was both encouraging and challenging to see their dedication to the Lord.

Whether preaching at open-air meetings, in village churches, or in inner-city churches in the city of Nairobi, it was eye opening to see how these saints make do with so little as compared to American churches. It reminded me of the Macedonians versus the Corinthians. If we did as much with our abundance as they do out of their poverty, we could really see our country changed for the Lord.



Kenyan Pastors

This trip was a very enlightening experience for all who went on it. You can read and be told about missions, but there is nothing like actually going to the mission field to get firsthand information about the work that is being done.

In addition to being positively exposed to missions, it was also encouraging to see that even halfway around the world in Kenya the ministry of the *Berean Bible Society* is bearing fruit. I was pleasantly surprised that many of the Kenyan pastors knew of Pastor Sadler and me from reading the *Berean Searchlight* and other BBS literature.

There is both great opportunity and great need in Kenya. Please keep our missionaries and national pastors over there in your thoughts and prayers.



Out of the Mouths of Babes

“A little girl walked daily to and from school. Though the weather that morning was questionable and clouds were forming, she made her daily trip to school. As the afternoon progressed, the winds whipped up, along with thunder and lightning. The mother of the



little girl felt concerned that her daughter would be frightened as she walked home from school, and she herself feared that the electrical storm might harm her child. Following the roar of thunder, lightning, like a flaming sword would cut through the sky.

“Full of concern, the mother quickly got in her car and drove along the route of her child’s school. As she did so, she saw her little girl walking along, but at each flash of lightning, the child would stop, look up and smile. Another and another were to follow quickly, each with the little girl stopping, looking up and smiling. Finally, the mother called over to her child and asked, ‘What are you doing?’ The child answered, ‘Smiling, God just keeps taking pictures of me.’”

—Selected

“In all things give thanks” is surely the essence of Brother Dave Rohrer’s testimony. Dave is a Christian businessman who actively served the Lord for many, many years before coming into an understanding of Paul’s gospel. He writes: “In the enclosed brief paper, *The Stam Connection*, I have tried to give some indication of my reaction to the second reading of *Things That Differ*. That reaction was the beginning of a most blessed relationship with the Berean Bible Society (four or five years) via the *Searchlight* which I regularly receive....The connection with you all (the whole BBS team) has been an ongoing experience of incredible blessing and spiritual enhancement to me and my wife, Jean. We could never be sufficiently grateful to God for you all.” —Ed.

THE STAM CONNECTION

By David Rohrer

“To make all men see what is the dispensation of the Mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”
—Eph. 3:9

It would be impossible to adequately describe the effect that a knowledge of *the Mystery* has had on my life. Knowing that I cannot put my feelings into words, I shall nevertheless try to explain a bit of what the emotional and/or psychological and/or spiritual effect has been to date.

More than a quarter of a century ago I purchased a book entitled *Things That Differ* which was written by one Cornelius R. Stam who, as I understand, is still living at the age of 92.

In July of 1995 (a little over a year after my heart surgery), while preparing for a trip to Durango, and being somewhat hurried with last minute details, I picked this book off the shelf and stuck it in my briefcase—in anticipation of any opportunities I might have to read during this time away from my office.



One morning in Durango I opened the book (a hard cover of 279 pages) and saw that I had written my own name on the inside of the front cover—and below my name was the clearly written date: *September 1972*. This means that some 23 years before I had purchased and carefully read this book which had since been on my bookshelf virtually untouched for that period of time. In opening the book, I saw that I had (with my red pen) written many notes with their page numbers, inside both the front and back covers. *I know* I had read the book “carefully” since red and yellow highlighting and underlinings were found liberally distributed through the entire book from front to back.

At this point, I shall make no attempt to discuss in detail the Lord’s leading in my life, nor to discuss the rather extensive reading and study I had done during those intervening 23 years. However, I hasten to say here (to the glory of *God* and with eternal thanksgiving to *God*) that He had most graciously and abundantly been preparing me for *the additional and wonderful surprise of 1995*.

