

# The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

September 2007



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

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# From the Editor to You:

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Dearly Beloved,

After the death of Moses, the Lord raised up Joshua, who had sat at the feet of Moses during the years of the wilderness wanderings. The mantle of the *law* passed seamlessly between these two warriors of the faith as Joshua was charged with the responsibility to see that the precepts of the law were carried into the Promised Land. The Lord spoke to Joshua saying: “Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee.” Notice the choice of Joshua provided a tie to the *past* (Joshua knew Moses personally), but also a vision for the *future* as he confirmed to Israel what Moses had committed to him.

When the Apostle Paul suffered martyrdom at Rome, the mantle of *grace* passed to Timothy. We are not speaking of apostolic succession, but rather the handing down of the message of grace from one generation to another. The apostle said of this faithful co-laborer, “For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.” Paul was confident that after his home-going Timothy would continue to stand for his apostleship and message *without compromise*. Once again, there was a tie to the past, while at the same time an uninterrupted continuance of the proclamation of the gospel of the grace of God.

Over two thousand years later this principle still applies today. A senior grace pastor will often groom a younger grace man to step in when he is no longer able to maintain his pulpit ministry. Years ago when Pastor Stam saw the finish line in the distance he asked me if I would consider joining him in the work at the *Berean Bible Society*. At the time I was serving as the pastor of the *Falls Bible Church*. A year earlier we had erected a new building to accommodate all those who wanted to hear the Word, rightly divided, so the decision to leave was one of the most difficult ones I’ve made in the ministry to date. It’s hard to believe, but this month is my *20th Anniversary* as the president of BBS.

I must say that it was an honor to have worked under the leadership of Pastor Stam. In fact, it was unforgettable! One of the many things he taught me was, ***never lose sight*** that God has called us to proclaim Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery. Thanks for standing with us as we labor *together* to make all men see what is the fellowship of the Mystery.

Amazed by His grace,

Paul M. Sadler, President

# The 23rd Channel



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**T**he TV is my shepherd, I shall not want for entertainment.

**I**t maketh me to lie down on the sofa.

**I**t leadeth me away from the Scriptures.

**I**t destroyeth my soul.

**I**t leadeth me in the path of sex and violence for the sponsor's sake.

**Y**ea, though I walk in the shadow of my Christian responsibilities,

**T**here will be no interruption,

**F**or the TV is with me, its cable and remote, they control me.

**I**t prepareth a commercial before me in the presence of worldliness;

**I**t anointeth my head with humanism,

**M**y coveting runneth over.

**S**urely laziness and ignorance shall follow me all the days of my life,

**A**nd I shall dwell in the house watching TV forever.

—Author Unknown

# PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Philippians 2:17-30

By Paul M. Sadler

## CHRISTIAN LOVE

The stories behind most of our great hymns of the faith are nothing short of amazing. Many of them were born out of fiery trials, while others were a result of a memorable occasion. A good example of the latter is John Fawcett, who came to a saving knowledge of Christ at an evangelistic meeting held by George Whitfield in 1756. Shortly after the Lord called him into the ministry, John accepted his first pastorate at a small, impoverished assembly in Wainsgate, England. After several years at the church, with his family growing larger in number, he was struggling to make ends meet; therefore he reluctantly accepted a call to pastor a large church in London.

When the day arrived to move, the members of the congregation gathered around the wagons in tears to bid their beloved pastor farewell. Pastor and Mrs. Fawcett had grown so close to the congre-

gation that it broke their heart to see them weeping uncontrollably. They both agreed they could not leave these dear saints and instructed those who were helping, to unload the wagons. A short time later, Pastor Fawcett was preparing a message when he incorporated the words of what would become one of the most beloved hymns of the Christian faith.<sup>1</sup>

## Blest Be the Tie That Binds

*Blest be the tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love!  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above.*

*When we asunder part  
It gives us inward pain;  
But we shall still be joined in heart,  
And hope to meet again.*

The world will never understand the depth of our fellowship with those of like-precious faith. Brother Stam's good friend, Pastor Edward Drew, once shared these insightful words with his congregation:

“Fellowship is the knitting together of all saved souls into a unity and oneness in Christ. If you are saved you will feel a nearness to all others who are saved, and you will find it a peculiar joy that you cannot feel in any human relationship. It is wrought only by the Holy Spirit, and is a very precious thing among believers. It is often marred in our Assemblies. It is God’s method of blessing His Church, and so it is the purpose of Satan to mar and spoil it among God’s people. Where there is true fellowship there is blessing that cannot be attained in any other way.”



Although the above stanzas of *Blest Be the Tie That Binds* were written centuries after the ministry of the Apostle Paul, they pretty well sum up his relationship with the saints at Philippi. The mutual tie that bound their *hearts in Christian love* was Christ. This assembly also enjoyed the *fellowship of kindred minds* having all received Paul’s apostleship and message as God’s will for the Church today, which they never questioned or compromised. When they were torn *asunder* by Paul’s unjust imprisonment it caused both Paul and them

*inward pain*. But they were still *joined in heart*, and longed to *meet again* (Phil. 2:24).

### THREE EXAMPLES OF THE MIND OF CHRIST

**“Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.”**

—Phil. 2:17,18

**Paul** is the first example of the practical outworking of having the mind of Christ.

The apostle faithfully proclaimed the whole counsel of God in his ministry; therefore, he always assumes that those who are following his example have a working knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures. The above passage is a case in point! The two terms Paul uses here, *offered* and *sacrifice*, are closely identified with the Jewish sacrificial system. The word “offered” has the idea to be poured out as a sacrifice in the sense of a *libation*, while the term “sacrifice” speaks of the act of the victim.

Essentially Paul is likening the *sacrifice* and *service* of the Philippians to the burnt offering in time past, which was a sweet savor offering that was well pleasing to God. Interestingly, it was a *voluntary* sacrifice that was done in the Lord’s service (Lev. 1:3). When the Philippians pondered what the grace of God had done for them in bringing them salvation, they willingly devoted the remainder of their lives to the things of the Lord. No sacrifice was too great in their desire to glorify God.

In the Old Testament the *libation* or drink offering was also a sacrifice that was normally poured over the burnt offering, the two being closely related (Num. 15:1-5). Since Paul was confident he would soon be released we do not believe that the apostle was necessarily speaking about being poured out in death at the hands of Nero (Phil. 1:25 cf. 2:24). It has been correctly observed that Paul's "use of the present tense and passive voice implies that his life *is still being poured out* in his sacrificial ministry for them." Not only did this cause them to *rejoice*, it also brought *joy* to Paul's heart to see what his ministry was accomplishing among them. Along the same lines, our good friend, David Barton, recently wrote to encourage us at BBS with these words: "May you rejoice in the joy that caused your testimony."

