

# The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

September 2001



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## From the Editor to You:

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Dearly Beloved,

For the past year or so, the *Berean Bible Society* Board of Directors has been entertaining the idea of putting together a tour to retrace the footsteps of the Apostle Paul. These days, most Christian organizations are offering tours to the Holy Land to acquaint believers with the earthly ministry of our Lord. Of course, it is always spiritually profitable to visit a historical site where biblical events unfolded, especially when it involves the place where the Lord gave Himself as the once-for-all sacrifice for the sins of the world. But, as we know, it was Paul who introduced the heavenly ministry of Christ, which explains the significance of Calvary.

With this in mind, after 60 years of standing in defense of the gospel of the grace of God, the *Berean Bible Society* will be hosting a guided tour which highlights the life and times of the Apostle Paul. This expedition is sure to give a whole new dimension to the unfolding of the revelation of the Mystery.

Lord willing, we will be departing from Chicago's O'Hare Airport on Sunday, May 19, 2002. The first stop is Thessalonica, where Paul first introduced the "blessed hope" on his second apostolic journey. Then it's on to Philippi, the city that served as the gateway for the gospel of grace to spread westward. Berea is next as we explore our roots, followed by Athens and a visit to Mars Hill, the very place where Paul debated with the Athenians.

We will then sail with Paul across the Aegean Sea to the Bay of St. Paul, where the apostle landed during his voyages. From there we will make our way to Ephesus where the apostle proclaimed the Mystery for two years at the School of Tyrannus. Here we will visit the 24,000-seat amphitheater where Paul fought against the evil beasts of Ephesus. Although archaeological excavations are still underway, we will also have the opportunity to visit the beautiful two-story library of Celsus, the temple site of Diana (one of the seven wonders of the ancient world), and the local archaeological museum where we will view many of the artifacts of that day.

There are many, many other stops along the way, but this will give you some idea of what's in store as we explore the Journeys of St. Paul. For a brochure and registration form, simply contact the *Berean Bible Society* or Robin Cady at *Wilcox World Travel and Tours* (828) 254-0746/e-mail: <rcady@wilcoxtravel.com>. Space is limited, so contact us soon!

Your companion in travel,

Paul M. Sadler  
President

**From Michigan:**

"I thank the Lord for responding to the cry of my heart, which through a chain of events (a miracle in itself) lead to your ministry. The cry: an understanding of His Word—the response: the *Berean Bible Society*. It sounds simple. However, if you knew the whole story, you would understand my gratitude in this matter. Also I thank you for the Acts volumes you have sent me. I only wish I could express the blessings they continue to be to me." (This sounds like the providence of God at work to me! Ed.)

**From North Carolina:**

"I am enjoying the *Searchlight*, especially the series on First Peter and look forward eagerly to its arrival each month. Keep up the good work."

**From Wisconsin:**

"Once again I wish to thank you for all of the support that I have received from you. I know that the prayers sent up on my behalf reach the Lord's ear. I see His hand daily in my life and I know that without Him and the prayers of the saints, I could not continue to grow and learn in the Lord. I continue to enjoy the lessons I find in the *Searchlight* each month. I often receive better understanding of Paul's teachings as well as encouragement, which I often need. It is not unusual for my questions to be answered by the time I have finished reading the publication."

**From Ohio:**

"Thanks again for sending the *Berean Searchlight* each month. It is a blessing, not only to read, but to be able to share with others."

**From Florida:**

"We have enjoyed so many blessings through your ministry. I probably am a believer in our Lord and Savior through you since my father came to salvation by grace through faith through the writings of Brothers Stam and O'Hair. Thank you for the *Berean Searchlight*."

**From Washington:**

"Thank you so much for the *Searchlight* through the years. I've enjoyed them very much. Keep them coming."

**From Missouri:**

"Thank you for your continued faithfulness in preaching and teaching the Word, rightly divided. It has been a great blessing to me and I thank God for the understanding He has given me."

**From New York:**

"I can never thank the Lord enough for what He has done for me through you people and your ministries. The insight and maturity that is seen through the simplicity of the Pauline letters always excites me and I'm past 80 years and still love to learn. What a wonderful loving Savior we have....How I thank God for what He has saved me from and what He has saved me for. I pray that you will continue to be a blessing to many people who have never heard the truth. I especially enjoyed the article on the *Prayer of Jabez* that Pastor Sadler placed in the *Searchlight* by Pastor Wilson. Thank you so much again for your teachings. They are truly an inspiration and encouragement. We pray for you all always."

**From Florida:**

"We praise the Lord for His good work through you all there. We pray often for you and His work at BBS."

**From North Carolina:**

"I look forward eagerly to each edition of the *Searchlight*. It is food for my soul. Thanks for this important ministry." (While there is a great deal of spiritual junk food being offered these days, we still serve full course meals, with appetizers! Ed.)

**From Indiana:**

"I just wanted to write and convey my appreciation for your ministry.... Thank you for defending the pure gospel of the grace of God, Paul's gospel. Keep up the good work."

**From Illinois:**

"I thank our heavenly Father for all of you who have a part in sending out the *Berean Searchlight* and for all the writers who are so faithful in spreading forth the good news of God's amazing grace. What a blessing it is to me—I look forward to receiving this magazine each month."

