

The **BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

April 2022



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

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A Note From the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace” (Eccl. 3:1,8).

The Russian invasion of Ukraine reminds us that there are times of war in this world. We live in a chaotic, uncertain world, a world which is under the sway of the wicked one. Satan “was a murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44) and, as “the god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4), he will always drive events and influence situations toward *death*.

How should believers view war? We should view it knowing that God reigns and is always in control. And we should view war in terms of the death of people who will spend eternity in either heaven or hell. Thus, through the tragedies, confusion, fears, pain, and heartbreak of war, we should pray for the salvation of souls, that many will turn to the Lord and so receive eternal *life* and hope in Him.

This physical war in Ukraine is now at the forefront of the world’s thinking, but there is a spiritual war going on at all times that we must not forget. In this war, we have a very real enemy to hate and to fight: the devil and his angels. As believers, we are in the thick of the battle and in the crosshairs of the enemy, but “we wrestle...against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph. 6:12). And our enemy schemes and has a plan of attack against each member of the Body of Christ.

Our spiritual warfare involves advancing the gospel and rescuing souls from eternal death; it is a fight for preserving and proclaiming the truth and combating error, and it is a battle to maintain a strong, bright testimony for Christ. In this warfare, we are called to “Fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12), to be strong in the Lord (Eph. 6:10), to put on the whole armor of God (v. 11), to stand (v. 14), and to wield “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (v. 17).

The devil can’t touch our salvation. Our life “is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). But in the battle, the old serpent can deceive us with error, destroy our testimony for Christ, discourage us so that we stop serving the Lord, and distract us or diminish our passion for reaching lost souls. In this very real war, may we heed our apostle’s words to “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men [be brave], be strong” (1 Cor. 16:13).

Grace and peace,

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler, President

KINGDOM OF GOD

Why does Paul refer to the
“Kingdom of God” in his epistles?

PASTOR KEVIN SADLER
BBS President

There are TWO aspects to
the kingdom of God:
one earthly, one heavenly

ISRAEL'S HOPE is the earthly kingdom

“Then He called His twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

And He sent them to preach the **kingdom of God**...” (Luke 9:1-2).

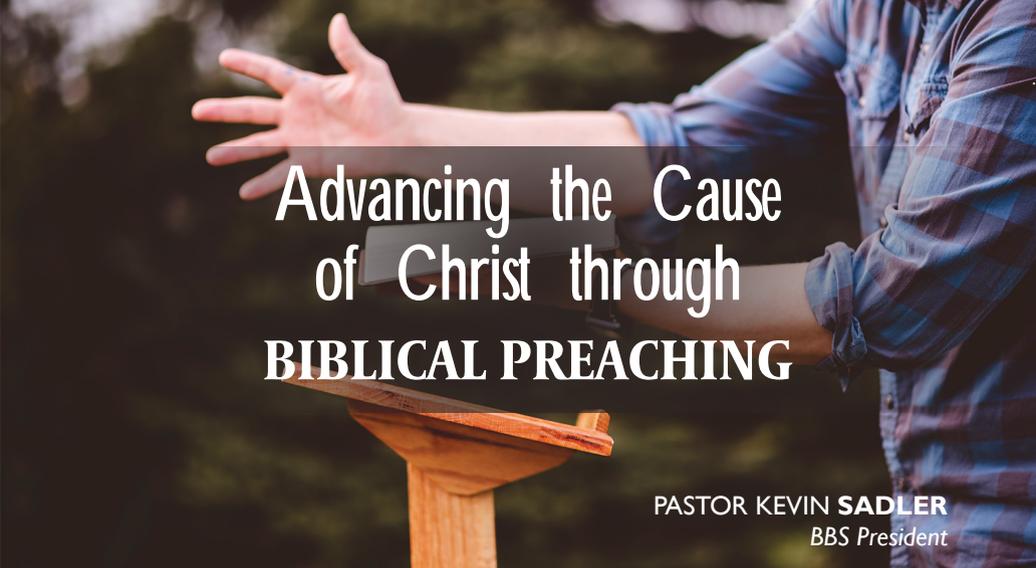
“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice **in the earth**” (Jer. 23:5).

THE BODY OF CHRIST'S HOPE is the heavenly kingdom

“For the **kingdom of God** is...righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17).

“And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His **heavenly kingdom**: to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Amen”
(2 Tim. 4:18).



Advancing the Cause of Christ through BIBLICAL PREACHING

PASTOR KEVIN **SADLER**
BBS President

“There once was a preacher who was at a dinner and was asked to get up and give a short, 10-minute talk. Well, we all know the dangers involved in asking a preacher to give a short talk. Anyway, after 20 minutes had expired, the preacher just kept on talking. After 35 minutes, the master of ceremonies gave a little rap on the table with his gavel. The preacher just kind of ignored it and kept right on talking. After 40 minutes, the master of ceremonies gave a little louder rap with his gavel. Still, the preacher kept right on talking. After an hour with no end in sight, the master of ceremonies banged his gavel as hard as he could. But still, the preacher went on. Finally...the master of ceremonies threw the gavel at the preacher. The gavel sailed over the preacher’s head and hit an old man who was sitting at his table, fast asleep. The old man woke with a start and shouted, ‘Hit me again! I can still hear him!’”¹

We have a message that demands to be preached and proclaimed, and which keeps us preaching until we go home to be with the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:14 states, “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” Preaching would be a waste of time and pointless if Christ is not risen. But because Christ lives, preaching is not meaningless. Our faith has meaning. We have true hope, and we have a message of good news to make known.

The old adage for preaching is “Preach not because you have to say something, but because you have something to say.”² We have something to say because Christ lives. And God, by the working of the Holy Spirit, uses the preaching of His Word to lead sinners to Christ under grace and to establish believers in their faith.

Preach the Gospel

“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not

with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect” (1 Cor. 1:17).

As mid-Acts dispensationalists, we often defend the one spiritual baptism under grace (Eph. 4:5), and therefore we tend to focus on the negative teaching of verse 17, that “Christ sent me [Paul] not to baptize.” However, the positive aspect of what Paul was set apart *to* by Christ is equally important. The Apostle Paul was sent by Christ “to *preach* the gospel.” Later in this letter, Paul reiterated this calling, when he wrote, “...for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” (1 Cor. 9:16).

