

The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

August 2001



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Editor: Paul M. Sadler

Composition and Layout: Kevin J. Sadler

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

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

Internet: <www.bereanbiblesociety.org>

E-mail: <berean@execpc.com>

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“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.... But now are they many members, yet but one body?... Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (I Cor. 12:12, 20, 27).

Dear Ones in Christ,

Do you ever stop to think about this term that we use so often, the “Body of Christ?” Do you ever just rest a minute or two and reflect on what it means to be a member of the Body of Christ?

Sometimes we rush through life so fast that we do not slow down long enough to remember and be thankful for all that we have in Christ. We are accepted in the Beloved. We are complete in Him. We are safe, sealed, and secure. We have a Blessed Hope. We have peace with God. We have assurance and confidence in what we believe because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We have a hope and perspective that goes beyond this present world system.

We serve a risen, glorified Savior. It was this same Lord Jesus Christ who appeared to Saul of Tarsus two thousand years ago and confronted, converted, and changed him into the Apostle Paul. Like Moses is to Israel, Paul is the spokesperson from God to the Gentiles. It was through him that God revealed these blessed truths related to the Body of Christ.

But, while we rejoice in this Body truth given to us, let us always remember that God has never revealed truth just for the sake of revealing it. Truth is meant to change us—to bring us into a closer relationship to Him. Truth is not meant to puff up, but to build up.

In light of this, we should consider what it means to be the Body of Christ. Perhaps it should be obvious, but let us remember that we are the body, not the head. The Head of the Body is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The fact that He is the Head has implications. The head is supposed to control the body. The body is supposed to take its direction and be obedient to the head. The head is supposed to call the shots, not the body. And, just like our natural body, the Body of Christ works much better when it’s properly coordinated.

This is our goal here at BBS—to get you “coordinated with Christ” by proclaiming the truth of God’s Word regarding the revelation of the mystery as revealed through the Apostle Paul.

Your Fellow Member,

David Havard

From Georgia:

"I really enjoy the *Searchlight*. It is like water in the middle of the desert. Our pastor just did a series on the pre-wrath rapture, so I have been trying to study this topic. I feel your book, 'Preparing Ourselves for the Rapture' will be very helpful....Thank you for your faithfulness in sharing the Word of God."

From Colorado:

"I've recently read Pastor Sadler's book on *Ephesians* and Pastor Stam's book on *Paul*. I thank you both for your insights and inspiration. I now know Paul and the vastness of God's grace like never before. I understand how he could rejoice through all his persecutions and trials. I understand...what joy."

From Massachusetts:

"Thanks for your ministry. Your monthly articles help me to understand God's plan and purpose from all eternity."

From Florida:

"I am currently receiving the *Berean Searchlight* every month. I am truly blessed to be on your mailing list and greatly appreciate it. My eyes have been opened to a whole new study of God's Word, and my walk with Christ has been strengthened tremendously. I am wondering if you could put my friend on your mailing list."

From Illinois:

"I have understood the Grace message since I was a teenager and am thankful to those who make it known. Pastor Stam came to our one room schoolhouse that served as our church many years ago and brought the good news of the mystery of God's grace. He has been a faithful servant these many years. I'm thankful the good news keeps going out."

From the Internet:

"Just wanted to let you know how much my wife and I appreciated your seminar in Seattle, WA and being able to meet you in person for the first time."

From Florida:

"When I first heard of this view, I'll have to admit that I rejected it out of hand. However! After serious prayer and many patient nights of study (on Terry Nida's part), I finally had my eyes opened. WOW!! What a difference it makes to rightly the Word of Truth. I naturally have some questions, one of which is when the Kingdom program ended, did those saved under that economy have to be re-visited and re-evangelized by the Apostle Paul? When exactly did the Apostle Peter's message finally cease? Other than these questions, a mid-Acts dispensation cures more problems than it creates. I'd like to become more familiar with this subject."

From Indiana:

"Thank you so much for sending the *Berean Searchlight* each month. It is a blessing!"

From Colorado:

"I want to say how blessed I have been by Pastor Stam's book on Galatians. It has really helped give me a deeper understanding of our Lord's Word. I have read the whole thing in just 8 days and now I'm ready to go back and really go slowly through it."

From New Jersey:

"I appreciate so much receiving the *Searchlight*. Keep up the good work."

From Michigan:

"I am making some good headway, at least I like to think I am, with Mr. Stam's book, *Things That Differ*. I'm so in love with the truth, rightly divided, that I'm handing out Stam's book like tracts and I'm happy to report that I have at least one leader in the Christian Reform Church asking his church some serious questions pertaining to their doctrines....I can't say enough about your latest series, *The Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter*. I'm so glad that someone is finally responding to the *General Epistles* and their place dispensationally."

From the Internet:

"I have been reading the *Berean Searchlight* for several years and have thoroughly enjoyed it. I can't adequately express how you have helped me to deal with many things that I had been struggling with regarding grace and rightly dividing the Word. I have taken tremendous leaps in understanding and am continuing to grow."

From Iowa:

"Just want you to know I do appreciate my *Searchlight*. Here is a little gift to help in publishing it. Thanks very much."

From Michigan:

"I thought maybe it is time I dropped a donation your way. I have learned a lot from you. When I was young and searching, a friend loaned me a copy of *Things That Differ*; that was the big turning point for me. It also made the Word of God make some sense and made things finally all fit together like it should and got me to settle down and get some direction in my life. Thanks."

From Oklahoma:

"In all of my 82 years...growing up around Bible believers...trusting the Lord in my 20th year...a 60 1/2 year marriage to a wonderful man that is at home with the Lord...*how* did I miss *Berean Bible Society*? But, thanks to a friend that sent my name in to you, I am enjoying the works of others that see things the way that has been revealed to me. Studying God's Word **is** the most important part of my life, now that I am alone. It has...afforded me the most joy, the *deep down* joy and peace that only He can give."

From Montana:

"Really appreciate the *Berean Searchlight*. I like the 'Question Box' and have been enjoying *The Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter*."

