

# The **Berean Searchlight**

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Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

April 2008



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

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## From the Editor to You:

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Dearly Beloved,

Lord willing, this month I will be traveling to the Philippines on a short-term missionary journey. *Things To Come Mission* has invited us and a number of other Grace leaders to participate in the *50th Anniversary Celebration* of TCM's ministry in the Philippines. Grace brethren from every corner of the Islands plan to attend these special meetings that will be held at the *International Grace Bible Institute* located in Ozamis City.

Because of the vision of Brothers Herbert Palmer, Vernon Anderson, and Joe Watkins in 1958, the Grace Message has swept across the Philippines into nearly every city and hamlet. There are presently over 400 Grace Churches and 4 resident Bible Schools in the country that are dedicated to training men and women in the Word, rightly divided. Part of the success of TCM's ministry, now under the direction of Ben Anderson, has been its emphasis on "church planting." Almost every Grace Assembly in the Philippines has *trained leaders*, in addition to the senior pastor, who can step into the pulpit to minister the gospel of the grace of God. Of course, this is the Pauline way.

Six years ago Vernon, Joe, and your Editor were in the Philippines for a preaching tour that covered five cities, one of which was Cebu. Over 250 Grace Pastors and Bible teachers were in attendance at the conference in Cebu City. Each preaching session was one hour in length followed by a 30-minute Dialogue session (similar to our Q & A) that often went over an hour. Vernon, Joe and I took turns addressing all the questions and issues that were raised over a two-day period. It was quite obvious that these brethren had a working knowledge of the whole counsel of God and knew how to apply it.

After Paul planted churches he always returned to confirm the faith of the brethren. Essentially this is the purpose of this trip. We are confident that the Grace brethren in the Philippines are fully committed to Paul's apostleship and message. But it is important to come alongside of those of like-precious faith from time to time to encourage them to stand fast in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Pray for us as each member of the team opens the Scriptures to challenge our friends in the regions beyond. May it be a time of spiritual refreshment for all who attend this landmark celebration.

In His service,

Paul M. Sadler, President

# 40th Anniversary

## Annual Berean Bible Fellowship Conference



**Location:** *Cedar Lake Bible Conference Center*  
Cedar Lake, Indiana

**Dates:** June 14-19, 2008

**Theme:** *"Stand Fast in the Liberty"* (Gal. 5:1)

**Bible Hour Teacher:** Pastor David Siegmann

***Guest Speakers from around the country will be present to proclaim the riches of God's grace!***

**Music Directors:** Mr. & Mrs. Jim Wade

**At the Piano:** Mrs. Virginia Shriver

**Accommodations:** BBF recommends that reservations be made early, although accommodations are often available for latecomers. For reservations, write or phone: *Cedar Lake Conference Center*, Reservations Manager, PO Box 665, Cedar Lake, IN 46303, or phone: 219-374-5941.



Facilities for travel trailers, motor homes, and tent camping include electric/water hook-ups, dump station, showers, etc.

For additional information or to receive a brochure, please contact Pastor Floyd Baker at 812-490-4156 or [bakerpastorf@aol.com](mailto:bakerpastorf@aol.com). You can also call BBS at 262-255-4750.

# PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Philippians 4:15-23

By Paul M. Sadler

**“Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.”**

—Phil. 4:15

## “IN THE BEGINNING”

Paul's reference to “in the beginning of the gospel,” here in Philippians, should not be confused with “the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” found in the gospel according to Mark (Mark 1:1). These are two entirely *different* gospels, given at different times, under different circumstances, to two completely different groups of saints. These two passages are a classic case in point as to the importance of rightly dividing the Word of truth (II Tim. 2:15).

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ” that Mark speaks of is the good news of Christ in relation to the prophetic program. This particular announcement

marked the beginning of the *earthly ministry* of the Savior to the nation Israel. This gospel, sometimes called the kingdom gospel, presents Christ as the true Messiah who came to seek and to save the lost in Israel (Luke 19:10). As we know, He came unto His own, but His own received Him not; consequently God has temporarily set the chosen nation aside in unbelief.

When Paul uses the phrase “in the beginning of the gospel” in Philippians he is referring to the good news of Christ in relation to the Mystery program. After Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, he was introduced to the *heavenly ministry* of Christ for the Church, which is His Body. This, of course, is the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24).

Interestingly, Paul uses this phraseology “in the beginning of the gospel” some years after his conversion, but still well within the scope of his *early* ministry among the Gentiles. The rationale



in using this phrase in relation to the church at Philippi undoubtedly had to do with the entrance of the gospel of grace into Europe where it spread like wildfire. The westward migration of Paul's gospel brought a great awakening to those Gentile nations that were once engulfed in darkness. This milestone may have also been marked by Paul to highlight the fact that the Church at Philippi was the *first* assembly in Europe to support his apostolic ministry.

### PARTNERSHIP IN THE GOSPEL

**“Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity” (Phil. 4:15,16).**

Years ago Art Linkletter had a TV show called, *Kids Say the Darndest Things*. My grandkids weren't around at the time or they would have probably been prime candidates to appear on Art's program. Where these little ones come up with all of these comical responses is beyond me. I'm pretty straight laced so they must have gotten it from my wife, affectionately known as *Nana!*

Cody, who was seven at the time, came down with a bad sore throat. Fearing he may have strep throat, Dad and Mom took him to the doctor who immediately wanted to do a throat culture. This was a *first* for Cody. It took two nurses and Mom to hold him down to swab his mouth. On the way out of the office, Cody said to

his sisters: “*Man, I thought I was going to die in there!*” I can relate to that!

A year or so ago Kevin was explaining to Cody about the Rapture and how we were not going to go through the coming Tribulation in vivid detail. Dad explained to him how the water would turn to blood, locusts, in the form of



evil beings, were going to come out of the bottomless pit in swarms, and how hundred pound hail stones would fall from the sky in that day. Cody was so captivated by Dad's words that his eyes were as big as saucers. When Kevin finished, Cody said: “*Are you one hundred percent sure we're not going to be here for that?!*”

Dad reassured him that we were going to be taken out of here by the Lord in the Rapture before those events. Thankfully, we've been delivered from the wrath to come. Now we share this with you because time is short! The coming day of the Lord is drawing near. Therefore, it is important that we live in light of the Rapture. We just don't know how much time we have left to serve the Lord. *After* we are saved, we are instructed by Paul to “maintain good works.” One way this is accomplished is through our *giving*, which is the subject of our text.

After Paul left Macedonia no church “communicated” or *partnered* with him to support his apostolic ministry, except the Philippians. As far as “giving” and “receiving” was concerned, only they had stepped forward to come

to the apostle's aid. In regard to giving and receiving it has been correctly said:

"Giving brings blessing to the one who *gives* the gift. Paul told the Philippians that they had 'done well' (4:14), and described their gift as 'fruit that abounds to your account' (4:17).

