

The Berean Searchlight

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

June 2011



Feature Article

Treasured Gifts, by Paul M. Sadler5

Articles

Not Ending Like Solomon, by Steve Shober 11

How I Study the Bible, by Ricky Kurth.....19

Departments

Sharing Right Division4

Question Box.....25

BBS Letter Excerpts26

Letter Excerpt Extra27

Growing Up in Grace—Christ in My World28

News and Announcements30

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.

The Berean Searchlight is the official organ of the Berean Bible Society, and is sent free of charge to any who request it.

Editor: Ricky L. Kurth — Graphic Design: Kevin J. Sadler

Printing: J. B. Kenehan, LLC, Waukesha, WI



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The Berean Searchlight (ISSN 0005-8890), June 2011. Vol. 72, Number 4.

The Berean Searchlight is published monthly (except July) at no subscription price, by Berean Bible Society, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022-0756. Periodical postage paid at Germantown, WI. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Berean Searchlight, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022-0756 and additional mailing offices.



From the Editor to You

Dear Friends in Christ,

My heart was heavy, but the Lord was with me last week as I delivered the message at my father's funeral. I am saddened by the loss, but I am comforted that he knew Christ as his Savior, and so while I'll miss him dearly, I won't miss him eternally.

I didn't always have this comfort. When I was a young man, Dad resisted my efforts to share Christ with him, saying he would make it to heaven on his own. I knew from those words that he was trusting his own good works to get to heaven instead of Christ's work on the Cross. But the passing of years and the approach of the end of a man's life sometimes leaves him longing for the *assurance* of salvation that can only come from resting in the work of the Savior. And so it was that a few years ago, I could see that Dad's opposition to the gospel was lessening, and he was thoughtfully considering my words. What a joy it was to eventually hear him give clear words of testimony, and in his last days even tell others that he was going to heaven because Christ died for his sins.



I share this experience to encourage you to never give up on loved ones, even when your words seem to fall on deaf ears. Not everyone accepts the gospel later in life, but it is hard to consider it again without hearing it again. With our parents, we are aided by the fact that as we grow older, the dynamic between children and parents tends to evolve. When we are young, our parents are the teachers and we are their students, as we soak up all of the wisdom that their years of experience have to offer. But as we mature, our parents often realize that we are now experienced adults in our own right, and they are less likely to ask, "Who is my child to teach *me* anything?"

Since I played Little League baseball, my father took me to many a Chicago White Sox game. And so a few days after his funeral, I took my son to a Sox game, where I gloved a batting practice home run before the game. I had to fight back the tears as I remembered it was Dad who taught me how to catch a baseball. But then I remembered that someday "God shall wipe away all tears," and "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying." 'Til then, Dad. 'Til then.



Yours in Christ,
Pastor Ricky Kurth



Sharing Right Division

By Pastor John Fredericksen

Do you remember how dispensational truth was first shared with you? This writer cannot think about rightly dividing God's Word without remembering the wonderfully gracious way these truths were patiently shared with him and his wife. No one acted like they were superior to us, that they were smarter than we, nor did they attempt to attack key doctrines where we might disagree. No one sought to win a scriptural argument. We were not embarrassed by public questioning. There were no threats, implied or otherwise, that fellowship might be withdrawn if our convictions remained unchanged, nor was there any hint of frustration with our understandings.

Those who first shared dispensational truths with us did so as it should be done, in a gracious and godly manner. As the saying goes, "You can attract more bees with honey than vinegar." So, those who ministered to us did so in an extremely loving manner. They followed the instruction Paul gave to Timothy: "The servant of the Lord must *not* strive; but be *gentle* unto all men, apt to teach, patient, *in meekness* instructing those that oppose themselves" (II Tim. 2:24-25).

Nonetheless, there certainly was opposition on our part when these servants of the Lord began to shed new light on traditionally held doctrines. Yet, with tenderness, they put Colossians 4:6 into practice: "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." These discussions were frequent and sometimes lasted into the wee hours of the morning, but there was diligence on the part of these soldiers of Christ. Their method of ministry made the doctrines they believed in palatable to us. We thank God this was the approach that was taken with us, and it is probably the only one that would have worked. As we read this testimony, may each of us be encouraged to share dispensational truth with others and always be certain to do so in such a tender way that we "adorn the doctrine" we believe.



Treasured Gifts

By Paul M. Sadler, D.D.

The *home* is the foundation of society, government, and the Church. If the home is under attack, whether from within as a result of sin or from without due to Satan, it will adversely affect every aspect of human existence. Those who may question this simply need to consider the ills of our own country: immorality, abortion, drug abuse, AIDS, juvenile delinquency, teen suicide, etc. Even the fall of Rome can be traced to a *moral* decline from within the Empire. Sadly, many of these problems plague Christian and non-Christian homes alike.

This reminds me of the time Vince Lombardi, the legendary coach of the Green Bay Packers, held a football high into the air before his All-Pro team and said, “Gentlemen, this is a *football!*” In other words, it’s back to the *basics*. Great advice! Max McGee, the team cut up, reportedly said, “Hold on a minute, Coach! You’re going

too fast!” Perhaps someone needs to stand up before the household of God and hold a Bible into the air and shout, “Brethren, this is a *Bible!*” Of course, the point would be to challenge believers to return to the principles of the original design that God established for Christian relationships.

“Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” (I Cor. 7:1,2).

To say that the Apostle Paul had his hands full with the Corinthians would be an understatement. They were into more trouble than a little one going through his terrible twos. The phrase, “Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me,” suggests the apostle had spent the better part of six chapters

dealing with the carnal actions of these members of the Body of Christ. With those matters set to rest, Paul now addresses the questions they had asked him regarding *marriage* and the issue of things offered to idols.

Apparently, there were some in this assembly who condoned the practice of *fornication*, which alarmed some of the brethren, and justifiably so. Although immorality was commonplace among the Greeks, this was *unacceptable* behavior for a believer in Christ. Fornication is normally associated with premarital relations, but the original Greek word *porneia* goes far beyond this meaning to include every type of sexual perversion imaginable. It extends from incestuous to homosexual relationships and everything illicit in between. For example:

“It is reported commonly that there is *fornication* among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you” (I Cor. 5:1,2).

“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to *fornication*, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire” (Jude 7).

God’s answer to this sin is *marriage*. Thus to avoid fornication the apostle clearly states, “Let every man have his *own* wife, and let every woman have her *own* husband.” Marriage provides a *safeguard* against temptation,

disease, and feelings of guilt. From the beginning, God has always intended one man for one woman. But how do we explain the fact that Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and David had multiple wives? Solomon had a large harem which included seven hundred wives and princesses, and three hundred concubines, most of whom served as wives.