From Colorado:

"First of all I want you to know how thoroughly I have both enjoyed and *appreciated* your series on the Apostle Peter. The content is so very *enlightening*. Perhaps you already have in mind publishing it in book form."

From Pennsylvania:

"Enclosed is \$.... to help with your ministry. We are glad that the grace ministry can be heard and read in your pamphlets. Keep up the good work."

From Illinois:

"Enclosed is my contribution for March. I really enjoy the *Berean Searchlight* that I have been receiving for many years. I thank our Lord for all of you who have a part in it. The messages are truly a blessing."

From Florida:

"Please accept this gift in memory of Pastor J. C. O'Hair. His writings are priceless as they abound in wisdom of the Holy Spirit. We do appreciate the *Searchlight* and the ministry of *BBS*... When we heard Pastor Stam on the radio in St. Pete., there was a spiritual battle in our home between Satan and the grace and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the revelation of Jesus Christ to the Apostle Paul. That was 46 years ago....The Lord bless you and make His light shine even more brightly...."

From New York:

"I am enclosing my offering for April. I pray God will bless each one at *BBS* as the Word goes out. The printed matter can be read and reread and passed on."

From Washington:

"Thank you for the *Berean Searchlight*. We have been receiving it for about a year and enjoy reading and studying the Word, rightly divided. Thank you for your labors in the work."

"These [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." —Acts 17:11

THE FOOTSTEPS OF PAUL



The *Berean Bible Society* Board of Directors is organizing a tour next spring (May 19-30, 2002) retracing the footsteps of the Apostle Paul. We will be visiting Thessalonica, Berea, Philippi, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, and

many other cities where the apostle preached and established local assemblies.

In addition to having a Christian tour guide explaining the historical significance of each city, Pastor Sadler will be preaching the gospel of the grace of God. Can you imagine what it'd be like to be standing at the ruins of Diana's temple as you hear Paul's gospel expounded? It is sure to be:

Educational

Spiritually Enriching

Life Changing



The *package price* of the tour includes airfares, hotel accommodations, shuttle service, two meals per day, visas, custom fees, entrance fees, taxes, gratuities etc. For brochures and additional information, please contact Robin Cady at the *Wilcox World Travel & Tours* (828) 254-0746 and our tour leaders: Pastor & Mrs. Curt Crist (828) 693-5812. Plan to join us for this exciting journey to where the *heavenly ministry* of Christ turned the world upside down, or should we say, "Right side up!"

THE REAL THING

"When the world sees authentic love, reconciling people with incredible differences through Jesus Christ, revival always comes."

—Ron Lee Davis (quoted in *Pulpit Helps*, Oct. 2000)

Sense and Nonsense

By David M. Havard



“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

It is amazing to me how some theologians can get things so mixed up—how they can take something simple and make it complex. As one old-timer puts it, “Some people are educated beyond their intelligence.”

The Bible is God’s revelation to man. The word “revelation” means that the purpose of the Bible is to reveal God to us. This reflects God’s intention that His Word be understood by *everyone*, not just the scholar. It should be no wonder then, that Paul’s epistles were not given to the church in classical Greek; rather, they were recorded for us in Koine Greek—what we might call the working man’s language. The untrained person in the pew with a little common sense often does better at understanding the Bible than the trained theologian (so-called).

There are a number of strange doctrines circulating within the Grace Movement that do not pass the “common sense” test. Christians, who for years thought they understood what the Bible clearly says,

are now confused because certain folks have come into their assembly and told them that the Bible doesn’t really mean what it says.

Of course, the irony of this is that understanding Paul’s gospel is built upon letting the Bible mean what it says to whom it is written. To abandon the old adage of “when common sense makes sense, seek no other sense” is folly indeed.

SHOULD YOU FIRE YOUR PASTOR?

An ongoing example of this type of reasoning is the teaching that the gift of pastor-teacher is not for today. Though I’m sure that I will be accused of over-simplifying their argument, it goes something like this: In Ephesians 4:13 we read that the gift of pastor-teacher will be “till we come...unto a perfect man.” Then we are taken to Colossians 1:25 where we read that Paul was given the job of fulfilling the Word of God. Next, we are told that the word “perfect” in Ephesians 4:13 means “complete,” and since the Word of God was fulfilled or completed by Paul, the church is now a “perfect man.” Therefore, they conclude, we no longer need the gift of pastor-teacher because the Word of God is completed. All we need now is to read the Word of God.

You may initially believe their fast talk. But you need to keep them within the context. It is always dangerous to do a word study and then try to force fit that one meaning of the word into every context. Context is always king! It is true that the word *teleios*, rendered “perfect” in Ephesians 4:13 may be

translated as complete. It may also be translated as “mature.” For example, in 1 Corinthians 13:10, *teleios* is better translated as “complete” because that best fits the context.

Do we believe that the Word of God was completed or fulfilled by Paul? Absolutely! But is it good hermeneutics to say that “a perfect man” in Ephesians 4:13 is referring to the perfected Body of Christ because the Scriptures are completed? I don’t think so!

Let us look at Ephesians 4:13 in its context and see what it says as to the purpose and duration of the gifts to the Body of Christ.

Now the completion of the Word of God does have an impact on the duration on the first two of these gifted men given to the church. The gifts of apostle and prophet have passed away upon the completion of the Word of God—specifically the revelation of the mystery given to Paul.¹ However, it does not follow that just because the gifts of apostle and prophet have passed away, that the gifts of evangelist and pastor-teacher have also passed away.

To back that up, let us first look at the *purpose* of these gifts given to the Body of Christ. Ephesians 4:12 gives us a progressive set of reasons for these gifts. The first reason given (denoted by the word “for” in our Bible) is the perfecting of the saints. The word for perfecting here is *katartizo* and it has the idea of “to equip for service.” The pastor is to be equipping us for the work of the ministry. This work of the ministry that we (the ENTIRE Body of Christ) are to be doing is supposed to result in the edification or building up of the Body of Christ. This is similar to what Paul says in verse 16 where he talks about “every joint” doing its part

which “maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” So then, the purpose of these gifts to the church is so that the saints will be equipped for the work of the ministry, which will result in the church building itself up in love.