"Giving brings blessing to the one who *receives* the gift. Paul was very thankful for their generous gift. Because they gave, he said, 'I have all and abound, I am full' (4:18).

"Giving brings blessing to God. From God's perspective, the Philippian gift was a sweet-smelling aroma, 'a sacrifice acceptable, *well pleasing to God*'" (4:18).<sup>1</sup>

The church at Philippi had truly touched the heart of Paul with their sacrificial giving. Shortly after he had established this assembly he moved on to evangelize the lost at Thessalonica. Fearing it might be a hindrance to these new converts who might question his motives if he were to raise the issue of giving, he labored day and night with his hands (I Thes. 2:6,9). With this in mind, Paul was probably pleasantly surprised when the believers at Philippi came to his aid at Thessalonica to help meet his needs, not once, but twice, which demonstrates the level of their commitment (Phil. 4:15). But this would not be the last time this assembly would assist the Lord's work financially.

With the diminishing of Israel, the saints at Jerusalem who once had "all things common" suddenly found themselves destitute. Until they were able to provide for their families, God supplied their needs through the Gentiles, which had

to be humbling to say the least. Some of the saints that gave a helping hand to the poor saints at Jerusalem were the Philippians who out of *deep poverty* abounded in the grace of giving (II Cor. 8:1,2). To encourage the Philippians that they weren't alone in the effort, Paul sang the praises of the Corinthians who had promised him they would give a generous gift to lend their assistance.

A year had now passed and the Corinthians had not honored their word. *Carnality* had short circuited the fulfillment of their promise. Probably the apostle felt this could tarnish his credibility in the eyes of the Philippians who had given so sacrificially. Paul wasn't afraid to challenge the Corinthians who claimed to love the truth, but failed to fulfill their promise. They were in a position to help the most, but had done the least to support the message of Grace. If they really loved the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery, then they needed to prove the sincerity of their love by giving a generous gift (II Cor. 8:7,8).

## THE GRACE OF GIVING

**"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7).**

The Scriptures teach "Christ also loved the Church, and *gave Himself*" for it, which clearly demonstrates that *giving* is the natural expression of love. To think, He loved us and gave Himself a ransom for our sins. What higher motivation could there be to give to the Lord's work than out of

love for what Christ accomplished for us.

*“Every man”* points to the fact that every believer has a *responsibility* to give to the cause of Christ, as God has prospered him. If you were to ask a treasurer of any local assembly what percentage of the membership *regularly* supports the work financially, you would probably be shocked to find the percentage is quite low. With this in mind, Paul wanted the Corinthians to step up to the plate, as it were, to *ease* the burden of the Philippians who were struggling to make ends meet.

*“The purpose of our heart”* should be to see the cause of Christ advanced. If God has opened the eyes of our understanding to the Word, rightly divided, we have an obligation to support those ministries that stand with us in the faith. Grace people need to support Grace works, beginning with the local church. The Philippians did! If we fail to do so the Grace message, as we know it, will eventually be lost. For example:

If your local Grace assembly was in danger of closing its doors and your church board contacted the Southern Baptist Convention for assistance, you may be surprised at their response. After they review your doctrinal statement and statement of purpose they would inform you: “We sincerely regret that we are unwilling to underwrite your ministry in view of the fact we are *diametrically opposed* to your position on the Great Commission, Water Baptism, and the historical beginning of the Church.” Beloved, we would not expect them to respond otherwise. They are well within

their right to decline your request, seeing that they do not share your convictions. Being a former Baptist, I can tell you that Baptists only support Baptist causes.

*“So let him give”* willingly, voluntarily, sacrificially as the Lord has prospered. That’s grace! You see the law demanded a tenth part from those who lived under the law—no exceptions! Grace on the other hand points to the finished work of Christ and says *give* as you are able. To teach tithing today is legalism pure and simple. We are no longer under the law, we are under grace!

***“Not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”***

The novel by Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*, is a literary classic. The story is filled with unforgettable lines from “Old Marley was as dead as a doornail” to “Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner!” When Bob Cratchit requested to have Christmas Day off to spend with his family old Scrooge retorted:

“A poor excuse for picking a man’s pocket every twenty-fifth of December!...But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier the next morning.”

Scrooge gave Mr. Cratchit the day off, but he did so *grudgingly*. In the mind of old Scrooge he would have preferred not to give his clerk the day off, feeling he had been robbed. This should *never* be the attitude of a believer in Christ when he gives to the Lord’s work. We are not to give out of necessity, but because we *love* the preaching



of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery.

Following Scrooge's transformation he was a changed man. After going to church he came upon the old gentleman who had the previous day requested a gift on behalf of the indigent. Scrooge stopped him in the street to beg his pardon for being so rude. He then promised the old gentleman a substantial gift to assist the poor, saying: "Not a farthing less. A great many back-payments are included in it, I assure you." He also raised Bob Cratchit's salary and vowed to help his struggling family. The story ends, "Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more...."<sup>2</sup> We might add, and he was happy to do so. This is the mark of a *cheerful giver!*<sup>3</sup>

Every believer needs ask himself in regard to his *attitude* toward giving to the Lord's work: "Am I like the old Scrooge in the Dickens' story or the new Scrooge who saw the light?"

### THREE HOUNDS

**"Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God" (Phil. 4:17,18).**

Paul wanted the saints at Philippi to understand that he wasn't hinting for another gift based on what he had said in the previous passages. He was rather looking for fruit that would continue to increase to their account. Every time they gave sacrificially to the

Lord's work they were making a spiritual investment, which eventually would bear eternal dividends at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Such dedicated service and generosity will not go unnoticed or unrewarded at that day.



When it came to the monetary side of the ministry Paul was extremely sensitive. It is obvious from these passages when he says, "Not because I desire a gift," and "But I have all, and abound" that he was *uncomfortable* even bringing up the subject. Along these same lines, Gordon Fee states: "Many years ago I heard a wise preacher counsel some younger ministers that Satan has three hounds with which he pursues those in ministry: pride, money, and sex. Money is surely not the least of these."

**"I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God."**

Paul acknowledges that he was more than *content* with what he had received from the assembly. And he wanted them to be aware that their thoughtfulness and generosity had touched the heart of

God. Their gifts were “an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable.” The apostle borrows this particular phraseology from the Old Testament. There were five Levitical offerings that were practiced under the Mosaic system, three of which were sweet smelling savor offerings. They are:

The *burnt offering* which typified Christ offering Himself to the Father as the sinless spotless Lamb of God (Lev. 1:3,4).