To advance the cause of Christ in this world, like Paul, we, the Body of Christ, are called to preach the gospel. Preaching the gospel doesn’t mean you need to have a pulpit to do it. In the original Greek, the words “to preach the gospel” just mean to bring good news, to announce glad tidings. We preach the gospel in any and every way in which we evangelize and make Christ and His finished work known to others.

Like the apostle, we are to preach the gospel “not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.” By this, we learn that it is possible to preach the gospel in a way that makes it of no effect. A reliance on “wisdom of words” can cause men to trust in men and to take their eyes off of Christ. But Paul did not want *anything* to draw attention away from the Savior and the truth of the gospel.

Thus, Paul preached the gospel without attempting to impress others by his eloquence; instead, he simply pointed others to trust Christ and trust Christ alone. It is not necessary to have degrees, training, clever tactics, or eloquence to preach the gospel. The power is in the truth of the gospel (Rom. 1:16), and we are called to make that message known faithfully, humbly, and plainly by reliance on the Spirit.



“A certain church had a beautiful stained-glass window just behind the pulpit. It depicted Jesus Christ on the cross. One Sunday there was a guest minister who was much smaller than the regular pastor. A little girl listened to the guest for a time, then turned to her mother and asked, ‘Where is the man who usually stands there so we can’t see Jesus?’”³ In preaching, Christ can be obscured either by the presentation or the content of the message. However, we are called to preach the gospel so that all can clearly see Christ and what He’s done for us by His grace.

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (1 Cor. 2:1-4).

In the same vein as 1 Corinthians 1:17, Paul stated here that he came to the Corinthians “not with excellency of speech or of wisdom.” Paul did not rely on lofty words of eloquence or human philosophy to convince his listeners. Paul didn’t come to the Corinthians as an orator; he came as a *witness*, declaring unto them the testimony of God.

The focal point of that testimony was the person and work of Christ: “Jesus Christ, and Him crucified” (2:2). As Paul wrote in his second letter to the Corinthians, “For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord” (2 Cor. 4:5). Preaching is to be centered on Christ, on Who He is and what He has done. And when we preach *the Word*, “we preach... Christ Jesus the Lord,” because the Holy Spirit has authored a Book that is all about Him.

Paul came to the Corinthians not teeming with confidence and self-assurance. Instead, as he wrote, “And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling” (1 Cor. 2:3). Paul came to Corinth after being beaten and imprisoned in

Philippi (Acts 16:16-24), run out of Thessalonica and Berea by persecution (17:1-15), and mocked in Athens (17:16-21,32). To encourage Paul upon his arrival in Corinth, the Lord spoke to him in a vision and told him, “Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city” (Acts 18:9-10).

And so, despite his weakness in the flesh, Paul was most powerful, because, as a result, his preaching was in the power of the Spirit. Paul’s weakness, fear, and trembling kept him from relying on and placing his confidence in himself, and it allowed God’s strength to flow through Him. Thus, Paul’s speech and preaching were “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (1 Cor. 2:4). Paul depended on

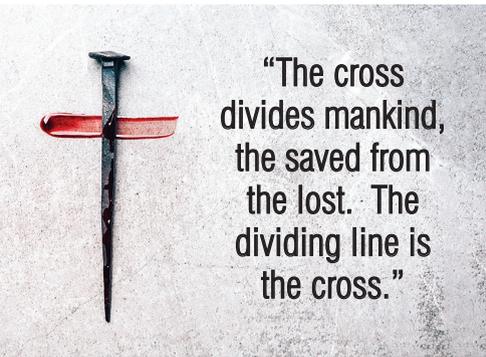
**“Thus, Paul’s
speech and
preaching were
‘in demonstration
of the Spirit
and of power’
(1 Cor. 2:4).”**



the power of the Holy Spirit. It was not his experience, talent, or ability that gave power to his preaching; it was the working of the Spirit through Paul’s faith and faithfulness.

Paul knew that preachers are called to proclaim the truth as revealed in God’s Word (2 Tim.

4:1-2), knowing and trusting that the Holy Spirit works through His Word. As a result of faithfully proclaiming the Word, on a spiritual level, Paul's preaching had power. And the Holy Spirit used Paul's preaching mightily to reach people for Christ and to transform their lives and hearts. Paul did not emphasize or place confidence in the *method* of his preaching, but rather his confidence was in the *message* of the cross.



The Preaching of the Cross

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18).

The message that Paul made known was “the preaching of the cross.” The gospel for today is the preaching of the cross. The word “preaching” in this verse is the Greek word “logos,” which means a word, teaching, or what is declared. The preaching of the cross means all that is involved in the cross, the total, collected teaching, its message and truth.

To the Apostle Paul was committed the preaching of the cross, for through the revelation of the

mystery we learn of the accomplishments and full benefits of the Cross. The message of the cross tells us that God the Father “hath made Him [Christ] to be sin for us, [Christ] Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21). The preaching of the cross teaches us that Christ has done everything necessary to save us, that we are saved by faith alone and have the forgiveness of all our sins, and that we are redeemed and have eternal life as a free gift.

However, this message of the Cross “to them that perish” is “foolishness.” “Them that perish” are those who are without God or His life. The Word teaches that sin results in death (Rom. 6:23). Outside of Christ, the unbeliever is “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1). Thus, when a person is still in their sins, they are perishing and will perish. They are heading for the second death of eternal judgment in the lake of fire.

“Them that perish” are those for whom God’s heart breaks, because He desires for all to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4). It refers to all who have not believed the gospel of grace and the life-giving message of the cross. And we, the church, have this treasure (2 Cor. 4:7) that needs to be faithfully preached so that the perishing might be rescued from the wrath to come (Col. 3:5-6).

Paul points out here that, for the many who have not believed, the message of the cross is “foolishness.” The term “foolishness,” in the original Greek, is *moría*,

from which our word “moron” is derived. The Cross is moronic, absurd, and silly nonsense to those who do not believe.

The reason it’s foolishness to them is that they have exalted their own thoughts and wisdom above God’s revealed wisdom and provision. The preaching of the Cross seems too far-fetched to many in this world, and they can’t wrap their minds around it that the death of one Man, on one hill, on one piece of wood, in one moment in history is the determining factor for the eternal destiny for every person. They find it foolish to believe that a virgin gave birth to a Child Who is both fully God and fully man, and that He lived a perfect, sinless life, bore our sins on the Cross, died, and rose again the third day.