When we combine these two metaphors a beautiful picture emerges. Paul holds up the faithful service of the saints at Philippi for all to see, but likens his ministry among them to the drink offering, thus presenting it as an addition to their sacrificial work. He looked at his work as merely complementing theirs.

Such *selflessness* is rarely seen in the Church today. Ministers of the gospel should be ashamed of themselves when they become envious of the success of others. It is unwise to compare ourselves among ourselves simply because we all have different gifts and callings and opportunities in the Lord's service. When we place others before ourselves and strive

together to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace the fallen hosts of heaven tremble.

Paul only makes a passing reference to himself in this section, but when it came to the ministries of Timothy and Epaphroditus, his co-laborers in the faith, the apostle has nothing but praise for these two men of God. He esteemed them better than himself. Paul delighted to share with the Philippians what the Lord was doing through these brethren to the praise of His glory. Like the Lord who gave Himself for us, Paul always had the best interest of others in mind. This should be true of every believer in Christ. Remember and remember well what the Scriptures say: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5).

**"But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state" (Phil. 2:19).**

**Timothy** is the second example of the practical outworking of having the mind of Christ.

Beginning at verse 19, if you read carefully the remaining verses to the close of the chapter, it is interesting to note that Paul was going to send this epistle with Epaphroditus, who was returning to Philippi. We are also told that he would be followed by Timothy shortly thereafter. But why send Timothy when Epaphroditus was going to bear the letter? Furthermore, if Epaphroditus was being sent beforehand, why, chronologically, does the apostle mention Timothy first?

The decision to send Timothy to Philippi was by *design*. When the time came for Epaphroditus to return home Paul had not yet heard whether or not he would be released from his incarceration at Rome. In essence the apostle says, as “soon as I shall see how it will go with me” I will send Timothy that you might know the final outcome of the proceedings. He adds, “But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly” (Phil. 2:24). We now know, of course, that things did go favorably for him at Rome. This means Timothy would have been able to share the good news with the saints at Philippi, along with the approximate timetable of Paul’s arrival.

Although Epaphroditus was returning to Philippi before Timothy, chronologically, Paul makes reference to Timothy first in the narrative because he was sending him in an official capacity. Paul was unsure of the status of the church in view of the problems Satan had stirred up among some of the brethren. The assembly was in danger of descending into the abyss of disunity from which there is usually no return.

Beloved ones, Satan hates the Mystery with a passion because it exposes him as a defeated foe. Those who stand for it, and faithfully make it known, are the objects of his hatred. He simply sows a little discord among the brethren and steps back and watches the assembly self-destruct. Paul, being well aware of the enemy’s tactics, sent Timothy to ascertain the state of the assembly and serve as

a mediator if need be (Phil. 2:19). The apostle says of him:

**“For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state” (Phil. 2:20).**

Timothy understood something that many of the brethren fail to see today, that is, Paul was God’s *spokesman* for the present administration of Grace. He obeyed Paul’s command: “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (I Cor. 11:1). You see, to follow in the footsteps of Paul is to acknowledge the teachings of Christ *in His heavenly ministry*. Paul is *God’s example* of how to properly teach the message of grace and effectively live the Christian life. Timothy was so in tune with Paul’s ministry that the apostle said of him that he had no man so likeminded. This is a clear indication that Timothy was *teachable*. Hopefully, the same can be said of us!

Timothy had a genuine burden for the Lord’s people, which prompted the apostle to say to the Philippians that he will naturally care for you. Timothy cared! A man may be very intellectual and eloquently preach the Word, but if he doesn’t show an interest in those he is ministering to he will never fully earn their respect. It’s another example of actions speaking louder than words. When Paul says, “For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s” (Phil. 2:21), apparently there were those at Rome who merely had selfish intentions. Hear me and hear me well, not every minister of the gospel is looking out for your spiritual



well-being. Sadly, there are many charlatans who name the name of Christ that are simply out for their own personal gain and glory (I Tim. 6:3-5).

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“When we...maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace the fallen hosts of heaven tremble.”

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Every so often I run into someone I haven't seen for years who sat under my ministry long ago. Interestingly, they rarely comment on a particular message I preached, but they do remember the time I stopped by to visit them during a rough period in their life. Someone cared! Like Christ, Timothy was genuinely concerned about those God had entrusted to his spiritual care. And we are reminded again to “let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” There is a very special bond established with those who express an interest in us. Stop and think, you are saved because someone cared! And, if you're like me, they hold a very special place in your heart.

**“But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel” (Phil. 2:22).**

As we know, Paul led Timothy to Christ on his first apostolic journey when he visited Lystra and Derbe (Acts 14:6 cf. 16:1,2). Several years later when the apostle returned to these cities to confirm the faith of these saints he found

that Timothy had ascended to a position of leadership. Having received such a good report about this young man from the brethren, he had Timothy join him on his second apostolic journey. Here, too, Timothy proved himself to be a faithful servant of the Lord.

After Paul's experience with John Mark, who left the work at Pamphylia, the apostle was careful never to place anyone in a position of responsibility before they were first tested. Sound advice! But in the case of Timothy, he had *proven* himself; therefore, the apostle felt comfortable to commend him to the church at Philippi. Paul was pushing Timothy out of the nest as it were, so he could soar to new heights. In so doing, he is teaching us “to be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor *preferring* one another.” “Preferring” has the idea of leading the way for others, which is precisely what Paul was doing in his commendation of Timothy.

**Epaphroditus** is the third example of the practical outworking of having the mind of Christ.

**“Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labor, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.**

**“I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that**

**I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me” (Phil. 2:25-30).**

Epaphroditus was sent by the church of Philippi to Rome to encourage Paul and deliver to him a gift for the work of the ministry. By doing so he supplied their “lack of service” toward Paul, which simply means they lacked the opportunity to do it in person (Phil. 2:30 cf. 4:15-18). En route to Rome Epaphroditus became ill, perhaps with the Roman fever, and was near death. However, he continued in spite of his sickness. According to the record, he literally *risked* his life for the work of Christ (Phil. 2:30). As we will see, such dedication did not go unnoticed by God.