Now, the next question to be answered is, “How long is this supposed to take place?” Some tell us that this only takes place until the completion of the canon of Scripture. Does that mean that these gifts stopped when Paul stopped writing? Or does it mean that they did not cease until the church had settled the issue of canonicity many years later?

In addition, even if it was logical to connect the cessation of the gift of pastor with the completion of the Scriptures (which is isn’t), it would still not hold true because the selected phrase “unto a perfect man” is only one of four statements in verse 13.

Verse 13 starts with the word “til”—these gifts will be operational until we ALL come into:

- 1) The unity of the faith
- 2) The knowledge of the Son of God
- 3) Unto a perfect man
- 4) Unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ

We, the Body of Christ, need to reach unity in doctrine—unity of *the faith*, the body of truth committed to the Apostle Paul. Look around and it quickly becomes obvious that this condition has not been met. Even within a local church this is not true, not to mention how it is not true in the confused and divided church at large.

Do we have full, precise, and correct knowledge of the Son of God? Would anyone dare to claim this? Paul did not. In Philippians he said

that this was his desire, not something that he had already attained (Phil. 3:10).

Are we fully mature—have we attained unto a perfect man? Well, if we have, then we dare claim what Paul himself did not dare to claim because we read in Philippians 3:12, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.” He did not claim to be perfected. Are we better than he? Apparently, some think so.

The fourth condition is arriving to the “measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Wow! Who can honestly say that he is at this point in his Christian life? This is speaking of no less than being in the image of Christ. While we are certainly predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ, I have yet to meet anyone who has indeed done so this side of glory.

The gift of pastor-teacher will be in effect until ALL of the conditions in verse 13 are met, and a “perfect man” is only *one* of them. Surely you can see that these conditions will never be fully realized this side of heaven. The gift of pastor-teacher will be here until the rapture!

In addition, this teaching fails the reality test. Church history does not back up these claims. In every dispensation, God has worked through His chosen vessels. To say that all you need is your Bible and your intellect disregards the teachings of Christ regarding the purpose of the Body of Christ. Just having the Bible and your brain will not make you a mature Christian. You cannot eliminate the work of the Holy Spirit (yes, He is still active today!—but that’s a whole other article) and the

Body of Christ in your spiritual development. Knowledge is essential, but knowledge, of itself, only puffs up. As Paul tells the Corinthians, “we all have knowledge” (1 Cor. 8:1) and the implication is “So what?” What counts, Paul says, is not knowledge per se, but faith working itself out through love (Gal. 5:6).

IS IT WRONG TO PRAY?

Another, and perhaps the most disturbing example of misguided theology, is the notion that God is only interested in spiritual things today. According to some, He is neither interested nor involved in anything physical today. This means, they say, that we should pray only for “spiritual” things. In their view, God is not interested in anything having to do with physical needs or wants. He will not intervene, so don’t waste your time praying about such things. To back up their argument, they go to verses where Paul is praying for spiritual knowledge and wisdom for the saints.

Let’s look at a few of these verses. One such verse is Colossians 1:9, “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” See, they say, this shows that you should only pray for spiritual things like being filled with the knowledge of God’s will (which they say means knowing the mystery).

But remember context? Don’t let them stop with verse 9. Go on and read verse 10, because it shows us the *reason* that Paul made the prayer request: “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.” The *purpose* for praying for

“If God is not involved in physical things today, if He does not answer prayer today, if He is disinterested in what is going on in the world today, then why bother—we may as well be atheists.”

the knowledge of God’s will is so that we can *walk worthy* of the Lord, being *fruitful in every good work*. This is intensely practical! This deals with the practical business of living out our Christian life in the real (physical) world on a day to day basis.

Another verse is 1 Thessalonians 5:23 which reads, “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.” Is this physical or spiritual? Why would Paul pray that we be “blameless” unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ? Aren’t we already complete in Christ and accepted in the beloved (Col. 2:10; Eph. 1:6)? Aren’t we free from judgment (Rom. 8:33)? So, if we are already blameless spiritually because of our position in Christ, what is Paul talking about here? Well, just like Colossians 1:9-10, he is talking about our walk. We need to be walking worthy of our calling in Christ. It is the things done in the body that will be judged at the Bema Seat of Christ—spiritual consequences for physical actions!

What is conveniently left out are all the verses where Paul DOES pray for physical things. Perhaps one of the first verses to come to mind is Philippians 4:6 where we are told to pray about “everything.” Some

will tell us that “everything” means only spiritual things. But is this true? Does it fit the context? Well, even in Greek, all means “all.” And that is the word that is used here (*pas*). In addition, in Philippians 4:10-20, Paul is talking about physical things, not just spiritual things. In verses 10-13 he talks about having abundance and suffering need. If there is any doubt that this is referring to physical things, his talking about learning “to be full and to be hungry” in verse 12 and “necessities” in verse 16 should remove any doubt. Also, in Philippians 1:19, Paul expresses his confidence that their prayers will result in his deliverance from prison.

DOES ALL REALLY MEAN ALL?

This erroneous idea that God is only interested in spiritual things has other ramifications as well. In addition to robbing dear believers of their intimacy with the Lord through prayer, this teaching also removes any sense of comfort that we get from knowing that God is sovereign over what happens in our lives.

A prime example of this is found in Romans 8:28. For centuries, Christians have found comfort in this verse which tell us that all things work together for good to those who love God, who are the called according to His purpose. “Oh,” this wise one tells us, “Surely you know that all doesn’t really mean all. That verse only refers to spiritual things. Only spiritual things are working together for good.”

Thankfully, I can tell you that such talk is not true. Again, even in the Greek, all means ALL! It’s that same word *pas* again. It is the context that will determine what “all” is referring to here. So, based

on the context of Romans 8:28, does all literally mean all, or does all refer only to spiritual things?