Here we have a matter of the directive and permissive will of God. While a strong case could be made from Eastern culture for having more than one wife, the fact remains that the Lord Himself states: “And He answered and said unto them [Pharisees], Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his *wife*: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matt. 19:4-6).

Notice the Lord uses the singular form “wife” not “wives.” This is also confirmed through His apostle, writing to the Corinthians, “Let every man have his *own wife*.” Although God *allowed* the practice of having more than one wife in time past, those who stepped into these treacherous waters normally lived to regret it. These arrangements almost always inflamed the fires of *jealousy*. In some cases, they even caused a departure from the known will of God.

Probably, a small percentage of Solomon’s marriages were politically motivated, which means

some of his wives were in name only. Nevertheless, when he foolishly married outside the house of God, his Gentile wives caused him to depart from the ways of the Lord. “For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his *wives turned away his heart* after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father....And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father” (I Kings 11:4,6).

In spite of the shortcomings and failures of the patriarchs and prophets, God often used their circumstances to further His plans and purposes. So even through our imperfections He will ultimately be glorified. But for our *sakes*, it is always preferable to remain in the center of His will.

“For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn” (I Cor. 7:7-9).

Paul’s statements, “For I would that all men were even as I myself,” and, “It is good for them [the unmarried and widows] if they abide even as I [i.e. single],” have caused some to conclude that the apostle viewed marriage with contempt. We feel, however, that this charge is without merit. There is a general consensus that, prior to receiving his apostleship, Paul had been married, but afterward tragically lost his wife. This assumption is based upon

his declaration that he had been a *Pharisee*. According to historians it was mandatory for one to be married to belong to this sect.

The issue here is why Paul seems to be encouraging the believers at Corinth to remain *unmarried*. The solution to the problem is found in verses 26-28:

“I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be. Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned....Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.”



The key phrase here is, “*the present distress*.” Paul admonishes them as their spiritual father that under the circumstances it was in their best interest *not* to marry if they were unattached. The blood of the martyrs had already begun to run through the streets of the ancient world and the apostle knew that the *persecution* would soon intensify. History bears witness that many Christians even sought refuge for their lives in the *catacombs*.¹ Back then your life hung in the balance for naming the name of Christ, as seen in Paul’s words

to the saints at Thessalonica: “So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in *all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure*” (II Thes. 1:4).

Paul knew the heartache that couples would experience when Christian husbands were taken and cast to the lions. So during times of persecution, it is better to remain *unmarried*. Therefore wisdom says: “Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.” Paul adds, “But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.” Burn, that is, with *lustful* desire. Interestingly, those who do marry at such times have not sinned, but they do leave themselves susceptible to suffer trouble in the flesh, at the hands of evildoers (I Cor. 7:9,27,28).

So then, Paul is not the ogre some make him out to be; he was simply concerned about the welfare of the saints. Clearly the apostle held the institution of marriage in the highest esteem, referring to it as a *gift*. “But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that” (I Cor. 7:7). For the most part, we believe it is God’s will for men and women to marry. Of course, there are exceptions to the rule.

Paul says, “One after this manner, and another after that.” In other words, some have the gift of marriage while others have the gift of celibacy. Those who have the latter gift are given a special measure of grace to remain *single*. As we know, celibacy has always been closely associated with the priesthood of Roman Catholicism or among monks who live cloistered

lives. However, if those who piously participate in these religious orders do not have the gift of celibacy, it will inevitably end in *immorality*. The past ten years or so have only served to highlight the accuracy of this last statement as one scandal after another has made headlines in the news.



“But how does one determine if they have the gift of marriage?”

True celibacy is a *gift* from God. Those who possess this gift have absolutely no desire to be married. This also applies to those who never remarry after the death of their partner. They find their sufficiency *in Christ* and normally are perfectly content to live alone. The Scriptures say in this regard, “The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit” (I Cor. 7:34). While the married woman has contentment through a Christ-centered marriage, the unmarried woman finds fulfillment by consecrating herself *wholly* to the things of the Lord.

I had a very dear aunt who epitomized this. She was as *pure* as newly fallen snow. The day my wife and I were saved, we made it a point to visit our families, convinced that everyone would be as excited about our conversion as we were. Of course, most of them thought we had suffered concussions from some type of fall! My aunt’s response was *jubilant*,

followed by these words: “I have been praying for you and Vicki every day for three years that you would come to know Christ.” Those weren’t idle words; she meant it! She added, “Now I am going to pray that God will call you into full-time service.” Well, I guess you might say we are the fruits of my aunt’s prayer life.

But how does one determine if they have the gift of marriage? Since celibacy is the exception to the rule, this is relatively easy to ascertain. Those who have the gift of marriage *desire* to be married. They are uncomfortable with the thought of being single the rest of their lives. Singles customarily spend a lot of time dreaming (rightly so) about one day having their own home and eventually a family. And both young men and women almost always will feel life is passing them by if they aren’t married by age 22. In short, those who have the gift of marriage are usually *consumed* with the thought.

PREPARATIONS FOR MARRIAGE

Normally the procedure for choosing the right partner for life begins on the wrong foot. The counsel of the world goes something like this: appearance, compatibility, education, and financial status. Unfortunately, the Church has been so influenced by the world these days that believers also seem to have the idea that these factors will ensure a happy marriage relationship.

Consider *appearance* for a moment. It will matter very little at 2:30 a.m. that a husband is tall, dark, and handsome when the

firstborn is screaming at the top of his lungs. And it’s about this same time that the vision of beauty he married, with long, flowing hair, has it cut short for practical reasons. Well, isn’t *compatibility* surely a must? Isn’t it essential to have the same likes and dislikes? But what profit is there if both a husband and wife enjoy playing tennis when the breadwinner comes home to inform his wife that he lost his job because the company downsized, or that he has been promoted and won’t have time for regular, weekly tennis anymore?



Now please don’t misunderstand me, there’s nothing wrong with having the same interests or a good education or being financially responsible. These things are indeed commendable traits, but *believers* who make them the foundation of their marriage relationship are like the man who built his house upon the sand. “And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it” (Matt. 7:27).

Believers in Christ should begin their search for “Mr. or Mrs. Right” according to the pattern of

God's Word. The four essentials for a Christ-centered marriage are: salvation, spirituality, convictions, and a willingness to solve problems biblically. We cannot place enough emphasis on this last essential.

Salvation is the first essential simply because believers are not to be unequally joined to unbelievers. It is God's will that believers only marry *in the Lord*.

The widow, for example, "is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord" (I Cor. 7:39).

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Cor. 6:14).


