

The **BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

May 2012



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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 President's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

We are living in the day of the electronic revolution. When Daniel prophesied that knowledge would increase in the End Times, he wasn't speaking about our day, but a time future to ours. It makes you wonder what lies ahead!

When I grew up, a telephone was a box attached to the wall with a rotary dial. The flexible cord that was attached to it allowed you to *roam* about ten or twelve feet. Caller ID was picking up the receiver and asking who was on the other end of the line. The old phone system also had a Call Waiting feature that amounted to a busy signal, which meant you had to call back later. If you were waiting for an important call, it could well be the better part of the day to receive it, especially if you had a sister who lived on the phone. For better or for worse, the cell phone changed everything. Today, you can be reached by anyone, anytime, anywhere in the world.

Another innovative tool at our disposal is Kindle eBooks. You can now read a wide variety of literature on a hand-held electronic pad. It even allows you to turn a page when you touch the bottom edge of the screen. Some have gone as far as to say that eBooks will one day replace all hard copy books as we know them. This is doubtful, but even here at BBS, we are exploring the possibility of using this medium to make our books available digitally.

I'm probably trapped in a time warp, but I still enjoy sitting down with a piping hot cup of coffee and reading a good book. I recently read the story of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and couldn't put it down. I am not so sure I would have completed the narrative reading an electronic version of it.

Speaking of books, with the Lord's help, we hope to release the first installment of the four-volume set of my commentary on the Book of Revelation by mid-June. With this in mind, you still have plenty of time to take advantage of the special offer in our spring letter. Through **May 31st** we are offering this volume at the special **pre-publication price of \$10.00**, plus postage and handling. You can place your order on our website at www.bereanbiblesociety.org.

Thanks, brethren, for your love, interest, and faithful support to make these types of projects possible. May it be to the praise of His glory in Christ Jesus.

Amazed at His grace,

Paul M. Sadler, President



THE GREAT DECEIVER

**“Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken.”
—Habakkuk 2:15**

There are many passages in the Word of God, such as the above reference, that are timeless principles. While the alcohol industry goes to great lengths to get people to believe that drinking is a harmless way to have a good time, the facts are otherwise. It is very careful never to advertise the alcoholic who is dying of cirrhosis of the liver or the homes that have been destroyed by strong drink. And of course, there’s always a voice in the crowd that says a few social drinks will never hurt anyone. Most recovering alcoholics, however, tell a much different story of how their slide into a life of drunkenness all started with social drinking.

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (Prov. 20:1).

Many years ago, I was driving through Apollo, Pennsylvania, where I saw a mangled piece of wreckage alongside of the road. Upon slowing down, I discovered it was an automobile, or at least what was left of it. Apparently someone survived the crash because there were beer cans strategically placed beside the car with a sign, which read, “And they told us we were going to have fun!” Someone lied.

Contrary to the world’s view that alcoholism is a disease, the Word of God calls drunkenness a *sin* (Gal. 5:19-21). Excessive drinking is not a disease; it is a matter of choice. Although some drunkards overcome their addiction through programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous, apart from faith, all too often they return to their drinking ways when confronted with a crisis. The world’s answer to the problems of this life is, “I need a drink.” However, the answer is not found in the bottom of a bottle. The answer is a personal relationship with Christ!

Everyone reading these lines has a family member, a dear friend, or a neighbor who struggles with this temptation. Yes, even believers wrestle with this sin, as Paul makes very clear:

“Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness....But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:12-14).

The best thing we can do for those who grapple with this addiction is to show them our love and support. It is important to share with them that they are dead to this sin in Christ and therefore, it doesn’t have to control their life any longer. Since alcoholism is such a deeply seated problem, encourage them to search out a godly pastor or Christian counselor who can assist them in a better understanding of Romans, Chapter 6.
—Paul M. Sadler



Living a HIGHER LIFE

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

The second in a series of messages on *Living the Grace of God*

The world about us talks a lot about “living the high life,” something they think that we Christians miss out on because of our faith and high moral standards. With that in mind, last month we began a series on *Living the Grace of God*, intending to show that to live God’s grace is to live life on the very highest plane imaginable. Beginning with the ministry of Paul, the apostle of grace, we looked at references in the Book of Acts to the word *grace* to see how God has been gracious to us, and how we in turn can learn to be gracious to others, thereby *living the grace of God*.

As we move on now to references to the word *grace* in Paul’s epistles, we see the apostle addressing “all that be in Rome,” and greeting them with the salutation of God Himself: “*Grace to you*” (Rom. 1:7). Here we must ask: if grace is God’s message to *unbelievers*, which we know that it is, why would Paul open this epistle to *believers* with, “Grace to you”? That is, why would he

extend grace to people who were already saved by grace?

Grace Is the Answer

We believe it is because grace is not just God’s answer to your *sin* problem; grace is God’s answer to *all of your problems!* The Corinthians were famous for carnality, for reveling in sins of the flesh, such as drunkenness and fornication. So the Apostle Paul opens his epistle to them by extending to them the thing they needed most: grace (I Cor. 1:1-3). Meanwhile, the Galatians had the very opposite problem: legalism. Instead of being too *carnal*, they were too *religious!* So the apostle opens his epistle to the Galatians by extending to them the thing that they too needed most: grace (Gal. 1:1-3). You see, no matter what your problem is, *grace is the answer!*

Pastor Stam used to talk about a snake oil remedy known as Haddacall that was popular back in his day. Whatever you had, Haddacall could cure it! Asked

about the funny name, the makers explained, “Well, we hadda call it something!” Well, beloved, *grace is God’s Haddacall*, the only true panacea in all of creation, the answer to everything that is wrong with you *as a believer*.



“...grace is God’s answer
to *all of your problems!*”

If you are carnal like the Corinthians, grace reminds you of all that God has freely given you in Christ, and the price He paid to give it to you. If that doesn’t cure your carnal flesh, nothing will. If you are religious like the Galatians, you need to remember that all that God has given you has been *freely* given to you. Your works didn’t help you *get* saved, and they won’t make you any more acceptable to God now that you *are* saved. If you ever wondered why the Corinthian and Galatian epistles appear in your Bible, it is because every sin that a believer commits falls in to one of these two errors—and grace is the answer to them all!

Since Paul had never been to Rome, he wasn’t sure what their problems were when he penned the words of Romans 1:7. So he simply says “grace to you,” knowing that whatever problems they had, grace was God’s answer. This leads us to suggest that if you are uncomfortable saying “God bless you,” as many grace believers are, just say what Paul said—“Grace

to you!”—and you will be extending God’s answer to all of your hearer’s needs.

Grace Is the Justification

Our next reference to the word *grace* is in Romans 3:24, where Paul talks about “being justified... by His grace.” Before you were saved, there was absolutely no justification for the wrongs you committed against God. You had sinned against a holy God who was your *Creator!* Yet in spite of this, God justified you—and you know how. It was, as Paul reveals here, “*by His grace!*” If you then want to *live* God’s grace, you must learn to justify *others* by grace when they wrong *you*.