The message of the Cross also does not fit with what most think how it ought to be when it comes to determining whether one goes to heaven. Mankind doesn’t like to think they are ungodly sinners who need a Savior, and that their sins demanded the shed blood and death of God’s Son to pay their penalty. It makes no sense to them that a Savior should suffer and

die for them. The Cross allows no place for man’s merit, man’s attainment, man’s wisdom, man’s perceived righteousness, or man’s ego or pride. Thus, the cross is chalked up as foolishness.

As Paul continued in this verse, he wrote, “but unto us.” The “but” shows a contrast, a division. The message of the cross creates a division within humanity. The entire world can be categorized into one of two groups: “them that perish” and them “which are saved.” This is how God views the world. He doesn’t see world religions, belief systems, or denominations. He sees those who have trusted His gospel of grace and are saved, and those who have not and are perishing and are in danger of everlasting judgment. You are either one or the other; there is no halfway, no middle ground, and no neutrality. The cross divides mankind, the saved from the lost. The dividing line is the cross.

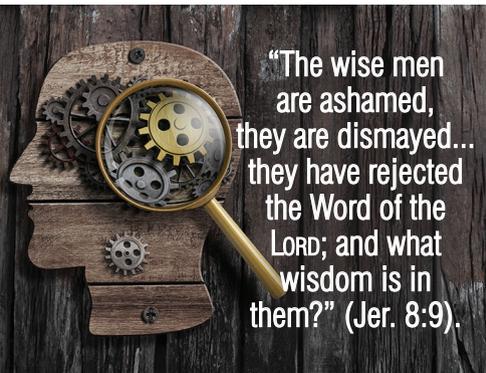
We find two responses to the preaching of the Cross in 1 Corinthians 1:18: it is either rejected as foolishness or received as the power of God unto salvation. The message of the cross, to us who believe and rejoice in it, is not foolishness; it is profound wisdom and the very power of God. It is about God, with power and grace, providing salvation from our sins, and giving us His life and righteousness the moment we believe.

The Foolishness of Preaching

**“For it is written, I will destroy
the wisdom of the wise, and will**

bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. 1:19-20).

In these verses, Paul proclaimed God's wisdom as far superior to man's. In verse 19, Paul quoted from Isaiah 29:14 to certify that man's wisdom will be destroyed, swept away, and brought to nothing. It is temporary and will be forgotten. In contrast, God's wisdom is permanent and will never be destroyed. It is eternal, perfect wisdom. So, the point is, which one should we trust?



"The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed... they have rejected the Word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?" (Jer. 8:9).

Jeremiah 8:9 reads, "The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the Word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?" When you reject the wisdom of the Word, you reject true and eternal wisdom. Trusting the fallible and ever-changing opinions of human wisdom is what is foolish.

When we preach God's Word, we are proclaiming true wisdom, wisdom that changes hearts and lives through Christ. We advance

the cause of Christ by faithfully preaching God's wisdom as revealed in His Word.

In light of God one day destroying and sweeping away human wisdom, Paul hurls a defiant challenge: "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" Did God consult them when He created all things from nothing? Can they teach God anything? Could they have ever devised such a perfect plan of redemption? Can they ever rise to disprove or challenge God's eternal and perfect wisdom? The answer is emphatically obvious: No!

Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? These questions are in light of God's destroying the wisdom of the wise and bringing to nothing the understanding of the prudent. In light of this taking place one day, these questions mean: Where did they go? They were here a second ago, weren't they? What happened to them? This verse re-emphasizes the impermanent nature of man's wisdom.

God's wisdom is revealed through His Word, through His Son, and through the Cross. And by these things, God has made foolish the wisdom of this world.

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21).

Paul wrote that the world with all of its so-called wisdom never

knew God. It never reached the ultimate goal of knowing God. And man, by his own wisdom, actually *cannot* come to the knowledge of God. Rather, by man's wisdom, man turned to graven idols of gold, silver, or stone (Acts 17:29). This impresses upon us the great need to faithfully and unapologetically preach God's Word.

I love the second half of 1 Corinthians 1:21: "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "The foolishness of preaching" means the foolishness of the message preached. Paul is not referring to the *act* of preaching, but the *content* of preaching,⁴ that is, the preaching of the Cross.

God is pleased to save anyone who believes through, as the world sees it, the "foolishness" of the message of the Cross. God has provided for and accomplished our salvation in a way that no one would have expected:

by death on a cross and the resurrection of His Son. Although the Cross is contrary to and offends the vanity of human wisdom and conceit, when the simple message of the gospel is preached and the world scoffs and calls it foolishness, God saves those who believe it. 

1. Closely adapted from Stephen Fournier, "Heavenly Hope," Sermon Central, August 28, 2002, <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/heavenly-hope-stephen-fournier-sermon-on-discipleship-49776>.

2. Richard Whately, Goodreads, accessed February 28, 2022, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/879633-preach-not-because-you-have-to-say-something-but-because>.

3. Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary, Volume 1* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Chariot Victor Publishing, 2001), p. 573.

4. W. E. Vine, et al., (ed.), *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers, 1985), New Testament entry "PREACH, PREACHING," B. Nouns, Note: on 1 Cor. 1:18, KJV, *logos*, "a word."

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

60 million people die each year in the world...

...that is 164,000 each day...

....that is 6,800 each hour...

...that is 114 every minute...

MOST WITHOUT CHRIST!

"...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." 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Believe and be saved today!





50 YEARS AT CLOVERLEY HALL

May 13-15, 2022

Location: Cloverley Hall, Whitchurch, United Kingdom

Theme: “God’s Best Kept Secret” (Rom. 16:25).

Speaker: Kevin Sadler, Berean Bible Society President

Contact: Barry Pumphrey at barryjp33@gmail.com

Plan now for a wonderful time around God’s Word across the pond!



SPOTLIGHT *on Grace Churches*

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How We Treat Other Believers

PASTOR JOHN FREDERICKSEN
BBS Board Member

In 2017, twelve-year-old Mallory Grossman was being relentlessly cyberbullied by classmates. She was told she was a loser and had no friends. She was even told, “Why don’t you kill yourself?” Mallory’s mother spoke to the mother of one of the girls sending mean electronic messages begging her to ensure the bullying would stop. This mother immediately dismissed it, saying it was just a big joke and that she really shouldn’t worry about it. The next day, Mallory took her own life. Treating others viciously, especially online, has become a national epidemic, and even Christians are not immune.

