

The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

December 2006



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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:



Dearly Beloved,

Paul says concerning the eternal purpose of God for the Church, the Body of Christ, that it is God “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles” (II Tim. 1:9-11).

Before the foundation of the world, God predetermined that He would introduce a new creation—the Body of Christ. It was planned before the world began, it was made possible at the birth of Christ, but it was not revealed until the raising up of the Apostle Paul. The above passages clearly teach us that God had a twofold purpose in the virgin birth of His dear Son. Man is born to live, but the Savior was born to die. The old wooden manger and the old rugged Cross are inseparably bound by love. To think of one is to think of the other!

According to prophecy, Christ’s first appearing was to put away the sins of Israel through the sacrifice of Himself, as revealed in the gospel according to Luke: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.” “For unto you,” that is, the chosen nation. Christ was their Redeemer! “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” (John 1:11).

As a result of Israel’s rejection of the Savior, God revealed His secret purpose through Paul’s gospel. We learn from Paul that Christ’s first appearing also included us. He *came* to abolish death and bring us eternal life and immortality. Through His birth and finished work at Calvary we, too, have life and life more abundantly.

This season of the year presents us with another occasion to humbly bow our heads to thank our Heavenly Father for sending His only begotten Son to die for the sins of the world. As we pause together to worship in His wonderful name, may this Holiday Season be a very special time of remembrance.

In His redeeming grace,
Paul M. Sadler, President



Leave the Landmarks Alone!

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

“Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour’s landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it” (Deut. 19:14).

A “landmark” is a mark that designates where your land ends and your neighbor’s land begins. Modern surveyors drive a metal rod into the ground to separate and distinguish property, but ancient landmarks often consisted of a stone that could be removed by someone wishing to encroach upon his neighbor’s land. God pronounced a “curse” upon any man who would dare to so mistreat his fellow-Hebrew (Deut. 27:17). This was because after God divided up the Promised Land amongst the children of Israel in the Book of Joshua, He commanded them that it not be sold (Lev. 25:23; Num. 36:7). This is why Naboth refused to sell his land to Ahab (I Kings 21:1-3). Naboth wasn’t being *stubborn* or *disrespectful* to his king, he was being *faithful* to the Law of his God (cf. Ezek. 46:18).

Landmarks to this day continue to mark where your land ends and your neighbor’s land begins. However, today we also have certain *societal* landmarks that God has given to help us distinguish between right and wrong. For instance, for thousands of years, mankind clearly understood where to draw the line between right and wrong when it came to the subject of *abortion*. Then in 1973, our Supreme Court removed the landmark when they legalized abortion, and we have been living with the holocaustic consequences of this “landmark decision” ever since. Now societal surveyors are taking aim at yet another God-given landmark, the definition of marriage that limits it to the bond that can only exist between a man and a woman in the eyes of God.

Such landmarks also exist in the spiritual realm of Bible doctrine. The historic fundamentals of the faith that define Christianity have for centuries helped God’s people determine where truth ends and error begins. These spiritual landmarks are always under attack, and the day in which we live is no exception. To counter this trend that was present even in his own day, the Apostle Paul challenged young Timothy:

“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (II Tim. 1:13).

While we should always be open to receiving new understanding from God’s Word “with all readiness of mind” (Acts 17:10,11), we must “prove all things” and “hold fast” *only* “that which is good” (I Thes. 5:21). We have a rich “inheritance” in Christ (Eph. 1:11,14) that these landmark doctrines serve to protect. Let’s work together to preserve them!

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Philippians 1:3-6

By Paul M. Sadler

“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy.”

—Phil. 1:3,4

PRAYER WARRIORS

Paul was a man of prayer! These days, it is not uncommon to hear someone say, “I believe in prayer,” as though the prayer itself had some type of mystical power. In reality, we believe in God who hears and answers our prayers according to the counsel of His will. If a believer prays without ceasing, it is a demonstration of his dependence upon God, as we see here in the life of Paul. On the other hand, if he neglects his prayer life, it demonstrates his dependence on self.

One of the reasons the Church is so spiritually anemic today is because it has forgotten to pray. Paul was constantly in an attitude of prayer both day and night, especially in regard to those things that were lacking in the faith of

the saints (I Thes. 3:10). We believe one of the keys to the apostle's greatness was *prayer*, for he was in regular communication with our Heavenly Father. This can also be said of those men and women who shook the foundations through the centuries for the cause of Christ. Allow me to illustrate!

It is said that the great English preacher, Charles Spurgeon, contacted D. L. Moody to join him in London at the *Metropolitan Tabernacle* for special meetings. Following the morning worship service Mr. Spurgeon invited Mr. Moody over to his home. After dinner Mr. Spurgeon asked Mr. Moody if he would like to join him in prayer before the evening service. When they entered his study Mr. Spurgeon knelt down by a chair and began to pray.