Easier said than done, right? But think about it. When you wronged God, He tried to think of some reason to forgive you (anthropomorphically speaking, of course), and the only reason He could come up with was *grace*. So when a brother wrongs you, and you can’t think of a reason to forgive him, *forgive him by grace!*

We know this is certainly not the way of the world. When most people are wronged, they let *anger* rule in their hearts as they seek to *avenge themselves* on their adversaries, not *forgive them*. Rather than letting anger rule in *your* heart, why not follow Paul’s advice to “let *the peace of God* rule in your hearts” (Col. 3:15), something he advises in the context of forgiving and loving one another (vv. 13,14).

What kind of peace are we talking here? The *irrevocable* kind of peace that you enjoy with God by virtue of your faith in His Son (Rom. 5:1). Now that you are

saved, you enjoy *perfect* peace with God that cannot be shattered, no matter what you do. This means that every time you do something that grieves God's Spirit, He lets His peace rule in His heart, and just lets it go. You literally *cannot* make God angry with you.

This is the peace that God would have rule in *your* heart as well. When a brother wrongs you, do you allow the transgression to break the peace you enjoy with him, or do you *live the grace of God* by letting the peace you have with God rule in your heart?



If you are not sure what the word “rule” means, the law of first mention (which says that the first usage of a word in Scripture defines it) takes us to Genesis 1:16, where we learn that the sun *rules* the day. So let's ask ourselves: *how* does the sun rule the day? If we are bad, does it threaten to come down and burn us up, or stop shining and freeze us out? No, the sun rules the day by gently shining *and never changing*, no matter what happens here on earth. How do you think the sun would react if we started lobbing nuclear missiles into it? Why, the sun is so great it would barely notice; it would absorb our most powerful

nuclear attack without blinking. That's how great the sun is, and that's how great God's grace is when you sin. The grace of God absorbs anything you do without so much as batting an eye. And *that's* how great *your* grace should be when others lob missiles at you. Just absorb it without blinking. Be like God!

Grace Is Important

If you are thinking this is not an important part of our calling as Christians, think again. A fuller quotation of Colossians 3:15 says, “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, *to the which also ye are called.*” As a member of Christ's Body, you are *called* to let God's peace rule in your heart when wronged. This will come as quite a shock to the many Christians who feel they are called to make others agree with them in matters of faith and practice, even if they have to *destroy* the peace that exists between them to do so!

You know what that means, don't you? It means that most Christians have *missed their calling!* You are no doubt familiar with this figure of speech. People use it when they see you have an aptitude for something you do not employ to make a living. Someone once told this writer he should have been a lawyer. While we are sure he meant well, we are not quite sure how to take that! But if you don't want to miss your calling *as a Christian*, you need to let God's peace rule in your heart.

There is something else you need to consider about your calling. Colossians 3:15 goes on to say that “ye are called *in one body,*” the Body of Christ. There's no getting

out of the Body of Christ, so you might as well learn to get along with the other members. After all, the members of your physical body all live together in perfect harmony. Your thumb always forgives your hand when you hit it with a hammer. Of course! What choice does your thumb have? It's not like your thumb can put in for a transplant, and it's not like there's some other Body of Christ you can go to if you can't get along with the members of *this* Body.



We like to compare living in the Body to the living arrangements described in *The Diary of Anne Frank*. The people sequestered in that tiny living space *had* to learn to live together, for they had no place else to go. As a member of “the church which is His Body,” you too have no place else to go, so you are better off just forgiving the members who do you wrong.

And we're not talking about forgiving *grudgingly*, with the attitude of, “All right, I'll forgive him, but I'm not gonna like it!” That kind of forgiveness just won't do, for Paul concludes Colossians 3:15 by adding, “and be ye thankful.” God not only wants you to *forgive* others, He wants you to be *thankful* for the brother who wrongs

you! How will that help? Well, it's hard to be angry at someone for whom you are thanking God. This writer knows a Christian who is just a pain in the neck, but he faithfully serves the Lord. So we thank God for him, and we find this makes us much less likely to want to wring his neck!

Perhaps you are thinking, “But Pastor, there's simply no justification for what that rascal did to me.” Maybe there isn't. But why not do what God did for you when there was no justification for what you did to Him, and forgive that brother *by grace*, thereby living the grace of God?

If you need some incentive, why not use the incentive that God used to motivate Him to forgive you? After telling us that we are “justified...by His grace,” Paul says that God justified us “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation *through faith in His blood*” (Rom. 3:24,25). God's incentive to forgive you was *the blood of Christ*, and this is your incentive to forgive those who have wronged you—the most powerful incentive imaginable.

If you are thinking, “But you don't know what she did to me!” That's true, we don't, but was it more than what you did to God when you sinned against His holiness? God forgave *you* because of Christ's blood, and He has also forgiven that sister who wronged you because of His blood. Shouldn't *you* forgive her because of the blood? God is satisfied with Christ's payment for her sin against you (Isa. 53:11); shouldn't you be? If you are not, that means your standards are

higher than God's, and if your standards are higher than God's, that's a problem!

Now you are perhaps thinking, "Okay, I'll forgive her, but I'm going to make her *work for it*." If that's your attitude, you need to check back with Romans 3:24, for a fuller quotation reveals that we are "justified *freely* by His grace." This means that God justified you without making you work for it, and that is how you need to forgive others, freely by grace—that is, if you want to live the grace of God.

This is a thought that Paul repeats in our next reference to *grace*, found in Romans 4:4, where we read: "to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of *grace*, but of *debt*." Here God explains what grace is, and what it isn't. It isn't something you can work for (Rom. 11:6)! If God made you work for your forgiveness, it wouldn't be grace. If you make your brother work for *your* forgiveness, you're not *living* God's grace. If you only forgive those who are nice to you, God says you are keeping company with sinners (Luke 6:33). If you rather forgive your brother freely by grace, you are keeping company with God Himself.

Grace in Tribulations

It is now time to consider yet another aspect of living the grace of God. Up until now, we have been talking about living God's grace amidst difficult *people*. As important as that is, we are also called to live the grace of God amidst difficult *circumstances*. This brings us to our next reference to *grace*, found in Romans 5:1-4. Here we read of "this grace wherein we stand,"

and how it helps us to deal with "tribulations."

We don't have to tell you that the Christian life is *filled* with tribulations. They sometimes come in the form of pain, suffering, and illness. When that happens, we need to *stand in God's grace*, and not go running to men who claim to have the gift of healing, who can't help us anyway. At other times, tribulations come in the form of financial adversity, especially in these difficult economic times. When that happens, we need to *stand in God's grace*, and not go running for help from the prosperity preachers, who can't help us either.

Dealing with these tribulations causes "the outward man" to "perish" (II Cor. 4:16), either as the direct result of physical affliction, or else from the stress caused by keeping up with financial challenges. At such times we need to remember that "the inward man is renewed day by day." This inward man renewal does not come automatically, however. As Paul says elsewhere, he is "renewed *in knowledge*" (Col. 3:10)—but in a knowledge of *what*? We believe it is in the knowledge that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, *worketh for us*" (II Cor. 4:17). And here all this time you thought your tribulations were working *against* you! God says they are working *for* you!