The Lord Jesus Christ taught His apostles an astoundingly important principle in Matthew 25:40. In describing the future judgment of kingdom saints who are allowed to enter eternal life in the Millennial Kingdom, He explained how important it was for them to treat fellow believers well. Whether they gave another believer in need a cup of water, food, or clothing, the Lord said, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.”

Saul, who later became the Apostle Paul after his conversion to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, was told something very similar. While he was on the road to Damascus to assault and arrest men and women who were followers of the Savior, the Lord Jesus intervened in a blinding light. When Saul “fell to the earth...[he] heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest Thou me” (Acts 9:4). When Saul asked, “Who art Thou, Lord...?”, the Lord said, “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest” (Acts 9:5). The relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ with kingdom believers was so close, and so purely intimate, that however one treated a follower of the Savior, that’s how they were treating the Savior Himself.

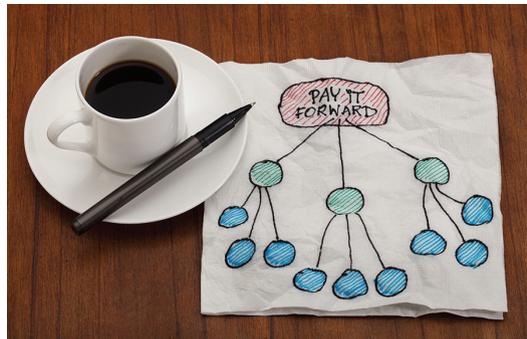
If anything, this principle must be even more true in the Dispensation of Grace. Our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ is described

as being a oneness in close identity to the Savior. The Apostle Paul explained to those in Rome that “Christ [be, or is] in you” (Rom. 8:10). He asked the believers at Corinth, “Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you?” (2 Cor. 13:5). Everyone who has trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior has “the Spirit of God dwell[ing] in [them]” (Rom. 8:9). It is this close identity of “Christ in you, [which is] the hope of glory [or eternal life]” (Col. 1:27). Pressing this concept home for Christians in Ephesus, Paul explained, “For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones” (Eph. 5:30). We are so closely bonded to the Lord Jesus Christ through His grace that, as far as He is concerned, our identity is one.

Have you ever considered that how you treat others who name Christ as their Savior is how you treat the Lord Jesus Christ? If we are harsh, rude, distant, or in any way hurtful, then this is the way we are treating the One who died for our sins to provide us with eternal life. When we are encouraging, loving, helpful, or uplifting, in effect, it is the same as treating the Lord Jesus in these positive ways.

Looking at the way we interact with fellow believers through this lens makes many of the instructions in Scripture take on a magnified perspective. We are told to “be ye kind one to another” (Eph. 4:32). This means to put away “lying” (Eph. 4:25), “bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking...with all malice” (Eph. 4:31). We are to purposely replace carnal interaction with speech that is “good to the use of edifying” (Eph. 4:29). We are to “[be] kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another” (Rom. 12:10). Our goal must be to “serve one another” (Gal. 5:13) because when we do so with a correct spirit, we are actually serving and honoring the Lord Jesus Christ. Why? Because how we treat fellow believers is actually how we are treating the Savior.

In 2000 a novel idea emerged from a movie about an eleven-year-old boy whose social studies teacher assigned the class to come up with an idea that would improve mankind. He decided that if he could do three good deeds for someone and they “pay-it-forward,” positive things would occur. He started by allowing a homeless man to sleep in the garage. In turn, the



homeless man repaired the family vehicle. After reporting this to his class, this boy’s idea swept through the school with positive results. Since this movie’s release, the culture in America has adopted this phrase, and the concept of “paying-it-[kindness]-forward” to others.

The Lord Jesus Christ has shown us great kindness in providing salvation as a free gift, blessing us with the richness of His written Word, and bestowing upon us multitudes of other spiritual blessings. It's time for us to pay-it-forward by consistently treating fellow Christians with kindness. In part, we can do so by remembering that how we treat other believers is essentially how we are treating the Lord Jesus Christ. Right now would be a good time for each of us to stop and ask the Lord to enable us to always purposely treat other Christians with kindness and love. 

Question Box

“What was Paul’s thorn in the flesh?”

“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me” (2 Cor. 12:7-8).

The most common response to this question is that Paul’s thorn in the flesh was an eye infirmity. Based on what he wrote to the Galatians, there’s no doubt that Paul had trouble with his eyesight. In that letter, he wrote how he preached the gospel to them “through infirmity of the flesh” (Gal. 4:13), and then he commended the church for being willing “if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me” (4:15 cf. 6:11).

Here’s something for you to consider as a possible alternative to this usual answer: Paul’s thorn in the flesh may have been *a person*. One chapter previous to his mention of a thorn in the flesh, Paul wrote about false apostles, deceitful workers, and Satan ministers being “transformed as ministers of righteousness” (2 Cor. 11:13-15). And Paul described the thorn in the flesh as being “the *messenger* of Satan.” It’s possible that Paul’s thorn in the flesh was one of Satan’s ministers of righteousness, false apostles, or deceitful workers who was buffeting Paul’s ministry, bringing “reproaches...persecutions...distresses” (12:10) to the apostle. When Paul wrote “For this thing” in 12:8, the original Greek allows for this being a thing or a person. Similarly, in our modern vernacular, we refer to people as being a thorn in our side, and it’s possible that Paul had a thorn in his, someone like Alexander:

“Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works” (2 Tim. 4:14).

—Pastor Kevin Sadler

DONE



A FINISHED SALVATION

Beloved, salvation is clearly a question of “do” or “done.” A large majority of religious clergymen say that you must do, do, do, do, to be saved. But God’s Word says that “it” is already *done*, and let God be true and every man a liar. Hebrews chapter 10 has a good deal to say about this truth:

“And every priest [the Old Testament priests] standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God;

“From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool.

“For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb. 10:11-14).

The tabernacle and the temple had pieces of furniture—a table of shewbread, a golden altar, a golden candlestick, and the Ark of the Covenant. There was no chair for the priest to rest upon. “Every priest *standeth daily* ministering and offering, oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sin.” Why? Because his work was never done.

My beloved friend, you can be as religious as you please every day of your life, and you can work as hard as you please, but you will never, never finish your task of saving yourself. It was Christ *alone* who finished the work of salvation for man. It was the Creator who died for the creature’s sin.

As He yielded up His spirit to His Father, He cried out that great word “FINISHED.” It is done! (John 19:30).

“Every priest standeth daily...But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God...For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified” (Heb. 10:11-14).