On July 19, 1995, I printed in red ink (inside the back cover) these words: “I’m beginning to see **what** I have never seen before **like** I have never seen before!” Near these words, I had also printed (perhaps on the same day) the following: “In reading *Things That Differ* I’m **absolutely astounded!**”

I’m well aware that from reading what I have just stated, some very legitimate questions can arise: Really, what was so different? What was so astounding? Did you learn some new doctrine? What did you learn that you did not already know? In answer, I would emphasize that my purpose here is not to discuss any particular Biblical doctrine nor any particular Biblical issues (per se), but, rather (as stated above) to try to give some reasonable indication or impression of what it was like to me, personally—that is, the **new reading of my already-well-marked book: *Things That Differ***.

Let me say, further (and happily) that what I was reading was neither inconsistent with, nor in conflict with most of what I had already known and believed. In fact, for the most part, it was strongly confirming and supportive of my already-formed (over 50 years) *deep doctrinal convictions* concerning the Scriptures and the Christian life.

“For me, it was sort of an ‘AH HA’ experience—one pleasant surprise after another—something like ‘*At last it all makes sense.*’”

At this point, I hear someone saying, “Come on, Dave, why don’t you quit stalling and tell us plainly what it was like?” I will try to do that in just a moment, but first, I must say a word about *what it was not like*.

It was not like anything psychic, mystical, or supernatural. It was nothing like signs and wonders. It was not like *God* speaking directly

to me, nor was it an “inner light” revelation. I did not hear strange voices or have dream-like inner visions.

It was more like an experience of “whereas I was blind, now I can see.” What was formerly vague and indefinite is now becoming clear—the way one would think and hope things should be. Apparently unresolvable issues and differences which have long gripped the evangelical church can be easily resolved by direct reference to the sacred page. Issues and conflicts which have long divided the denominational churches, as well as evangelical believers in general, can now be easily resolved by a proper interpretation and understanding of the Bible.

For me, it was sort of an “AH HA” experience—one pleasant surprise after another—something like “*At last it all makes sense.*” Something like fresh springs of living water to a parched throat. Something like scales falling off my eyes.

Someone has said: “The voyage of discovery lies not in finding new landscapes, but in having new eyes.”

No new version—no new words—no new landscapes. The same marvelous Word of God—the same familiar passages—but somehow a thrilling new voyage of discovery.



In addition to pastoring a number of grace assemblies over the past 30 years or so, our good friend Bob Hanna has been a frequent contributor to the daily devotional guide *Amazing Grace*, published by Grace Gospel Publishers. Pastor Hanna has made a full recovery from an automobile accident last year, which greatly curtailed his activities for a number of months. But as they say, “you can’t hold a good man down.” He’s back in the saddle teaching a weekly Bible Study in Calimesa, California. —Ed.

The Pauline Legacy—Our Heritage

By Robert Hanna, Senior Grace Pastor

In the dispensation of the Grace of God, there is little understanding of its significance on the part of fundamental Christian believers. There is one particularly evident reason for this lack of comprehension: ignorance of the identification and ministry of the Apostle Paul. Unless one recognizes the distinctive message committed to Paul, one is left in darkness and confusion as to his spiritual standing, purpose, and destiny as a child of God.

Fact: While ministering in His fleshly presence on earth, the Lord Jesus Christ addressed and instructed none but the nation of Israel (Rom. 15:8; Matt. 15:24).

Fact: Saul of Tarsus (arch-enemy of Christ and persecutor of His church) was saved and appointed to become Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 15:15,16; 11:13; I Tim. 1:12,13; 2:7; II Tim. 1:11).

Fact: Paul became the exclusive dispenser of a secret revelation given to him by the heavenly seated Christ (Eph. 3:1-9; Gal. 1:11,12; II Cor. 12:2-4). The only way Christ speaks from heaven is through the Apostle Paul.

Fact: Under Paul’s ministry the Church which is the Body of

Christ was established according to the revelation of the mystery (Rom. 16:25,26; Col. 1:23b-27).

Fact: The Church which is the Body of Christ is composed of both Jew and Gentile, the law as a wall of partition between Jew and Gentile having been taken out of the way (Rom. 10:4; 6:14).