The *meal offering* which typified the flawless humanity of Christ who endured suffering on behalf of the sinner (Lev. 2:1-3).

The *peace offering* which typified Christ as the peacemaker who brings the believer into fellowship with God and other believers through His finished work (Lev. 3:1-3).

These three offerings were all well pleasing to God, typifying Christ’s *affectionate devotion* to His Father’s will. They were also acts of worship! In like manner, the Philippians’ faithful support of Paul’s apostleship and message demonstrated their affectionate devotion to do the Father’s will. It, *too*, was an act of worship. We normally think of worshipping God through the preaching of His Word which indeed is true, but our worship also includes *giving* sacrificially to His work, which is a sweet aroma to the Father, as noted here.

**“But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19).**

This passage is often quoted to insure believers that the Lord will always supply the needs of the ministry. But this is not always

the case. Even in Paul’s life there were many times he lacked things, as the foregoing context demonstrates (See also I Cor. 4:11,12). You see, it is the believers’ *responsibility* to support the Lord’s work. This doesn’t diminish from the fact that God in His providence often lays it upon the heart of the saints to give, but this does not mean they always follow through to financially support His work. Every believer knows he should, but not every believer does for one reason or another. Perhaps the Lord is prompting you to lend a helping hand that we might reach those in the regions beyond with the gospel.

“The westward migration of Paul’s gospel brought a great awakening to those Gentile nations that were once engulfed in darkness.”

When other assemblies had failed to donate to Paul’s itinerant ministry among the Gentiles, the Philippians stepped forward time and time again to make up for what was lacking. They made real sacrifices in spite of their deep poverty. They were more concerned about the gospel of the grace of God than themselves and the creature comforts that others sought after. So the promise that “God shall supply all your need” was given specifically to the Philippians. Notice Paul says, “your” need. This was not an unconditional promise to all believers that God would give them everything

their heart desired. It is rather directed to those, like the Philippians, who are using their financial resources wisely, as limited as they may be, for the furtherance of Paul's gospel. In such cases, God will furnish the necessities of these dear saints so they will never be destitute.

### THANKS TO ALL

**“Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you. All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (Phil. 4:20-23).**

Interestingly in verse 19 the apostle states, “My God....” You see, Paul had a personal relationship with God, as all believers do in Christ. He cherished this relationship, unlike some believers today who simply think of Him as a God who's way out there, who really doesn't care. Paul understood God was ever-present with him and interested in every aspect of his life and ministry. And when he pondered all the Father had done for him in Christ he could not help but close the epistle with a doxology—glory be to Him for ever and ever.

“*Salute every saint in Christ Jesus.*” Note Paul sends greetings to “every” believer at Philippi. He never left anyone out in the Lord's work, including those who were not always on their best behavior, such as Euodias and Syntyche. Pastors are well served to do all within their power to make sure the saints that are under their spiritual care feel a part of the

ministry. In so doing, they are following Paul's example!

“*The brethren which are with me greet you.*” Paul's companions in travel were very dedicated to the Lord and to His apostle. While there were many such workers Paul is undoubtedly referring to Luke and Aristarchus (Acts 27:1-3 cf. Col. 4:10,14). Sadly, this type of Christian courtesy is nearly a lost grace these days.

“*All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.*” Although Paul suffered dearly for trying to reach his countrymen at Jerusalem, thankfully, in the end it all worked out for the furtherance of the gospel. Here again we witness the providence of God, for Paul was able to reach many in Caesar's household with the gospel that may not have been reached otherwise. Those added to the *household of God* probably included servants, slaves, soldiers, and perhaps even some of Nero's family members. Amazing!

“*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*” The theme of all of Paul's epistles is *grace*; therefore the Philippian epistle begins with *grace* (vs. 2) and now ends with *grace* (vs. 23). It also begins and ends with our first love! As the song says, “Christ is all that He claimed to be,” and more!

*The End!*



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### Endnotes

1. *Turning Toward Joy*, by David Jeremiah, Chariot Victor Publishing, Colorado Springs, CO, p. 196 (Italics mine).
2. Dickens, Charles, 1812-1870, *A Christmas Carol*, Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library, <http://etext.virginia.edu>.
3. ©iStockphoto.com/Jim Pruitt.

# Pennsylvania Bible Conference

**Dates:** April 25-27, 2008

**Location:** *Quality Inn*, 625 Quentin Road  
Lebanon, Pennsylvania

**Speaker:** Ricky Kurth, *Berean Bible Society*

**Conference will include:** Preaching the Word, Question and Answer times, Prayer sessions, children's classes, and refreshments/fellowship.

For directions and additional information, please contact:  
William Schaeffer at (717) 949-3020

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## Grace For Today's 5th Annual Encouragement Conference

**Dates:** May 24-26, 2008

**Location:** *Eddy Farm Conference Center*  
Sparrow Bush, New York  
(near Port Jervis, NY)

**Theme:** "*Faith Working Through Love*"

### **Speakers and Bible Teachers:**

Pastor Paul M. Sadler, Pastor David Hobbs,  
Pastor Dennis Kiszonas, Elizabeth Kiszonas,  
Elder Leon Gilchrist, Joe Torres,  
Dr. John Mark Stevens

To receive a conference brochure and registration form, please contact: Maureen Morgan, Registrar at *Grace For Today*, P.O. Box 798, Times Square Station, New York, NY 10108, or e-mail: [conference@gracefortoday.org](mailto:conference@gracefortoday.org), or call tollfree: 1-800-803-0003.



# The Ant and the Raven

By Cornelius R. Stam



## *Should Christians Lay Up Store for the Future?*

### **A CONTRADICTION?**

**Proverbs 6:6-8: “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:**

**“Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,**

**“Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.”<sup>1</sup>**

—King Solomon

**Luke 12:24: “Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap: which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: How much more are ye better than the fowls?”<sup>2</sup>**

—The Lord Jesus Christ

Here is one of those seeming contradictions in the Bible—and our use of the word *seeming* should not be taken as an indication that we intend to explain anything away. On the contrary, we agree at the outset that these two passages teach exactly opposite ways of living.

The sin of trying to explain away plain statements of Scrip-

ture is just what skeptics have so long accused theologians of doing. Nor are problems really solved by such methods.

We can almost hear some theologian, guilty of this practice, insisting that we are to draw spiritual lessons from *both* these passages, for while one teaches that we should not be slothful or careless about tomorrow’s needs, the other teaches us not to be anxious either, since God cares for His own.

Granted! But this is merely bypassing the heart of the problem. Whatever spiritual lessons we may gather from these and other portions of the Bible, the fact remains that if we should hear one of the above statements from the mouth of God, should take Him at His word and make it our rule to live by, we should live in a very different manner than if we had heard the other.