It has been said that when we become ill today we expect to *live*. After taking a regimen of antibiotics we’re usually up and around in a few days. In biblical times when they became seriously ill they expected to *die*. And Epaphroditus would have died if God hadn’t *intervened*, for Paul says: “For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him.” Notice it was God who had mercy on him, not the instrumentality of Paul. The sign gifts of the Acts period had long since passed; consequently, the apostle was unable to heal his friend. But God did respond to the prayers of Paul and those at Philippi to meet this need.

God is not using faith healers today to perform miraculous

healings, in spite of what they say. In fact, more often than not, God’s answer to our prayers regarding physical afflictions is, “My grace is sufficient.” And the Scriptures go on to say, His “strength is made perfect in weakness.” But we should be careful not to bind the hands of God by saying He *never* heals today. He is sovereign and sometimes does raise up the sick in answer to our prayers. Surely this was the case with Epaphroditus. We do concur though that this is the *exception*, not the rule.

Paul was grateful that God had raised up Epaphroditus lest he “should have sorrow upon sorrow.” The apostle was already enduring the sorrow of imprisonment and it would have been added sorrow if he lost Epaphroditus, who was more than a brother, he was also a companion in labor and a fellow soldier who fought the good fight of the faith. As Paul sends him back to Philippi bearing this letter, imagine the surprise of the assembly who thought they would never see him again when they heard he had been sick.

Paul instructs them to “receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation.” The apostle was always quick to bestow honor to whom honor was due, and we are well served when we follow his example. May the Lord help us to be quick to encourage and slow to find fault!

*To Be Continued!* 

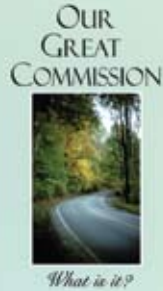
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## Endnote

1. *101 Hymn Stories* by Kenneth W. Osbeck, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.

# Getting Things Straight

By C. R. Stam



## WHAT THEN IS OUR COMMISSION?

We trust that it has now been made abundantly clear that the commission of our Lord to the eleven apostles, the so-called “great commission,” is *not* the commission of the Church, the Body of Christ; it is *not* to be carried out today.

What then *is* our God-given commission? Before answering this let us consider briefly what happened to the commission given to the eleven.

We have emphasized the fact that the so-called “great commission” and the prophetic program in general were *interrupted*. The apostles and disciples *could not* carry out their commission *to its completion* due to Israel's stubborn rejection of Messiah. But after it had become evident that Jerusalem and the favored nation would not repent and receive Messiah, the leaders of the twelve agreed, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to confine their ministry to Israel alone while others went to the Gentiles. We

will discuss this later in detail, but first:

## Prophecy Interrupted The Mystery Revealed

When Peter arose to speak at Pentecost to explain the gift of tongues, he declared that the last days had come (Acts 2:16,17) and that this would be further evidenced by two phenomena: (1) the pouring out of the Spirit on God's people and, (2) the pouring out of judgment upon His enemies, all prophesied by Joel with regard to “*that great and terrible day of the Lord*” (Acts 2:14-21 cf. Joel 2:28-32).

As we know, the Spirit *was* “poured out,” but not the judgments that were to bring in the day of the Lord. There were no “wonders in heaven above” or “blood” or “fire” or “vapor of smoke.” The sun was not “turned into darkness,” nor the moon “into blood.”

Rather, when Israel rejected the apostles' offer of the return of Christ and “the times of refreshing”; when the stage was all set,

as it were, for the judgment to fall, God did a wonderful thing.

In an amazing act of grace, the rejected Lord reached down from heaven, *not* to crush Saul of Tarsus, the leader of the rebellion, but to *save* him and make him His own apostle of grace, thus ushering in the present “dispensation of the grace of God.”

It was to this *other* apostle that God committed the glorious message and program which is ours today. Stated briefly, it was that God would now reconcile believing Jews and Gentiles to Himself by grace through faith, apart from the law or works, all on the basis of the blood shed at Calvary for the remission of sins. Those who accepted this offer of reconciliation and thus became members of the “one body,” were to be given a heavenly position and prospect, and “all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ.” The most general term for all this good news is, “*the gospel of the grace of God,*” which the Apostle Paul declared, in Acts 20:24, had been specifically committed to him.

The prophetic Scriptures, of course, contained no hint of all this. It was “a mystery hid in God,” “hid from ages and from generations,” and “kept secret since the world [or *ages*] began” (Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:26; Rom. 16:25). This is why the apostle again and again calls this great body of truth, “the mystery,” or “the secret.”

## OUR GREAT COMMISSION

Where the lost are concerned, then, our commission comprises an offer of *reconciliation* to God through the death of Christ.

This could hardly be stated more clearly than it is in II Corinthians 5:14-21:

**“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:**

**“And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.**

**“Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.**

**“Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature [Lit., “there is a new creation”]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

**“And all things are of God,<sup>1</sup> who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;**

**“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.**

**“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ’s stead be ye reconciled to God.**

**“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, [Him] who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”**

How tempted we are to go into an exposition of this passage, but we merely quote it here to show that God “hath given to us *the ministry of reconciliation,*” and “hath COMMITTED unto us the word of reconciliation.” *This is our “GREAT COMMISSION,”* the



proclamation of the greatest message ever sent by God to man.

Under this commission we are no longer to differentiate between Jew and Gentile for “henceforth know we no man after the flesh.” Nor are we even to know Christ after the flesh for, “now henceforth know we *Him* [Christ after the flesh] no more” (Ver. 16). Rather the Apostle Paul prays more earnestly that we might know Him as the One “*far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come*” (Eph. 1:21).

It should be noted here that whereas the twelve had never seen Christ *in heaven* (At His ascension “a cloud received Him *out of their sight*”—Acts 1:9), Paul had never seen Christ *on earth* (I Cor. 15:8). This was appropriate in view of the difference in their ministries. The twelve had been sent to proclaim the *return* of Christ to reign *on earth*, while Paul was later sent to proclaim the *grace* of Christ and His headship over the Body, with its *heavenly* calling and position.

Under Paul’s commission, and ours, we are to require nothing for salvation but simple faith in the One who was “made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. 5:21). Indeed, rather than demanding anything of the lost we are to “pray” *them*, to earnestly beseech them, “in Christ’s stead,” to be “reconciled to God” (Ver. 20). *This is infinite grace indeed!*

Finally, obedience to *this* great commission brings believing Jews and Gentiles alike into a “new creation”: “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is [Lit., there is] a new creation*” (Cf. Eph. 2:10; 4:24; Col. 3:10).

Mark well, *this*, says the inspired apostle, is *our* great commission.

***“God...hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation” (Ver. 18).***

***“God...hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (Ver. 19).***

Let the Church once recognize *this* glorious commission as distinctively hers, and the major cause of denominational division will be removed.