As our apostle, Paul makes two statements that clearly steer us in the direction of discernment in understanding Scripture. (A)—“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (II Tim. 3:16). (B)—“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth” (II Tim. 2:15).

All Scripture is written for our enlightenment but not all Scripture is written *to us* nor *about us*. We must study all Scripture in the light of Paul’s epistles. Only in the letters of Paul do we find direct instruction as members of the Body of Christ.


Paul’s distinctive message and ministry must be recognized in order for believers in this dispensation of Grace to know their relationship with God. Once this is

accomplished, we find that our identification with our apostle is manifold. He is much more to us (as members of the Body of Christ) than our apostle. He is our example (Phil. 3:17), he is our minister (Col. 1:25), he is a father figure and instructor (I Cor. 4:14-16).

The letters of Paul are directed to believers who have been saved under the Gospel of the Grace of God in the dispensation of the Grace of God. Paul calls this gospel "my gospel" (Acts 20:24; Rom. 2:16; Rom. 16:25; II Tim. 2:8). As our mentor, Paul enlightens us regarding our spiritual relationship and responsibility. We are to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph. 4:1). "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32). "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without" (Col. 4:5). Paul prays for us, "that the God of our Lord Jesus

Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Eph. 1:17).

Our apostle urges us to totally dedicate ourselves in the service of Christ (Rom. 12:1). He affirms that we will "suffer for His sake" (Phil. 1:29; II Tim. 3:12). We are assured of enablement to perform the ministry to which we are appointed: "For the love of Christ constraineth us...." "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me" (II Cor. 5:14; Phil. 4:13).

As the believing remnant in this dispensation of God's grace, we are to engage in the "Ministry of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:18,19), speaking the truth in love (Eph. 4:15), preaching the Gospel of the Grace of God (Eph. 2:8,9), and redeeming the time (Eph. 5:16) until we receive our final and glorious inheritance (Col. 3:4). "And so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thes. 4:17). 

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

GRACE, IT IS AMAZING

Grace is the sweetest sound
That ever reached our ears;
When conscience charged and justice frowned,
'Twas grace removed our fears.
'Tis freedom to the slave,
'Tis light and liberty;
It takes its terror from the grave,
From death its victory.

—Selected

CHRIST AND CHRISTMAS

By C. R. Stam

Because Christmas is so heavily commercialized, because it is celebrated, largely, by a Christ-rejecting world, and because of its heathen origin, many sincere Christians feel that we should ignore it completely.

We have never felt this view to be Scriptural. We do not believe we should *ignore* Christmas any more than a missionary in a Roman Catholic country should ignore the Catholic celebration of the death, burial (when "God is dead") and resurrection of Christ. Rather this would be a good time for the missionary and his associates to, perhaps, celebrate the Lord's supper, and let the populace know the *truth* about the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

We say: Don't ignore Christmas; *use it!* Use it to tell the truth about our Lord's birth, His finished work of redemption and His present glory. Use it to bring your unsaved loved ones to Christ and your saved loved ones to a deeper knowledge of the truth.

We suggest that if you are planning to give gifts to your friends and loved ones at this time of the year, you present them with gifts that will count, spiritually.

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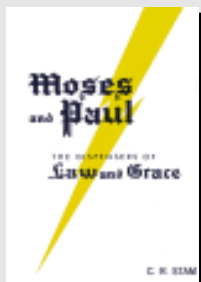
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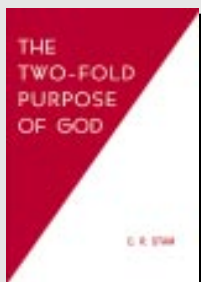


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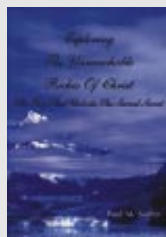


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The Source of Theology

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.

Executive Director, *Berean Bible Institute*

Generally speaking, there are 4 sources from which men endeavor to build their theology. These are important to consider because the basis on which one develops his theological thinking will determine his authority and discernment for truth and error.