—Pastor C. R. Stam



The Cure for Discouragement

PASTOR RICKY KURTH
Searchlight Editor

My body is like a temple. And by that I mean, it looks and feels like something the Romans destroyed 2,000 years ago.

If you're feeling discouraged about how the temple of *your* body looks and feels, it may help to consider the story of the discouragement that some old men felt when they saw the temple their countrymen were building to replace the one Nebuchadnezzar destroyed some 70 years earlier:

"Many of the...ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of *this* house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice..." (Ezra 3:12).

Evidently those ancient men could tell just by looking at the freshly-laid foundation that the new temple wouldn't be *nearly* as grand as Solomon's. Surely the tears in their eyes reflected the discouragement they felt in their heart.

But their discouragement surely diminished once the prophet Haggai announced God's plan to *glorify* the house they were building, saying:

"...I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory...."

"The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the LORD of hosts" (Hag. 2:7,8).

The "desire of all nations" is not Christ, as the Christmas carol "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" would have us believe. It is *money*. Money is, and always has been, the thing that people in the nations have desired most.

And as you can see, God's plan to glorify the humble home His people were building for Him involved a plan to *shake* the nations to *get* their silver and gold, in order to *finance* the glorification of His temple. He planned to turn the nations upside down, as it were, and *shake* them, as a child might do with his piggy bank to get to his savings, or as a bully might do to his classmate to relieve him of his lunch money. If that doesn't sound like something God would do, remember that He *owns* all the riches in the world by virtue of creation. He even

owns *the owners* of those riches (Psa. 24:1).

But here we have to ask *when* God planned to glorify His humble new home. You see, up until this point in the Book of Haggai, this prophetic book has been all about the rebuilding of the temple that took place 2500 years ago in Haggai's day. But God's plan to *glorify* the temple was one that He didn't plan to enact until the Lord returned to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth for Israel. We know this because right *before* saying He would shake the nations to get their riches, God said,

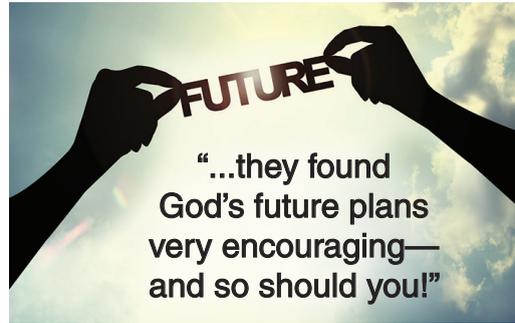
“For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while,¹ and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land” (Hag. 2:6).

That's how we know that God's plan to *glorify* the modest temple they were building with the riches of the nations will come at the battle of Armageddon that will precede the millennial kingdom. Speaking of that epic battle, Joel declared,

“The LORD...shall roar out of Zion...and the heavens and the earth shall shake...” (Joel 3:16).

I've never been in an earthquake severe enough to make me fear for my life, but I'm told it can be *terrifying*. But if you know anything about people and their love for their money, you know that even the *biggest* earthquake isn't likely to shake them up enough to get them to *part* with their money. So as Haggai and Joel tell us, God plans to shake—not just the

people in the nations—but *heaven and earth as well*.



As a former painting contractor, whenever I read passages like this, I always think of the shakers that paint stores used to use to shake paint. These days the shakers clamp down on the paint cans from the top and the bottom to prohibit them from opening while enduring the violence of the shaking. But back in my day, the shakers gripped the cans in the middle, *squeezing* them as if to *dare* their lids to pop off. Once in a while they did—with some very *colorful* results! Especially since the shakers in those days weren't enclosed in sealed containers as they are today.

But let me tell you, those old shakers knew how to *shake paint*. And when I read prophecies like the ones we just considered, I picture God clamping *the universe* in one of those shakers *and throwing the switch*. I daresay that will pop the top of even the tightest tightwad, and cause his riches to come flying forth!

Now perhaps you are thinking, “Wait a minute! If God plans to wait until the Lord returns

1. This prophetic “little while” was interrupted by the dispensation of the mystery.

to shake the nations down for money to glorify the temple, how would it encourage the Jews in Haggai's day to hear about it? They are the ones feeling discouraged about the size of the new temple. How would it help them to know that God planned to glorify it long after they were dead?"²

If that's what you are wondering, I'd invite you to remember that God plans to glorify the temple *of your body* by healing all of your physical afflictions after you are dead. Speaking of that plan, Paul wrote,

"...the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ...shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body..." (Phil. 3:20,21).

The Apostle was speaking of the Rapture, of course. And unless the Lord comes for us before you die, God plans to glorify the temple of your body by fixing everything that's wrong with it after you die—just as He planned to glorify Israel's temple after the Jews rebuilding it had died. Judging by the fact that they went back to work on the temple, I believe they found God's future plans very encouraging—and so should you!

If you *don't* feel encouraged to hear of God's plan to glorify your body by fixing it after you die and raising it again at the Rapture, if you insist that God heal your affliction now, in this life, I would invite you to consider that this is somewhat of a childish way to look at things. Don't we always

say that the problem with children is that they want *instant gratification*, and aren't willing



to wait for things? We say that about childish adults as well.

Well, don't you be a childish Christian! The one thing Paul calls on us to do more than anything else is to "*grow up into Him in all things*, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15). And part of growing up in the dispensation of grace is to recognize that "*though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day*" (2 Cor. 4:16). And nothing says you've grown up more than realizing that

"...our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17).

God has a plan to glorify the temple of your physical body. But the patience we show until that glorious day comes is something that literally *screams* to unbelievers that you have something they don't have—the sure hope of a new body, and the all-sufficient grace of the Lord of glory in the meantime. 

2. Even if the dispensation of the mystery *hadn't* interrupted prophecy, Daniel had already prophesied that the coming of Messiah was still centuries away.

CAREGIVER TO CAREGIVER

“Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” (Col. 1:11). The word *might* in this verse is the Greek word *dunamis*, from which we get our English word *dynamite*. What would we need maximum *dynamite* strength from being plugged into glorious God-power for...wait for it...*patience and longsuffering with joyfulness*?!