What exactly are our tribulations working for us? "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17); i.e., rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Why would God reward us for suffering sickness and financial adversities? We believe it is because

we live in a dispensation where even the most faithful believer has to live with these things.

Things were different for Israel under the Law. God promised them, “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord...I will put *none of these diseases upon thee*” (Ex. 15:26). If they were good, God would bless them with good crops (Lev. 26:4,5), peace (vv. 6-8) and prosperity (vv. 9,10). These are *not* promises God has made to His people today, despite what the health and wealth preachers say. We are not under the Law (Rom. 6:14), and so we cannot hold God to promises that were part of the terms of the Law.

But this is why God plans to *reward* us for having to deal with things that His people in time past could avoid by being faithful to Him. We like to compare it to “combat pay” in the military. All soldiers are paid for their service, but those who are exposed to the dangers of combat are paid *extra*. In the same way, God plans to reward us for serving Him in an age where we are exposed to the kinds of things His people didn’t have to deal with under the Law.

Now that you know that the tribulations in your life are working *for* you, doesn’t that help you deal with the burden and discomfort of these adversities? It should, just as knowing you are getting healthier helps you deal with the burden and discomfort of exercise! This is especially so when we read God’s promise that “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:18). In other words, the rewards that

God has planned for you for dealing with tribulation can only be described as *incomparable*.

But if rewards in the *next* life aren’t enough to change how you feel about adversity in *this* life, we hasten to add that adversity is working for you in this life as well. Paul says that “tribulation worketh patience...experience; and...hope” in *this* life (Rom. 5:3,4), and this too should cause us to evaluate our troubles in a new light. Nothing else on earth pays dividends both in this life and in the life to come. No wonder Paul says “we *glory* in tribulations” (v. 3)!



Russian psychologist Ivan Pavlov was well known for the experiments he conducted with dogs. In one of these, he administered a daily electric shock to one poor pooch, who understandably growled when subjected to such abuse. Pavlov learned to modify the dog’s response, however, by giving him a treat subsequent to each jolt. After his pet learned to associate the discomfort with a forthcoming treat, he soon stopped meeting each shock with a growl, and eventually even learned to respond by wagging his tail in anticipation! While you may never learn to greet the shocks of life with quite the same level of tail-wagging anticipation, keeping

these benefits in mind should help us all learn to “glory in tribulations” with the apostle who probably experienced more tribulation than any of us will ever know.

Grace Is Much More

Our next reference to *grace* is in Romans 5:15, where Paul compares the sin of Adam to the sacrifice of Christ, noting that, just as Adam’s sin condemned men, Christ’s sacrifice saves them. But as Paul points out in this passage, the grace of Christ’s sacrifice does “much more” than just restore the innocence Adam lost. If all you received when you got saved was Adam’s innocence, you’d soon sin and find yourself right back in condemnation. That’s why God’s grace does “much more” than just restore what Adam took away. Using the phrase “much more” again in verse 17, Paul speaks of “they which receive abundance of grace” and “the gift of *righteousness*” (v. 17). Add to this righteousness the spiritual blessings we read about in Ephesians 1:3, and we can surely say with Paul that “where sin abounded, *grace did much more abound*” (Rom. 5:20).

Is that how you treat people who abound in sin against you? Or do you just forgive them, and restore them to the relationship they had with you before they transgressed? While most of us would consider this our Christian duty, just doing your duty doesn’t make you a profitable servant (Luke 17:10). Why not consider doing “much more,” and *live the grace of God* by heaping gifts on those whom you have forgiven? Why would you want to do that? Well, for one thing, it would make

you *godly*; i.e., it would make you *like God*, which is the definition of the word *godly*. For another, imagine the *testimony* that something like that would have!

In 2006, a gunman entered an Amish schoolhouse in Pennsylvania and shot ten young girls, killing five, before taking his own life. Within hours of this horrific tragedy, members of the Amish community visited the gunman’s family, and not only forgave the man, but did *much more*, setting up a charitable fund for his family. Their ability to go above and beyond the call of forgiveness became a news flash that circled the globe, and brought worldwide respect for the Amish and the God they claim to serve. Just imagine the acclaim that could be brought to the grace message if *grace believers* were to react like that!

We know that, short of finding yourself in a high profile situation like that, when you do much more than forgive those who wrong you, it is not likely to make news around the world. But to be a follower of God in an area like this is sure to testify to *someone*. If no one else, it will surely serve as an unforgettable witness to the one to whom you do much more than just forgive.

We know that this is high ground, spiritually speaking, but if you’ve ever sung, “Lord, plant my feet on higher ground,” this just might be the answer to the prayer you pray each time you sing that grand old hymn of the faith. And beyond the eternal value of the testimony you would be in such a case, you’ll be learning to live life on the highest plane possible, that of *living the grace of God*. 

44th Annual
BEREAN BIBLE
FELLOWSHIP
CONFERENCE



*“The Preeminence
of Christ”*

June 16-21, 2012

Cedar Lake Bible Conference Center
Cedar Lake, Indiana

Location:

*Cedar Lake Bible
Conference Center*
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Cedar Lake, Indiana

Dates:

June 16-21, 2012

Bible Hour Teacher:

Pastor Jeff Seekins

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

Music Director:

Pastor Wes Bardeck

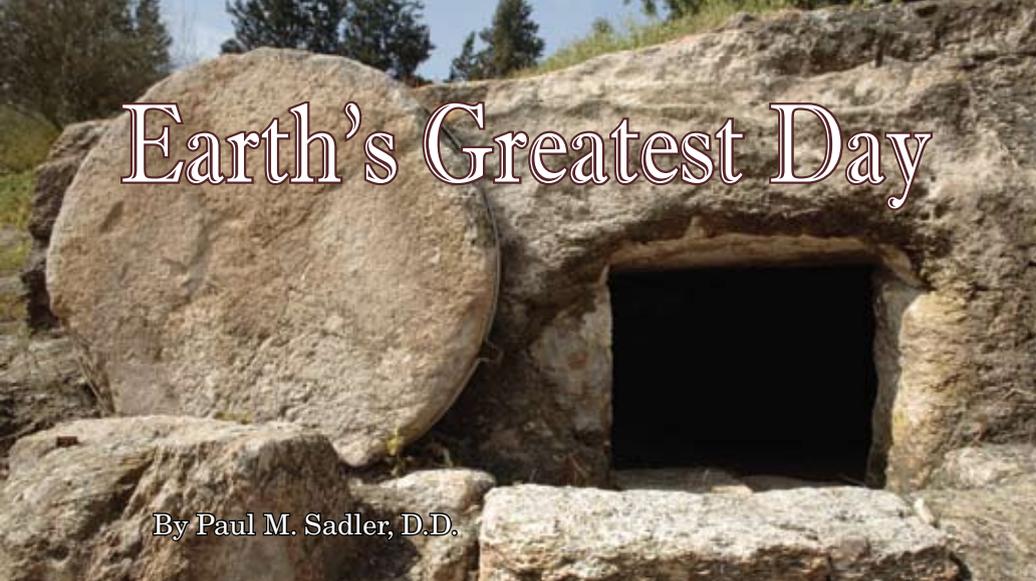
At the Piano:

Mrs. Debbie Bardeck

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

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Earth's Greatest Day

By Paul M. Sadler, D.D.