It would be impossible to practice both these programs at the same time.



## TWO OPPOSITE PROGRAMS

Both Solomon and our Lord deal with the question of laying up material store for the future.

*Says Solomon:* You had better make provision for tomorrow. It will not always be summertime. The storms of winter are coming. *“Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise.”*

*Says our Lord:* Do not be concerned about tomorrow’s needs. Tomorrow will take care of itself—God will provide. *“Consider the ravens...which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them.”*

Or, to put it more briefly:

*Says Solomon:* Consider the ant; she lays up store for the future.

*Says our Lord:* Consider the ravens; they don’t! Yet God takes care of them.

This is just where some theologians attempt a solution by trying to explain away facts.

They say that our Lord’s words as recorded by Luke do not actually mean that we should not *prepare* for tomorrow’s needs—only that we should not *worry* about them. They argue that the *“Take no thought,”* of Verse 22, means only, *“Take no anxious thought.”*

But this explanation is utterly unsatisfactory, for in Verse 29 the Lord adds: *“Seek not ye what ye shall eat...”* while in Verse 33 He goes so far as to command His followers: *“Sell that ye have, and give alms...”* Strange that these things are not *practiced* by those who preach that the teachings of Christ on earth are for our obedience!

No, all attempts to neutralize our Lord’s explicit directions are illegitimate attempts to escape difficulties. Sincere and honest men will far rather leave problems unsolved and await further light than to resort to strained interpretations and forced solutions.

We do not see how it can be fairly denied that the ant and the raven are used by Scripture to teach exactly opposite ways of life as far as economic practices are concerned.

How shall we explain this? Can it be explained? Shall we say: *“Behold, a greater than Solomon is here!”* and simply prefer our Lord’s words to Solomon’s? Surely not, for *both* statements are equally inspired by the Holy Spirit. *Both* are God-breathed.

## THE ANSWER

The simple solution to the problem is again a dispensational one—a matter of “rightly dividing the Word of truth.”

When we obey II Timothy 2:15 and recognize the fact that from time to time God has changed His dealings with men, this difficulty vanishes.

In quoting from Luke 12 we purposely passed over the words of our Lord which are the key to the whole passage:

***“But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.***

***“Fear not, little flock for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.***

***“Sell that ye have, and give alms...” (Vers. 31-33).***

Lest there should be any question as to the character of the

kingdom here referred to, we quote Luke 22:29,30:

**“And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me;**

**“That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”**

Surely this is not taking place today, but refers to the personal, physical reign of Christ on earth.

This is the key to the problem.

Our Lord's exhortation to His disciples to consider the ravens and stop being concerned about tomorrow's needs, was given in view of the fact that the “kingdom of heaven” or the establishment of the rule of the heavens on earth was at hand.

“How do you suppose we would fare...if we...lived like the ravens?”

John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus and the twelve apostles all did a great deal of preaching, but ask Matthew what was the *theme*, the *subject* of their message and he will tell you so plainly that there can be no question about it.

**Matthew 3:1,2: “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”**

**Matthew 4:17: “From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”**

**Matthew 10:5-7: “These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded**

**them....preach, saying: the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”**

This glorious Kingdom of Heaven, the earthly establishment of the Kingdom of God (Dan. 2:44) was the very theme of our Lord's message.

He taught His disciples to PRAY for it (Matt. 6:10).

He sent them to PREACH it (Matt. 10:7).

He told them to PRACTICE it (Matt. 10:8-10).

### A CHANGE IN PROGRAM

Ever since David this glorious kingdom had been *prophesied*. During our Lord's earthly ministry it was *proclaimed* “*at hand*.” After Pentecost it was actually *offered*. Acts 3:19,20 records Peter's memorable proposition to the “men of Israel”:

**“Repent...the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.”**

Israel's answer?

Read Acts 4 to 7.

Read especially Acts 7:59-8:3:

**“And they [the council] stoned Stephen....And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem....As for Saul, he made havock of the Church....”<sup>3</sup>**

Messiah had been officially rejected, not only in incarnation, but in resurrection.

And the favored nation stood by her rejection of Christ too, while Jews from Jerusalem to Rome confirmed what their leaders had done.

Surely the reader can see why the world's unrest continued as before, yea, has increased until this day. *Christ had been rejected and is rejected still*, not only by the Gentiles but even by His own chosen people.

How can there be peace without the Prince of Peace? How can there be justice and prosperity until He reigns? How do you suppose we would fare in "this present evil age" if we sold our investments, distributed the proceeds to the poor and lived like the ravens?

But there is a very bright side.

While the world, as such, and the nation Israel have rejected the Lord Jesus, God still offers Him to individuals. We, each for himself, may receive Him as our own *personal* Savior, while God holds the judgment of the world in abeyance. And so, strangely and wonderfully, though the nations have rejected Him He seems to be brought closer to *us*!

***"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.***

***"He came unto His own and His own received Him not.***

***"But as many as received Him, to them gave He [the] power [right] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:10-12).***

How simple! How wonderful!

Against the dark, black background of Jerusalem's great persecution of Messiah and His followers we should read Romans 5:20,21:

***"...But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through***

***righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."***

We are living today under *the reign of grace*: not the reign of *law*—that is past; nor the reign of *Christ*—that is future; but ***THE REIGN OF GRACE***.

To demonstrate the riches of His mercy and grace, God *saved* His chief enemy on earth, the leader of the rebellion: Saul of Tarsus, the blasphemer, the persecutor, the evil-doer, and committed to him "*the dispensation of the grace of God*" (Eph. 3:1-3).

This is an evil age, the age of the rejection of the Son of God, but at the same time it is the age of *grace*. Indeed, the exceeding sinfulness of man serves to emphasize the true character of grace, for grace is the kindness and love of God to the guilty and undeserving (See Eph. 2:1-10).

Thus, while "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," we may be "*justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*" (Rom. 3:23,24):

***"In whom we have redemption, through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7).***

***"The gospel of the grace of God!"***

This is our glorious message to a world of lost sinners. Let us not confuse it with "the gospel of the kingdom."

The character of this age is one of exceeding sinfulness on man's part but exceeding grace on God's part and our lives must be lived in accordance with these facts.

Nowhere does Paul, the apostle of *this* dispensation, instruct us to



“take no thought for the morrow.” Indeed, he teaches distinctly that parents should lay up provision for their children (II Cor. 12:14) and that

***“If any provide not for his own and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel [unbeliever]” (I Tim. 5:8).***

Our Lord said to a rich man: *“Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor..”* (Mark 10:21). But that was while the earthly establishment of His kingdom was being proclaimed. Nowhere does Paul, the apostle of the *ascended* Lord, teach us to do this. He *does* say:

***“Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;***

***“That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate [Lit. generous contributors]” (I Tim. 6:17,18).***

The apostle of grace *does* say, by inspiration:

***“...see that ye abound in this grace [giving] also” (II Cor. 8:7).***

He *does* say:

***“...he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully” (II Cor. 9:6).***

He *does* say:

***“...God loveth a cheerful [or joyous, Gr. hilarious] giver” (II Cor. 9:7).***

But nowhere does he exhort believers in this present evil age to sell all they have and give to the poor, taking no thought for the morrow.