**From Iowa:**

"We recently received the book, *The Prayer of Jabez*, which was given to us as a gift. After reading Pastor Rollin Wilson's comments about it, it shed more light on it for us. I like what Paul, in his writings, has to say about the way we should look at it. Thank you for the *Berean Searchlight* on the book." (The prayer of Jabez as well as the Lord's prayer must be interpreted in light of the program in which they are found, otherwise confusion reigns. Ed.)

**From Florida:**

"Thank God for the *Berean Searchlight* and all the blessing it brings to so many. I pray that the message will grow like wildfire in a high wind. It is truly the need of churches today. Just a small gift to help a little to continue your work."

**From Washington:**

"I do enjoy the *Searchlight*. It is the only real grace teaching I get here. Your recent conference was in Seattle—that's 30 miles across Puget Sound from my home. I'm 81 years old and don't get to these kinds of meetings anymore. I'm an organist for two different groups (churches). That keeps me alert. From day to day I live with God's blessings."

**From Michigan:**

"Though we've never met, we hope to this next month at the Bitely, Michigan conference. Really enjoy the *Searchlight* so much. Such good messages. May God bless you and all the workers there."

**From New York:**

"I am graduating from high school this year and am embarking on new journeys. Thank you for your ministries. They are a lighthouse in the dark ocean. Thank you." (Congratulations! Graduation is a milestone you will cherish throughout the coming years. It is a rite of passage that will guide you into a new chapter of life that is filled with endless possibilities in the Lord. Whatever your pursuits, Heidi, it will be important to always keep your eyes upon the Lord. Ed.)

**From Florida:**

"How I thank the Lord for the blessings He gives because of the ministry of all of you at *BBS*. I always pray for those who come into a knowledge of the Word. All to the glory of our Savior."

**From Illinois:**

"May the blessings of God be with you all in your work in training those who want to bring the Word into the hearts of those who are seeking the Lord Jesus. May God's grace abound in all circumstances."

**From Florida:**

"I want to thank you for the *Berean Searchlight*. I appreciate being on your mailing list. Many have been my blessings and from time to time, I've been able to glean good *usables* from your productions. Especially am I in accord with and rejoice over your position on this terrible divisive issue of these radical *King James Version* only advocates. You are well justified in receiving this accolade. It is past due from me."

**From Massachusetts:**

"Thanks so much for your clear teaching and rejoicing of the gospel of Grace. Your ministry is a long cool drink when one is scorched. May God continue to bless you and your ministry in abundance."

"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

**May 19-30, 2002**



For those who have tasted of the riches of His grace, what could be more advantageous than visiting the pearl of the Mediterranean, with an opportunity to learn more about the area of the world where the gospel began to spread

through Asia into Europe? As we retrace 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 would 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 and 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!"

***Don't miss this wonderful time of fellowship,  
which will enrich your study of the life  
and times of the Apostle Paul!***

# The Victory of the Gospel

By Paul M. Sadler



**“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.”**

—Phil. 1:12

There is probably no other subject that brings more joy to the believer than the gospel. The word itself is music to our ears. What lofty victories have been won through the centuries as the good news of Christ and Him crucified made inroads into the affairs of men. But who will deny that the measure of our resolve to win lost souls to Christ is not always what it should be, especially when we consider Paul, who turned the world upside down. More often than not, we have a defeatist attitude when it comes to evangelism.

A lesson from ancient history may give us some help in this regard. You will recall when Daniel unfolded the progressive revelation regarding the “times of the Gentiles,” he likened the “third world empire” to a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings. If you picture a leopard in your mind’s eye for a moment, you have probably envisioned the swiftness of a large cat sweeping across the plain in pursuit of its prey. Put four wings

on his back and he is portrayed as striking with lightning speed.

As history bears out, this is a remarkably accurate description of Alexander the Great who was the mastermind behind the Grecian Empire. It is said that he would have his armies march for days on end simply to surprise the enemy. Interestingly, as Alexander was marching on Persia, it looked as if the great empire was about to crumble, as it later did before his armies. There was a critical moment, however, which nearly resulted in disaster. The army had taken spoils of silver, gold, and other treasures in such quantities that the soldiers were literally weighed down with them. Alexander gathered all the treasures together in one great pile and set them on fire.

The soldiers were furious, but it was not long before they realized the wisdom of their leader. It was as if wings had been given to them—they walked lightly again. The campaign proceeded to victory.<sup>1</sup>

Brethren, if we expect to have *victory* in our proclamation of the gospel, we must first relieve ourselves of the things of this world. They will weigh us down. A good soldier of Jesus Christ must never entangle “himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (II Tim. 2:4). Armed with this truth, we must also follow Paul who is the divine example today of how to properly evangelize the lost to Christ.

## THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

**“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things**

**which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places” (Phil. 1:12,13).**

The saints at Philippi and the Apostle Paul had a very close relationship in Christ. When they learned he had been imprisoned in Rome, they were naturally concerned for his well-being. Apparently, word had reached the apostle that they were devastated by the news, which prompted him to respond to their concern for him.

“Simply because we are living in the administration of Grace does not mean that God is out of touch with His creation or the Church....”

You see, Paul was a firm believer in the *providence of God*. Providence is “God’s faithful and effective care and guidance of everything which He has made.” Things simply don’t happen by chance, God is working through us “both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13 cf. II Tim. 1:9). He has a plan and purpose for our lives and ministries. While this runs contrary to *self*, which desires to be in control of every situation, the apostle’s response to such unsound reasoning was: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God” (Gal. 2:20).