The incomparable English preacher, Charles Spurgeon, once said, “Every circumstance connected with the life of Christ is deeply interesting to the Christian mind. Wherever we behold our Savior, He is well worthy of our notice....All His weary pilgrimage, from Bethlehem’s manger to Calvary’s cross, is, in our eyes, paved with glory. Each spot upon which He trod is, to our souls, consecrated at once, simply because there the foot of earth’s Savior and our own Redeemer once was placed.

“When He comes to Calvary, the interest thickens; then our best thoughts are centered on Him in the agonies of crucifixion, nor does our deep affection permit us to leave Him, even when, the struggle being over, He yields up the ghost. His body, when it is taken down from the tree, still is lovely in our eyes—we fondly linger around the motionless clay. By faith we discern Joseph of Arimathea, and the timid Nicodemus...drawing out the nails and

taking down the mangled body; we behold them wrapping Him in clean, white linen, hastily girding him round with belts of spices; then putting Him in His tomb, and departing for the Sabbath rest.”

On the first day of the week, Christ broke the bands of death and rose again. In the words of the angel who was there that glorious morning, “Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matt. 28:6). It is in every sense of the word, earth’s greatest day.

WITNESS OF THE EMPTY TOMB

After the crucifixion of Christ, Joseph begged Pilate for the body of Jesus, that he might give it a proper burial. Once in his possession, Joseph and Nicodemus wrapped the body and placed it in the tomb—they placed the Rock of Ages in a hewn-out rock. Then they removed the object holding the “great stone” in place, allowing it to roll in front of the entrance of the tomb. This stone is estimated to have weighed more

than a ton; in fact, it is said that it would have taken the strength of twenty men to move it. According to the Scriptures, there were four believers that day who witnessed the entombment of our Lord's body: Joseph, Nicodemus, Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary (Matt. 27:57-61; John 19:38-42).

Shortly thereafter, the Chief Priest and the Pharisees requested that Pilate secure the tomb. This was accomplished by doing three things:

“So they went, and made the sepulcher *sure*, sealing the stone, and setting a watch” (Matt. 27:66).

To make the tomb *sure* meant that the stone would have been removed from the entrance so the religious leaders and the Roman soldiers could confirm the body of Jesus was actually there. Obviously it was present and accounted for, seeing that the soldiers *sealed* the tomb with the Roman signet. The motto in those days was, “Break a Roman seal, and lose your life.” Finally, *they set a watch*, which meant sixteen Roman soldiers were posted nearby, four of which were stationed at the door of the tomb. We know for certain that there were more than two soldiers on duty because Matthew clearly states that “some of the watch came into the city” after Christ's resurrection (Matt. 28:11,12).

As dawn was breaking on resurrection morn, the air, in all probability, was cool and crisp. When Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome arrived at the burial plot, they were amazed to find that the massive stone had been removed and the

tomb was empty (Mark 16:1-3). When Peter and John arrived on the scene, they too were puzzled, but eventually realized that the reason the body was gone was because Christ had risen from the dead, as He had promised (John 20:19,20). The secured tomb was empty, which bears witness to the fact that Christ did indeed rise from the dead. Even the unbelieving Roman watch confirmed that the tomb they had been guarding was empty (Matt. 28:11-15).

THE WITNESS OF ANGELS

“And, behold...the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it” (Matt. 28:2).

It is interesting that, according to the four Gospels, there were two different appearances of the angels on the day Christ rose from the dead. As messengers of God, they announced the Savior's birth, and now one of them announces His resurrection. But is it possible for one angel to move what Mark calls a “very great” stone (Mark 16:4), estimated to weigh well over a ton? The strength and ability of the angels of God go far beyond our comprehension; they are supernatural beings. For example, in the days of Hezekiah, one angel smote dead 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night (II Kings 19:35; Isa. 37:36).

The account given to us by Matthew makes it very clear that the Lord had already risen from the dead prior to the angel of the Lord rolling the stone away from the doorway. You see, the removal of the stone was for our benefit. It was removed by the angel so

we could see the tomb was empty. This is why the angel said to the women present that day, “Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen” (Matt. 28:5,6).

THE WITNESS OF THE LORD

Luke records for us that the Lord showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs—undeniable, irrefutable proofs (Acts 1:3). In addition to the aforementioned witnesses, the Lord was seen

by over 500 brethren at once in Galilee (Matt. 28:10; I Cor. 15:6). This was followed by perhaps the most credible evidence of all: He appeared to James and Paul, both of whom rejected Him before His resurrection.

Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus, when He saw the resurrected Christ, was similar to that of Thomas, who couldn’t deny his senses and said, “My Lord and my God!” But there’s still another infallible proof for those who believe: He lives in our heart by faith. Amen! 

Question Box

“I receive and enjoy BBS’s daily devotionals. Regarding today’s devotional about Enoch—the seventh from Adam, and your question to your class regarding Enoch, is there any possibility of a correlation between Enoch and believers in this dispensation?”

Although there are similarities between the translation of Enoch and the Rapture of the Church, it is important to rightly divide the Word of truth in this comparison. We know, for example, on the day Enoch was translated, the Mystery/Rapture was still hidden in the mind of God (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:8,9; Col. 1:25,26). Therefore, I do not believe that Enoch is a representation or type of the Church. This would only serve to confuse the two programs of God.

Since Enoch lived and was translated under God’s prophetic program, it is more probable that he is a type or representation of the catching away of the faithful remnant of Israel at the beginning of the Great Tribulation (See Rev. 3:10; 12:5,6). Like Enoch, they too will be caught up into the presence of God as a result of their extraordinary faithfulness to the Lord.

Unrelated to all prophecy, only the members of the Church, the Body of Christ, will be translated into His glorious presence when the trump sounds. Perhaps today! —Pastor Sadler

Midwest Grace Fellowship Spring Bible Conference

Location: *Miracle Hills Ranch,*
Bethany, Missouri

Dates: June 1-3, 2012

Theme: *Christ Our All in All*

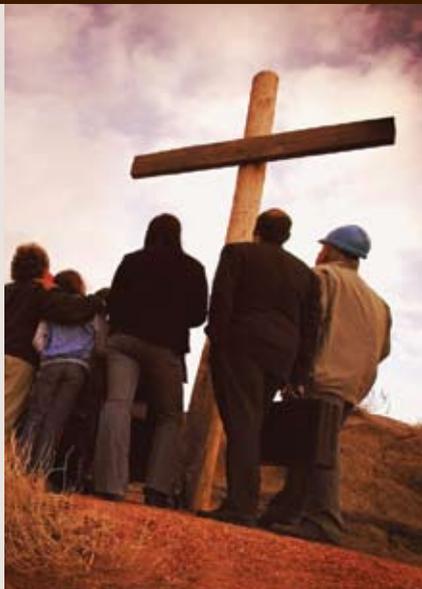
Guest Speakers:

Pastor Joel McGarvey
Pastor Ken Lawson

For more information, please contact:

Dan Heyle (660) 425-6853 or
Pastor Ken Lawson (217) 498-6958

All are warmly welcome!