Context includes both the verses before and the verses after. To get the preceding context, look at Romans 8:18. Sufferings here obviously refers to physical sufferings, otherwise, what he is saying makes no sense.

For the following context, look at Romans 8:31-39. In verse 35, Paul is undeniably talking about physical things—tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword. Then notice what he says in verse 37, “In all these things we are more than conquerors though Him who loved us.” What things? Those physical things just mentioned previously. When you keep Romans 8:28 in its context, it is clear that all really does mean all—spiritual AND physical!

In addition to the Biblical proof that we are to pray about physical things, the dispensation of grace has many examples of godly men and women who had prayer answered regarding physical things (William Carey comes readily to mind). I have clearly had prayer answered in my own life. It is not just coincidence. God is still sovereign. He can still choose to work through circumstances and other believers to answer our prayers. He still can give us inner peace or not as we listen to His “still, small voice” as He speaks to our heart.

If God is not involved in physical things today, if He does not answer prayer today, if He is disinterested in what is going on in the world today, then why bother—we may as well be atheists. For all practical purposes, this teaching is the same as Deism or Gnosticism.

God does want to hear from His children. We have a *personal*


relationship with Him through our Lord Jesus Christ. This is why we can approach Him and call Him “Abba, Father” (Rom. 8:15)—a term of close endearment. And, like a father, God wants to hear about whatever it is that is concerning us.

CONCLUSION

Paul wrote often about Judaizers who came into the church and tried to rob the believers of their joy. These instigators tried to remove them from the simplicity they had in Christ. They tried to put them under the bondage of the law.

Unfortunately, the same types of people are in the church today. You find them stirring up trouble and causing believers to doubt things which they should not be doubting and causing them to stumble in their walk with the Lord.

Paul also says that the reason for such troublemakers is their desire to create a following after themselves (Acts 20:30). They desire to put you into bondage—only in this case it is not the Mosaic Law, but their elitist and misguided interpretation of the Scriptures.

What then is to be our response? I can think of no better admonition than that of our Apostle Paul who said, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. 5:1). 

Endnote

1. It is only tradition that dates the writing of the book of Revelation around 90-95 ad. I believe that Paul was the last writer of the New Testament. I believe that the internal evidence (not tradition) indicates that the kingdom writings of the New Testament (Matthew-Luke, the General Epistles, and Revelation) were all written before 70 a.d. and the destruction of the temple.

Question Box

“Why do you believe and teach that in Paul’s writings alone is the doctrine for the Church when Paul said all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, etc.? Thanks.”

“I would like a better understanding of the relationship we have to the non-Pauline books. I have read or heard that “not all in the Bible is written to us or about us,” but I need more information than this.”

Our relationship to non-Pauline books is sometimes debated within grace circles. As with so many other issues, it is important to have balance.

On one extreme, we have those who believe that all the Bible is applied equally to us today (they point out that in 2 Timothy 3:16 Paul says that all Scripture is profitable for “doctrine”). On the other extreme, we have those who believe that we should only read Paul’s epistles (this group has contributed to the comment of “you guys are the cult that believes that only Paul’s epistles are inspired”). The answer to both extremes is found in 2 Timothy 3:16.

To the first group we point out that the word translated “doctrine” in the KJV is from the Greek word “*didaskalian*” and is perhaps better translated as “teaching.” This does not contradict our premise. Paul was never shy about pointing to Old Testament examples to teach the Body of Christ certain principles (1 Cor. 10:5,6; Rom. 15:4). We should read ALL of the Bible and learn lessons and application about God’s character and how He wants man to relate to Him.

The basic nature of God and the basic nature of man has not changed. In all dispensations, God wants true worship and holiness from His people. We can gain insight and application from all of the Bible, yet we need to be careful to base our understanding of salvational and prophetic doctrines on Paul’s epistles alone.

When we say that we should get our “doctrine” from Paul’s epistles alone, we are referring to his proclamation that he is the apostle to the Gentiles. By doctrine, we generally mean that we get our understanding of how we are saved, how we are kept saved, and our future hope and position from his epistles as opposed to the books written to the Jews.

In other words, what has changed in our dispensation as compared to that of the kingdom? What is different for us as compared to Israel? The two main things that are different are the terms of our salvation and our future hope. We are saved by faith alone, not faith plus works (the works alone did not save them; it is incorrect to say that anyone is ever saved by works). Our future hope is the heavenlies, not the earthly kingdom. Of course, the connecting link between all of this is the Lord Jesus Christ.

When we read non-Pauline books, we are to look for those principles or truths that are true regardless of the dispensation. For example, in Matthew we can draw many contrasts between the kingdom and the Body of Christ. Yet there are also many principles that we can apply to us today. The Pharisees were denounced for their hypocritical attitude, for judging

(Continued on page 14)

Jeremy Clark serves as a youth minister to about 30 students at the local church where he and his wife Andrea attend in Huntington, Indiana. Brother Clark came to see the grace message two years ago and continues to enjoy and study more about it. He has a private law practice and also serves as deputy prosecutor for Huntington County. —Ed.

Gracious Youth Ministry

By Jeremy Clark

Those us of us in ministry positions who know and understand the grace message appreciate the freedom and peace it brings to our mind and spirit. We have seen the excitement in others when they first understood the exceptional nature of Paul's gospel (Rom. 16:25). Next to seeing a lost soul come into a saving knowledge of Jesus, watching the light come on as a Christian realizes that he or she does not have to ignore the "contradictions" in God's Word is a joyous occasion. We who minister, imitating Paul as he imitates Christ (1 Cor. 11:1), desire and long to teach the precepts of the gospel of grace. But isn't there more?

For the past two years, I have served as a part-time youth minister as one who understands the mystery (Col. 1:24-26) as you do. I have spent hours instructing students and adults alike in the gospel of grace so that I might "commit these [teachings] to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). For a moment, enter the mind of today's student and ask yourself how you would like to be in my youth group. No doubt you are eager to sit and listen to some guy talk about the Pauline revelation as compared to the dispensation of the law and the reinstatement of the Kingdom program that God put on hold due to Israel's rejection of her King. I can sense the yawns.