Those who violate these clear injunctions will only heap *sorrow* upon themselves. A young lady may have good intentions that she will reach her fiancé for Christ after they are married, but this is seldom the case. The fact is that the unbeliever normally draws the believer away into the things of the world. Through the years, I have had a number of godly women share with me that the thing they regretted most in life was being married to an unbeliever. Nearly all said it wasn't that their husbands weren't good providers; they were, but there was *no* fellowship with them in the gospel. Hear me and hear me well: Disobeying the Word of God always has *consequences!*

Although it is not a biblical prerequisite that a marriage partner has the other three spiritual graces, they do provide the means through which the relationship

will function more smoothly. For example, if a young woman is a grace believer and marries a dyed-in-the-wool Baptist, he naturally has very strong *convictions* that they should attend a Baptist church. In his words, he was born a Baptist, was raised a Baptist, and will die a Baptist. I speak here from experience, having had this same mindset myself before I came to see the grace of God. Of course, the issue is only complicated a hundred-fold when the little ones come along. What should they be taught—Baptist or grace doctrine?

The wife could compromise, but this runs contrary to her convictions, which are as deep as her husband's. They could attend different churches, but this divides the family. Another option would be to stay at home; however, the Scriptures teach us that we shouldn't forsake the assembling of ourselves together. I rest my case!

In Summary

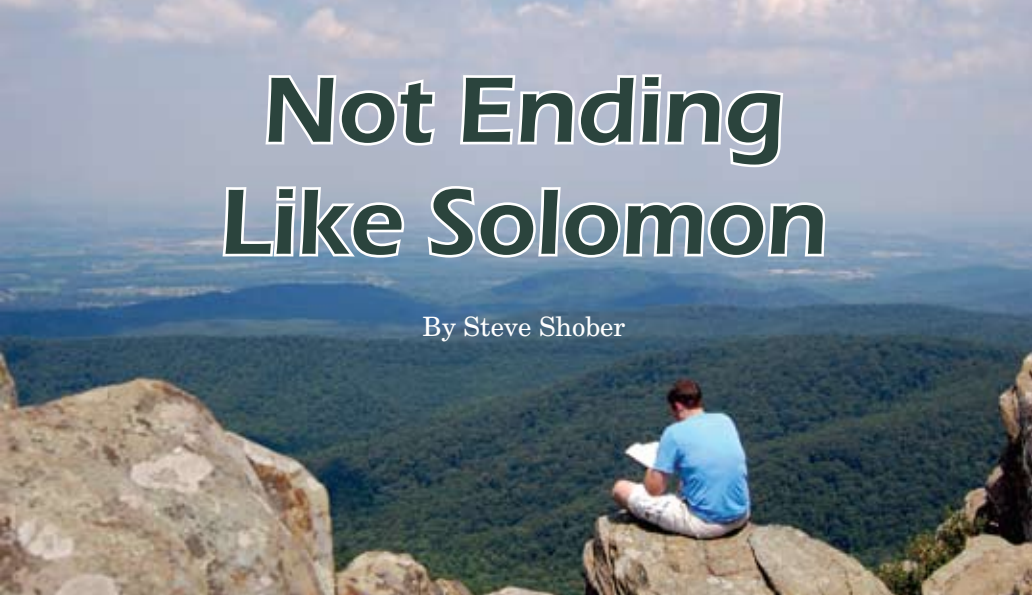
Paul's counsel here in I Corinthians Chapter 7 is invaluable. God has given the members of the Body of Christ the means by which to avoid fornication, with its multifaceted allurements. Apart from the gift of celibacy, *marriage* is the only righteous answer to this relentlessly menacing sin. Always remember that God established these guidelines for our well-being, and when they are disregarded, heartache and wreckage will be the inevitable result. 

Endnote

1. Catacomb: "A subterranean cemetery of galleries with recesses for tombs."

Not Ending Like Solomon

By Steve Shober



The following article is based upon a chapter in an upcoming booklet on the *Song of Solomon* published by the *Berean Bible Society*. Other parts of that booklet were published in three *Searchlight* articles from February to April, 2008.

Summary

The wisest man that ever lived started life well, but something terrible happened to him. Something captured his heart and led him astray, away from the Lord. What in the world could capture the heart and mind of the wisest man that every lived? We will see the answer is directly related to not being grounded in the Word. He seems to have purposely disobeyed the Lord and he did not flee youthful lusts, even as an adult man. That is why we must learn from Solomon to assure we do not follow his manner of life. It is for that reason we plead with teens to learn early in life to follow the Word even though they may be thought weird for doing so.

Background

Solomon began his career with great wisdom and understanding given to him by God (1 Kings 3:12-13). He was also given riches and honor. He was without doubt the wisest, most knowledgeable man that ever lived and clearly demonstrated his gift from God in his early years. He was the man God allowed to build Him a temple, likely the greatest building (and complex of associated structures) ever constructed. He built the Temple during his first 20 years as king, and reigned a total of 40 years.

Solomon was drawn away from the Lord, as we will see, but when his spiritual decline began or how long it took are not clear. It seems to

have started slowly and imperceptibly at first, then after a lengthy time, the full results of his disobedience manifested themselves. Disobedience can be likened unto some seeds which take a long time to sprout and mature. This is a great lesson for us all, that is, *disobedience's consequences may take time, but they will surely take their toll.*

Solomon lived around 1000 BC and was the most politically powerful man in history. He had it all, and he walked with the Lord while he was young. Talented and smart, he wrote 3000 proverbs (much of the book of Proverbs), he wrote 1005 songs (the Song of Solomon is one of them), he knew more about nature (stars, animals, plants, etc.) than anyone, and could discern why things happen as they do (1 Kings 4:32-34). However, of his 1005 songs, apparently one for each wife and concubine, why is only one such song in the Bible? His father, David, also wrote songs/psalms and many, or all, are preserved in the Word. One has to wonder if most of Solomon's songs were merely uninspired, sensual, love songs of no spiritual value.

Clear Instructions from God

Here are some of the factors that led to his downfall. God told Moses several important things related to the time when Israel would want to establish a king. This instruction was given when Israel was coming out of Egypt (~1451 BC). Solomon, who lived around 450 years later, surely knew these commands were specifically written for the kings (Deut. 17:15-17). The kings were forbidden by God to do four things:

1. He shall not multiply horses to himself,
2. nor cause the people to return to Egypt to get more horses,
3. neither shall he multiply wives to himself,
4. neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

These four items were disregarded, as much as possible it seems, by Solomon. Let's see:

1. He had 12,000 horsemen and 1400 chariots (1 Kings 10:26).
2. He had horses specifically brought out of Egypt (1 Kings 10:28).
3. He had 1000 wives and concubines (1 Kings 11:3). Some of these women were gifts to him from other rulers in an attempt to secure peace with this most powerful king. Some were the result of his own avarice. In I Kings 11:3 it is noted he had 700 wives (of noble birth), princesses, and 300 concubines (not of noble birth). What is not known is if that was the number of women at that particular time or if that is a summary of all during his lifetime (the latter is most likely).
4. The weight of gold that came to him in one year was 666 talents (1 Kings 10:14). Mention of the exact weight of the gold is not a coincidental thing; it is mentioned for a reason. Certainly we know that number is associated with the Beast (Antichrist) who deceives the

world and is empowered by Satan (Rev. 13:18). It would seem reasonable to conclude that the number 666 implies that Solomon was being deceived (and led astray) by his gold. For clarity, 666 talents amounts to something on the order of 80,000 pounds of gold a year (in today's world, using a value of \$1300 per ounce, that is around 1.7 billion dollars worth of gold in one year). Gold was so plentiful in Israel that silver became like stones in the street, 1 Kings 10:27.