Celebrate Grace Camp

Location: Near Montrose, Colorado

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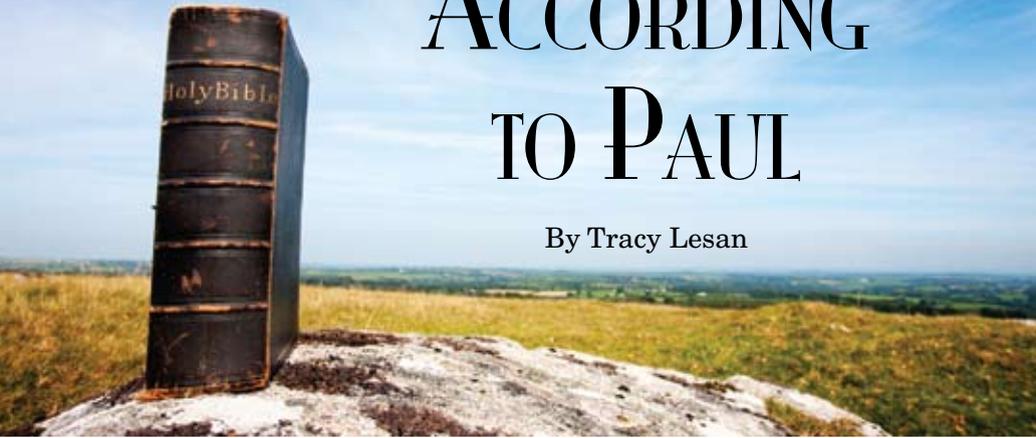
Guest Speaker: Pastor Jeff Seekins

For directions or additional information, please contact:

Jerry and Judy Worthley at
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The Gospel ACCORDING TO PAUL

By Tracy Lesan



Bad News about the “Good News”

Religious folk talk a lot about “the gospel.” Many churches have “gospel readings” during their worship services. Some have “gospel choirs.” “Gospel crusades” attract thousands to large arenas. Pastors frequently give “gospel sermons.” “Gospel tracts” are distributed around the world. People from all walks of life enjoy listening to “gospel music.” A few even evangelize using “gospel magic.”

With all of this talk about the gospel, you’d think that we must know very well what it is and be in full agreement about it. If only that were true! Most do know that the gospel or “good news” concerns the Lord Jesus Christ and the necessity of faith in Him for eternal salvation. So far, so good. But just watch the sparks fly when people try to explain it in more detail!

Battles rage over all sorts of matters, from the meaning of “faith” to the assurance of salvation and everything in between. In fact, probably nothing else has caused more confusion and division among God’s people than issues surrounding the good news. And that’s bad news—very bad news.

The Standard of Truth

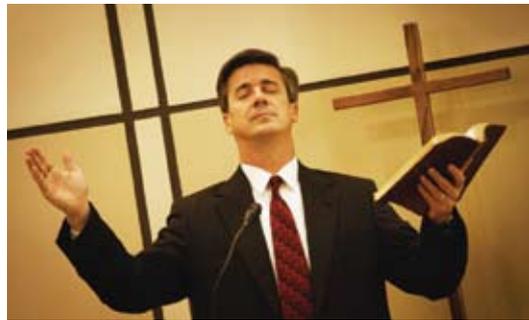
In this article I’d like to address a subject which, although usually overlooked in the debates, would dispel much of the confusion and help all of us to proclaim God’s message of eternal life with clarity and confidence. It has to do with our authority-base and is the subject of the following passage in the book of Galatians:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Gal. 1:6-9).

The Apostle Paul is writing to the churches that he had planted in the province of Galatia (part of modern-day Turkey) during his evangelistic ministry there (see Acts 13,14). The readers had believed his message that Christ “gave Himself for our sins” (Gal. 1:4), and on the basis of their “faith,” apart from “works of the law,” they had been “justified” by God (Gal. 2:15-21). Sometime later, however, while Paul was away, other religious leaders had come and started teaching the Gentile believers that they needed to be circumcised, obey the Mosaic Law, and live like Jews (see Acts 15:1-5; Gal. 2:11-14; 3:1-5; 4:9-11; 5:2-12; 6:11-13). Evidently, many were being led astray by this false teaching, so Paul intervened with this passionate and potent letter with the goal of winning them back.

Of utmost importance in Paul’s stinging rebuke, quoted above, is the standard which he gives for the true gospel. How can the Galatians distinguish right teaching from wrong? How can they know which preachers to follow? Very simply: by evaluating everything and everyone according to Paul’s pattern.

No matter how piously the preachers act or how frequently they quote Scripture or how fervently they pray or how loudly they shout “Hallelujah!” or how many followers they have or how many best-sellers they’ve written or how many miracles they’ve performed or how many cathedrals they’ve built or how many charities they’ve established or how many crosses adorn their robes and crowns, if they don’t preach what Paul preached, they’re wrong. Even if Paul himself were to return and minister again, or even if “an angel from heaven” were to give a special revelation, if the content of the message were in any way to contradict Paul’s prior teaching, the Galatians must refuse it. And regarding the preachers, themselves, all who promote “another gospel” are under a *curse*.



Even if Paul himself were to return and minister again, or even if “an angel from heaven” were to give a special revelation, if the content of the message were in any way to contradict Paul’s prior teaching, the Galatians must refuse it. And regarding the preachers, themselves, all who promote “another gospel” are under a *curse*.

The reason why Paul so strongly emphasizes his gospel as the standard of truth is that Christ Himself gave it to him directly from heaven. He didn’t receive it through Peter or any other human agency

but *by the revelation of Jesus Christ* (Gal. 1:12). It was the Lord who had made known to him this all-important proclamation and the Lord who had sent him to spread it. By this, the churches of Galatia—and all believers still today—can know beyond the shadow of a doubt that the words of Paul are the very words of their glorified Savior and Head.

The Mystery of the Gospel

The last verses of Romans similarly declare Paul's unique authority in the gospel:

Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith (Rom. 16:25-26).

Paul calls the message which he preached “my gospel” (see Rom. 2:16; 2 Tim. 2:8) and describes it as “the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery.” He also says that it has been made known “by the scriptures of the prophets” or prophetic Scriptures (*graphē prophētikōn*). This surely doesn't refer to the writings of the Old Testament prophets, for otherwise Paul couldn't say that the mystery “was kept secret since the world began, *but now* is made manifest.” A parallel passage also affirms that it was “hid from ages and generations, *but now* is made manifest to His saints” (Col. 1:26). The words *but now* unmistakably distinguish the present from the past and draw attention to the newness of this important truth.¹ God kept it a secret from everyone, including Israel's prophets, until He manifested (*phaneroō*) it to Paul and other “apostles and prophets” whom He sent to the Gentiles (Eph. 3:1-5).² And Paul's epistles, specifically, are the “Scriptures” by which He has “made known” this marvelous message to “all nations” (see 2 Pet. 3:15,16).