## **UNDERSTANDING WHAT THE WILL OF THE LORD IS**

How much is gained when we thus rightly divide the Word of truth!

When once we see that the dispensation of justice and righteousness has been held in abeyance and that today God is dispensing grace to a condemned world, we will have no difficulty in accepting these words of Scripture at their face value. We will not need to resort to forced and unnatural interpretations.

To be always explaining away simple commands of God because they seem impossible to practice consistently must at last affect our consciences and our spiritual lives.

On the other hand, it will contribute much to our spiritual peace and joy to understand God's purpose for us in this present dispensation, for God does not expect of us what cannot be accomplished apart from His presence here in Christ.

Best of all, greater spiritual power will attend our ministry as we appreciate more fully the singleness of God's wonderful purpose in the present dispensation.

We do not work miracles as the twelve did (Acts 5:12-16). We do not all live out of one fund, as they did (Acts 4:32-35). We are not


promised that whatever we ask in faith we shall have, as they were (See Matt. 21:22 cf. Rom. 8:26-28; Eph. 3:20; Phil. 4:6,7).<sup>4</sup>

No, this program of Messiah's kingdom is held in abeyance while the sin and rebellion of the world go on. We are left here as ambassadors on enemy territory, with just one wonderful message: "*the gospel of the grace of God.*"

It is ours to go to rebels against God, both Jews and Gentiles, offering them forgiveness and peace, by grace through faith in Christ:

***"That He might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the cross,***

***having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph. 2:16).***

***"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17).*** 

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## Endnotes

1. ©iStockphoto.com/Tina Doust.
2. ©iStockphoto.com/Chris Duncan.
3. The Church of that day must not, of course, be confused with the Church of *today*, which is called "the body of Christ." God has always had His Church (*Ekklesia*, a called out assembly) but the Church of today is "one *new man*" (Eph. 2:15) composed of Jews and Gentiles reconciled to God in one body by the cross (Eph. 2:16).
4. See the author's booklet: *Unanswered Prayer*.

## Question Box

*"Was the thief on the Cross Jew or Gentile?"*

Scripture does not say for certain, but does present us with evidence that suggests he was a Jew.

First, we know he believed in *one* God, for he didn't ask the other malefactor, "Dost not thou fear *the gods*?" (Luke 23:40). Monotheism was found mostly among Jews (Deut. 6:4).

Second, he believed in the bodily resurrection of the dead, for he spoke to the Lord about "me" and "Thou" and their life after death (Luke 23:42). Resurrection was not something considered credible among Gentiles (Acts 26:8), and was seemingly not commonly believed among them (Acts 17:32).

Third, his words "remember me when *Thou comest* into Thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42) prove he believed in the Second Coming. Since the Lord had not spoken on the Cross of this event, at least as far as the record of Scripture goes, this would indicate he was previously familiar with the Lord's teachings, something more likely to be true of a Jew.

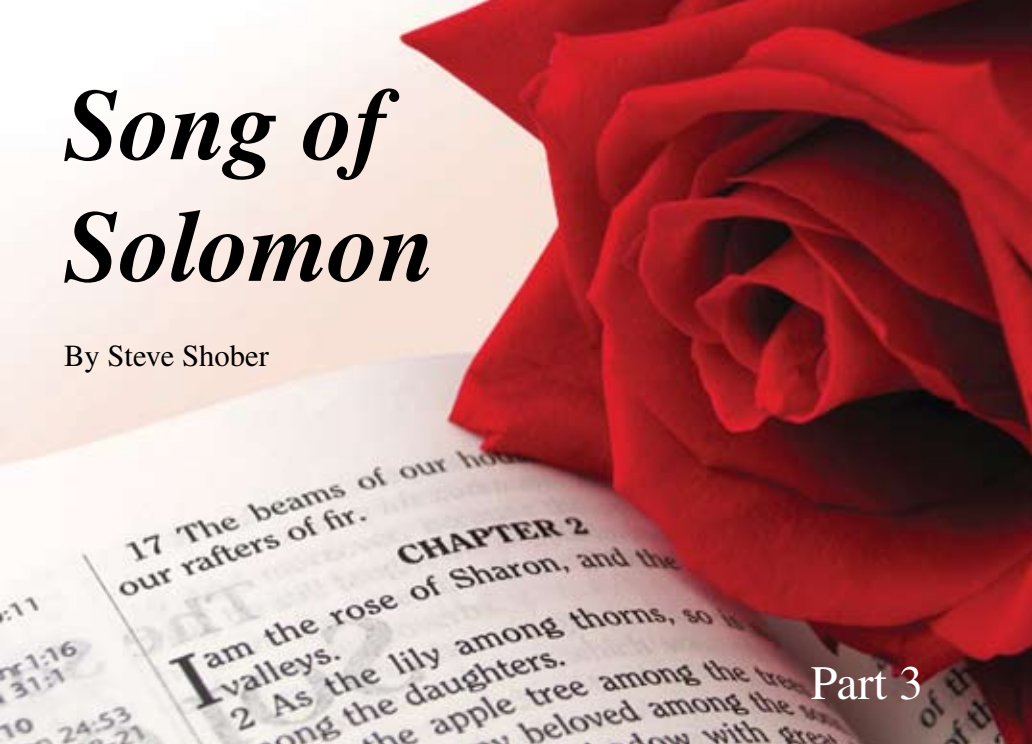
Fourth, he knew the Lord would someday have a "kingdom" (Luke 23:42). The Lord had likewise not talked about His kingdom while on the Cross, again suggesting the malefactor was already familiar with His teachings. A Gentile would not likely be familiar with Israel's hope of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

—Pastor Kurth



# Song of Solomon

By Steve Shober



Part 3

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In the first article on the Song of Solomon (see February's *Berean Searchlight*) the actual love story was unraveled and discussed. The love story is a poetic portrayal of the historic relationship between God and the nation of Israel, as discussed in the second article in March. This third and final article on the Song of Solomon continues by revealing the relationship between the love story and the seven churches in the Book of Revelation, along with some applications for us today.