Mr. Moody recounted how Mr. Spurgeon continued in prayer for the better part of two hours. He poured out his heart to God, how he was an unworthy sinner who

was grateful to be saved from his sins through the precious blood of the Savior. He pleaded with God that that very night lost souls would be saved and plucked from the fires of hell. Mr. Spurgeon's prayer was interrupted by a knock at the door: "Mr. Spurgeon the hour is late, and it is time to go." Mr. Moody recalled how Mr. Spurgeon was soaking wet with perspiration and had to quickly change into a new suit.

Upon arriving at the *Metropolitan Tabernacle* Mr. Spurgeon was so weak he had to be helped to the platform. But when he rose to speak it was as if he had been reenergized. Mr. Spurgeon spoke with such conviction and power that night that at the close of his message when the invitation was given, Mr. Moody said he lost count of how many souls were saved that evening.

"Prayer is a discipline, both to practice it and persevering in it."

George Whitefield is another example of a man who dedicated himself to prayer. Thousands were saved in England and America as a result of his evangelistic efforts. Before Whitefield would hold revival meetings he would bare his heart to God. He was quoted as saying to those who ministered the gospel: "Days and weeks have I been on my face before the Lord." The day Mr. Whitefield was called home to be with the Lord he was

found kneeling by his bed in a posture of prayer.

Brethren, the hour is late! Perhaps the time has come for each of us to spend more time before the throne of grace, praying that God would give us a greater burden for lost souls. The unsaved are dangling over the fires of hell by one thin thread of human existence. May the Lord embolden us to warn them before they slip into a Christless eternity!

Brethren, the hour is late! Perhaps the time has come to seek the face of God that He might open the eyes of those who have yet to see the Mystery. Pray along with me that there might be one last great awakening to Paul's apostleship and message before the trump sounds, and may it be to the praise of His glory in Christ Jesus.

Brethren, the hour is late! Perhaps the time has come to have a season of prayer for our local assemblies, that the brethren will put away all the envying and contention and infighting for the sake of the gospel. Let us pray that there might be *unity* among the brethren so the local assembly can have a more effective outreach in the community.

Prayer is a *discipline*, both to practice it and persevering in it. There's normally a spiritual battle being waged when we're on our knees. Satan knows all too well that it is an effective weapon in the believer's arsenal. Have you noticed how your mind sometimes wanders when you're praying? Your thoughts drift off to all those things you need to attend to or forgot to attend to during the day. As you continue in prayer, you find yourself thinking about who

you're going to invite over for the holidays. Paul undoubtedly experienced the same problem, this is why he challenges us to pray, "with all perseverance" (Eph. 6:18).

THANKSGIVING

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you" (Phil. 1:3).

Another thing that characterized the apostle's prayer life here in Philippians was *thanksgiving*. Every time these dear saints came to mind he thanked God for them. Thanksgiving has been called the memory of the heart. Paul had fond memories of the day many of them came to Christ, and how they were like thirsty little puppies that couldn't get enough of the sincere milk of the Word. He probably smiled when he thought back on those memorable times. The apostle was also mindful of their willingness to stand with him and the message of Grace through thick and thin. In fact, they had hoped to encourage Paul when they sent Epaphroditus to minister to his needs at Rome (Phil. 2:25).

Having pastored a number of Grace churches over the years I can relate, better than most, to what the apostle is expressing here. I have never looked at the ministry as something that made me superior to the Lord's people, but rather that it was my responsibility to set an example for all to follow. Over time the Lord's people tend to emulate their pastor. If he is gracious and kindhearted, they will be gracious and kindhearted. If he is confrontational, they too will be confrontational. If the pastor loves the message of grace, they will respond in kind.

As I think back, I have such precious memories of those dear saints who sat under my ministry. They were as different as snowflakes, yet there was a commonality, in that they all loved the Lord and desired to hear Paul's gospel proclaimed. My reward was to see them grow in grace and enthusiastically share it with others. This isn't to say that there weren't problems at times, but everyone seemed to sense that for the Lord's sake they needed to work out their differences. Like Paul, I have often thanked God for the privilege of knowing these dear saints, and I still think of them and remember them in prayer when they come to mind.

"Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy" (Phil. 1:4).

The apostle's prayer life also included making *requests* on behalf of those to whom he ministered, and he did so with *joy*, in most cases. You see, Paul wanted the saints at Philippi to succeed in the Lord's work for the glory of God. It was his desire to see them prosper so they could give another contribution to further the gospel of Grace. Not, as he said, because he desired a gift, but because he desired *fruit* that it may abound to their account, which would ultimately result in eternal reward (Phil. 4:17).

Another request Paul would have made on behalf of these brethren was for God to put a protective hedge around them to protect them. You will recall how the apostle had shamed the magistrates at Philippi on his first visit for having beaten him uncondemned, being a Roman. By

the time of this writing, however, opposition to the gospel had once again surfaced (Phil. 1:28).

“For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now” (Phil. 1:5).