Some believe Solomon was not a believer when he died. His tremendous downfall was the result of disobedience to God's clear and specific commands. There was only one thing each king was instructed by God to do. **"...he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life;**

that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren..." (Deut. 17:18-20). Solomon did commit all the forbidden items, and did so flagrantly! In addition, there is no record he followed the one item he was told to do as king; accordingly, his heart was turned away from the Lord, and it resulted in his heart being lifted up above his brethren. In the end, his great wisdom and knowledge became mere human intellect, that of vanity and meaningless. The issue of "his heart being lifted up above his brethren" is a major factor we each must understand, for it can be anyone's Achilles' heel.

A very important fact is that Solomon loved many "strange women" (1 Kings 11:1-6). The word "strange" is used because they worshipped other gods and were strangers to the house of Israel (and God). These women brought their idolatry into Solomon's life and this had a devastating effect upon Solomon. His many wives, and where they were from, were in direct contradiction to what the Lord had instructed the children of Israel (1 Kings 11:2). These strange wives had a catastrophic impact on the wisest man that ever lived, for in his old age, **"...his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God..."** (1 Kings 11:4). There are other factors leading to his downfall, but his disobedience with respect to wives is specifically noted as a major cause of his downfall.

These strange women *were heaven on his eyes, but horrible on his heart.* That is why we have to learn early in life that we cannot let outward looks deceive us, it is the hidden person of the heart we must find in

another (2 Cor. 5:16; 1 Pet. 3:4). Not only did Solomon forget about the one-man-one-woman concept taught since the days of creation, he also forgot that God had specifically instructed the Children of Israel not to go to the nations around them to get wives or husbands—they were all idolaters.

Solomon's many wives eventually led him away from the Lord; maybe 700 wives were 699 too many. Oftentimes disobedience is very subtle so that the effect is not realized for many years. By the time a person recognizes the problem, it is too late to change the results (it is never too late to come back to the Lord). He could have anything he wanted, and his youthful lust caused him to disobey God. It seems it took many years for his disobedience to catch up with him, but it surely did, as it will any of us.

Solomon wrote, in Ecclesiastes, that the things we might think would bring lasting joy and a sense of accomplishment only end in vanity, nothing. As an example, in the first chapter he makes it clear that wisdom by itself is meaningless and ends up being a source of grief. For wisdom to be of eternal value it cannot be based upon human intellect, *it has to be based upon something deeper. Wisdom has to be grounded in the Lord.* Solomon was grounded in the Lord at first, but we can learn from him that if one is not continually grounded this most treasured quality ends up being meaningless. Thus, he ends Ecclesiastes by stating what really is important, that is, **“REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth...”**, and to, **“Fear God, and keep his commandments”** (Eccl. 12:1 & 13). Had he followed his own advice his life would not have ended as it did. He may be called, “a good example of a bad example.”

Something deeper

Not following God's specific instructions resulted in Solomon's heart being led astray. Everything in human life, no matter how pure or virtuous, must needs be based upon something deeper and eternal. To have a God-honoring life, and to end life with joy, one has to be grounded in the Word and the things of the Lord. Being grounded in the Word creates a foundation that is sure and unmovable. It establishes our viewpoint on spiritual and worldly affairs. It binds our minds and desires to our Head. It secures us to the eternal Truth. The Apostle Paul recognized this need to be grounded, and in the beginning of his very first epistle discussed this very issue, **“...to the end ye may be established”** (Rom. 1:11b). Then, he provided God's newly revealed truth (that grounds and “stablishes”) in the book of Romans. Romans concludes that being established comes from the Lord and His Word, **“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” (Rom. 16:25). So, today what provides that sure, established foundation is the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery. As we each endeavor to grasp the truth of His Word according to the Mystery, we are established and grounded in a right relationship with Him.

It is too bad Solomon did not ground himself and honor his own writings (given to him by God). A simple reading of the great virtues of a godly woman, as taught in Proverbs 31, are not even broached in his Song of Solomon writings. Proverbs 31 is the prophecy of the mother of King Lemuel, she understood the dangers of vain women and how they can destroy a king. The truth of Proverbs 31:3 is absent in SOS, **“Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.”** So, in SOS he presents a purely physical relationship and attraction: the true values of a godly woman are completely missing, as presented in Proverbs 31:30, **“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.”** Oh, that Solomon had listened to these words of wisdom from this woman rather than the words of his strange wives that worshipped other gods.

Application to Us

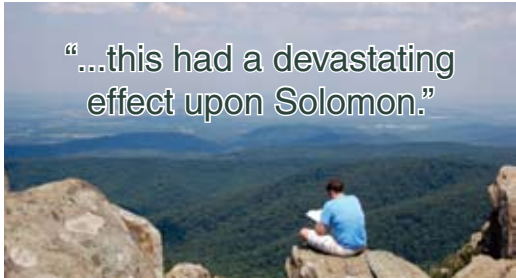
A key verse relating to our spiritual establishment is found in 2 Timothy 2:22, **“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”** The conclusion to Ecclesiastes relates directly to this key verse, it helps explain “youthful lusts.” **“REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them”** (Eccl. 12:1). Solomon was referring to old age specifically when he wrote this; however, it also contains the eternal principle of 2 Timothy 2:22. If we remember the Lord from our youth and onward, when the evil days come (hardship, old age, improper desires, illness, cognitive impairment, loss of everything) then we have something deeper that still brings pleasure and hope. Our lives will have had meaning, we will not be bitter, we will still have an inner joy that can only come from the Lord, the anchor of our soul.

If we forget our Lord in our youth, we will pay the price of disobedience just as Solomon did. So, we are told to flee from the things that cause us to lust, and rather to grab hold of godliness. If we do that, our final



end will be as good (or better) than our beginning. It seems Solomon ended his life as a defeated man, perhaps wondering why he had not been more faithful to the Lord. That is what 2 Timothy 2:22 is trying to prevent in our lives. Paul did not end poorly even though he was in prison, poor, and suffered the loss of all things, **“Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ”** (Phil. 3:8). What he had was eternal, it made his life have significance, and it could not be taken from him. If we follow the Word, the things of this world will not capture our minds and our relationships with others will not bring us to ruin, as happened to Solomon.