## Comparing SOS to the Churches in Revelation

There is an interesting connection between the seven churches in Revelation and the story in SOS. Granted, the messages (Revelation letters) to these churches are hard to understand; however, most Grace believers consider these churches to be yet future assemblies. The messages God has for them will be made clearer during the Tribulation. These churches will be mostly Jewish assemblies coming to an understanding of Jesus Christ through the Hebrew-Jewish Epistles and the Revelation letters. Each letter to these churches contains specific instructions for the particular assembly but the scope of it is much broader. Paul Sadler<sup>3</sup> states, "In other words, these letters will be distributed among all the kingdom assemblies for instruction, similar to Paul's epistles today. Just as we turn to Paul's revelation for the commands of Christ for the Church, the tribulation saints will turn to the Hebrew epistles for their marching orders, with special emphasis on these seven letters."

Bullinger<sup>4</sup> also indicates these churches will be future and the messages to these seven churches refer to seven past phases of Israel's history. Thus, the literary order of the churches in Revelation corresponds with the historical order of the Old Testament. The messages combine into a unified message to remind those in the Tribulation of why and how they got into this predicament, and what the future holds for them. Here is how Bullinger views the seven churches and the historic reminder of the messages (ignore “Meaning of Church Names” for now):

Revelation Church	Historic Reminder	Meaning of Church Names
1. Ephesus	The Exodus	Desirable
2. Smyrna	Wanderings	Sweet smelling
3. Pergamos	Wilderness	Marriage
4. Thyatira	Period of the Kings	Continual sacrifice
5. Sardis	Ten tribes removed	A remnant escapes
6. Philadelphia	Judah removed	Brotherly love
7. Laodicea	Minor Prophets	A righteous people

The Revelation letters cover Israel's birth coming out of Egypt, her wanderings, her removal, and the Minor Prophets (who discuss the Tribulation and Kingdom). The historic reminders of the messages to these churches and the interpretation of SOS are very similar, it is no mere coincidence. There are seven key elements in SOS and seven Revelation churches; the teachings of both books are wonderfully aligned. The parallel teaching shows God's efforts to remind Israel of her past and what lies ahead.

The topic of leaving one's first love is repeated often in the Bible (Ezek. 16:22,43; Jer. 2:2; and Hosea 2:15). In Revelation 2:4, the church at Ephesus is told by God He has somewhat against them, “because thou hast left thy first love.” The interpretation of SOS indicates the problems resulting from the loss of first love; this helps show the parallel historic interpretation of SOS and Revelation.

Now refer to the Meanings of the Church Names (above), as given by Anderson,<sup>5</sup> and somewhat modified by the author. They too have an interesting correlation with the SOS story. The names yield the same general theme of historic parallels that Israel must be aware—they must get on the same page as God. The historical flow proceeds from desirableness and the sweet smell of first love, to marriage and continual sacrifice, to removal, to the need for brotherly love in the Tribulation, and finally to the establishment of a righteous people in the Kingdom.

## Application to Us

**His Faithfulness:** This timeless Song from the hand of the Lord holds much for us today—by way of application of Scripture to our lives, not by way of direct involvement in the interpretation. Certainly the fact that God remembers the eternal covenant with Israel even after thousands of years of unbelief and rejection is very touching. We can use SOS to reconfirm the eternal principle that He is ever true to His promises and Word. His faithfulness is our assurance that the spiritual blessing we have will not be rescinded nor forgotten in any way by Him.

**Depth of love:** The example of the final love from SOS attests to the love we should have for our spouse and members of the Body of Christ. Solomon's desire toward his beloved (SOS 7:10) reflects God's perfect love for Israel. Paul reinforces the meaning of true love in I Corinthians 13 when he says that love: suffers long, is kind, envies not, is not puffed up, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, bears all things, endures all things.... These concepts seem elementary but they are much deeper than initially realized and require meditation on the Word. As the Word is made part of our inner being—our thoughts and desires—we will see pronounced changes in our lives. We will see relationships improving and broken hearts mended as our hearts learn to lean upon Him. One can only imagine the far-reaching implications toward maintaining marriages and promoting unity as we obey His Word.

The concluding highlight of Solomon's Song is:

**“For love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be condemned” (SOS 8:6b-7).**

This explains why His love for mankind was so strong that it could not be quenched, even by death, even by the death of His Son. In spite of all that humans have done since the dawn of creation, His love never wavered. We caused a separation through our sin, through it all His love burned with a vehement flame. That love compelled Him to provide reconciliation with the fallen race through the sacrifice of His Son. Ephesians 5:2b says, “...given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.” May we all rejoice in the true, pure love of our heavenly Father that has brought us salvation through His Son, and sealed it with His Spirit (II Cor. 1:22; 5:21).




**The unthinkable:** In some respects, we Christians expect deliverance from our problems much like Israel. Ephesians 3:20 says, “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” It is certainly true that in some situations (that we think are unsolvable) the Lord provides an unimaginable deliverance for us, but this is not the general rule. Expecting that He will do it our way is just what unbelieving Israel (and the Shulamite) expected when He first came. We are often misled to believe this verse is referring to how we limit God from delivering us in some unimaginable manner because we do not ask or think He is capable. However, very often the primary meaning relates to what the vast majority of Christians in this dispensation have experienced, that is, deliverance in another manner.

What God generally provides for us today is indeed unimaginable; but, it is not deliverance from our problems (we can all imagine that). Instead, He provides the grace to successfully get through them (this is precisely what we do not want to ask nor do we want to imagine). We would prefer a fairy tale solution in which God waves some magic wand and “poof, everything is changed and we live happily ever after.” God may or may not provide this sort of deliverance; however, He always provides sufficient grace to see us through our struggles. This results in personal spiritual growth and requires some suffering. It results in a change in us, which is against our natural desires (we would rather see others changed and circumstances altered). Through it all we grow spiritually and the power of Christ rests upon us. This is what Paul had to learn in II Corinthians 12:7-10. It means the journey may have some difficulties but it will transform us; that will have a positive impact upon others.

**Solomon’s Seal:** SOS 8:6 says, “Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm.” A seal is a confirmation or proof of completion, of being official, and of privacy. In our study of SOS a sealed heart is one that has God’s law written and sealed within (Jer. 31:33). This seal is the final proof and confirmation of a finished transaction, taking thousands of years to complete, between God and the chosen nation Israel. A seal upon the heart indicates that all thoughts, desires, and attitudes of the heart are in accordance with His will. A seal upon the arm indicates that all behavior of redeemed Israel will flow from a life sealed in Christ. Interestingly, we can have the blessing of being sealed today, before Israel is restored, by placing our faith in Christ’s substitutionary death for us. We will then be sealed into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit and blessed with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:3).

“There are seven key elements in SOS and seven Revelation churches...”