The providence of God is clearly seen in both the early and latter ministries of the apostle as he sought to evangelize the lost to Christ. During the course of Paul’s second

apostolic journey, Paul and Silas attempted to advance the gospel eastward into Asia, but were *forbidden* by the Holy Spirit. As they moved westward to Mysia, they tried to go north to Bithynia, but again were *prohibited* by the Spirit. Finally, after arriving at Troas, the apostle received the vision of a man praying: “Come over into Macedonia, and help us.”

There was no question in Paul’s mind that this was the Lord’s leading, for Luke records, “immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel unto them” (Acts 16:6-12). God indeed was pointing the way, for the farther west the gospel of the grace of God spread, the warmer its reception. Simply because we are living in the administration of Grace does not mean that God is out of touch with His creation or the Church, the Body of Christ. He is still sovereign! (I Tim. 1:17 cf. 6:15,16).

Years later, it must have seemed as though everything was collapsing around the apostle when he was unjustly jailed in Caesarea. He suffered through one miscarriage of justice after another before appealing to Caesar, which narrowly spared his life. Then, on the way to Rome, he endured a catastrophic shipwreck that landed him on a pagan island where he was bitten by a venomous snake. Upon arriving in Rome, he faced a number of false charges, each of which carried serious consequences. But Paul realized that all these things were according to God’s plan and purpose. Thus, the apostle longed to calm the fears of those at Philippi when he wrote:

**“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things**



**which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel” (Phil. 1:12).**

Here we are given some insight into Paul’s manner of life, specifically in regard to his *attitude* in times of adversity. How would you have responded if placed in a similar set of circumstances? There are usually one of two responses at such times: “Lord, after all these years of faithful service, why have you forsaken me? Why me? It’s just not fair!!” Or, “What is God teaching me through these distressing circumstances? How can I glorify Him?” Paul’s approach was the latter. He looked upon times of adversity as opportunities to share the gospel. In other words, he had a *new audience* that he would not have had otherwise.

What appeared to be setbacks, humanly speaking, providentially resulted in the furtherance of the gospel. The term “furtherance” here has the idea to “cut beforehand” in the original language. We might liken it to the advance team who clears the way over a mountain pass so a road can be built. The things that had happened to the apostle gave him access to Rome’s seat of power. It was a groundbreaking effort that prepared the way for others to follow. Think of it, Paul had admittance to Caesar’s household, at Rome’s expense! Amazing!

As a result, Paul adds that his “bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places.” The palace here is the Greek *praitorion*, which in this context is not merely a reference to a place, but a brigade—the imperial guard. This was an elite group of soldiers who were highly trained to protect the royal household. They were the cream of the crop!



The Secret Service Agents who protect the President of the United States would be comparable to this select unit.

Julius, the centurion who escorted the apostle to Rome, was a member of this special force called Augustus’ Band (Acts 27:1). Although Paul was the prisoner, Julius and the others of this inner-circle were a captive audience as they heard again and again how Christ had died for their sins. At first they most likely concluded that Paul was mad. But as they beheld the sincerity of his love for lost souls, and the passion with which he proclaimed the Cross, the gospel gradually chipped away at their stony hearts of flesh. *Victory!* A number of this elite unit came to a knowledge of the truth and were saved (Acts 27:1,3,43; 28:16 cf. Phil. 1:13; 4:22).

Rome could bind the apostle, but it could not bind the Word of God! Its greatest hindrance is often the child of God who is reluctant to speak due to the *fear* of men. “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

### **FRIENDLY FIRE**

**“And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds,**

**are much more bold to speak the Word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds” (Phil. 1:14-17).**

The one regret the apostle had was the sad reality that only *many*, not *all*, of the saints at Rome were zealously evangelizing the lost to Christ. As some of these dear saints beheld Paul staring into the face of death, while maintaining a clear Christian testimony, they were emboldened by his courageous stand. Persecution is often the torch that sets souls on fire for the things of the Lord. In 1934 when Pastor Stam’s older brother, John, and his wife, Betty, suffered martyrdom at the hands of the communist Chinese, hundreds of couples were compelled to train for the mission field. In John and Betty’s absence, they took up the torch and carried the gospel around the world. As it has been said, “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.”

While there were those at Rome who highly esteemed Paul’s apostleship and message, others were envious of his fruitful ministry. Envy is the feeling of displeasure produced by observing the advantage or prosperity of others.<sup>2</sup> You will recall the heartache this sin caused when Joseph’s brethren became envious of him. Jacob loved Joseph more than the others because he was the son of his old age. But Jacob’s partiality in no way justified the sin of his sons. Further, it was obvious that a special blessing had been conveyed upon Joseph, which should have been received with thanksgiving by the other

family members. Instead they resented him.

The trail of envy is always littered with lies, even if it’s only lying to one’s self that they are more deserving. Those who entangle themselves in this web of deception, as Joseph’s brethren did, desire the spotlight to shine on them. So after they cast Joseph into a pit, they decided among themselves to sell him to the Ishmaelites. But, to their surprise, when they returned to the pit, Joseph was gone. Interestingly, even though it was the Midianite merchantmen who actually sold Joseph into Egypt, God held Joseph’s brethren *accountable* for the evil deed (Gen. 37:28,36 cf. Acts 7:9). Joseph adds, “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive” (Gen. 50:20).