As an example, one thing that can capture a person is the desire for power (control). A person may or may not have power in the classic sense of being the “boss;” however, many inappropriately strive for power by being “control freaks or control-aholics.” Such people have to be in charge or control of everything and every relationship; this is their way of having power. If they can’t get control directly, they will get it some other way. These other ways are indirect and often unrecognized ways Christians “set themselves above their brethren.” Other ways are things like:



- demanding or threatening (physical, emotional, financial...)
- pouting, crying, or giving the silent treatment
- making every discussion about themselves or their interests
- always having a better story or experience, “Well, if you think that’s something, wait until I tell you about my experience.”
- using sickness as a tool to manipulate
- passive-aggressive behavior
- having to have the last word in a discussion or argument
- insisting they are always right, and proving it
- manipulation by using sex, education, money, secrets, or a million other things
- going behind the backs of others to undermine them
- using gossip or rumors to put others down
- verbal abuse used to demean another

Anyone in a true leadership position has to be very careful. That is why Paul instructed Timothy not to put a novice in office, lest he be lifted up by the pride of his own importance (1 Tim. 3:6). Whether old or young, we must guard against lifting ourselves above our brethren. That can easily occur because power is very captivating and subtly deceives. So, pastors, teachers, those in high office at work, husbands,

parents, etc., can become lifted up in their own mind. God's antidote to such thoughts is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12, 5:14-24. We must make these verses an integral part of our spiritual lives to help assure we run our race with honor and with a pure heart.

Without proper spiritual grounding in the Word (based upon the Pauline Mystery), we will surely drift into some form of sin, obsessive behavior, skewed priorities, or a host of other things. We can end life well regardless of what some would call our "fortune in life." We can be penniless, disabled, or demented; however, our life is not based upon fortune, but upon our heavenly spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3-23). Those blessings cannot be taken from us by anything or anyone. If properly grounded, it does not matter if one is (or becomes) handicapped, mentally confused, unable to help him/her self, or suffers the loss of all things: such a person can be grounded and end life in a God pleasing manner. The need to follow the Word in all things and to walk by faith is necessary to prevent ending up like Solomon.

It is easy to instruct children and teens, but applying these truths to our adult lives can be a true challenge. No one wants to *end his/her life with regrets, full of bitterness, or feeling his/her life made no difference.* No one wants to end life having been led away from the Lord. Staying close to Him means being grounded and established in the Word. Day by day, each Christian must delve into the Word and allow the Spirit to teach him or her from it; this is what establishes us and keeps us grounded in Him. No other way, or thing, can ground us. When Paul came to the end of his



life, he had no regrets or bitterness; he knew his life made a difference. All this in spite of the fact he was without earthly blessings or comfort. Paul says, **"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith"** (2 Tim. 4:7). What a testimony from a man of God. What a wonderful Lord we have, Who enables any one of us to finish our course in such a manner. The assurance of ending life in honor is something we will all cherish as a true blessing from God; certainly this is far better than the fleeting pleasures of this life.

The Lord surely must rejoice in His saints who are grounded in the Word and who do not set themselves above their brethren. May Paul's prayer be accomplished in our lives, **"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"** (1 Thes. 5:23).



Colorado Conference

Saturday, July 2, 2011

Location: *Blair-Caldwell African-American Research Library*
2401 Welton Street, Denver, Colorado

Speaker: Pastor Ricky Kurth, *Berean Bible Society*

For directions or additional information, please contact:
James Everett at 303-719-9780

Grace Believers' Bible Conference

Dates: August 5-7, 2011

Location: *Bitely Community Church*
10781 N. Bingham Avenue, Bitely, Michigan

Theme: *Searching the Unsearchable Riches of Christ*

Guest Speakers:

Pastor Paul M. Sadler, *Berean Bible Society*
Dr. W. Edward Bedore, *Berean Bible Institute*
Pastor Ken Lyon, *Bitely Community Church*
Pastor Don Webb, *Day of Grace Ministries*
Pastor Dwight Reed, *Berean Church*

For additional information, please contact:
Pastor & Mrs. Ken Lyon at (231) 745-9595

HOW I STUDY THE BIBLE

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

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How many times have you heard your pastor exhort the congregation to “*study to shew thyself approved unto God*” (II Tim. 2:15)? But if you are a new believer, perhaps you are wondering what it *means* to *study* the Word of truth. And even if you are a seasoned Bible study veteran, perhaps you have wondered how a *pastor or Bible teacher* goes about studying God’s Word. Well, while I cannot speak for all pastors and Bible teachers, I thought I would share with you the approach I take when studying a passage of Scripture.

Preparing My Heart

My own personal process begins by sitting down at my desk and choosing a hymn from the online *Cyber Hymnal* to play quietly in the background while I work. As soon as the music begins, I am immediately relaxed and focused, much as when you go

to church and the music program prompts you to feel worshipful, and prepares your heart to receive God’s Word.

I’m then ready to pray. While I’m anxious to begin studying, I don’t rush through this precious time, choosing rather to enjoy a season of intimate time alone with my Father. Nor is this the extent of my prayer time, for while studying I often ask the Lord what He meant by what He said in His Word. To enjoy a running conversation with the Lord is just a *delightful* way to study the Word of truth, and I heartily recommend it!

Preparing My Mind

Of course, you are not ready to begin to *study* a passage of Scripture until you have *read* it! If you are not familiar with the passage you are studying, you will want to read it through many times, and the context as well.

This reminds me to mention that aside from your focus on any particular passage of Scripture, your spiritual life should be characterized by a regimen of *daily Bible reading*. Schedule planners are commonly available to help you read through the Bible in a year, and this is the very *least* that any serious Bible student will want to give to this crucially important first step to Bible study. The Apostle Paul told young Pastor Timothy to “*give attendance to reading*” (I Tim. 4:13), and who would doubt that uppermost in his mind was the reading of *the Word*.

Comparing Scripture with Scripture

The first reference book I consult is called *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*. When you look up a verse in TSK, it refers you to other verses of Scripture that will help you understand the verse you are studying. It has often been said that the best commentary on the Bible is *the Bible itself*, and if you believe as I do that this is so, then you will find this book to be *invaluable!* TSK is a sort of *concordance of ideas*. That is, it may refer you to another verse that contains none of the same *words* as the verse you are studying, but some of the same *thoughts*.