When Paul wrote the words “my gospel,” he wasn't being conceited or overly possessive. He had every right to refer to this marvelous message as *his* in a special way because he was its first recipient and primary preacher. The introductory greeting of his letter to Titus brings this point out vividly:

Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ...In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested His word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour (Titus 1:1-3).

The “hope of eternal life,” the believer's sure expectation of living with God in heaven forever, is obviously an essential aspect of the gospel. Indeed, it's “the hope of the gospel” (Col. 1:23). Paul says that God had this “hope” in mind “before the world began” but *manifested* (*phaneroō*)

it “in due times.” Here again, as in Romans 16:25,26, we see that the message which Paul proclaimed had been hidden in the past. And this time, he explains even more clearly when and how it was revealed. The Father unveiled His age-old plan for our eternal life, not in the laws of Moses or Psalms of David or visions of Daniel or parables of Jesus or sermons of Peter, but in the *preaching* of Paul: “through preaching, which is committed unto *me*” [emphatic *egō*]. It was Paul whom God chose to “make all men see” or to bring to light [*phōtizō*] this wondrous “mystery” about the “unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. 3:8,9). That’s why Paul speaks of “the mystery of the gospel” (Eph. 6:19).

But didn’t he preach the same message as everybody else? Of course he did—and didn’t! He did proclaim the same crucified and resurrected Savior as had the apostles before him, but his gospel was also startlingly new and different in significant respects.



The Gospel of the Kingdom

Before Paul, God’s message of salvation and eternal life was “the gospel of the kingdom” (Matt. 4:23), the good news about the Lord’s coming reign upon the earth which “all His holy prophets” had been announcing “since the world began” (Acts 3:21; see Isa. 9:6,7; 11:1-10). According to this prophetic plan, the Jews enjoyed special favor as God’s chosen people and were to be the channel of blessing to the Gentiles, as the Lord promised Isaac:

And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed (Gen. 26:4; see Isa. 60; Zech. 8).

Jesus affirmed the Jews’ privileged position when He declared that He had been sent only to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” and that the Jewish “children” should be fed before the Gentile “dogs” (Matt. 15:21-28; see 10:5,6). Even after His resurrection this order remained, as the disciples preached God’s Word “to none but unto the Jews only” (Acts 11:19), and it took supernatural persuasion for Peter to enter a Gentile’s home (Acts 10:28,29).

Another primary feature of God’s prophetic plan was the authority of the Law. Obedience to the Mosaic commands was essential in order to gain *life* and be counted *just* or *righteous* by God:

But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right... [if he] hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live (Ezek. 18:5,9; see Lev. 18:5; Deut. 6:24,25).

[Zacharias and Elisabeth] were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless (Luke 1:6; see 2:25).

The Lord Jesus emphasized the necessity of obedience to the Law for gaining *eternal life* in the coming kingdom:

Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him...if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments (Matt. 19:16,17; see Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28).

Peter similarly taught that everyone who “fears” God and “worketh righteousness” (*ergazomai dikaiosynē*) is “accepted with Him” (Acts 10:34,35). For many years the believers in Jerusalem remained “zealous of the Law” (Acts 21:20), and some sought to impose the Law on Gentiles (Acts 15:1,5).

The Gospel of the Grace of God

After that brief survey, we can perhaps better appreciate the significance of the following declarations from Paul in his letter to the Romans:

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested (Rom. 3:21).

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness (Rom. 4:5).

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth (Rom. 10:4).

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek (Rom. 10:12).

The end of the Law?! Righteousness by faith without works?! No difference between Jews and Gentiles?! These truths which are so easily taken for granted today were nothing less than revolutionary when Paul first spoke them, and they turned the religious world of the first century upside down. They also cost Paul his reputation, his comfort, his freedom, and, ultimately, his life.

God commissioned this new apostle to proclaim a new message of eternal life, one which had no connection with a favored nation, human merit, or a promised land. It's good news for all mankind without distinctions: “all” people, including the Jews, are now equally “under sin” (Rom. 3:9; see 3:23; 11:30-32), Christ “gave Himself a ransom” equally “for all” (1 Tim. 2:4-7), and “all” who believe are equally blessed in Him (Gal. 3:28). It's good news of justification by grace through faith alone: those who work not, but believe in Christ receive His righteousness as a gift, never to be taken away (Rom. 4:5; see 3:24; 11:29). It's good

news of an enduring, heavenly, not earthly, inheritance: believers will be taken home to heaven to share in their Lord's glory and enjoy His presence forever (Phil. 3:20,21; 1 Thes. 4:13-18).

These truths are not peripheral elements but the very essence of Paul's gospel, which he referred to as "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24). God kept this testimony of grace a secret in the past but made it known "in due time" through Paul (1 Tim. 2:6; Titus 1:3) as part of "the dispensation of grace" which He gave to him (Eph. 3:2).

Our Reliable Guide

The Bible plainly demonstrates that Paul is our God-ordained authority in all matters relating to the message of salvation for the present age. Though all of Scripture is equally inspired by God and equally necessary for us to learn everything that He wants us to know about Himself and His plan for the ages, Paul's writings in particular demand special attention. His proclamation of Christ "according to the revelation of the mystery" is what the Lord is using today to establish people (Rom. 16:25). And any deviation from it is under a curse (Gal. 1:8,9).

A well-respected Bible teacher of days gone by aptly commented, "Throughout church history, to depart from Paul has been heresy. To receive Paul's gospel and hold it fast is salvation."³ He also remarked, "You can judge any man's preaching or teaching by this rule—is he Pauline? Does his doctrine start and finish according to those statements of Christian doctrine uttered by the Apostle Paul? No matter how wonderful a man may seem in his gifts and apparent consecration, if his gospel is not Pauline, it is not the gospel."⁴

Only those who teach according to Paul's standard will give accurate and authoritative answers to the myriad of questions surrounding God's good news. Only they will be "approved" workers who not need be "ashamed" (2 Tim. 2:15). The gospel according to Paul is God's good news for today. When we follow Paul, we're truly following Christ.

Are you on the right road? 

Endnotes

1. For other new revelations introduced by *but now* or similar phrases, see Romans 3:21; 2 Corinthians 5:16; Ephesians 2:13; 3:5; 2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:3.
2. The other *holy apostles and prophets* to whom God revealed the mystery (Eph. 3:5; see 2:20) were, doubtless, the same ones that Paul referred to in the next chapter: *When He ascended up on high...He gave some apostles; and some prophets* (Eph. 4:8-11). They were men like Apollos, Silas, and Timothy (see 1 Cor. 4:6,9; 1 Thes. 1:1; 2:6) who were appointed after, not before, Christ's ascension and served among the Gentiles together with Paul.
3. Newell, William R., *Romans: Verse-by-Verse* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Classics, 1994), 2.
4. Newell, *Paul versus Peter or Remarks on Galatians I and II* (Grand Rapids: Bible Doctrines to Live By), 5.

The Epistles of John

What in the World Is Going On? (I John 2:16,17)

By Pastor Ricky Kurth



“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (I John 2:16).