I want to back up one verse and share with you a secret, if you will, that I learned early on as I began my ministry to students. While the following principle certainly applies to youth ministry, it also applies to anyone who ministers in the Church. Paul urges Timothy (a young pastor himself) to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:1). We understand what grace is all about. We understand that we have been given the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8). The question for us who minister, and especially to today's students, is how do we minister BY grace instead of ministering ABOUT grace. We want to be strong in grace both in word and in DEED.


To understand ministering by grace, you must understand what it means to minister without grace. Legalism is the practical antithesis of grace. Bondage to laws (especially man-made ones—Col. 2:20-22) is the opposite of living the life of grace. Likewise, a ministry bound to a ministry "formula", bound to an unalterable schedule, bound to man-made ideas of what youth ministry is all about is ministry by legalism. How many of us treat ministry like a job with a checklist of items we have to accomplish in order to "feel" that we have had a successful week? The world has taught us to treat a job in this manner. Consider the consequences of running

your ministry this way: Because you have written ten notes to students, you have led a Bible study and a Sunday school class, you spent time talking to a parent, and then prayed in front of the congregation during the worship hour, you feel as if you have done enough to meet your job requirements for the week and become proud of your accomplishment. During other weeks, you do not feel as if you have done enough and then are overcome with guilt since you have not checked off enough items from your list. The consequence of ministry by legalism is either pride or guilt. Neither is fruitful.

I often tell my students that if they want to know how to live the Christian life to its utmost and fullest, then they must constantly ask themselves what it is that they can do to bear fruit for God (Rom. 7:4). What things can they do that will please God? (Eph. 5:8-11). Think about the following absurd example: How would your mom feel if you told her one day that you love her, and to show her that you love her you are not going to beat her. You go on to tell her that the reason you are not going to beat her is that it is against the law. Do you think that she would sense that she is loved? Probably not. Most people refrain from beating their moms because they love them first and as a consequence of

their acts of love they fulfill the law (Rom. 13:8-10). Likewise, we know that God does not want us to serve him legalistically since it shows no love towards Him, but only increases our pride. He wants us to find out what pleases Him and to do those things (Eph. 5:10).

If you are weak in grace as a minister, how will you conduct yourself? Instead of finding out how you can help to bring forth fruit in the lives of your students and others with every act of service, you will attempt to accomplish certain tasks and objectives that will make you feel good and take away any sense of guilt. Notes, Bible studies, Sunday school, talking to parents, and praying are all great things. However, ask yourself if you are doing them because they are the most effective ways to bear fruit in your ministry or because you are ministering by legalism.

The great thing about students is that they do not want to be part of a legalistic ministry. They want someone who is real and genuinely cares about them. Students know when we are not strong in grace and when we are ministering out of a sense of self-imposed obligation, pride, and legalism. They know when we are being real. Besides, ministry by grace is a whole lot more fulfilling, meaningful, and fun! 

(Continued from page 12)

others, for trusting in religion and outward forms and not in Christ. We read about the need for commitment to Christ and for putting the things of God first. In non-Pauline books we still read about the need for holiness and sincerity before God.

With non-Pauline books, we start with the understanding that if it is speaking about how a person is saved, kept saved, or their future hope, we basically disregard that because we know it is speaking about a different dispensation. But, if it is talking about how we are to live regarding holiness toward God or our relationship with believers or before the world, we should try to take it to heart by way of application.

—Pastor Havard

The Prayer of Jabez, Its Principle, and Paul (Cont.)

By Pastor Rollin E. Wilson

III. POINT #3 OF JABEZ'S PRAYER

"...and that thine hand might be with me..." 1 Chronicles 4:10.

This part of Jabez's prayer is said to demonstrate the idea of dependence upon God, His power and presence, according to author Bruce Wilkinson. He suggests that often in a given endeavor for God the believer eventually comes to the place where he realizes his abilities and resources have worn thin and spiritual panic sets in:

"Maybe the new ministry opportunities you prayed for and received are turning out to require a person with much more ability than you will ever have.

"You have taken up an armload of God's blessings, marched into new territory...and stumbled into overwhelming circumstances. When believers find themselves in this kind of unexpected quandary, they often feel afraid. Misled. Abandoned. A little angry. I did..."¹

This feeling of inadequacy is what one is supposed to experience, Wilkinson found out, and therefore cites this as the reason why Jabez asked for *God's hand* now upon him. And, in his book, this becomes the title of chapter four: *The Touch of Greatness*.

Just what is this *touch of greatness* from God? And how does one feel/experience *the hand of God* on the believer? Wilkinson seems to answer these questions by the one word: dependence. Dependence, of course, upon God.

Again we are hearing truth that is applicable to every dispensation

of God. From Adam to the present dispensation of grace, God has always expected man to depend upon Him, by faith. The very essence of *grace teaching* demonstrates that God has done it all [in the spiritual area of our Salvation and need], and desires to have the believer experientially prove this in his or her daily walk with Him. Well then, if this be so, the current chapter may stand on its own and needs no critique in reference to applying further Pauline teaching.

Admittedly we don't find as much to address in chapter four, but there are a few items that need to be pointed out.

First, Wilkinson sees the evidence of God's hand on the believer today in the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit. The evidence of this is cited from Acts 1:8; 4:13; 5:29; 7:51; and 9:27.

The implication from the above texts is that God's hand on us will produce today the same results He did back there. "When we ask for God's mighty presence like Jabez and the early church did, we will also see tremendous results that can be explained only as from the hand of God."²

Although the Holy Spirit as God is changeless, we know His ministry of *filling* has changed from the [early] Acts period until now. In early Acts, the Holy Spirit's filling meant the recipient spoke in tongues whereas Paul taught that the Holy Spirit's ministry later was a totally spiritual one and did not include the speaking of tongues,

see Ephesians 5:18, 1 Corinthians 13:8-11,

Eph. 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

1 Cor. 13:8 Charity never faileth; but whether [there be] prophecies, they shall fail; whether [there be] tongues, they shall cease; whether [there be] knowledge, it shall vanish away.