The Meaning of Words

After checking TSK’s cross-references—and sometimes cross-references for the cross-references!—I will look up key words in my text in an English dictionary. The word *prostitution*

is an excellent word, but it is not a word we use much these days, and a good dictionary will define it as *an appeasement* or *satisfaction*. God’s use of this word in Romans 3:25 then lets us know that God was *satisfied* with Christ’s payment for our sins (cf. Isa. 53:11).

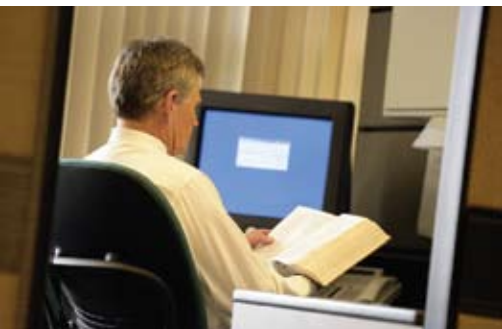
In addition to checking the dictionary for uncommon words, I am often surprised when I look up the meaning of even very familiar words. Once when I was asked what Hebrews 13:20 means when it says God “brought *again* from the dead our Lord Jesus,” I learned the first word Webster gives to define the word *again* is the word *back*. Thus rather than saying God raised Christ from the dead a second time, this verse is rather saying God raised Christ *back from the dead*, i.e., *back to life*.

The Bible’s Use of Words

Next in my study of God’s Word, I will often do what my computer Bible program calls a “Word Search.” This step is a computerized and more convenient way to look up key words in a concordance, to see how such words are used in other verses. Once while studying Colossians 2:2, a search for the word *knit* led me to Judges 20:11, where I compared Paul’s admonition to be “knit together *in love*” with being “knit together *as one man*.” Since the members of Christ’s body are “one new man” in Christ, learning to love one another will certainly knit us together!

It also helps to consider the context of other verses where your key word is found. While studying what it means to be “renewed in

knowledge” (Col. 3:10), we found the word *renew* in I Samuel 11:14, where the next verse says they renewed the kingdom *by making Saul king* (v. 15). Thus we can infer that our spiritual lives are renewed not just by knowledge, but by a knowledge of God’s Word coupled with a desire to make God our king *by obeying His Word!*



You can also enter more than one word in a computer Bible program’s Word Search, and it will give you every verse where those words appear together in one verse. For instance, if you are studying Hebrews 6:18 and enter the key words *fled* and *refuge*, you’ll be led to Numbers 35:25, 26, and 32, where you’ll learn that the cities in Israel where men guilty of manslaughter fled for refuge were types of how Hebrews had to *flee to Christ for refuge* after God reduced the charge against Israel from murder to manslaughter (Acts 3:17).¹

Now I am ready to do what my Bible program calls a “Phrase Search” for key *phrases* in my text. This feature will show every verse in the Bible where *an exact phrase* is found. Many years ago, while studying I Corinthians 15:29, a Phrase Search helped

me realize that Jews in Paul’s day were being “baptized for the dead” because they had been ceremonially “defiled for the dead” (Lev. 21:1).² Later while studying the “new heart” of Ezekiel 36:26, a Phrase Search led me to an insightful comparison with Ezekiel 18:31, the only other place where that exact phrase is used:

“Make you a new heart...” (Ezek. 18:31).

“A new heart also will I give you...” (Ezek. 36:26).

Here we see God demanding that His people *make themselves* a new heart under the Old Covenant, then graciously promising to *give them* a new heart under the New Covenant! I often use this as an example of how grace supplies what the flesh cannot achieve, even under the Law!

The Original Languages

Next, I like to check key Bible words to see from which Hebrew and Greek words they were translated. Then when it comes to *defining* these words in the Bible’s original languages, I never look to lexicons or Bible dictionaries. I personally believe all such dictionaries have a predisposition to define a word in accord with the writer’s doctrinal persuasion. So instead I again consult with my Bible program, which tells me the different ways a Greek or Hebrew word is translated in other verses. In this way, words in the Bible’s original languages are defined for me *by their context* rather than by a doctrinal agenda.

For example, someone once wrote me here at BBS to say that the word “for” in Acts 2:38 should

have been translated “because of,” and to verify his claim he provided several pages of documentation written by a noted Greek scholar. This scholar’s agenda, of course, was to prove that Peter did not require the Jews to be baptized to be saved, because that would not agree with his theology! I replied that I had dozens of Bible translations in my library, and not one of them rendered the verse as he suggested.

Pastor Stam used to say that this method gives *the Holy Spirit’s* use of words in the original languages. Using this method, when I looked up the Hebrew word for *atonement*, I learned that *kaphar* is sometimes translated *reconciliation, forgive, merciful, cleansed* and *pardon*. When you consider how this word is translated, and how it is used in the different contexts in which it appears, you begin to get an idea of the meaning of *atonement*.

Interestingly, the word *logizomai* is translated *counted, reckoned, and imputeth* in Romans 4:3-10. Frankly, this used to drive me crazy! I wondered why the translators didn’t translate the same word the same way every time. I now believe our KJV translators were actually *defining* Greek and Hebrew words for us, in the same way we define words. When you look up a word in the dictionary, what do you find? *Other words!* Thus I believe that *logizomai* should be defined as *counted, reckoned, and imputeth*, with the context deciding between the subtle differences in these words to determine which should be used in any given verse.³

Learning the various ways in which Hebrew and Greek words are translated can also lead to valuable Bible illustrations. For example, *kaphar* is also translated *pitch* in Genesis 6:14, illustrating how complete an atonement God made available in time past. One hole in the pitch of Noah’s ark would have condemned this faithful man to a watery grave, but one hole in his atonement would have condemned him to an even worse fate *beyond* the grave!

My study of the Greek word for *propitiation* in Romans 3:25 helped augment the understanding my English dictionary gave me. *Hilasterion* is translated *mercyseat* in Hebrews 9:5, and indicates that because God was satisfied with Christ’s payment for our sins, this allowed Him to be *merciful* to sinners. The verb form of this Greek word is used in Luke 18:13, where the publican prayed for God to “be merciful” to him. He was praying, in effect, “When you think of me, *think of the mercy seat.*” The verb form of this word is also used in Hebrews 2:17, where we learn that the reason God could be merciful to sinners is because Christ *made reconciliation* for their sins.

Comments from Commentaries

At this stage in my study of a Bible text, I will generally consult a few trustworthy Bible commentaries. While I own very few commentaries written from the perspective of God’s rightly divided Word, even non-grace works can often provide keen insight, or at the very least cause me to

consider God's words from angles I had not previously considered.

A Crucial Step

I am now ready for the next step in my Bible study, *meditation on God's Word*. The Bible often stresses the importance of meditation (Josh. 1:8; Psa. 1:2; 63:6; 119:15,23,48,78,97,148; I Tim. 4:15). There's just something about meditating on every word of Scripture, and allowing God's Spirit to work in the spirit of our mind. It is not without symbolic significance that, generally speaking, an animal that *ruminates* or "*cheweth the cud*" was considered a *clean* animal (Lev. 11:3). And so after I have filled my head with all of these studies, it is time to *ruminate* on what I have learned.