Did you notice that with just sixteen words, this humble apostle managed to sum up *the world and all things in it*? That’s quite an accomplishment when you recall that John was a fisherman, not a philosopher; he had no degrees hanging on his wall from institutions of higher learning. What he *did* have, of course, was the inspiration of the Spirit, which caused *his* words to be *God’s* words. This means that what we are really reading here is *God’s* summation of the world and all things in it.

Notice that God’s summation of the world remarks twice upon the *lusts* that are in the world. The dictionary defines the word *lust* as a strong desire, and the Bible uses this word in two ways. First, there is “the lust of concupiscence” (I Thes. 4:5), the lust for illicit sexual gratification that we normally

associate with the word *lust*. But the Bible also speaks of lust for something we *don’t* normally associate with this word. When Israel was in the wilderness, they “fell a lusting,” saying, “Who shall give us *flesh to eat*?” (Num. 11:4 cf. Psa. 78:18,30). Oddly enough, the Bible speaks here of a lust *for food*.

Here it is important to remember that the children of Israel were not lusting for food because they had nothing to eat! Speaking of the manna that God gave them for their need, we read that “man did eat angels’ food: He sent them meat to the full” (Psa. 78:25). So they *had* food; they just wanted a different *kind* of food than what God was serving up (Num. 11:5,6). That’s why “the wrath of God came upon them” (Psa. 78:30,31).

Now remember, John is describing for us *all that is in the world*. Would you say that so far he has made an accurate assessment of the world and all that is in it, in describing people who were not

satisfied with what they had, wanting something else instead? What a *powerful* summation of the world about us!

Now we invite you to think about this type of lust in terms of the coming Tribulation, for remember, I John is a Tribulation epistle. We know that when the Beast issues his mark, believers will not be able to buy food without it (Rev. 13:16,17). In response, God plans to counter this bold move with a bold move of His own, once again feeding His people with manna from heaven (Mic. 7:14,15). When that happens, human nature not having changed much in the past 3500 years, some will undoubtedly tire of “this light bread” as they did long ago (Num. 21:5), and will begin to lust after food other than what God will provide them. We believe that *this* is “the lust of the flesh” about which John is warning them, for to procure the kind of food for which their hearts will lust, they will have to take the mark of the Beast.

This lust of the flesh is not the only lust they need beware of, however, for John also warns them about “the lust of the eyes.” The Bible also recognizes *this* kind of lust, the kind we normally associate with the word *lust*. Speaking of “the evil woman,” Solomon warns, “Lust not after her beauty in thine heart” (Prov. 6:24,25). If you are familiar with the Book of Proverbs, you know that Solomon speaks here to warn his son of the danger of soliciting a harlot. This is a warning that transcends all dispensational bounds, for even if you don’t catch a social disease from such a solicitation, the moral decay that springs from this kind

of lifestyle will eat you up inside and leave you nothing but a hollowed-out shell of a man.

If you know the Book of Proverbs well, however, you know that when it is read through the eyes of Hebrew believers in the Tribulation, Solomon’s warnings of “the evil woman” will serve to warn these Hebrews of “*the great whore...with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication...Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots*” (Rev. 17:1-5). We feel this great whore is the religious system of the antichrist, and that many a Tribulation Jew will lust after her with his eyes, even though he is already married to God (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14). In yet another example of not being satisfied with what they have, they will lust after the great whore with their eyes, and the Antichrist will give them plenty at which to look. He will rebuild their temple, and ordain a priesthood that will once again lead them in the observance of feast days and the offering up of animal sacrifices. The biggest thing he will give them to look at, of course, will be a messiah that they can see with their own eyes.

We feel that *this* is the lust of the eyes about which John is warning. If you don’t think that the trappings of religion can be seductive to the eyes, remember that the largest Christian denomination in the world is literally filled with gold, and candles, and robes, and stained glass windows, and all the rest of the glitz and glamour of religion that Satan has used down through the centuries to seduce countless millions through the religious lust of their eyes.

The apostle closes this verse with one final warning for these future believers, one which concerns “the pride of life.” Since John is writing to fathers, young men, and little children (2:13,14), we feel he has the entire nation of Israel in mind, and so we likewise feel that he is warning here about a certain *national* pride in Israel. If it be asked what national pride Tribulation Jews are likely to be engaged in, we believe the thing of which the children of Israel were always most proud was their God-given religion. It would seem that the religion of all ancient nations was the thing of which they were most proud when we consider the following example from Scripture:

Jethro speaks here of the national pride the Egyptians had for their religion, for it was in the area of religion that God proved that He was above them. Jethro’s words verify something that we learn from extrabiblical sources, something that concerns the plagues with which God judged Pharaoh and his nation. We are told that the Egyptians worshipped the Nile river, and so when God turned the Nile into blood, God proved that He was above them in the area of their religion, the thing wherein they dealt proudly. We are also told that the Egyptians worshipped the sun, and so when God brought darkness on the land of Egypt, God once again proved He was above them in the thing wherein they dealt proudly. We understand that every one of the ten plagues with which God afflicted Pharaoh and his people was designed to embarrass one of their gods.

We say all that to better understand Hosea 7:10, where the prophet speaks of “*the pride of Israel.*” Here we believe that, as it was with the Egyptians, the pride of Israel was her God-given religion, which consisted mainly in a sacrifice system of which the children of Israel were very proud. It was not, however, anything about which they *should* have been proud; in fact, their religion was designed by God to make them *ashamed*. Hebrews 10:3 says that “in those sacrifices there is a *remembrance again made of sins.*” They should have been ashamed that innocent animals had to *die* to pay for their sins. That’s why a fuller quotation of Hosea 7:10 reads as follows:



“This world is scheduled to *burn*, and it should hold no place in our affections.”

After remarking on how God had delivered Israel out of the hands of Pharaoh, Moses’ father-in-law observed, “Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt *proudly* He was above them” (Ex. 18:10,11). We feel that

“And the pride of Israel testified to his face: *and they do not return to the Lord their God, nor seek Him for all this.*”

The sacrifices of Israel testified that God’s people were sinners; yet for all that testimony, they refused to return to the Lord. Instead of being ashamed of their religion, they were proud of it.

This then, we feel, was Israel’s “pride of life”—and will be again in the Tribulation. When the Antichrist rebuilds their temple and reinstates their religion, complete with a system of animal sacrifices, pride will again rise up in the hearts of Jews around the world. Thus we feel that it is *this* “pride of life” about which John was warning, the thing they will have to resist in that terrible day, for as John says, these lusts and this pride are “not of the Father,” but are “of the world.”

“And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (I John 2:17).

The phrase *passeth away* is a well-known figure of speech, and the Bible uses it in the same way that we use it today. When we hear that someone has *passed away*, we know that someone has *died*. In the same way, the Bible predicts that “the heavens shall pass away...the earth also,” speaking of how each will be “burned up” (II Pet. 3:10). No wonder John says, “love not the world” (I John 2:15), and no wonder Paul counsels us to “seek those things which are above,” and “set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. 3:1,2). This world is scheduled to *burn*, and it should hold no place in our affections.