1 Cor. 13:9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

1 Cor. 13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

1 Cor. 13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

“Paul’s clear teaching to the church today is that the early Acts gifts of the Spirit have ceased....”

Secondly, a recurring phrase used by Wilkinson hints at a possible charismatic bent. By *charismatic bent* I mean an accommodation of the modern *charismatic*³ movement that emphasizes the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit. In fairness to Wilkinson, he does not directly identify nor link himself with the charismatic movement. However, the use in his book of the word “miracle” or “miraculous” in reference to God’s power through the believer today may accommodate those in the charismatic persuasion. At least by using these terms he does not disassociate nor distance himself from that movement.

Paul’s clear teaching to the church today is that the early Acts gifts of

the Spirit have ceased with the coming of the full revelation of the mystery truth given progressively to the apostle of the Gentiles. Therefore, God’s power is, through the Holy Spirit, filling the believer as per Ephesians 5:18,19, and this is in conjunction with the Word of God rightly divided as seen in Colossians 3:16 and 2 Timothy 2:15,

Eph. 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit;

Eph. 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

2 Tim. 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The point that I’m making in this article is that Wilkinson will point to non-Pauline events, people, and texts as the norm for today, all the while giving mere lip service to Paul’s direct teachings on the same issue. For example, we’ll quote the author’s words and ask the reader to note his major emphasis [on the early Acts texts] and then his minor emphasis on Paul’s teaching:

“What strikes me about the early church was that believers continually sought to be filled by God (see Acts 4:23-31). They were known as a community who spent hours and even days in prayer together, waiting upon God and asking for His power (see Acts 2:42-47). They were longing to receive more of God’s ‘hand’—a fresh spiritual in-filling of God’s power that would turn impending, certain failure into a

miracle and make their extraordinary assignment possible.

“Paul told the Christians at Ephesus to make it a priority to be ‘filled with all the fulness of God’ (Ephesians 3:19). To that end, he prayed that God would bless and strengthen them ‘with might through His Spirit.’ (3:16).”⁴

It all comes down to a matter of emphasis...and *The Prayer of Jabez* does not emphasize Paul’s teachings.

IV. POINT #4 OF JABEZ’S PRAYER

“...Oh, that you would keep me from evil...” 1 Chronicles 4:10.

Chapter five of *The Prayer of Jabez* is entitled: “Keeping the Legacy Safe.” The issue here is to be kept from evil, or an encounter with the evil [one] i.e. the devil. The author reasons that since Jabez has asked for God’s blessing [and obviously received it], and he has asked for his borders to be enlarged [and obviously received it], he well knew that in such times of success evil would be lurking to defeat him. This is summed up in the chapter with the words: *The Perils of Spiritual Success*. This is proven by the author pointing to many Christian leaders who at the pinnacle of their success succumbed to temptation and ultimately dropped out of ministry. It is stated that this is an accepted rule of thumb, “In fact, if your experience is anything *but* that, be concerned.”⁵

This matter of being kept from evil is cited as part of *the model prayer Jesus gave his followers* [Wilkinson’s words on page 67]... “‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one’ (Matthew 6:13).” Surely most believers would want to follow the

words of Jesus, and in most cases they do with regard to repeating this [so called Lord’s] prayer, in Matthew 6:9-13,

Matt. 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Matt. 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as [it is] in heaven.

Matt. 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

Matt. 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Matt. 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

But what really causes confusion here is to read carefully all of the above verses and note that the prayer asks the Father for His Kingdom in heaven to come to earth. Paul tells the Church today we are already seated with Christ in heaven and awaiting Christ to take us there, Ephesians 2:6 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17,

Eph. 2:6 And hath raised [us] up together, and made [us] sit together in heavenly [places] in Christ Jesus:

1 Thes. 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

1 Thes. 4:17 Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Further, *this model prayer of Matthew 6:9-13* requires of those praying that they forgive others if they would be forgiven. The implication is: if one doesn’t forgive others, God will not forgive him! How different this is from Paul’s teaching in Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 2:13,

Eph. 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Col. 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

In these two verses Paul makes plain that, under grace, God has already forgiven the believer all sins. We do not pray to receive forgiveness nor must we today forgive in order to be forgiven.

Surely, the context then of this Matthew 6:9-13 *model prayer* demonstrates that prayer is directed for Israel in yet a coming day when Christ will return to earth with that expected Kingdom.

But might not this part of Jabez's prayer to be kept from evil and that part of Christ's Kingdom prayer [in Matthew 6:9-13] mentioning the same be found "parallel"⁶ to our present dispensation of grace? If we could find a text from Paul where this concept of praying to be kept from the evil one [i.e. the devil], it might prove helpful. What *The Jabez Prayer* makes its emphasis is not Paul's direct teaching of grace. Therefore, if and when Paul is cited/quoted it's almost as an accommodation or as another possible resource, not in any sense showing that his teaching is the norm and standard under grace today.

Some Pauline Teachings About the Evil One:

1. Eph. 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Eph. 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness

of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places].

We don't find in the [above] verses the words "evil one" but surely the references to the devil and the evil day and God's protection [whole armour of God] against this spiritual wickedness are legitimate synonyms. The point in this context of Ephesians 6:10-18 is that God has equipped the believer under grace to stand against the attacks of our enemy Satan.

2. 2 Thes. 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep [you] from evil.

In 2 Thessalonians 3:3, we have a similar Greek text to Matthew 6:13 with the use of the words: "the evil," and therefore the word "one," may be added. Therefore, Paul says that the Lord will keep us from "the evil one." Here, it's a stated fact. Not something to be asked or to be prayed. One cannot help but compare [i.e. contrast] Jabez's prayer: "...and that thou wouldest keep me from evil," with Paul's declared statement of fact: "the Lord will keep you from [the] evil [one]."