“We expect the enemies of the Cross to oppose us; it’s part of the territory.”

The Apostle Paul experienced a similar attack from an unlikely source. Some of the brethren who should have been standing in defense of Paul’s ministry became envious of him and sought to add affliction to his bonds. This had to be a bitter pill to swallow. We expect the enemies of the Cross to oppose us; it’s part of the territory. When the alarm reverberates through the Church in the day of battle, we stand foot to foot, toe to toe, wielding the sword of the Spirit against these workers of iniquity.

As we fight the good fight of the faith, whenever Satan brings railing accusations against us for the preaching of the gospel, we endure it for the cause of Christ.

But when those of the household of faith, *brethren* who should be upholding us, slander us and seek to destroy and uproot, it is like an arrow through the heart. The envious man is reminiscent of the archer who stands in the shadows and shoots his arrows from afar. You can hear the arrow coming, you can feel it pierce through your soul, but the carnal one who shot it is nowhere to be found.



As we proceed, Paul shows us how to attain victory in spite of opposition. First, we must distinguish between taking a stand against unsound teaching, and tolerance with those whose motives are not always what they should be.


For example, when the Judaizers sought to corrupt the gospel at Galatia, the apostle rolled out the 16-inch guns: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8).

Since the gospel Paul preached was the one and only way of salvation, he pronounces anathema upon anyone who states otherwise. The word “accursed,” Greek *anathema*, also appears in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament. “The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire...Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed [Gr. *anathema*] thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed [Gr. *anathema*] thing” (Deut. 7:25,26).

In the eyes of the Lord, idols of gold and silver were an accursed thing. They brought the disfavor of God. Thus, Israel was to have nothing to do with them. In like manner, those who corrupt the gospel that Paul taught are also said to be accursed. That is, they are to be *avoided*.

On the other side of the coin, Paul exercised a spirit of tolerance with those whose motives were questionable at times, for he knew the Lord would judge them at that day. This didn’t mean he agreed with their actions or their philosophy that the end justifies the means. But he could say with a clear conscience, “What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice” (Phil. 1:18).

You see Paul didn’t try to conform everyone into his image or his way of doing things. Rather he desired, as we should, that others be conformed to the image of Christ. We sometimes become so rigid that we frustrate the grace of God. But grace more than compensates for our shortcomings. It gives liberty in Christ.

What about you, dear reader, have you experienced the victory of the gospel in your life? If not, remember and remember well the apostle’s words, “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Rom. 13:11). 

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## Endnotes

1. *Encyclopedia of 7000 Illustrations*, Assurance Publishers, Paul Lee Tan, pg. 836.
2. *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, World Bible Publishers, W.E. Vine, Vol. 2, pg. 37.

## Question Box

*“There seems to be a great deal of confusion concerning ‘the Israel of God’ of Galatians 6:16, and ‘all Israel will be saved’ of Romans 11:26. Are these the same or different? What is your interpretation?”*

We believe Paul draws a sharp distinction between these two phrases. The apostle says to the Galatians, “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature [creation]. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:14-16).

“And as many as walk according to this rule,” what rule? Essentially, in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is any longer a factor. Today those who have placed their faith in the finished work of Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, are a new creation. Thus, Paul bestows peace and mercy on “them,” that is, the believing *Gentiles* and upon the believing *Jews*, “the Israel of God,” who had accepted this new way. As Paul says, “Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew” (Rom. 11:1,2). These Jews are the believing remnant spoken of in Romans 11:5,6 who were, and continue to this hour, to be saved under Paul’s gospel. Therefore, they, like the Gentiles, are members of the Body of Christ.

Chronologically, Paul points to a *future* day when he states: “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Rom. 11:26). In the coming day of the Lord, Israel will be restored as a nation. She again will be the apple of God’s eye. But simply because a Jew is a descendant of Abraham does not necessarily mean he has responded in faith to God, as did his father Abraham. Clearly this is what the apostle is driving at when he openly declares, “For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel” (Rom. 9:6). During the tribulation, the nation will be made up of both believing and unbelieving Israelites as it was in time past (See Matthew 3:1-12).

So then, the statement, “And so all Israel shall be saved,” is to be understood in the following manner: All *believing* Israel will be saved or delivered when the Messiah returns in His Second Coming to overthrow the kingdoms of this world and establish His kingdom of righteousness.

—Pastor Sadler

# The Day of the Lord

## WHAT IS IT?

By Cornelius R. Stam

**T**he Scriptures have much to say about “the day of the Lord,” but precisely what *is* the day of the Lord?

Generally speaking, of course, it refers to the time when the day of man, or “the times of the Gentiles,” will be brought to an end and “the Lord alone shall be exalted” (Isa. 2:11,17). But will it include more than the actual return and reign of Christ? Will it include the prophesied tribulation period, *during which* God will bring Gentile rule to an end? We believe it will.

One pastor who teaches that the Body of Christ will go through the tribulation and that its Rapture to be with Christ will *follow* the tribulation, writes:

“The day of the Lord follows the tribulation and it is the day of the Lord’s wrath upon those who ‘know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (II Thes. 1:8). It comes as ‘a thief in the night,’ which is not so with the tribulation.”

But this interpretation does not take into account *all* that is said in Scripture about the day of the Lord—and contradicts some of it.