God grant that the walls of denominationalism may soon tumble and fall, at least for His people, and that they may proclaim to the world with one voice:

***“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.***

***“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, [Him] who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”***

## The Commission to the Eleven Superseded by the Commission to Paul

Surely no one even superficially acquainted with the Book of Acts and the Epistles of Paul will question the fact that sometime *after* our Lord's commission to the eleven, Paul was sent, as an apostle of Christ, to proclaim to all mankind "*the gospel of the grace of God.*"

The question, however, is whether Paul was sent out under a different commission from that to the eleven; whether his was a *different message* from theirs, and whether this constituted a *change in commission*. This is answered for us in many passages in Paul's epistles, but especially in Galatians 2:1-9.

Here he relates how he went up to Jerusalem again, and this time, he says, "[I] took Titus with me also." As we consider the passage further we shall see the significance of this statement. Here, however, it is noteworthy that the apostle adds that he went up to Jerusalem on this occasion "by revelation," i.e., the Lord instructed him to go. Why? This is answered for us in the rest of the sentence:

**"...and [I] communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain" (Ver. 2).**

In the light of this passage, how futile to argue that Paul merely went up to check with the other apostles to make sure he was preaching the same message as they!

*First*, he had been sent up to Jerusalem by the Lord *because* believers from Judaea had sought to impose circumcision and the law upon the Gentile believers (Acts 15:1,2). *Second*, he states that he "communicated" to the leaders at Jerusalem "*that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles.*" This phraseology is common to Paul's epistles, indicating that "*that gospel*" which he preached to the Gentiles was *not* the same as the gospel which the apostles at Jerusalem had been preaching to the people of Israel. *Third*, this is further confirmed by the fact that in communicating this information to the leaders at Jerusalem he first went "*privately* to them which were of reputation." Why should he have to do this if his message was the same as that which they were preaching at Jerusalem? He was obviously trying to convince them of the truth and validity of "*that gospel*" which he had been preaching among the Gentiles.

This all being so, it was important to the apostle to have Titus, a Gentile, with him as a test case, for in Verse 3 he says:

**"But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised."**

Note the word "compelled." Some would have intimidated or coerced Titus into subjecting himself to circumcision and the law, but Titus, like Paul, was a man of strong, godly character and Paul says, as it were: "And they didn't compel Titus, the Gentile, to be circumcised either!" And then, referring to certain "false brethren unawares brought in," who had sought "privily to spy

out” the Gentiles’ liberty in Christ, he declares:

**“To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (Ver. 5).**

All this makes it clear that “that gospel” which Paul preached among the Gentiles was a *new* revelation, never before made known. And if this be not enough we have a statement in Verses 7-9 that proves beyond a doubt that Paul’s commission superseded that of the eleven. Here we read that “*they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me [Paul] as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.*”

**“And when James, Cephas [Peter] and John...perceived the grace that was given unto me [Paul], they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision” (Ver. 9).**

Here, by a solemn, official agreement, Peter, James and John promise to confine their ministry to Israel while Paul goes to the Gentiles. This is striking in view of the fact that the twelve, not Paul, had originally been sent into all the world.

Were they all out of the will of God in making this agreement? By no means! Subsequent revelation proves that they were all very much in the will of God and that Israel’s rejection of Christ had brought about a change in the program.

Thus the leaders at Jerusalem “loosed” themselves, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, from the commission under which they

had at first been sent, and what they “loosed on earth” was indeed “loosed in heaven” (Matt. 18:18).

Had not the eleven been sent into “*all the world,*” to “make disciples of all nations”? Did not this include the Gentiles? Yet here they acknowledge *Paul* as the apostle to the Gentiles, at the same time agreeing that they are to *discontinue* the pursuance of their earlier commission to evangelize all the world. How can anyone read this, simply *read* it, and question the fact that to Paul was given a special commission and that this superseded, historically, the commission given to the eleven?

This passage alone should be sufficient to convince those who still wish to carry out the so-called “great commission,” that this is now *impossible*. It was given up long ago as God raised up that *other* apostle, Paul, and committed to him that message which has brought salvation and blessing to millions down through the centuries since.

### **Paul and His Commission**

It is significant that the three terms employed in the so-called “great commission” to indicate its world-wide scope, are also used in Paul’s epistles in connection with his ministry. Only, whereas the twelve never got to “*all nations,*” “*all the world*” or “*all creation*” with their message, Paul *did* with his.

In closing his epistle to the Romans the apostle says:

**“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation**

of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.

***“But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets,<sup>2</sup> according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith” (Rom. 16:25,26).***

To the Colossians he writes concerning “*the truth of the gospel*”:

***“Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you...” (Col. 1:6).***

***“...which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven [or all creation under heaven]; whereof I Paul am made a minister” (Col. 1:23).***

Various arguments may be advanced to prove that “the gospel of the grace of God” did not actually reach “all the world” or “all creation,” and we do not deny that to those addressed “all the world” would doubtless mean all the *known* world, and “all creation” would likewise mean all the creation *as they knew it*. But the point is that whatever these three phrases mean in the so-called “great commission,” they must also mean in these statements by Paul, for the terms are exactly identical in the original.

We have seen how the twelve did *not* get their message to “all nations,” “all the world,” or “all creation,” because, on the one hand Israel rejected it and on the other hand God had a secret purpose to unfold. But Paul, to whom this secret purpose was revealed, says that by the grace of God he *did* get *his* message to “all nations,” “all the world” and “all creation.”

Whereas the twelve never got beyond their own nation in carrying out their commission, it is written of Paul that during his stay at Ephesus “*all they which dwelt in Asia [in Asia Minor] heard the word of the Lord Jesus*” (Acts 19:10). To the Romans he writes: “*from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ*” (Rom. 15:19), and speaks of his plans to go to Spain (15:24), plans which were probably accomplished between his two imprisonments. Even of his helpers it was said: “*These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also*” (Acts 17:6). And to the Romans again he says: “*your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world*” (Rom. 1:8).

“...Paul was sent out under a different commission from that to the eleven...”

With regard to this last statement it is argued by some that since Paul had not even been to Rome by then, it must be that believers from the Jerusalem Church had gotten as far as Rome under their “great commission.”