Perhaps this is the key and crucial point in *The Prayer of Jabez*: that what the author sees in Jabez's prayer that should result in a larger life for the believer today, we already possess in greater abundance in Christ, as clearly stated by Paul. Why is this so hard for the Church to see? Why has it been relegated to less than front page in our best selling books among evangelicals today?

God has placed the revelation of His grace in the present dispensation in the writings of the Apostle Paul. The apostle made every effort to acknowledge this God given emphasis in his writings and ministry as he laid stress on his apostleship; see Romans 11:13:

Rom. 11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

The word the Holy Spirit used that is here translated *magnify* is the Greek word: DOXAZO and means “to make any one important, to invest with dignity, to glorify.” Paul’s *office* and ministry were tantamount to the very words of Christ which believers today dare not demean nor depreciate to less than God’s norm and standard for *breaking through to the blessed life*.

V. POINT #5 OF JABEZ’S PRAYER

Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, see 1 Chronicles 4:9.

Chapter 6 of *the Prayer of Jabez* book is entitled: Welcome To God’s Honor Roll. Jabez is shown to be one of God’s *favorites* as God honored him beyond his peers. “Simply put, God favors those who ask. He holds back nothing from those who want and earnestly long for what He wants.”⁷

The author sees in the Hebrews 11 *Hall of Faith* chapter “ordinary easy-to-overlook people who had faith in an extraordinary, miraculous God and stepped out to act on that faith.”⁸

The point of this chapter seems to be that God’s highest reward is wrapped up in the principle of Jabez’s prayer and even Paul is cited as proof that this should be pursued as in Philippians [which by the way Wilkinson says was Paul’s last epistle!]⁹ 3:14,

Phil. 3:14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Surely Wilkinson is correct: God desires that believers *earnestly long for what He wants*. But is the

prayer of Jabez the essence and totality of what God wants from believers today under grace? Isn’t the prayer of Jabez that the believer would enjoy blessing and expanded/enlarged borders and deliverance from the evil one? When we analyze these components, it appears that the benefactor here becomes the one praying Jabez’s prayer. And we understand that God has always desired to bless those who would believe Him and obey His Word; see Hebrews 11:6:

Heb. 11:6 But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

God’s Desire and Will for the Church Today

The Jabez Prayer places an emphasis which to me is really out of focus with what God desires first and foremost today. God’s prime desire today centers in and around what Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:15-23,

Eph. 1:15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

Eph. 1:16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

Eph. 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

Eph. 1:19 And what [is] the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Eph. 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the

dead, and set [him] at his own right hand in the heavenly [places],

Eph. 1:21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

Eph. 1:22 And hath put all [things] under his feet, and gave him [to be] the head over all [things] to the church,

Eph. 1:23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Just to read these verses and contemplate what Paul is telling us that God the Father wants is awe-inspiring, is it not?! Actually, what we have here is part of Paul's prayer for these Ephesians. And, since we're dealing with the subject of *prayer* in this article, why not look at one of the classics available from the pen of Paul himself. How many believers have ever prayed this prayer? And if not, why not? Wouldn't we all agree this would certainly be what God the Father desires and wants?

Throughout this prayer the references are pointed at, and focused upon, the Lord Jesus Christ, as we'll note:

- 1) That believers might receive from the Father the *knowledge of him* [i.e. Christ], 1:17
- 2) That believers, being enlightened, would know the hope of *his* calling, and *his* inheritance in the saints, 1:18
- 3) And the exceeding greatness of *his* power who believe according to *his* mighty power, 1:19
- 4) Which the Father wrought when He raised *Christ* from the dead and set *him* at His own right hand in the heavenly places, 1:20
- 5) Far above all...not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, 1:21

6) All things put under *his* feet, gave *him* to be the head over all things to the church, 1:22

7) Which [i.e. church] is *his* body, the fulness of *him* that filleth all in all, 1:23

To emphasize the centrality of Christ in this prayer, we've *itali-cized* those words directly referring to our Lord Himself. If this were the only text from Paul that so emphasized our Lord Jesus Christ as the epitome of what God wants and desires today, it would be enough. But many are the similar Pauline texts that could be added to this one in Ephesians 1. Paul says it this way in Colossians 1:19 and 2:9,10:

Col. 1:19 For it pleased [the Father] that in him should all fulness dwell;

Col. 2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Col. 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

The believer will not go astray by praying the prayers of Paul which are as equally inspired of the Holy Spirit as is the prayer of Jabez. Therefore, the issue is not which is more inspired but which is God's emphasis today in this dispensation of His grace and the fulness of the glorified Christ.

VI. POINT #6 OF THE JABEZ PRAYER

"And God granted him that which he requested..." 1 Chronicles 4:10.

Wilkinson's final chapter 7, is entitled: Making Jabez Mine. He challenges his readers to make the prayer of Jabez a treasured and life long habit. He suggests 6 steps to be followed, some each day, some once a week, others involving one's family, friends, and local church. From the author's personal experience,

“...the issue is not which is more inspired but which is God’s emphasis today in this dispensation of His grace....”

the Jabez Prayer and Principle is legitimate having contributed to his success in his personal life and ministry with Walk Thru the Bible, of which he is the founder and president. One cannot argue with the *success* of his ministry which he attributes to “God’s grace and Jabez praying...”¹⁰

Obviously Wilkinson does not suggest that all who [as does he] pray the Jabez prayer, will experience the ministry *successes* as he has. But, none the less, one cannot miss that he has written *The Jabez Prayer* as a norm and standard for other believers to follow.

My thesis in this critique of the book, *The Jabez Prayer*, has been that God’s principle in *prayer* and *the breaking through to the blessed life* is to be found in Paul’s letters to the Church, the Body of Christ. When we realize what *the Jabez Prayer* asks believers today to pray and practice, and when we realize what Paul’s grace teachings claim that believers already possess in Christ, it should be easy to respond accordingly in faith.