## Benediction

The Lord's desire is toward the believer today. His love, blessings, and heart are all directed to profit us beyond our imagination. As we come up out of our wanderings and learn to lean upon Him, He transforms us. Our prayer is that each of us will be so transformed by the Lord that others will look at us and say, **"who is this?"** 

**Addendum:** God makes it clear that He has provided for mankind in ways we do not recognize. In Psalm 104:14 it says that God created herbs for a reason, "...herb for the service of man." The word "service" has been translated "medicine" by some. This is interesting because there is a rather common herb called **Solomon's Seal** that has some unusual medicinal properties. But why would it have been given that name? The name, Solomon's Seal, is derived from the fact that at the end of one season the plant's stem dies and detaches from the root leaving behind a round mark. Each year there is a new mark. These marks reminded people of the marks from the signet rings used by someone like Solomon to seal a document.



In addition, Solomon was connected with wisdom in the Bible and this herb was seen (figuratively) as wise. For hundreds of years people have seen a connection between this herb and Solomon (the seal-marks and with wisdom). Gerard (16th century herbalist) says, "Common experience teacheth, that in the world there is not to be found another herbe comparable to it."<sup>6</sup> It has been found this herb works on tendons and ligaments to help correct muscular-skeletal problems (*Note: the root is used for medicinal purposes, the berries are poisonous*). Solomon's Seal helps restore physical alignment much like Solomon restored his relationship with the Shulamite. It is interesting that God created this herb for us, and it is no coincidence that for centuries it has had this special name.

## Endnotes

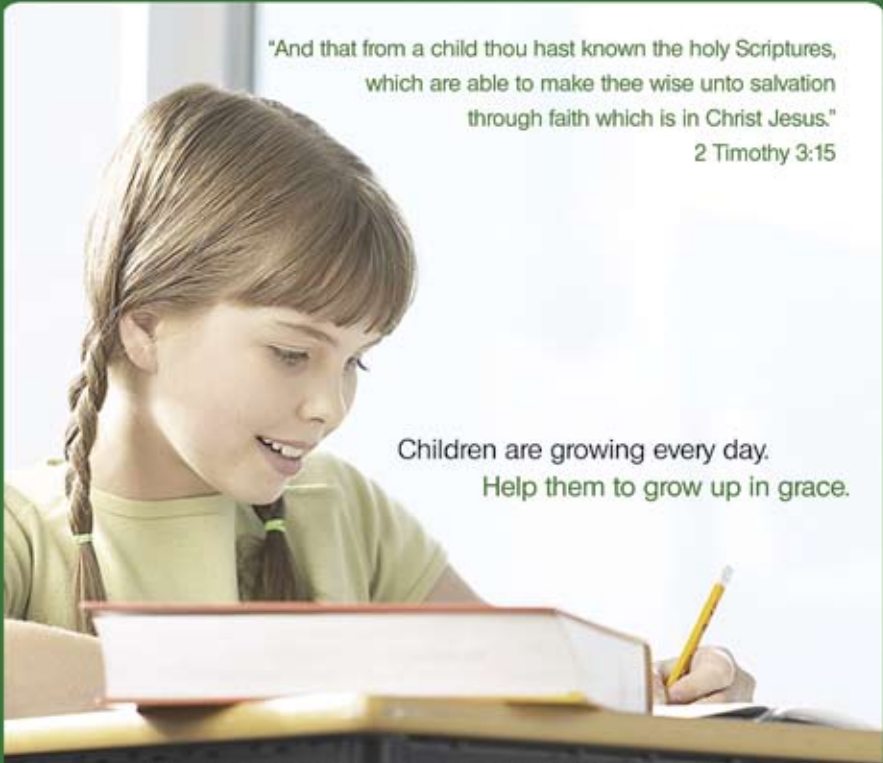
3. Sadler, Paul; *Berean Searchlight*, Studies in the Book of Revelation, Dec. 2003.
4. Bullinger, E. W.; *The Apocalypse*, Fleming H. Revell Company, reprinted 1972.
5. Anderson, Roger; *Revelation*, Grace Publications.
6. From *Gerard's Herbal*, 1597, quoted by M. Wood, "*The Book of Herbal Wisdom*," North Atlantic Books, 1997.

Steve Shober is a member of the BBS Board. If you have questions about this article you can contact him at: [shober@chorus.net](mailto:shober@chorus.net).



# Growing Up In Grace

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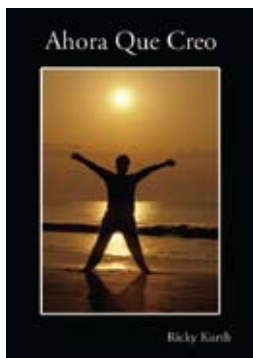
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## BBS Letter Excerpts

### **From Texas:**

“I’m always on the lookout for good Christian literature. Recently I had an opportunity to read a copy of your *Berean Searchlight* and found it a valuable resource for Bible study.”

### **From Arizona:**

“I have recently started to study the Word, rightly divided. I must say the Scriptures have totally opened up to me now. The Bible has taken on a new meaning in my life.”

### **From Montana:**

“I got to tell a friend about the Grace message tonight. It was my first time making sure a believer understood the mystery, even though I am still learning it, and told her so. It was really fun and exciting!” (It always is!—RK).

### **From California:**

“God has brought us together at a time when my faith was truly in crisis. After receiving salvation, I read my Bible through several times. Taking about 25 addresses of every major Christian denomination from the almanac, I wrote query letters. Most responded, some did not. I was left more confused than anything else. It took me three months to wade and sort through the statements of faith. I applied each one to Scripture. I became frustrated as I found obvious voids with each denomination. My faith began to waver. It was at this point I was led to your ministry, and I give thanks every day for you all.”

### **From Florida:**

“I just recently met a brother in Christ who introduced me to studying God’s Word, rightly divided, which was a big help to me. I thought something was wrong with me since I could not speak in those so-called tongues. I thought I wasn’t worthy.”

### **From Texas:**

“It was through one of Pastor Stam’s books on Acts that a friend found the answer to our question: ‘Why is water baptism essential to salvation, and at the same time, why is water baptism *not* essential to salvation?’”

### **From Australia:**

“I have finally been able to work through Stam’s book. There was a great deal that I absolutely agree with and had already arrived at some of those conclusions as well....I do understand the difference between the gospel of the kingdom and that of the mystery delivered through Paul. I have said for quite some time that our doctrine is Pauline. These things seem plain and clear to me.” (From a Baptist pastor.—RK).

### **From Illinois:**

“Please remember to search various parts of the Bible (Matt. 28:18-20). May I encourage you to read various passages about baptism in context?”

### **From Zimbabwe:**

“All your books are a blessing to me and my family.”