The man who bought the house on the corner of the street where this writer lives soon found out that it would be next to impossible to bring it up to code and render it habitable. He was not fazed, however, for he was only interested in the land, and so he donated the house to the local fire department. They in turn have scheduled a day in which they will set fire to the house in order to provide real-life experience for their firefighters.

Knowing this, on the day before the controlled burn, how many of you would choose to move your belongings into this doomed residence? We’re talking about all your earthly possessions, everything you hold dear. “Of course not,” you exclaim, “the building is scheduled to be burned!” Yet everything that so many believers hold dear is right here on earth, “where moth and rust doth corrupt” (Matt. 6:19), awaiting the day when “the elements shall melt with fervent heat,” and “the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (II Pet. 3:10).

Many years ago I was fishing with my father when I hooked a small perch and began to reel him in. Suddenly a large Northern Pike hit the perch, and just as suddenly I was struggling to reel in a much bigger fish! After netting the pike and bringing it into the boat, we were amazed to learn that he had never been hooked by our lure. He ended up on our dinner plate because *he just refused to let go of the perch*. We often think of that Northern when we see believers who just refuse to let go of the world, and the things that are in the world. Don’t be one of them! 



BBS Letter Excerpts

From Illinois:

“Thank you so much for getting down to the ‘nitty-gritty’ of the truth of the Scriptures. I haven’t been able to find very much of it in the churches I’ve attended. Truth-seekers desperately need someplace to feed themselves, and my spirit relates to the truth you guys are printing.”

From Tennessee:

“I played the piano for years in a denominational church, when two months ago I quit after a disagreement over Acts 2. I gave them your *Two Minutes with the Bible* devotional on *The Teachings of Jesus*. I was predicting what would happen. If you know of a church near me, let me know.”

From our Inbox:

“Our family has been through the mill with denominational preachers the past few years, who have no answer for me. They try to tell us what we should be doing, yet I don’t find it in the Bible. I started on this path by telling my kids that they don’t need to trust and follow what men say, but what God says. So we began to take the basic things we believe and search them out. Where were they in the Bible? No one wants to answer our questions and it seems to not matter! Since I can’t afford to go to Bible college, what do you suggest I do? I am a stay-at-home mom of five children.” (*Berean Bible Institute* now has distant learning classes for people just like you!—Ed).

From Arkansas:

“My husband and I enjoy the *Searchlight* each month. It is full of good Bible studies that encourage us in our walk within the Body of Christ and right division. We have a home Bible study every Sunday and have used some of the *Searchlight* material in our studies. We do not have a local assembly, so receiving the *Searchlight* each month is a blessing.”

From West Virginia:

“The article you wrote about foot-washing hit home because I didn’t know how to explain that to my brother. I knew it was under the gospel of the kingdom and not for the Body of Christ. The *Searchlight* keeps me grounded, since we don’t have a grace church in our area.”

From British Columbia:

“We do not have a Berean church near us, so we really appreciate getting the *Searchlight*.”

From West Virginia:

“For about a year I have been receiving the *Searchlight*, and from what I have read from the Bible and what you publish it seems to add up... I am very disappointed that I can’t find a good place to call home and have a true church that will follow the Word.”

From New York:

“The *Searchlight* is my lifeline, as I’m by myself...rightly dividing has been the most wonderful help.”

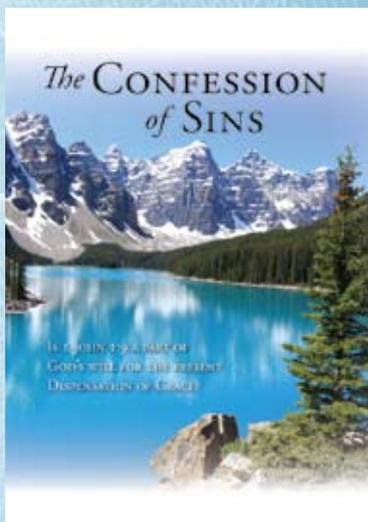
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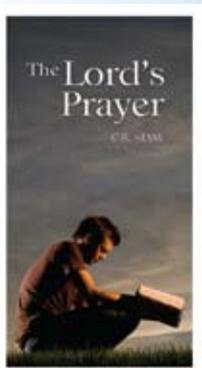
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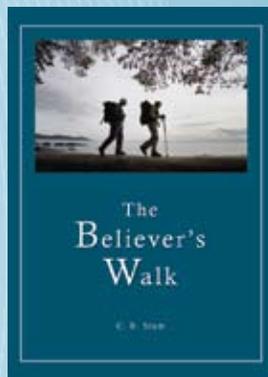


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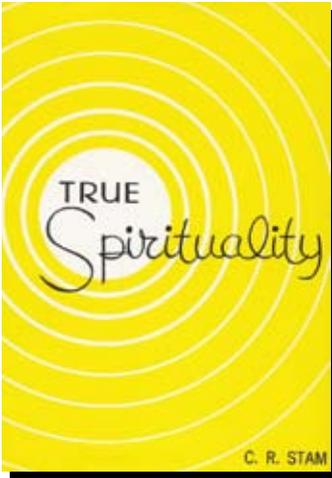
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News and Announcements

New MP3 Messages: Two new series by BBS president *Pastor Paul Sadler* have been added to the hundreds of audio messages already appearing on our web site. *Understanding Dispensationalism* and *Acts, Dispensationally Considered* are sure to be greatly used of God to help introduce the grace message to countless visitors to our site, especially if you refer your friends and family to www.bereanbiblesociety.org/MP3/. Be sure to log on yourself, and get in on yet another free opportunity to grow in God's grace, afforded to you by the faithful financial supporters of the *Berean Bible Society*. Don't you wish you were one of them?

The 21st Century Women of Grace Conference will be held July 7th & 8th at your editor's home church, *Faith Bible Church* of Steger, Illinois. Speakers will include Barb Sistelos, a former *TCM* missionary to Brazil, currently working with her husband Tony at *TBS Ministries*, and Mari Edgekoski, a former successful businesswoman and teacher of women's Bible classes. Conference Director Johanna Bright reports that this conference will cover women's health, etiquette in today's society, music, literature, and everyday living for today's Christian woman. Jo would be more than happy to tell you more if you write her at mommayaya@att.net.

Tony Sistelos was ordained to the ministry by the *St. Louis Community Bible Church* in St. Louis, on April 1st. Your editor was on hand with the church's own Pastor Rick Owsley to welcome Tony to the ministry. While his ordination unleashes yet another grace pastor on the stranglehold that Satan has held on the truth for far too long, Tony is already spoken for, as he has assumed the presidency of the *St. Louis Theological Seminary*. He and his wife Barb invite your prayers for them as he brings his strong academic background to the helm of a work that God has already richly blessed under the leadership of Pastor Owsley.

Did you notice? Every one of the letters in this month's Letter Excerpts (See page 27) is from a "stranded" grace believer. Your support of *Berean Bible Society* allows us to be a spiritual *lifeline* to many who have no grace church to teach them God's rightly divided Word.



The *Au Sable Lighthouse* is located in the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore near Grand Marais, Michigan. The shoreline in this area is considered one of North America's most beautiful, but in the 1800's it was considered a "ship trap" and one of the most deadly.

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