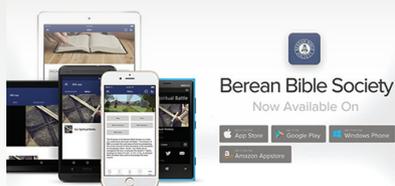
I have a better understanding of the reason why, now that I’m a caregiver for my over-90-year-old mother. She suffers with chronic, severe pain, so it takes tremendous God-strength for her to push through the pain to do simple everyday things like walking or lying down in her bed. Everything is urgent for her since dealing with things when they come to mind is her only defense against forgetting—it takes God-power for her to be patient and not panic. For myself, it has taken God-power just to maintain a reasonable level of patience in the longsuffering of constantly picking things up for her, cleaning up after her, having her question my intentions toward her, and balancing efficiency with letting her retain a modicum of control over her life. How often have I had to pause and breathe a cry for the Holy Spirit’s help when I’ve felt my patience slipping, and He’s taken over for me!

But to have patience and longsuffering **WITH JOYFULNESS?! That really does take maximum *dyna-might* strength from God!** I know for a fact, neither my mom nor I have the power in and of ourselves to be **JOYFULLY** patient and longsuffering. However, when we come to the end of each day and we sit on the side of her bed, as she leans into me and I put my arm around her, and as we pray and thank God for each other, we experience those glimmers of joy.

—Valerie Wynalda

(Valerie’s mother is retired veteran missionary Darlene Anderson.)

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PRINCIPLES FOR Biblical Application



PASTOR KEN **LAWSON**
BBS Board Member

When a person begins to grasp the Biblical principles of right division, inevitably there are certain questions that enter his mind concerning portions of the Bible that are not Pauline. Since Paul is the apostle of the Gentiles and writes by revelation for the people in the dispensation of grace, what are we to do with the other portions of His Word? The vast majority of Scripture speaks to those who lived before the mystery was revealed or else will feel its impact after our translation to heaven.

Most Pauline Dispensationalist would agree that the entire Bible is for us, that is, it is equally inspired and for our learning, but that in Paul's writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church which is His Body. As such, his epistles comprise "our private mail" as Gentiles under the dispensation of the grace of God. Beyond that there is some uncertainty in how best to apply the vast majority of Scriptures that are not Paul's.

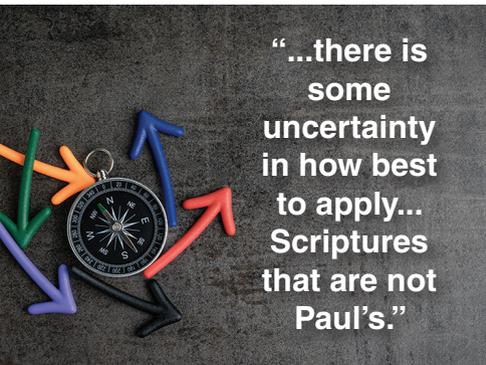
For example, what are we to do with Exodus chapter 20 through Malachi chapter 4? These are all books that are designated as "under the law" a position that Paul affirms we are not subject to today (Rom. 6:14).

Christians have a tendency to levitate to extremes on this matter. Some pick and choose certain portions that warm their hearts while others completely ignore many of the well-known Old Testament passages that believers have come to love. We certainly don't want to be accused of having a shorter Bible, nor do we want to give the impression that Paul's writings are more inspired than others. I believe that there are certain key principles that we can follow that are both Scriptural and objective and will help to guide us to enjoy our Bibles to the max.

Interpretation vs. Application

One of the first things to recognize is the distinction between

interpretation and application of the Word of God. There is only one true interpretation but many possible applications. That is, the Biblical author had one main idea in mind when he wrote a passage. Many Christians have come up with timely applications of a passage that are true, but are they the primary interpretations? Therefore it is necessary that the reader carefully study the context to determine that he has the author's mind (and the Spirit's) before he tries to make an application for us today. A mistaken interpretation will often lead to a flawed application. Isaiah chapter 53:4-12 is a good case in point.



Here are some glorious statements about Christ, His cross work, and His salvation to sinners.

“Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

“But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed.

“The LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

“...He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.

“...For the transgression of my people was He stricken.

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin.

“He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.

“...He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many....”

These quotes might be first interpreted as being spoken to or about Christ and the present-day church. However, that should be a secondary application, not the primary interpretation. During Isaiah's lifetime the church with its associated mysteries was yet a secret hid in God (Eph. 3:1-9). The Hebrew nation was the only ones that Isaiah addressed in his prophecies. That is why he wrote, “For the transgression of my people was He stricken.” Isaiah's people as we know were Israel.

It is important to recognize that the “mystery of the gospel” was not revealed before Paul and his ministry to the Gentiles. But who would deny that once the mystery was made known that the truths of Isaiah 53 took on a much wider and glorious display. Whereas the sacrifice was said to “bare the sin of many,” Paul's revelation expands it to encompass everyone everywhere. “[Christ Jesus] gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Tim. 2:6). Paul not only identifies the person of Isaiah's prophecy but explains to us the

mechanics of how His substitutionary sacrifice works so that we can now see in it much more than Isaiah or even the twelve apostles could.

Types and Shadows

Time would fail us to expound the riches of the typology of Israel's tabernacle, the priesthood, the holy feast days, the Levitical offerings, the brazen serpent, and literally hundreds of other types



and shadows that the Old Testament sheds on the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. All of these would be lost without seeing the primary interpretation to Israel and also the sweetness of the secondary application to the saints of this dispensation.

God's Attributes

Having had a brief lesson on interpretation vs. application, there are three more principles that a Christian needs to know to consistently apply non-Pauline passages in the Bible. The first principle is that God does not change and that any passage of the Bible that pertains to His character is equally applicable to all ages and dispensations. God

says, "I am the Lord; I change not..." (Mal. 3:6) and "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). God is perfect in every way, and His wonderful attributes of love, mercy, grace, holiness, truth, faithfulness, and goodness are unchangeable whether they occur in the Old Testament, the Gospels, the Book of Acts, the Hebrew epistles, Revelation, or Paul's epistles.

Humanity's Need

The second principle is that man also does not change and that any passage of the Bible that pertains to our fallen nature or our need of Christ and the gospel of God are equally applicable to all ages and dispensations. One of the evidences of the inspiration of the Bible is that God does not attempt to compliment or raise man's self-esteem to reach him with the truth. We are altogether addressed as lost, blind, dead, naked, poor, wretched, wicked, evil, sinful, and lacking in righteousness, goodness, and divine life. This is true regardless of what portion of the Bible it may occur. Man's only hope is faith in the person and work of Christ on the cross and His subsequent resurrection. Even then man's inborn nature does not change, but rather he receives Christ's life as a free gift that brings freedom from his old nature of sin.