We do not accept this as valid, for while indeed there were “strangers from Rome” present at Pentecost, there is no indication that there was any substantial number of these, or that those present were even converted, much less that they started a church at Rome. On the other



hand we do read in Acts 8:1 that in the great persecution in Jerusalem “they were all scattered abroad throughout *the regions of Judaea and Samaria*, except the apostles.” Then, with regard to this same scattering we read further:

**“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word to none but unto *the Jews only*.**

**“And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to *Antioch*, spake unto *the Greeks*,<sup>3</sup> preaching the Lord Jesus” (Acts 11:19,20).**

When the Church at Jerusalem heard of this they sent Barnabas to look into it and *he* went to Tarsus to find *Saul*, and under *Saul* the Church at Antioch became the base of operations for the evangelization of the *Gentiles* with “the gospel of the grace of God.”

It was from Antioch that, as we have seen, Paul went by revelation to Jerusalem to communicate to the leaders there that gospel which he preached among the *Gentiles* (Gal. 2:2), with the result that they promised to confine their ministry to Israel, officially and publicly recognizing *Paul* as the apostle of the *Gentiles* (Ver. 9). And even *at that council*, the Circumcision apostles wrote concerning those who had gone out from them to impose their message and program upon the *Gentiles*:

**“Forasmuch as we have heard, that *certain which went out from us* have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must be circumcised, and keep***

**the law: to whom we gave no such commandment” (Acts 15:24).**

The Circumcision saints themselves still remained under the law for the time being (see Acts 21:20) but, recognizing Paul’s further revelation and his commission to the *Gentiles*, they condemned as trouble-makers those of their number who sought to impose their message and program upon the *Gentiles*. And Paul also called them trouble-makers (Gal. 1:6,7).

Thus those to whom Paul wrote at Rome could scarcely have been converts of the Circumcision believers at Jerusalem. They had doubtless been won to Christ through those whom Paul had reached with “the gospel of the grace of God.”

This leads us to recognize another important fact. We’ve seen from Matthew 24:14 that if the twelve had gotten their message to all the world, “the end” of that dispensation would have come. This proves at the same time that Paul was *not* laboring to fulfill that “great commission” and that he did *not* preach the same gospel as they, for then “the end” would have come in his day, since he *says* that *his* message *had* gone to “all nations” and “all the world.”

*To Be Continued!* 

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## Endnotes

1. I.e., in this new dispensation *all is of God*. There are no sacrifices, no feast days, no baptism; nothing for man to do to gain acceptance with Him. Salvation is by simple faith in what *He* has done for us.
2. Lit., *prophetic writings*, i.e., his own writings, for it had been “*kept secret*” and was only “*now*” made manifest.
3. Not *Grecians*, for *Grecians* were *Jews*, and this would’ve been nothing unusual.



# Berean Bible Fellowship

## Fall Bible Conference

**Dates:** October 11,12, 2007

**Location:** *Marriott Hotel*  
Evansville, Indiana

**Guest Speakers:**

John Fredericksen, David Siegmann,  
Paul M. Sadler, Richard Ware, Ricky Kurth,  
Ken Lawson, Edward Bedore, Joel Finck

**Theme:** “*Vital Ministries*”

If you need additional information regarding accommodations, directions or to receive a BBF Fall Conference brochure, please contact: Pastor Floyd Baker at: (386) 851-0744, e-mail: [bakerpastorf@aol.com](mailto:bakerpastorf@aol.com), or the *Berean Bible Society* at: (262) 255-4750, e-mail: [berean@execpc.com](mailto:berean@execpc.com).

# Berean Bible Institute

## Fall Bible Conference

**Dates:** October 19,20, 2007

**Location:** *Berean Bible Institute*  
116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive  
Slinger, Wisconsin 53086


**Guest Speakers:**

Ricky Kurth, Dan Wolgast, Paul Turner,  
Matthew Ritchey, Ken Lyon, Rob Nix

**Theme:** *The Supremacy of God’s Grace*



For additional information or directions please contact Dr. W. Edward Bedore at: **Berean Bible Institute**, 116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086-0587, phone: (262) 644-5504, fax: (262) 644-5507, e-mail: [bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org](mailto:bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org).



# Hell, Sheol, Hades, Paradise, and the Grave (Cont.)

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.  
Executive Director, Berean Bible Institute

## DEATH AND SHEOL

Death and Sheol/Hades are linked together at least thirty-three times in the Scriptures. In these, we see a general distinction between the “outward man,” which is the body and the “inward man,” which is the soul (cf. II Cor. 4:16). In this sense, death, or the grave, claims the physical part of man, the body, while Sheol/Hades claims the separated, spiritual part of man, the soul. This is exactly the meaning of Psalm 16:10: “*For Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell (Sheol); neither will Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.*” In his Pentecostal address, Peter left no room for doubt that this was a prophetic pronouncement concerning the time between the Lord Jesus Christ’s death on the Cross and His resurrection. First, he quoted Psalm 16:8-11 (Acts 2:25-28) and then made direct application of verse 10 to Christ (Acts 2:31). Not only was the Lord Jesus’ soul not left in Sheol/Hades, but neither was His body left to rot in the grave. That Peter used Hades, the place of Sheol, in this quotation shows that they are identical in meaning.

Of course, the Lord Jesus Christ is exceptional because He had the power not only to lay down His life on our behalf, but also to take it up again (Jn. 10:17,18). This is not so of any other man, as the Psalmist points out when he asks, rhetorically, “*What man is he that liveth and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave (Sheol)?*” (Ps. 89:48). Because of the curse of sin, all of mankind faces the reality of physical death. None can evade it by their own power,

nor can any man or woman escape from Sheol/Hades on their own. We know that since the Cross the souls of those who die “in Christ” do not go to Sheol/Hades, but to heaven. However, this is through the merit of Jesus Christ and His power, not their own. For those “in Christ,” death has no sting and Sheol/Hades has no victory because their body and soul will be united in a resurrection unto life (see I Cor. 15:19,20,51-57). This is as certain as the fact of Jesus Christ’s resurrection. This is not so for those who die without Christ for they face a resurrection unto judgment, which is referred to as the “second death” (Rev. 20:13,14; 21:8).

Psalm 89:48 speaks of the time when the soul is separated from the body. The body is given over to death where it will decay, while the soul is assigned to Sheol/Hades to await the final judgment. It is clear that the body and soul of the lost will be reunited at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment of the unsaved dead, when “*death and Hades*” will deliver up the dead that are in them. That is, their bodies will be raised from the grave, or death, and reunited with the soul, which will come out of Sheol/Hades to be judged by Jesus Christ at the Great White Throne (see Rev. 20:11-15; cf. Jn. 5:28,29).