When our Lord returns to earth in person, “in flaming fire taking vengeance” and “punishing” with “everlasting destruction,” He will evidently dispatch His enemies forthwith. There is no evidence that this will cover a protracted period of time. Paul, describing the arrival of the day of the Lord in I Thessalonians 5:1-3 says nothing about the personal return of Christ, but he *does* describe a protracted period of suffering and trouble. Read this statement carefully:

**“The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, for when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”**

First, note that the phrase “thief in the night” is not used to describe suddenness, but *unexpectedness*. The thief plans his visit for the time when he will be least expected. *This* phrase is so used of our Lord’s return to earth in Matthew 24:43,44. But I Thessalonians 5:1-3 states that the “destruction” of “the day of the Lord” will also come as “a thief in the night.”

The Antichrist will have made a seven-year covenant with Israel and the world will enjoy three and a half

Will the day of the Lord include more than the actual return and reign of Christ?

Will the day of the Lord include the prophesied tribulation period, *during which* God will bring Gentile rule to an end?

years of “peace and safety.” Then, unexpectedly, he will break the covenant and defile the temple, plunging the nations into the most terrible time of trouble they have ever experienced (See Dan. 9:27; 12:1; Matt. 24:21).

Actually *God* will take over as the “great tribulation” breaks, letting the nations of the world bring their uncalled-for rebellion to a head.

Next, note the phrase, “as travail upon a woman with child.” When Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel “in the midst of the week”<sup>1</sup> (Dan. 9:27), “destruction” will break out suddenly. This does not mean, however, that it will run its course in a moment. Rather, it will “*come upon them*” suddenly, and run its course “*as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*”

The travail of a woman with child *takes time*. The birth pangs *increase* both in frequency and in intensity until the child is born.

This, we suggest, illustrates the “great tribulation” far more accurately than it does the actual return of Christ, for during the great tribulation the world’s troubles will indeed increase both in frequency and intensity “*and they shall not escape.*” This “destruction,” to take place during “the day of the Lord,” will overtake the world of the ungodly unexpectedly, just when they are congratulating themselves as having attained “Peace and safety” (I Thes. 5:3).

Now please think carefully. Will *anyone* be saying, “Peace and safety” at the *close* of the “great tribulation”? Will *anyone* rejoice in “Peace and safety” as the battle of Armageddon rages? How, then, can this passage about “the day of the Lord” refer only to the return of Christ *after* the tribulation?

But when we see that “the day of the Lord” begins *with*, rather than *after* the tribulation, all is in order.

As we know, the seven years of the tribulation will begin with the rider on the “white horse” (Rev. 6:1,2—evidently Antichrist cf. Rev. 19:11—the true Christ), who goes forth “conquering and to conquer.” Like Antiochus Epiphanes, he will “come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries” (Dan. 11:21). All will go well for him and he will bring to the world a kind of peace that will win him universal allegiance. “Peace and safety”! the world will exclaim.

---

“...when we see that  
“the day of the Lord”  
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all is in order.”

---

But of the rider on the *next* horse we read: “and power was given to him that sat thereon *to take peace from the earth*” (Rev. 6:4). Then follow war, famine and death (Vers. 3-8).

This “destruction” will come suddenly when, after three and a half years (“in the midst of the week”), Antichrist will betray Israel and break his seven-year covenant with them (Dan. 9:27), and will, like Antiochus Epiphanes, desecrate the temple (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; Matt. 24:15; II Thes. 2:3,4).

There we have it! Our “post-tribulation” brethren say that “the day of the Lord follows the tribulation.” Paul, in I Thessalonians 5:1-3, makes it clear that the day of the Lord *includes* the tribulation. They have men in the closing, most terrible hours of the tribulation saying,

*“Peace and safety”!* They have the Lord’s speedy judgment of the ungodly described by *“travail upon a woman with child”!*

No, the Rapture of the Body of Christ to be with Him will not follow the tribulation; it will *precede* it. Thus the Apostle Paul, after writing about the Rapture of the Body in I Thessalonians 4, continues in Chapter 5 with the word “But,” to show the *disrelation* of God’s prophesied “times and seasons” and “the day of the Lord,” from that blessed day for which every believer should be “looking,” “waiting” and “watching.”

*“Wherefore comfort one another with these words”* (I Thes. 4:18), and *“be not soon troubled”* (II Thes. 2:2), for like the Thessalonian believers we are to “*serve* the living and true God, and to *wait* for His Son from heaven...who hath *delivered* us from the wrath to come” (I Thes. 1:9,10).

## THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS

As we have demonstrated, the prophesied day of the Lord takes us back to the middle of the Tribulation when the “peace and safety” that Antichrist brings, will be suddenly broken, and the horrors of the “*great tribulation*” will come upon this world “as travail upon a woman with child.”

With God’s help, we will seek further to show from Scripture that the “day of the Lord” takes us back even to the beginning of the Tribulation period, for the first three and a half years of the Tribulation are the introduction to the rest.

Here we must ask what will cause men to say “peace and safety”? II Thessalonians 2 gives us light on this.

In Verse 7 the Apostle says:

**“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only He who now letteth [hindereth] will let [hinder], until He be taken out of the way.”**

We take this to be the Holy Spirit in the Church. Not that the Holy Spirit will not be operating on earth during the Tribulation, but He will be taken out of the way *as a restraining force* when the Church is caught up to be with Christ.