At the end of the week, I spend late Saturday afternoon mowing the lawn or doing some other work that busies my hands but frees my mind to *think about* what I have learned. My neighbors are

by now familiar with the puzzling sight of me sitting atop my lawn tractor with a clipboard in my hand as I jot down the many thoughts that such meditation produces. Some of my keenest insights into the Scriptures have come while meditating on the Word. I wonder if this is why, in Bible days, the rabbis who taught the Scriptures were also required to have a secular job which busied their hands but left their minds free to *meditate* (cf. Acts 18:1-3). Psalm 119:99 says,

"I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation."

Don't Malpractice What You Preach

My next Bible study tip for you as you strive for new light on God's Word is to *obey the light you already have*. Pastor Stam used to say that God will never give you new light on His Word unless you are living up to the light He has already given you. I wonder now if he based that on Genesis 11:31-12:1-7, where after God told Abram to leave his country and his father's house, He spoke to the patriarch no more *until he obeyed*. Of course, it is just as possible that Pastor Stam was thinking of the next verse in Psalm 119:

"I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts" (v. 100).

You'd think this verse would say the opposite, that we keep God's precepts because we understand them, but it rather says we understand God's Word *because we keep it*. Our good friend Doug Cox says that during his days at

the old *Milwaukee Bible Institute*, his professors cautioned him never to allow the study of God's Word to degenerate to a mere academic pursuit. Your study of the Word should always be motivated first and foremost by a desire to learn how God would have you to live. Only as you obey and stand for what you have learned can you expect God to bless you with additional light.

Preach What You've Learned

The final step in my Bible study process is best illustrated in the story of a college student who was struggling academically, so he asked one of his professors if he thought he needed a tutor. The professor wisely replied, "You don't need another *teacher*, what you need is a *student*. You need someone that *you* have to teach." It is a

"...this method gives the Holy Spirit's use of words..."




well-known axiom of teaching that the teacher always learns more than the students. That's because he has to understand the material well enough to teach it to others. I can personally testify that nothing drives me to seek to understand God's Word like knowing that on Sunday I'll be standing up in front of a group of people whose hearts *hunger* to understand the revelation of God. Becoming a teacher, even a teacher of just one

other believer, initiates you into the cycle of blessing described in II Timothy 2:2 (cf. Psa. 78:1-8).

Ask For Help

Like you, there are times when I am absolutely stumped as to the meaning of a verse of Scripture. At such times I will sometimes call Pastor Paul Sadler, my fellow laborer in the Lord here at *Berean Bible Society*, or Dave Stewart, my fellow laborer in the Lord at the local church where I pastor. "Pastors and teachers" were given "for the perfecting of the saints" (Eph. 4:11,12), and not to avail ourselves of their help is to ignore a gift from God.

What Are You Waiting For?

I'd like to close by encouraging all budding Bible students to compare these suggestions to what other pastors and teachers might suggest, and try all that is suggested to see what you find most helpful. One thing is for sure, there is no wrong way to spend time with the only Book that God has given to man. With that in mind, the best advice I can give each of you is to *get started today!* Your life, and the lives of all those around you, will be eternally the better for it. 

Endnotes

1. See *Murder, Manslaughter and the Mystery* in Pastor C. R. Stam's book *Satan in Derision*.
2. See our article on this difficult verse in the April, 2011 *Searchlight*.
3. Our KJV translators were also exercising good writing skills. Pastor Stam taught me years ago that it is *boring* to use the same word over and over, and that a thesaurus is a writer's best friend.

Question Box

“What about foot-washing (John 13:1-17)?”

The text you cite has prompted several Christian denominations to practice foot-washing as a religious ceremonial rite. We feel the Lord was merely teaching the apostles a lesson about *humility*, a lesson they sorely needed (Lk. 9:46; 22:24).

In Bible days, feet that walked in sandals on dusty ground needed washing when they arrived at their destination (Gen. 19:2; 24:32). This humble task was often rendered by a servant (Gen. 18:4) or those willing to serve as a servant (Lk. 7:38; I Tim. 5:10). Proud men would of course refuse to wash a man's feet (Lk. 7:44), and since this was sadly true of the apostles, the Lord washed *their* feet as “an example” (John 13:15) of humility.

This word *example* is important. The *Mona Lisa* is an example of Renaissance art, but this does not mean all Renaissance art is characterized by portraits of women. It rather means that the *Mona Lisa* has the same *spirit* of other works of that era. Thus the Lord washed the apostles' feet to *exemplify* how they should treat others in the same *spirit of humility*. While washing a man's feet exemplified this spirit well in Bible days, paved walks and leather shoes have rendered this particular example of humility obsolete. Today, guests are shown the same humble spirit with a beverage, a meal, and other gestures. We feel those who insist on practicing the *exact* example of humility the Lord gave are emphasizing symbolism over substance. They sometimes ask why we observe the Lord's Supper but not foot washing, but the former is never said to be *an example* of what to do. Paul rather says, “*This* do” (I Cor. 11:24,25).

Finally, there is a doctrinal significance to this ceremony that renders it exclusive to Israel. God promised Israel they'd be a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:6), and priests had to be washed in an initial baptism ceremony to initiate them into the priesthood (Ex. 29:4). Later they had to wash their hands and feet as part of their daily service (Ex. 30:19-21). When John preached that the kingdom was “at hand” (Mt. 3:2), he meant the kingdom in which Israel would be a kingdom of priests, so he baptized them to initiate them into the priesthood. In John 13, the time for the twelve to minister to the world as priests was drawing nigh, so the Lord washed their feet so they could function as priests (cf. John 13:6-10).

—Pastor Kurth



BBS Letter Excerpts

From our Inbox:

“This has helped me so much in my walk with Jesus Christ. I appreciate it, Team Berean!”

From Minnesota:

“Oftentimes I do not agree, but more often I agree!”

From California:

“I’m thankful for your messages and the plain doctrine. Your *Searchlight* is my only mail since my family left me.”

From Kansas:

“Thank you for putting special emphasis on [the Scriptures], that our earthly state might better reflect our heavenly position.” (That’s what it’s all about!—Ed).

From our Inbox:

“I am so glad for the daily devotionals. It has changed my life so much. It has made me committed to God’s principles of His teachings.”

From Facebook:

“I’m reading *Man, His Nature and Destiny*, and I got to say that this is in my top three favorite books you guys got. What a blessing this is.”