When the Lord Jesus said that “*as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*” (Mat. 12:40), He was saying that He would spend the time between His death and resurrection in Sheol/Hades. We know from Psalm 16:10 and Acts 2:25-32 that the Lord’s soul, which was made an offering for sin (Isa. 53:10), was in Sheol/Hades, and we know from Matthew 12:40 that He was in the heart of the earth, which is where we believe that Sheol/Hades is located.

When we speak of the heart of something, we are not referring to that which is superficial or only skin-deep. Symbolically, the heart signifies the innermost character, feelings, or inclinations of a man. The heart is also used when referring to the center, or core, of something. For example; it is sometimes said, “the heart of a watermelon is the best part,” meaning that the center part of the watermelon tastes better than the part



closer to the rind. If we say that we have a “heart-felt desire” for a particular area of ministry, we would be speaking of a yearning to do the Lord’s work that comes from our innermost being as opposed to a superficial desire based on the emotions of the moment. When used figuratively in the Scriptures, the word “heart” is used in a similar fashion, thus the heart of the earth gives reference to something much deeper than a simple place of burial for a man’s body barely under the surface of the earth. That it is said that before His ascension the

Lord Jesus first descended “*into the lower parts of the earth*” (Eph. 4:9) affirms this. In a Psalm of thanksgiving for being delivered from death, David makes reference to this by distinguishing between Sheol/Hades (rendered grave in the KJV) and Queber (rendered pit in this passage) (Ps. 30:1-3).

In Ezekiel we find prophecies against the kings of Assyria (Ezek. 31) and Egypt (Ezek. 32) that indicate that Sheol/Hades is in the center of the earth. In these two chapters it speaks of the fall of these mighty kings, who in death ended up in the underworld with those who have gone before them. We do not have the space here to give extensive commentary on these two chapters. But we do want to point out that in regard to both kings it is said that in death they would go “*to the nether parts of the earth...with them that go down into the pit*” (see Ezek. 31:14,16,18; 32:18,24), the “*nether parts*” being the lower regions of the earth. We should take note that in chapter thirty-one it is being pointed out to Pharaoh that just as the king of Assyria, who was greater than he was, had died and gone into the underworld, so would he.

In chapter thirty-two we find a prophecy, given in the form of a lamentation, foretelling Pharaoh’s defeat by the king of Babylon (Ezek. 32:1-16). This is followed by a lamentation over the multitude of Egyptians who would be slain by the Babylonians (Ezek. 31:17-31). We have pictured for us those of the nations who preceded them, welcoming Pharaoh and his host as they arrived in Sheol/Hades by taunting them. They point out that the Egyptians had thought themselves to be invincible because of their strength and fame among the nations. But now they were just like the great nations who had gone before them, their individual souls being confined to Sheol/Hades while their bodies decay in the grave.

“*The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell (Sheol)..*” (Ezek. 32:21). The “strong among the mighty” spoken of here refers to the men who had been the kings and leaders of the different nations that are mentioned in this passage: Asshor, or Assyria (v. 22), Elam (v. 24), Meshech and Tubal (v. 26), Edom, her kings and her princes (v. 29), the princes of the north and the Zidonians (v. 30). This passage shows that while those of each group mentioned are in their respective burial places, their *quebers*, they are at the same time all together in “the pit,” which is an expression that is sometimes used for Sheol/Hades (vv. 18,25,29). These are similar examples as that found in Isaiah 14, which we have previously looked at.

While we have not exhausted the subject by looking at every passage that Sheol is found in, it is clear from these examples that Sheol is not simply the grave but is located at the center of the earth and is the abode of the souls of the unrighteous dead who are awaiting their resurrection unto condemnation. It is equally clear that those in Sheol/Hades are not in an unconscious state of existence but are quite

aware of what is going on around them. There is memory, recognition, and communication there.

## TARTARUS

The Apostle Peter used the word *Tartarus* in reference to “*the angels that sinned*” that God delivered to Sheol/Hades to await judgment (II Pet. 2:4). This word, which is translated “hell” in the KJV, was used in Greek mythology to refer to the place of punishment for the most wicked. It is not clear if Peter was using this word in reference to Sheol/Hades in a general way or if he was referring to a specific compartment of Sheol/Hades where a certain class of fallen angels are confined awaiting final judgment. Either way, this passage teaches that there is a place of confinement in which a particular group of beings are being held until the time of their judgment. This is consistent with the overall Biblical teaching about the existence and purpose of Sheol/Hades.

## PARADISE

While Paradise is not now a part of Sheol/Hades it will be mentioned here because it was located in Sheol/Hades at one time. Before the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ everybody who died went to Sheol/Hades, which was at that time divided into at least two compartments. One was a place of torment while the other was a place of blessing, which was referred to as Abraham’s Bosom (Lk. 16:22-25). As we mentioned before, Tartarus may be a specific place in Sheol/Hades.

“The soul of man lives on after physical death and will always remain in a conscious state of being.”

We know that Jesus Christ went “*into the lower parts of the earth*” (Eph. 4:9), that is to Sheol/Hades, “in the heart of the earth,” for three days and nights while his body was in the grave (Mat. 12:40). The Lord Jesus told the repentant thief that he would join Him in Paradise that same day (Lk. 23:42,43). This tells us that Paradise was located in Sheol/Hades at that time. We believe that this was the same place referred to as Abraham’s Bosom in Luke 16. However, after Jesus Christ rose from the dead He ascended to the Father, taking the saints who were in Abraham’s Bosom to heaven with Him. Thus, He took “*captivity captive*” (see Eph. 4:8-10).

That Paradise was moved to heaven is confirmed to us by the Apostle Paul who speaks of a man who was “*caught up into Paradise*” where he “*heard unspeakable words*” (II Cor. 12:3,4). With Jesus Christ’s work complete, the believers who had been confined to Sheol/Hades were now taken to Heaven to wait in God’s presence until the time of

their resurrection to enter His Kingdom on Earth. Since that time, at death all believers go to Paradise in Heaven to await the time of their resurrection. This is true whether they belong to the Kingdom Church of the future or the Body of Christ Church of the present Dispensation of Grace.

## THE GRAVE

We have already looked at the word *queber*, the most common word for grave, or a burial place, in the Old Testament, and have shown that it is not the same as Sheol. As previously stated, of the sixty-four times it is used it is rendered “grave” thirty-four times, “sepulcher” twenty-six times, and “burying place” four times. Two other words that are used for a burial place in the Old Testament are *Shah-ghath* and *Qeburah*.