**Verse 8: “And then shall that Wicked [one] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.”**

The “then” of Verse 8 is also used in a broad sense, for it is obvious that while the full manifestation of Antichrist will take place in the midst of the seven years of the Tribulation, his destruction will take place at the *end* of the seven years. Doubtless his manifestation will be a gradual matter, for when he sits in the temple of God, posing as God (Ver. 4), he will already have held sway for three and a half years. See what the Apostle says about this deceiver in Verses 9 and 10:

**“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders,**

**“And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.”**

It should be observed that not all wars begin with a *battle*, and God here begins to wage war on this Christ-rejecting world by simply letting them believe the big lie that they have always wanted to believe. How could God state more clearly that He will begin to judge this wicked world than by removing the restraining influence and giving men

up to Antichrist? And, as we say, this takes us back to the *beginning* of the Tribulation. This first part of the Tribulation *ushers in* the judgments of God for grace rejected.

Though God has sent a message of grace to all nations, they have turned a deaf ear to it. They do not *wish* to acknowledge their sin and their need of Christ. In John 5:40,43, we have the words of our Lord:

**“Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life.”**

**“I am come in My Father’s name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.”**

And this is exactly the case. The world has never received Christ, but when Antichrist comes they will go wild over him. He is described in the Book of Revelation as the rider on the white horse, going forth “conquering and to conquer.”

Well do we remember the days of Hitler as one nation after another fell before his armies. He indeed went forth conquering, and many feared that he would continue “to conquer” until the whole world was under his sway. This, thankfully, did not take place, but with Antichrist his conquests will continue until he dominates all mankind.

It is of the utmost importance here to notice that this is God’s judgment upon “them that perish, *because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.*”

**“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (II Thes. 2:10-12).**

This, then, is included in “the day of the Lord” in its broadest sense, for this is how God will begin to

bring the day of man, or “the times of the Gentiles [nations],” to an end.

Thus we do not agree that “the day of the Lord follows the Tribulation” and that only His return *to earth* is “the day of the Lord’s wrath upon those who ‘know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.’” God *begins* to judge man by giving him up to Antichrist; then comes the “*great tribulation*,” the latter half of the seven years, and then our Lord’s return to bring to a speedy end that which began as “travail upon a woman with child.”

Thus, the day of the Lord, as it is spoken of in Scripture, may be referred to in a narrow sense, or in a broader sense. In its narrowest sense it refers to the reign of Christ on earth, but in its broader sense it includes *the whole Tribulation period*. As some theologians might put it, we have the day of the Lord *proper*, and the day of the Lord *general*, the latter including the reign of Christ *and* the Tribulation, when God begins to intervene in man’s affairs by giving him the Antichrist, the big lie men have always wanted.

Any who have not acknowledged their sin and have not yet trusted Christ as Savior should remember that while God is gracious and patient, He will not allow man to go on forever rejecting and insulting His Son. And when His anger is finally aroused it will be “the cup of His indignation, poured out *without mixture.*”

God is not the soft “do-gooder” of man’s conception. True, He is the very personification of love, but He is also the personification of righteousness and justice and truth and, in anger against love spurned, He will finally judge this world by giving men up to the *kind* of Christ



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“...how important  
it is to trust Christ  
without delay,  
before it is  
eternally too late.”

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they have always desired—*Anti-christ*. They will perish “because they received not the *love* of the *truth*, that they might be saved” and “*for this cause* God shall send them strong delusion,” by removing the restraints that have hindered the reign of Antichrist.

Since the Rapture of the Church could take place at any moment and bring to a close this dispensation of Grace, how important it is to trust


Christ without delay, before it is eternally too late.

**“The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hands, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:35,36).**

**“...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (II Cor. 6:2).**

**“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...” (Acts 16:31).**

**“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures;**

**“And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (I Cor. 15:3,4).** 

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Our good friend and co-laborer, Fred Wisniewski, is a gifted Bible teacher who loves to share the riches of God’s super-abounding grace. Fred also serves as our Senior proofreader here at BBS. The following article is a solemn reminder that some golden daybreak we must *all* stand before the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. —Ed.

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## Revealed By Fire

By Fred Wisniewski, Bible Teacher

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be *revealed by fire*; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is” (I Cor. 3:11-13).

**E**very true believer, we would think, looks forward to that first happy moment when, being absent from the body, he or she will be present with the Lord. After all, this is what we have been living for since the day we first trusted Christ.

At the same time, we may experience a little apprehension, knowing that in glory we must stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10). Not that we need be concerned about our eternal destiny. We are in Christ, and in Christ we are secure. We are confident that He loves us, because while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, and we were “accepted in the Beloved” once we trusted Him for our eternal salvation. No, it’s not a question of whether we are saved or lost; God’s Word assures us we are saved forevermore. Our sins have all been

judged at the Cross of Calvary; we have been redeemed and forgiven through His blood. Rather it's a question of what will be our station for the duration of our salvation.

Scripture makes it plain that God has a system of rewards in place for His children in Christ when we reach our heavenly home.

"If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (I Cor. 3:14-15).

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" (I Cor. 9:25).

*"It is required of stewards that a man be found faithful,"* and many of us already know that we haven't always been very faithful. Certainly a lot less faithful in His service than we could have been, and should have been. With the world clamoring for our attention on every side, and our inherent moral weakness, willful pride and self-serving ambition, we often lose the focus of our mission as *"ambassadors for Christ."*

So, looking forward to that day when we will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, to "give an account" of ourselves to God, we may feel a bit sheepish. There will be some anxiety, because we know that while we may have successfully hidden some of our faults and failings from the world, it was impossible to hide them from God,

"Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (I Cor. 4:5).