From Illinois:

“I liked your article about baptism for the dead quite a lot. Ripping good stuff. I really believe you’ve cracked the code cleanly and wide open. This should be published and taught everywhere: Oxford, Cambridge...”

From California:

“Your December issue touched me. There were two articles that struck a chord with me, one being *Freedom from Loneliness* by John Frederickson....The last article, *A Harsh Wind or A Gentle Breeze* by Dave Stewart, also rings very true with many here in prison.”

From Florida:

“I read your article...‘Are You Secure?’ What you said about eternal security actually blew me away. I’ve always thought you could lose your salvation. But after reading your article, I was amazed, because it made perfect sense. I never looked at salvation the way you presented it, and I now feel more secure in my salvation, and all the fear is gone, along with the confusing emotional baggage that comes with it.” (Check that baggage! Welcome aboard!—Ed).

From California:

“I’m guilty of taking the *Searchlight* for granted. I didn’t even think about who was paying for it. Thanks for your gentle reminder. I hope a lot of people will feel the same way I do and start sharing the expenses.”

From Alabama:

“We have used *Growing Up in Grace* at *Forest Park Bible Church*. I think the kids learned a lot.”

From Facebook:

“Thank God for BBS. Where would we be without them?”



Letter Excerpt *Extra*

From South Africa:

“I would like to testify. About twenty-eight years ago, somebody in a charismatic coffee bar told me I was going to Hell even though I loved Jesus because I wasn’t showing the signs of Mark 16:17. I then asked my minister why our church doesn’t show these signs. He could not answer. As I was very worried, I asked Jesus in prayer to take full responsibility of my crises, as I am not an academic person, and I do not know the Bible well enough to get the right answers. For many years thereafter I went to church as a deacon, knowing there was something I was missing or didn’t understand in the Bible. I hoped I would get to heaven by belonging to a church and by being a good person.

“After my brother joined a motorcycle ministry about five years ago, I joined him at their cell group meetings. The leader, who was charismatic, asked me why my church baptized babies in water. For answers, my brother searched the internet and found the website of the *Berean Bible Society*. In studying with the Bereans, rightly divided, the spirit of God opened my blind eyes and gave me an entirely new view of the Word of God. My ignorance of II Timothy 2:15 was evident. With the help of BBS, God has answered my question of many years ago.”

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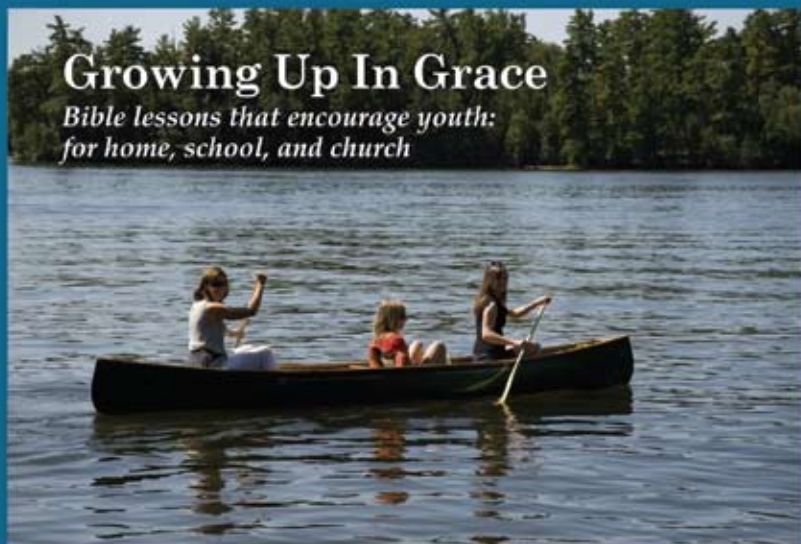
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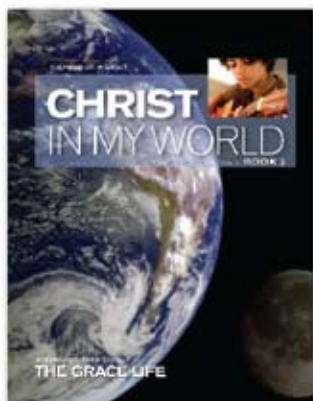
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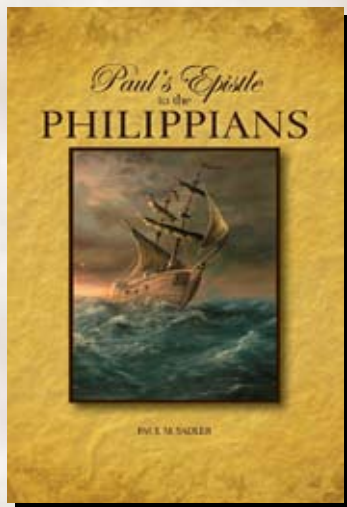
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News and Announcements

Ministry Opportunity: After many years of faithful service, health issues have prompted our dear brother Sam Castrova to reluctantly release the reins of our *Lending Library*. If you think you can give this ministry the same prompt and meticulous attention that Sam gave it, we'd like to hear from you. Since the recorded messages are already duplicated, this ministry consists mostly of packaging and mailing CDs, and can be conducted from anywhere there is a Post Office. This is a volunteer position, but BBS pays all of the expenses. If you'd like to be a part of getting God's rightly divided Word to Bible students across the nation, we'll be pleased to consider you for this valued position.

New and Improved Index! BBS Webmaster Richard Church has made dramatic improvements to our online *Searchlight Scripture Index*. Now when you search for a Scripture reference, you need only click on the link that appears to be taken right to the page where that verse or chapter of Scripture is referenced. Now the user-friendly index provided by our good friend Roger Newell is now even friendlier!

Mid-Atlantic Fall Grace Bible Conference: *White Sulfur Springs* in Mann's Choice, Pennsylvania, will again host this year's conference, but this time in their brand-new thirteen million dollar facility! Keynote Speaker Paul M. Sadler will be looking for you as he shares the riches of God's grace with the many hungry hearts that attend this joyful annual event. If you have questions about this September 9-11 conference, conference host Suzanne Potter has answers: (304) 263-2411.

European Grace Believers Unite! European grace believers looking for grace fellowship can find it by getting in touch with our good friend Rob van der Zee in Spain at info@badnewsgoodnews.net.

Our cover this month features a photo taken by Ken and Barb Wardius, a couple who travel extensively in search of unique photo opportunities. You can view some of their impressive gallery of photographs and e-mail them with any questions at their website: www.crestwoodcreek.com.



The *Seul Choix Point Lighthouse* is located in Schoolcraft County, Michigan. This location is the only harbor of refuge along a long and dangerous stretch of coast. The translation of the French name is "only choice," as it was used as a refuge by early French traders in this area.

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“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is
a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34).

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