*Shah-ghath*: This word is translated “grave” once (Job 33:22). It is rendered “ditch” twice, “destruction” twice, “corruption” four times, and “pit” thirteen times. This word speaks of something that man can dig (Ps. 94:13; Prov. 26:27) and is used in reference to a hole into which a man can fall (Ps. 7:15; Prov. 26:27), and a hole used as a trap (Ps. 35:7). It is a place where the physical body suffers destruction through the corruption of decay (Ps. 16:10; 49:9; 55:23). The basic meaning is that of a hole of some kind that man digs for a particular purpose. Generally, it is used of a burial place, i.e., a grave.

*Qeburah*: This word is related to *queber* and means a grave or burial place. It is used of various types of graves and is found fourteen times and is translated “grave” four times, “sepulcher” five times, “burial” four times, and “burying place” one time.

In the New Testament we find three more words that refer to the grave, *taphos*, *mnema*, and *mnemeion*.


*Taphos* is used seven times and is translated “sepulcher” six of those and “tomb” once.

*Mnema* is used seven times, being rendered “tomb” twice, “grave” once, and “sepulcher” four times.

*Mnemeion* is the most common word for grave in the New Testament. It is used forty-two times, five times as “tomb,” twenty-nine times as “sepulcher,” and eight times as “grave.”

The grave is a place where the physical remains of those who have died are deposited. It can be a hole in the ground, a cave, or a specially prepared vault or other place used for interment. The soul and spirit having departed the body at death, there is no consciousness of life in the grave. It is a place of corruption that serves to point out man’s need of a Savior. The soul of man lives on after physical death and will always remain in a conscious state of being. The unsaved go to Sheol/Hades to await their resurrection unto condemnation while the redeemed go to heaven to await their resurrection unto life (see Jn. 5:25-29).

## PRACTICAL APPLICATION FOR TODAY

A proper understanding of what the Bible teaches about Hell, Sheol, Hades, and the Grave dispels confusion over what happens to the soul at the time of physical death and guards against being led astray by those teaching the false doctrines of soul-sleep, eradication of the soul, the universal reconciliation of mankind, and the annihilation of the lost. All of these erroneous doctrines are of Satan, used of him to dishearten believers and blind the lost to the reality of the cost of spurning the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our thinking, and therefore our life on a day-to-day basis, is influenced by what we believe. While some of the false doctrines mentioned above are diametrically opposed to each other, they still have one thing in common. They subvert the truth of the immortality of the soul. 

Questions or comments for Dr. Bedore should be addressed to him directly at: *Berean Bible Institute*, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086, or by e-mail at: [bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org](mailto:bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org).

### *Question Box*

*“Who prompted David to number Israel, God (II Samuel 24:1) or Satan (I Chronicles 21:1)?”*

It was God who initially determined to prompt David to number Israel, to bring them under His chastening hand, but He used Satan to do His bidding. We see something similar in Zechariah 14:1,2, where God says,

**“For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle...”**

And yet we read in Revelation 16:

**“For they are the spirits of devils...which go forth unto the kings of the earth...to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty...And He gathered them together” (v. 14,16).**

Here again we see the Lord determined to do something, but using Satan to do it. And yet we read in Joel 3:11:

**“Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together...to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.”**

The genius and fairness of God is seen in that He wants the nations gathered for the battle of Armageddon, He uses Satan to gather them, and yet the nations will feel no coercion, but come willingly of their own volition. —Pastor Kurth



# In Memory of a Fellow Soldier

By Paul M. Sadler



Dave Winebrenner, a fellow soldier with whom we had the privilege of serving alongside in the good fight of the faith, was ushered into the presence of his Lord and Savior on Tuesday, July 17th.

Earlier this year after holding meetings at the *Community Bible Church* in Tipp City, Ohio, I had an opportunity to visit Dave and Marie at their home in Springfield. Although I knew he was in pain at the time, you would have never known it. When we began to talk about the riches of God's grace we all rejoiced that it was an honor to have an understanding of Paul's gospel.

For those at *Grace Bible Church* in Springfield, the *Berean Bible Fellowship* and the *Berean Bible Society*, Dave will long be remembered as a good soldier of Jesus Christ who tirelessly defended the faith.

May God comfort and strengthen you day by day, Marie, as you continue to faithfully serve Him in your beloved husband's absence.



## Buckeye State Meetings

**Dates:** Sunday, October 28, 2007

**Location:** *Grace Bible Ministries*  
120 Woodbine Street  
East Liverpool, Ohio

**Speaker:** Pastor Paul M. Sadler

For additional information, please contact:  
Pastor Tom Schneidmiller at (330) 385-3777 or (330) 368-0134



## BBS Letter Excerpts

### **From a Serviceman in an Undisclosed Area:**

“Last month’s article on Philipians by Pastor Sadler was a timely reminder for me to be content where God has me right now, and to be praising Him in the midst of the storms.”

### **From Arizona:**

“I’ve always been a believer, but my faith has been shaky because of the way I’ve been trying to understand the Bible. But now a gentleman has come to me and has shown me about rightly dividing the Word of truth. Now things make more sense to me than ever before.”

### **From the Internet:**

“I am slowly going through Stam’s book. I’ve enjoyed it thus far. There were many things that I believed which he has touched on, and that is always a blessing when God gives you a witness to what you have learned on your own. When I was in Bible school they always warned us about certain doctrinal errors, and Stam was one of those people. Yet, in reality, I have already moved to the same positions as what I have read thus far.” (Please pray for this Baptist pastor.—RK).

### **From South Dakota:**

“My wife and I were blessed beyond measure at the BBF conference in Cedar Lake. It is surely a blessing to understand and hear the Word taught through our apostle’s revelation from our risen Lord, rather than mixing Prophecy truth with Grace truth!”

### **From Colorado:**

“A correctional officer here has made a tremendous impact on my Christian faith by challenging me to look at why I believe what I believe. He holds to the dispensational view, which goes against all that I’ve ever been taught. The strange thing is, I am beginning to see what he has been talking about. I am an ordained Baptist preacher who has fallen from ministry....What little I have already read has helped me understand a lot of what had not made sense to me previously.”

### **From Florida:**

“I wish to thank you for taking the time and effort to really explain the plan of salvation to me in detail. Not all of us really understand just how it works, and your letter to me was the best.” (Those who know Paul’s gospel can give the clearest presentation of the gospel of the grace of God.—RK).

### **From Spain:**

“I got saved in 2000 in a Baptist church which I left in 2002. In the beginning of 2003, I understood the separate gospel of the Apostle Paul. Since that time I have studied the books of Pastor Stam and internet information from the Netherlands, where my family lives.”