Intuition: This could be explained as the combination of human “experience” and “reason.” Or we might say the knowledge that man gains from experience, including observation, and what he determines it must mean through his deductive powers. This determination, or conclusion, is then assumed to be true, and thus becomes the basis of further conclusions. This, in reality, steps out into the realm of philosophy rather than theology, i.e., what the Bible actually teaches. Philosophy is built on the shifting sands of man’s wisdom. Only Scripture can provide a sure foundation.

Tradition: Simply put, this is all knowledge passed on to us from others rather than being gained by personal experience. This is the broadest possible use of the term tradition as it is more often used in a more restricted sense in referring to specific doctrines, practices, customs, etc. But just because something has “always been believed” and/or “practiced” does not make it correct. Tradition may be useful in confirming doctrine, but never in building it.

Science: This is knowledge that is gained by direct observation

and experiment. It provides first-hand knowledge only to those who actually observe and experiment and is related to others as “tradition” through documentation. Science is only as accurate as the accuracy and integrity of those who observe and experiment. We must bear in mind that all knowledge, even scientific knowledge, rests in some way on intuition (theory, premise, et. al.). As new facts are discovered and more evidences emerge, the spectrum of scientific research broadens and theories change. Because it is in such a state of continuous flux, we can not rely on science for theological conclusions.

Special Revelation: Only special revelation gives us specific facts about God and His Creation that can be used to determine doctrine. All special revelation is found in the Bible, God’s Word and there is no authority for anyone or anything to claim special revelation apart from the Scriptures. The existence of the material world tells us there is a God, a Creator to which man is responsible. But to have personal knowledge of that God is impossible outside of the realm of special revelation, God’s Word, the Bible. Special revelation is **the only source** for theology as Scripture, and Scripture alone, *“is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”* (II Tim. 3:16).

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

BROTHER GEORGE FLEGAL recently accepted the call as the Pastor of the *Grace Community Church* in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. If you live nearby, Pastor & Mrs. Flegal (Diana) would like to extend a warm welcome to visit the assembly. The church is located at: 5800 W. 49th Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57106. For more information, please phone: (605) 361-3393. May God richly bless these dear saints as they labor together to share the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery.

NEW BIBLE STUDY: A group of grace believers is now meeting regularly at the LaPorte County Library, 904 Indiana Ave., LaPorte, Indiana 46350. For additional information, please contact Jerry Sterchi at (219) 326-8705. God's very best to these dear saints as they grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

WINTER BIBLE CONFERENCE: The *Grace Bible Church* is planning to hold their annual Bible Conference on January 19-21, 2001. The assembly is located at 111 N. Tamiami Trail, Nokomis, Florida 34293. For times of services, write or call Pastor Elvin C. Myers (941) 496-8051. E-mail: <whitey64@juno.com>. If you get cabin fever, Nokomis/Venice is a great place for a winter vacation!

NEW FELLOWSHIP: Our good friends Jim and Yvette Bartkiw of Ontario, Canada recently formed a new fellowship group. They are currently holding meetings in their home on a regular basis. If you are passing through the Niagara Peninsula region of Ontario, we would certainly encourage you to stop by and pay them a visit. We're sure it will be time well spent around the Word, rightly divided. For those who are interested, Jim and Yvette's address is 4226 13th Street Louth, Jordan Station, Ontario, Canada LOR-1S0 or phone: (905) 562-7170. All are welcome!

"THE TRUTH THAT SET ME FREE": If you have a loved one who is entangled in the maze of Catholicism, this little booklet by Maxine Fischer is a must read. This is Maxine's *personal* testimony of how she was delivered from Mary worship when she came to know Christ as her Savior. Since coming to a knowledge of Paul's gospel, Maxine travels around the country sharing with all who will listen of how God wonderfully saved her and brought her into an understanding of the Mystery. We will be happy to send you this 28-page booklet for \$2.00 postage paid. Simply write us here at the *Berean Bible Society*.

*The picture of the lighthouse that appears on the front cover was sent to us by Joe Watkins, Director of *Things To Come Mission*. The lighthouse is located in Compostela, Cebu, Philippines.

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