**From New Mexico:**

“The more I study my Bible according to the principles of right division, the more convinced I am of its validity. I have always been a dispensationalist, more from the ‘classic’ Acts 2 position, but I have also virtually always had problems with the sections of Acts encompassing Pentecost, for the now-obvious reasons. The ministry of BBS has been tremendously helpful in clearing up my confusion in this area. I attended two different Bible colleges, but neither of these colleges, apparently, were aware of (or willing to embrace) the Grace message. What a pity!”

**From Quatar:**

“The church that I have been attending here has been visited by a group of preachers who advocated ‘drunkenness in the Spirit’ and ‘holy laughter.’ Glory to God, our Bible study group was not affected by their practices. I have been using the articles available on your web site to combat such doctrines and practices.”

**From South Dakota:**

“Thank you for the *Berean Searchlight*. Besides the sound teaching of the Word, it helps me follow the ministry of Grace pastors. I can pray for them in regard to up-coming Bible conferences, meetings, and such with which they’re busy for our Lord.” (I can always tell when people are praying for me when I preach.—RK).

**From the Internet:**

“I am running around the internet doing Bible study research. There sure are a lot of different views and opinions. Your website is very interesting. You answer some questions about different things.”

**From Indonesia:**

“Praise the Lord for His blessings through the ministry of BBS. I’m so blessed through this publication.”

**From Mississippi:**

“In the April 2002 *Searchlight* there is an article titled *The Teachings of Christ* by Robert C. Brock. Excellent words. How may I obtain a quantity (500) of these tracts? I purpose to give these to Katrina relief volunteers. Since the storm my wife and I have met thousands called to come and help, and I’m compelled to share both the gospel of Christ...and the above tract by Mr. Brock to the fellowship of believers...I have concerns that many are under a bondage of ‘co-working for His love.’”

**From Kenya:**

“Ever since you put me on your mailing list, me and my family have seen a tremendous growth in our spiritual lives, especially the *Philippians* series.”

**From Wisconsin:**

“This old guy thanks our Lord for putting men like you in my life. I now understand much better Romans 1 and 2. I have had five cancer operations on my throat. If the good Lord keeps me around much longer I may not be able to talk anymore. But I hope the last things I say are about Christ and Ephesians 3:9, because that’s what I’m all about.”

**From Tennessee:**

“I’m sorry to have to cut back on my gift. I am 74 now and had to quit my part-time job in the fall, so my income is very limited now. I hope this check will help a little.” (God bless you for your faithfulness.—RK).

“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



## NW Washington Grace Conference

**Dates:** April 24-26, 2008

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## Middle Tennessee Bible Conference

**Dates:** May 16-18, 2008

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**Theme:** *Serving One Another in the Body of Christ*

**Guest Speakers:**

Paul M. Sadler, *Berean Bible Society*  
Curt Crist, *Grace Bible Church*, Hendersonville, NC

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## Berean Bible Institute Graduation and Awards Ceremony

**Dates:** Saturday, May 10, 2008

**Location:** *Berean Bible Institute*  
116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive  
Slinger, Wisconsin 53086

### Guest Speakers:

Dr. Paul M. Sadler, *Berean Bible Society*  
Dr. W. Edward Bedore, *Berean Bible Institute*

For additional information or directions please contact Dr. W. Edward Bedore at: **Berean Bible Institute**, 116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086-0587, phone: (262) 644-5504, fax: (262) 644-5507, e-mail: [bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org](mailto:bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org).

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The overall goal of **Berean Bible Institute** is to help individual members of the Body of Christ learn God's Word with an eye towards: (1) their becoming strong defenders of the authority, dispensational nature, and crucial truths of Scripture, (2) that they would personally apply the truths of the Bible to their lives, and (3) that they would, in turn, become effective ministers of God's Word to others. In other words, our goal is to cultivate, by God's grace, fruitful members of the Body of Christ who will provide strong leadership for the Grace Movement in the years to come.

We are endeavoring to carry out our mission by taking a strong stand for the "revelation of the mystery," defending the essential doctrines of Biblical Christianity, demonstrating a solid testimony of God's grace at work within the school, and encouraging a strong desire for self-sacrificing ministry among the students. May we, by God's grace, be found faithful in carrying out the ministry that the Lord has called us to.

If you have a heart-felt desire to prepare for the ministry, plan now to attend **Berean Bible Institute** next fall!

—Dr. W. Edward Bedore

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# NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**Two more booklets in Spanish:** Thanks to a contribution from our good friend Pete Ochoa, *Now That I Believe* and *This is That, But What is This?* have joined *Simple As Can Be* and *Unanswered Prayer* on the roster of BBS booklets available in Spanish. To order, see Page 25, or visit our Bookstore at [www.bereanbiblesociety.org](http://www.bereanbiblesociety.org). Let's not let our Spanish-speaking friends miss out on the riches of Grace!

**Two Minute Woes:** More frequently than we would like, we hear from subscribers to our *Two Minutes With the Bible* daily e-mail devotional reporting an interruption in service. We want you to know that BBS webmaster Richard Church is working hard with e-mail providers to keep *Two Minutes* from being blocked as "spam," the usual source of the problem. If you experience such an interruption, check your spam-catcher, and if that is not the problem, don't hesitate to contact us.

**Kansas Conference:** *New Harmony Church* of Hutchinson, Kansas, would like to invite you to a Bible conference that they have scheduled for Memorial Day weekend, May 24,25, with Pastor Ricky Kurth bringing the messages. Why not come out and enjoy the enthusiasm of the folks in this assembly who are just being introduced to the message of Grace. For more information, contact Pastor Bob Raigoza at (620) 663-9442.

**Bound Volumes of the Searchlight:** As our long-time readers will remember, at the end of each year BBS used to bind all eleven issues of the *Searchlight* together in book form, and make them available to our readers. Our friend Jeff Lance would like to complete his collection of these early volumes, and is willing to pay for them, including the shipping. He is missing Volumes 1-10,12,13,14,15,17,18,19,20,25,27,28,31,39,40. If you can help, please write him directly at 43 Gary Road, Enfield, CT 06082.

**A Word of Clarification:** We stated in the December 2007 issue that the Lord was circumcised in Jerusalem after His birth. However, it seems doubtful that Mary and Joseph would have returned to Jerusalem until after the days of her purification (Lev. 12:2-4). This means Christ would have been circumcised in Bethlehem, where they *apparently* remained until they presented Him to the Lord in Jerusalem. Afterward we know they returned to Nazareth where they lived (Luke 2:39).

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\*Our cover lighthouse photo was taken by Paul Miller of La Mesa, CA. Perched on a cliff on the central California coast, 50 miles south of San Francisco, the 115 foot *Pigeon Point Lighthouse*, one of the tallest lighthouses in America, has been guiding mariners since 1872.

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