### **From Indiana:**

“Your conference messages on *Knowing God’s Will* helped me tie up some loose ends in my life that have been dangling for a long time.”

**From Louisiana:**

“I need to ask for your forgiveness. Almost 10 years ago, I borrowed your Acts series from the Lending Library. I never returned it. It was not intentional, I just procrastinated to the point where I eventually forgot about it. I hope this gift will handle the amount it cost you to duplicate the series, along with a little extra to support your ministry that has so benefited me over the years.” (“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” [Prov. 28:13].—RK).

**From Florida:**

“I purchased this copy of *Things That Differ* for my girlfriend. Am I cool or what?”

**From Texas:**

“I have been to this church and that church, and studied this denomination and this other denomination and so forth. I have spent thousands of hours of my life searching for the truth of just how a correct theological scheme should be, but I always seem to find something that does not seem to agree with Scripture. I could never correlate the gospels, Acts or Revelation with Paul’s epistles. What Paul taught seemed to be so much different on numerous accounts with what Jesus had to say. Anyhow, maybe I have found what I have been looking for? I hope so.”

**From Virginia:**

“Your ministry has blessed me immensely concerning rightly dividing the Word of truth. I thank God and rejoice to be set free from the traditions of men concerning what I was taught and adhered to in the past.”

**From Florida:**

“I love the cover photo of the Good-year blimp flying over the Montauk Point Lighthouse. Two of my favorite things are lighter-than-air craft and lighthouses.”

**From Georgia:**

“For the past few years I have been attempting to teach a small Bible study group based on rightly dividing the Word. Much of our information is gleaned from the writings of Brother Stam and other likeminded authors. Because of these writings, we have been successful in answering most of our questions from a dispensational viewpoint. To date, a number of difficult subjects have been resolved by the group by rightly dividing truth contained in Scripture.”

**From Wisconsin:**

“I intend to use *Moses and Paul* and *Twofold Purpose of God* for 6th grade Bible study next year.”

**From the Internet:**

“*Two Minutes with the Bible* is my favorite church page column that we run in *The Herald*.” (From a newspaper editor.—RK).

**From Florida:**

“Enclosed is a check that is long overdue. Your faithfulness is much appreciated. My husband recently went to be with our Lord, and through his illness the *Berean Searchlight* was a comfort and a blessing to us.”

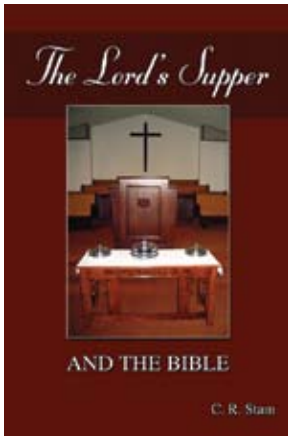
**From California:**

“I was encouraged by Pastor Kurth’s article *Abounding in This Grace Also*, and want to send you what I can at this time for whatever the Lord leads you to use it for.”

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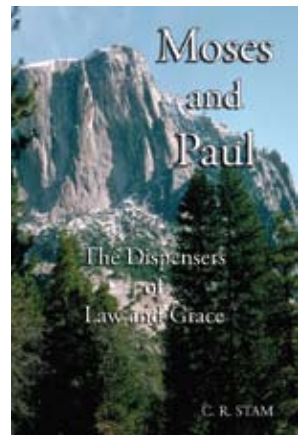
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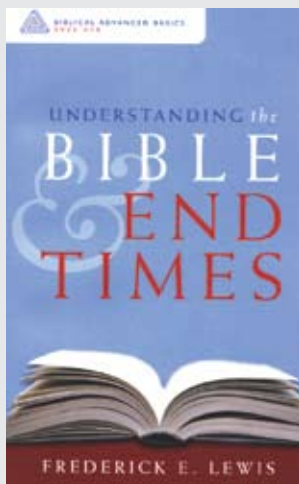
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Author Fred Lewis is semi-retired, a U.S. Army Vietnam veteran, and resides in Wisconsin. He is married to Jan, his wife of over forty years, has three children, and two grandchildren.

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# NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**The Grace Singles Conference** has found a new home at Camp Idrachaje in scenic Connifer, Colorado. If you are a post-high school single Grace believer, why not spend December 28th thru 31st listening to speakers such as John Fredericksen, Justin Lynn, Andy Kern and Kevin Dickey bring messages from God's Word revolving around the theme of *Life, Love and Other Mysteries*. For more information, contact Pastor Lynn at (303) 663-1026, or at [Pastorjustin@Q.com](mailto:Pastorjustin@Q.com) or [www.GraceSinglesPlace.com](http://www.GraceSinglesPlace.com).

**A new Grace church** has been established in Rancho Cucamonga, California. The product of the vision of Brother Jeff Hedwall, *Hillside Bible Fellowship* has called former BBI student Kevin Mepsted to lead them, and Pastor Mepsted officiated at their first service in July. Be sure to pay them a visit if you live in the area, or even if you are just passing through. For further information, call Pastor Mepsted at (909) 476-2527, write him at PO Box 8621, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91701-0621, or e-mail him at [kevinmepsted@yahoo.com](mailto:kevinmepsted@yahoo.com).

**Attention Georgia Grace Believers:** Our good friend Pat Kilgo leads a home church in the Atlanta area on Sunday mornings, and wishes to hear from other Grace believers who might be interested in attending. For more information, please call him on his cell phone at (404) 694-3341.

**Wisconsin Bible Conference:** The saints at *Grace Bible Church* of Lancaster, WI, wish to extend to all *Searchlight* readers an invitation to attend their Annual Fall Bible Conference, scheduled for September 21-23. This year's speakers will include Joel Finck and Peter Fries, who will address the theme of "Understanding Paul's Gospel." This year's conference will be held at the Farm Bureau/Rural Insurance Building, just north of Lancaster on Hwy 61. For more information, contact Jack Trumm (608) 794-2410, or Mel Flogel (608) 348-7574.

**Keystone State Meetings:** Our friends at *Grace Family Bible Church* of Duncansville, Pennsylvania, wish to invite you to join them for a series of meetings that will feature Pastor Paul M. Sadler. Mark your calendar for September 29,30, and contact Pastor James Zaebst at (814) 696-4366 for further information.

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\*Our cover lighthouse photo was taken by Hal Bekemeyer of Winter Garden, Florida. The *Portsmouth Harbor Lighthouse* is located in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. It is the only mainland lighthouse on New Hampshire's 18-mile seacoast and was constructed in 1877 on the grounds of Fort Constitution, a Revolutionary War fortification.

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