And one final prayer:

Eph. 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Eph. 3:15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

Eph. 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Eph. 3:17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph. 3:18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what [is] the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

Eph. 3:19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Eph. 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Eph. 3:21 Unto him [be] glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

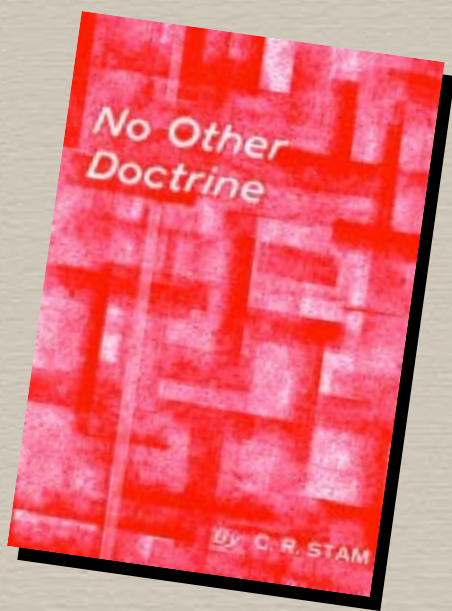
Endnotes

1. Dr. Bruce Wilkinson, *The Prayer of Jabez*, Multnomah Publishers, Sisters, Oregon, 2000, p. 46.
2. *Ibid*, p. 55.
3. From the Greek word for “gift” CHARISMA and thus applied to those who seek to revive that early Acts ministry of the Holy Spirit.
4. *Ibid*, p. 56.
5. *Ibid*, p. 64.
6. “Parallel” meaning: a truth that is similar but not identical, and therefore being of inter-dispensational application.
7. *Ibid*, p. 76.
8. *Ibid*, p. 77.
9. Your author holds that actually 2 Timothy was Paul’s final letter, see 2 Timothy 4:6 et al.
10. *Ibid*, p. 89.

Lost Priority? “We spend more time praying for the saved who are sick than for the unsaved who are lost...more time trying to keep the saints out of heaven than the lost out of hell.”

—Adrian Rogers (quoted in PrayerNet Newsletter, Oct. 2000)

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THE BBI BYLINE

Out With the Old; In With the New

By Kevin T. Heyle

When we buy a house or rent an apartment, typically the first thing we do upon possession of our new home is to spend time cleaning it. We begin by removing any old items that were left, then we methodically clean the floors, the walls, the fixtures, and the ceilings until all the old dirt is removed. If necessary, we may even have to repaint or even make major repairs. After all the necessary preparations the day finally comes when this new home is ready to be used by its new residents.

Essentially this is what takes place when we are saved. When we place our faith in Christ, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit and enter into an eternal agreement with God; we become His possession (I Cor. 6:20). God then begins working on us and in us to clear out all remnants of the previous tenant—sin (II Cor. 7:1). At the same time He begins a remodeling project, preparing us for His future use (Eph. 2:10).

This is the process of sanctification. Sanctification is a term of ownership that means to separate or to set apart. We are positionally

sanctified when saved, but from that point on, until our resurrection, God is dealing with our practical sanctification. Concerning practical sanctification Paul tells us *“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver; but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour; and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart”* (II Tim. 2:19-22).

Our reasonable service to our Savior is to yield ourselves to Him so that He might make us a godly vessel for His use and an instrument for His righteousness (Rom. 12:1,2; 6:13). At our yielding God is then well pleased and can use us for His glory!

Kevin Heyle is a graduate of Berean Bible Institute.

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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOMEGOING: Our good friend George Mathison was promoted to glory on April 25th after years of failing health. George and Marilyn were a great help to us when we established *Berean Bible Church* in Chicago. George's sense of humor and sincere love for the saints was indeed refreshing. The Grace Movement has suffered a great loss at his passing, but we rejoice that he is with the Lord, which is far better. Let's pray, without ceasing, for Mrs. Mathison that God will comfort her according to the riches of His grace.

MIDWEST GRACE FELLOWSHIP will be having a Bible conference on Saturday and Sunday, August 25,26, 2001 at the *Town House Meeting Room*, 217 N. Washington, Iola, Kansas. The theme for these meetings is *Paul's Letter to the Ephesians*. The guest speakers will be Pastor Paul M. Sadler and Pastor Ken Lawson. For brochures, directions, and times of services, please contact: Mr. David Tidd (620) 365-6004 or Pastor Ken Lawson (816) 425-2408.

MID-ATLANTIC FALL GRACE BIBLE CONFERENCE: This annual conference will be held on Friday through Sunday, September 7-9, 2001 at *White Sulphur Springs*, Manns Choice, Pennsylvania. The keynote speaker this year is Dr. W. Edward Bedore, Executive Director of the *Berean Bible Institute*, Germantown, WI. For more information, please contact: Suzanne Potter (304) 263-2411.

AUDIO TAPE RECORDINGS: As some of you know, Dave Allen continues to put in long hours recording our books onto audiocassette. He is currently working on *Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*. He has already recorded *Things That Differ*, *The Triumph of His Grace*, *Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ*, *Moses and Paul*, and *The Twofold Purpose of God*. As you can see, he has been very busy! If you have listened to any of these tapes and have any suggestions, please let us know and we will be sure to pass along your comments to him. If these tapes have been helpful to you, it would certainly be an encouragement to Brother Allen if you'd let him know.

FT. MYERS BIBLE STUDY: A new grace Bible study has been started in Ft. Myers by Pastor Elvin C. Myers. For more information contact Jeff and Terry Riley at (941) 549-2663.

*The picture of the lighthouse that appears on the front cover was taken by Roger Newell of Valrico, Florida. The *Little Point Sable Lighthouse* is located at the Silver Lake Dunes, at Mears, Michigan, on Lake Michigan. This lighthouse is 119 feet tall and is the tallest on Lake Michigan.

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“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear God, and keep His commandments:
for this is the whole duty of man” (Eccl. 12:13).

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