Paul's Pattern

The third principle that we need to heed is a bit more difficult to grasp and to practice, but it is



well worth the effort. It is simply the truth that anything in God's Word is still valid for us today IF it is repeated in principle in Paul's writings or his Acts ministry.¹ Paul wrote of many distinctive truths concerning Christ and His church, the body of Christ. However, not every subject of which he wrote was a new revelation. This is manifest through his many references, quotes, and allusions to the Old Testament. God has always been interested in developing in His saints such things as love, mercy, grace, holiness, truth, faithfulness, and goodness. In short, He wants His children to partake in His own nature and develop Christ-likeness. These are addressed in all portions of the Bible.

Practicing the Principles

How is it possible to know if a certain scriptural subject is addressed by Paul and therefore for us? There is no shortcut. We must study. We must know Paul's writings like the back of our hand. We cannot trust human opinion, wisdom, or tradition. Here are a few examples to consider.

Example #1. Peter confessed that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). We know that this remains the same because it deals with the character of Christ that never changes. We also see this repeated in Paul's ministry in Acts. He confounded the Jews proving that He is the very Christ and the Son of God (Acts 9:20,22).

1. There are some notable exceptions to this principle. For example, the supernatural manifestations of visions, voices, tongues, healings, miracles, and other sign gifts were all a part of Paul's early ministry and could all be called "transitional elements" while God was attempting to reach more of the Jewish people during the Book of Acts. That these were discontinued after the Acts period is certain from such passages as 1 Corinthians 13:8; Colossians 1:25-26; Philippians 2:25-30; 2 Timothy 4:20.).

Example #2. The old Psalm says, “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies” (Psa. 58:3). So much for the idea of sinless babies. This speaks to our fallen, natural depravity before God and the inability to improve the flesh. Paul affirms this analysis when he says, “There is none righteous, no, not one” and “There is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Rom. 3:9-12).

Example #3. The Sermon on the Mount says, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5). This one is a little trickier, for now we have before us a verse that can be only partially applied to us. Meekness is a blessed state in any age, for we see it in Moses, Christ, and

Paul (Num. 12:3; Matt. 11:29; Gal. 5:23). However, it is not true that we (the present day church) will inherit the earth. That is Israel’s lot in the coming kingdom. Our inheritance is one in the heavenlies (2 Cor. 5:1; Eph. 1:3,11; 2:6; Phil. 3:20; 2 Tim. 4:18).

Countless examples could be given but we believe you get the principles. All of the Bible is for our learning and profitability (1 Cor. 10:11; 2 Tim. 3:16). Paul’s writings are particularly to us and about us so that we can claim “first dibs” on them. But let us also see and appreciate the multifaceted variety of our God in all of Scripture and how all of these revelations can minister to our hearts and lives. Amen. 

Georgia Special Meeting

Sunday, June 12, 2022

Location: Grace Bible Church
4624 Whiteoak Rd., Appling, Georgia 30802

Speaker: Ricky Kurth, *Searchlight Editor*

Contact: Pastor Loyd Lewis 706-799-6819
or Loydt.lewis@yahoo.com

BBS Letter Excerpts



From Tennessee:

“I was so excited to hear about the creation of a mid-Acts study Bible. What an absolute blessing this will be to myself and countless others. I discovered right division last year and ever since my desire to study and read the Bible has never been higher. I’ve read more Bible in the last year than I have in my entire life combined. As one of the writers said in the *Searchlight* this month, it became ‘an open Book.’”

From North Carolina:

“I am so grateful, thrilled, and excited about the Grace Bible! It’s an answer to prayer! The page from Daniel in the January *Berean Searchlight* is awesome! Also the article by Pastor Ricky Kurth called ‘The Depiction of Daniel’s Prediction.’ Both the article and the page from Daniel are the best I’ve ever read or studied!”

From Facebook:

“CAN’T WAIT!”

From Arizona:

“Pastor Kurth, Thank you for your article. It made every thing plain [Faith + Works = Justification].... Right now I’m listening to you teach on the Acts 28 position. It is sad that wrong teachings like that can be so persuasive. Also, I’m eagerly awaiting the new study Bible BBS is working on. I’m feeling like a little kid waiting for Christmas morning.” (Visions of a Grace Bible are dancing in all of our heads! –Ed.)

From Georgia:

“Love this ministry....I am a former and semi-retired Pastor and have so gratefully grown over the past 8-9 years through Pastor Sadler’s teaching, Pastor C.R. Stam, etc. I am about ready to start a new Bible study amongst ourselves. I would love a ‘do-over’ in some of my former viewpoints and teaching from 20 plus years ago. Pastor Sadler and C.R. Stam (his books) and others have been wonderful solid encouraging teachers.”

From Nevada:

“About two years ago I became intrigued with 2 Timothy 2:15. My research led me to a study of dispensations and then to the book *Things that Differ* by C. R. Stam....My studies have steeled me to become a follower of Paul as he was of Christ. My life’s goal now is to make all men see the fellowship of the mystery which encompasses all of the unsearchable riches of God. I intend to run this race until the end.”

From Arizona:

“Just a note to thank you for your prompt response....Your answer was very reassuring! I am so glad that I have discovered your website. Rightly dividing Scripture is like finally understanding the correct formula that allows you to answer that nagging math problem you could never figure out. The Bible is rapidly making more and more sense to me.”

From Missouri:

“Hi Kevin...I just listened to your salvation audio sermon on Naaman and was so blessed by it and just had to let you know.”

From Idaho:

“We very much appreciate all that you do: the *Searchlight*, Kevin Sadler’s *Transformed by Grace*, books, pamphlets, etc., which keep us closer to God’s Word.”

From our Inbox:

“I am enjoying the videos. Just discovered you today!”

From Brazil:

“I would like to receive a subscription to the printed magazine at my home. I loved the studies of Pastor J. C. O’Hair. I have been pastoring a full-time Assembly of God congregation for a year now. I love studying the Scriptures and teaching.”

From New York:

“A few years ago, when I was first coming to learn the Bible, rightly divided, you helped me a great deal and answered many of my questions. Thank you!”

From North Carolina:

“I am 73 years old and have been attending churches from Maine to Georgia and have never heard what you just wrote in your piece [‘What’s The Word?']. It is sad that the Gospel rightly divided is ignored.”

From Indiana:

“This tract [*Basic Distinctions Between Prophecy and the Mystery*] is great for anybody who doesn’t rightly divide the Word of truth to understand the dispensation of grace.”