**Sometimes it was just plain dereliction of duty, "as many, which corrupt the Word of God"**

"The question then will be how much of our works, and charity, and service, and faith, will survive that fiery gaze...."

(II Cor. 2:17). For Scripture tells us that carefully building on *"the foundation that was laid"* starts with rightly dividing the Word of truth (II Tim. 2:15). God's Word also counsels us to

"be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:14-15).

"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck" (I Tim. 1:19).

**We will know there were times we did the right things, but for the wrong reasons.**

"For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:18).

"And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ" (I Cor. 8:11-12).

**Sometimes we had the appearance, but not the substance.**

"...and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (I Cor. 13:2-3).

**And sometimes, well, we just refused to grow in our Christian experience.**

"For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (I Cor. 3:3).

Faithful or unfaithful, each of us will be giving an account of himself to God. Not for our sins, which have been forgiven through the blood of Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:7). But for how we built on the foundation that was laid; for our works in His service, "*which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*" (Eph. 2:10).

Since each believer is a member of His Body, Christ has perfect knowledge of how each member functions, whether in thought, word, or deed. When we stand before His Judgment Seat,

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be *revealed by fire*; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (I Cor 3:13).

When that day comes for you and for me, we will be privileged to stand in our Lord's presence and look Him in the eye. Hopefully we won't have to be ashamed to look Him in the eye. The Apostle John, describing the appearance of Christ in the Book of Revelation, states that "*His eyes were as a flame of fire*" (Rev. 1:14; 2:18; 19:12). It may be that the fire with which Christ will test the believer's works will be the "fire" in His eyes, for:

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13).

It may be we will hear Him say what was said to the saints at Thyatira:


"I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee..." (Rev. 2:19-20).

The question then will be how much of our works, and charity, and service, and faith, will survive that fiery gaze, or whatever else may be the source of the blaze, to determine whether we "receive a reward," or "suffer loss."

Christian friend, have you given thought to that coming day when, being absent from the body, you will stand before the Lord, to

"receive the things done in [your] body, according to that [you] hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10).

Let us hope that you and I can stand before Him with the confidence of the Apostle Paul who, having fought a good fight, having finished his course, having kept the faith, could write to Timothy:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (II Tim. 4:8). 

## TOMORROW

Tomorrow sounds so innocent, but it is life's most dangerous word.

Tomorrow is the bolted door that shuts people out of heaven.

Tomorrow is the nursemaid of hell.

Tomorrow is Satan's word.

***Don't count on tomorrow!***

"Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

# ***FALL BIBLE CONFERENCES***

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## **Florida Bible Conference**

**Location:** *Grace Bible Fellowship*  
2780 N. Florida Avenue  
Hernando, Florida

**Dates:** September 15,16, 2001

**Speaker:** Pastor Paul M. Sadler

For times of services or directions, please contact:  
Edwin Jones (352) 563-2101

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## **Grace Church of Christ**

### ***Special Meetings***

**Location:** *Grace Church of Christ*  
1915 South Main Street  
Middletown, Ohio

**Date:** Sunday, October 21, 2001

**Speaker:** Pastor Paul M. Sadler

For more information, please contact:  
Pastor Trent Cole (937) 263-5474

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## **Community Bible Church**

**Location:** *Community Bible Church*  
1427 W. Main Street  
Tipp City, Ohio

**Date:** Sunday Evening,  
October 21, 2001

**Speaker:** Pastor Paul M. Sadler

For additional information or directions, please contact:  
Pastor Jeff Seekins (937) 667-6868

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***Come fellowship with those of like-precious faith  
around the preaching of Jesus Christ according  
to the revelation of the Mystery!***

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## **BEREAN BIBLE FELLOWSHIP**

### **2001 Fall Bible Conference**

to be held at

#### ***Faith Bible Church***

560 East Sauk Trail  
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October 11,12, 2001

**Theme:** *The Believer's Walk*

For conference brochures, please contact: Ivan Burgener, President, *Berean Bible Fellowship*, PO Box 6, Collinsville, IL 62234 or phone: (618) 344-6741. If you need information regarding accommodations or directions, please contact the host pastor: Pastor Ricky Kurth at <pastorkurth@msn.com> or phone: (708) 757-5418.

***May God richly bless these meetings  
to the praise of His glory!***

## **Beacon of Grace Bible Church**

### **Fall Bible Conference**

**Location:** *Woodland Public School*  
1511 Seventh Street  
St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada  
(QEW Exit #51)