From our Inbox:

“Thank you so much for responding...now this makes sense!! I really enjoy listening to your sermons and reading your magazine—I’m still learning all of this.”

From Guam:

“We are getting positive feedback from our *Two Minutes* newspaper articles that are sent all over the Island. The writers in the *Searchlight* are amazing, well-studied, and Spirit inspired.”

From our Inbox:

“This is new since I last visited the website. I have now downloaded the mobile app, what a blessing! An excellent app, I love it!”

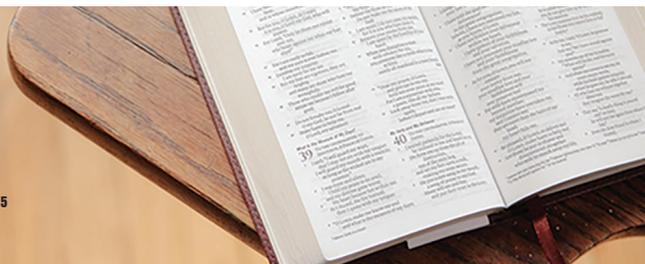
From our Inbox:

“It was 1983/1984 when our pastor saw right division. We were basically an Acts 2 Baptist church, very small. A man heard our pastor on a radio broadcast, thought the teaching was decent, close to the truth. He stopped by and gave our pastor *Things That Differ*. Our pastor took it as a challenge, lol. Fortunately, for most of us, he let the book show him some things.”

From our Inbox:

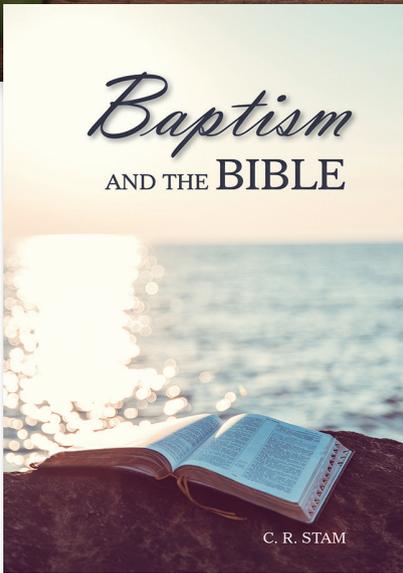
“I just want to express my deepest gratitude for sending me your magazines freely. I’m so blessed with it. The topics were really biblically explained and it is rightly divided. Where should we send our support money, ‘coz we want to help financially. My friend keeps asking me where to send our support for BBS? Please tell us ‘coz we really need to help. Heartfully!” (Bless you! The “Donations” link on our website lists several ways to give! –Ed.).

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.”





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News and Announcements

Website Eruption: BBS Webmaster Richard Church reports that there were *92,931 downloads* of our MP3 audio messages in 2021! That's an average of 255 plays per day, and an increase of 23% over the previous year. In addition, our BBS YouTube channel has been getting some attention. With New Day Media and Richard continually adding new videos and Missy Tollar keeping up with replying to the comments, this has all helped to increase our numbers. Views per day were up 52%, minutes viewed were up 76%, comments were up 38%, shares were up 62%, new subscribers were up 20%, and likes were up 116%. If you see something you like, like us and subscribe!

Your Spanish-speaking Friends: After our good friend Francisco Maldonado translated *Things That Differ* into Spanish for us, he didn't stop there. This state-certified translator went on to convert several more of our books, and is working on additional volumes. We are posting these translations on our website under the "Bible Study" tab. If you have loved ones who are more comfortable studying Bible study literature in their native tongue, be sure to direct them there.

New Nevada Church: After our new friend David Rusk learned the grace message and was unable to convince his pastor that it is the truth, he tried to share it with other pastors in town, with similar disappointing results. That's when he decided to start a new church in his hometown of Mesquite, a community that is located between nearby St. George and Las Vegas. If you live close enough to join this excited grace believer's new fellowship, you can learn more about it at davidbrusk@yahoo.com.

A Church on the Move: *Grace Bible Fellowship* of Swartz Creek, Michigan, has recently outgrown the home where they were meeting and have moved to a facility in a small shopping mall. If you live in the area, or in nearby Flint, you might want to get in touch with our good friend Pastor Phil Long at 810-444-0670, or at assignphillong@yahoo.com. He and his brother Joe would love to welcome you to the warmth of their fellowship.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR!

50 Years of Cloverley, May 13-15, Whitchurch, UK

Grace Bible Church Special Service, June 12, Appling, GA

BBF Summer Conference, June 19-23, Tipp City, OH

Missouri Conference, July 8-10, Salem, MO

Transformed by Grace Conference, August 20, Streamwood, IL



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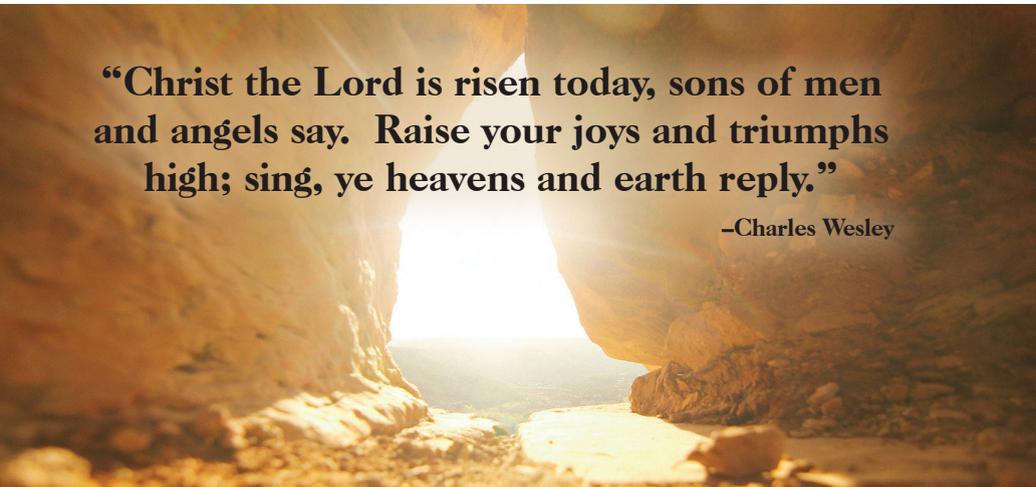
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and angels say. Raise your joys and triumphs
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