**Dates:** October 26-28, 2001

**Theme:** *"Christ's Heavenly Ministry to Israel!"*  
*"Hebrews to Revelations"*

**Guest Speaker:**

Pastor Dick Ware  
*Grace Bible Church, Oshkosh, Wisconsin*

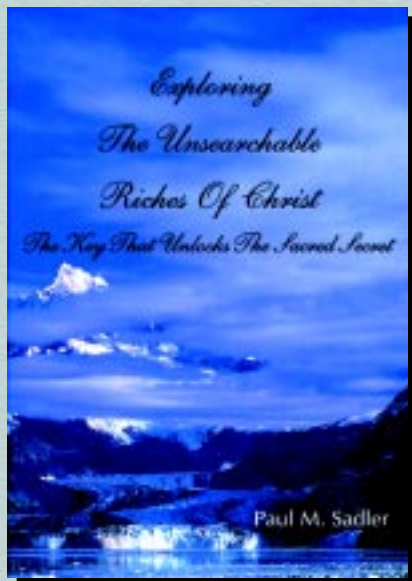
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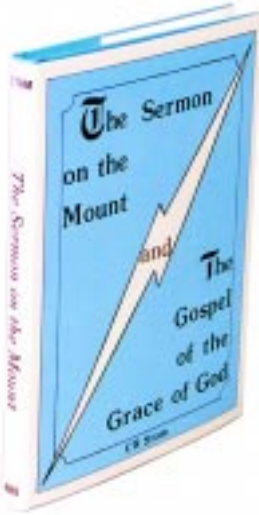
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***We would like to encourage  
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# THE BBI BYLINE

## Why Paul?

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.

Executive Director, *Berean Bible Institute*

**“Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead;)....**

**“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.**

**“For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:1,11-12).**

Without the book of Acts, we would not know where the Apostle Paul came from. Indeed, this is the primary purpose for the book of Acts, to reveal the transition from the *kingdom program* that is the subject of Old Testament *prophecy* and is centered on the nation of Israel, to the *mystery program* which deals with all of mankind on an individual basis without regard as to national identification.

God's purpose for Israel is a kingdom here on earth over which her Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, will be King. This was never a mystery (secret) but was “*spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began*” (Acts 3:21).

What had been kept secret (a mystery) was revealed to Paul only after Israel had persisted in the rejection of her Messiah. The promised kingdom was still in view and within reach until the stoning of Stephen as recorded in Acts 7. From this point on, we see a diminishing of Israel and the twelve Kingdom Apostles as Paul comes to the forefront as God's chosen servant. A new Apostle to whom He would reveal His long kept secret (mystery) program of grace. Today, salvation is offered to all through simple faith in Jesus Christ, the Living Head of the Church which is His Body.

It is only in this secret (mystery) program as revealed to Paul (Ephesians 3:1-7) that we find the promise of eternity in heaven and the doctrine of justification by grace through faith alone, totally apart from works of any kind.

Why Paul? To reveal to a lost and God rejecting world the dispensation of the grace of God, the dispensation that we live in today.

**“I have no YESTERDAYS, time took them away; TOMORROW may not be—But I have TODAY.”**

Who will be the pastors, Bible teachers, and missionaries of tomorrow? None other than the faithful men and women who are preparing themselves for service today.

For more information about *Berean Bible Institute* contact: Dr. W. Edward Bedore, PO Box 40, Germantown, WI 53022, or phone: (262) 255-4094, fax: (262) 255-4195, e-mail: <berean@execpc.com>.

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## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**THREE STALWARTS CALLED HOME:** “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” On March 26, 2001 Pastor Louis Menge was called into the presence of our heavenly Father at the age of 79. Pastor Menge will long be remembered for his God-given ability to establish churches, Bible Studies, and Christian camps.

Pastor William Heath was also promoted to glory on April 22, 2001 at the age of 83. Bill and his wife, Eunice, served as missionaries in the Philippines for many years under *Things to Come Mission*. Upon returning from the field Bill remained active in the Lord’s work preaching and teaching.

After a long battle with cancer, our good friend Dan Sanborn departed to be with Christ on June 7, 2001, just four days before his 63rd birthday. In addition to faithfully serving the Lord at his local assembly, Dan was instrumental in establishing the Michigan City regional meetings in Michigan City, Indiana.

These dear brethren are going to be deeply missed, but thanks be unto God that someday soon we will all be reunited when the trump sounds. May God comfort the wives (June, Eunice, and Mary) of these three stalwarts with the full assurance that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

**BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE:** Those who have been praying about the need for a grace correspondence course, your prayer has been answered. DISTANCE BIBLE STUDIES is designed for home study and places a dispensational emphasis on the Bible. DBS is now offering its first course: *Matthew and Ephesians*, which contrasts God’s heavenly program for the earth (i.e. Matthew), with God’s heavenly program for the Church in heaven (i.e. Ephesians).

The course is self-contained with 12 lessons and exams, as well as mid-course and final exams, followed by an explanation to the answers given. *Matthew and Ephesians* is priced at \$20.00 postpaid, and may be ordered directly from: DISTANCE BIBLE STUDIES, P.O. Box 97, Altoona, Wisconsin 54720. This is a great way to increase your knowledge of the Word, rightly divided.

**NEW GRACE FELLOWSHIPS:** The *Berean Bible Fellowship*, under the direction of Pastor Chuck Barrett, is holding meetings every Friday evening at Villa Vista Apartments, Enumclaw, Washington. For directions and additional information, please contact: Pastor & Mrs. Charles Barrett at (360) 825-4781.

There is also a new Grace fellowship meeting in Erie, Pennsylvania called *Bible Ambassadors*. These dear saints are currently meeting on Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings. For additional information, please contact: Pastor Dan Porath at 2820 W. 23rd Street (in EBCO Park), Erie, PA 16506.

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\*The picture of the lighthouse that appears on the front cover was sent to us by Jackie Wilson of Kewaskum, Wisconsin. The *Cana Island Lighthouse* is located in Door County, Wisconsin.

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