Paul was grateful for the Philippians “fellowship in the gospel” as well. Today, most people associate *fellowship* with pie and coffee after the Sunday evening service. This, however, would be better characterized as “a social gathering.” Our *fellowship in the gospel* has a far deeper significance. According to Strong and Thayer the word “fellowship” has the idea of partnership, joint participation, communion, etc. For example, the two oxen depicted below are bound together by a yoke. They are equally bearing the burden of the load as they pull together in the same direction. The same is true in regard to our spiritual experience.



True *fellowship* is always based upon the Word of God. So when Paul thanked God for their fellowship in the gospel, note that he adds “from the first day until now.” Our fellowship with one another is a product of our response to the good news of salvation, for “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). The apostle takes us back to the beginning of the gospel in Europe. Their *partnership* in the faith

began on the day that Lydia and the others at Philippi responded to Christ and were saved by the grace of God. This began a long-standing relationship which was precious in their sight. When they gathered together, the conversation didn’t center on who was the greatest of the gladiators; rather they discussed Christ and what He accomplished on their behalf.

There is a natural progression here in Philippians concerning the matter of fellowship. We also enjoy the *fellowship of the Spirit*. “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind” (Phil. 2:1,2). The law demands, but grace beseeches! Here Paul pleads with those who were at odds with one another that they might be likeminded for the furtherance of the gospel. He challenges them to do so on the basis of their *joint participation* with the Spirit. If they heeded the apostle’s words (the Word of God) it would enable the Spirit to work more freely in and through them to eventually resolve their conflict. The goal was that the Spirit would have greater control in their lives (Eph. 5:18).

Finally we have the *fellowship of His sufferings*. “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death” (Phil. 3:10). We are partakers of Christ’s sufferings. Like the Lord, we, too, experience rejection, misrepresentation, and cruel mockings when we stand for the truth. Every

hardship that we endure for the cause of Christ has a way of drawing us closer to Him. We bear the same yoke!

THAT DAY

“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6).

Paul was “confident of this very thing.” In others words, there wasn’t a question in his mind whatsoever that the *good work* that God had begun in these believers at Philippi would continue until that day. What is the “good work” that Paul speaks of here? It is the *good work* that God is performing in every believer. Our *redemption* in Christ was secured for us at Calvary, but practically speaking it will not be completed until the redemption of the purchased possession (Eph. 1:14).

In addition, God has not only saved us, He has also called us with a holy calling; therefore, He has *set us apart* unto Himself. In His providence He is working in our lives to carry out the good pleasure of His will, which ultimately is to conform us to the image of His dear Son (Rom. 8:28,29). In this connection, God has called us to a life of *service*. In the case of the Philippians, one of the areas where their service abounded was in their sacrificial support of Paul’s apostleship and message. They were committed to the cause!

Notice that God will “perform” or *complete* this good work at the day of Jesus Christ. One thing that Old Testament prophecy teaches us is this: God honors His Word!

Solomon said: “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever” (Eccl. 3:14). If God is going to complete this good work on our behalf at that day, then it can only mean that every believer is eternally secure in Christ. But exactly what is the *day of Christ*, and when will it take place?

The term “day” can refer to a 24-hour day or to a long period of time. Consequently, the context must always be consulted to ascertain the duration of time under consideration. In regard to creation, Hebrew scholars tell us that when the Hebrew word *yom* (day) is used with a *number*, it always refers to a 24-hour day, without exception. When perimeters are set on the term *yom*, such as “the evening and the morning,” as found in Genesis 1:4, this limits the day to 24 hours as well. So then, the six days of creation were 24-hour days.

But the term “day” can also refer to an extended period of time. Take, for example, Paul’s reference to “man’s day.” “But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment [Gr. *hemera*—day]: yea, I judge not mine own self” (I Cor. 4:3). Essentially, the apostle is saying he didn’t concern himself that he was being judged of the Corinthians or what men said, he didn’t even judge himself—the Lord was his Judge. The point is, it has been “man’s day” for the past 2,000 years.

We must carefully distinguish between the *day of the Lord*, the *day of God*, and the *day of Christ*.

The *day of the Lord* is closely associated with the judgment of

mankind. This day will be a day of darkness when God pours out His wrath. It, too, is an extended period of time that includes the seven-year Tribulation, the blood-bath of the Battle of Armageddon at the Second Coming of Christ, the thousand-year reign of Christ, the Great White Throne Judgment, and the fiery purging of the present heavens and earth (Zeph. 1:14-17; Rev. 1:9,10; 14:14-20; 19:11-16; 20:5,6,11-15; II Pet. 3:7,10,11).

The *day of God or dispensation of the fullness of times* is spoken of by both Peter and Paul. This brings us to the eternal state when all things will be summed up in Christ. At the beginning of the ages to come, God will renovate the present heavens and earth, restoring them to their original glory. This is the long awaited new heavens and new earth wherein will dwell righteousness (Isa. 65:17; Eph. 1:10,11; II Pet. 3:12,13; Rev. 21:1).

“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6). The phrase *day of Christ* is exclusively used by the Apostle Paul. Sometimes the apostle refers to this period as “that day.” It is one of the key components of the special revelation he received from the Lord of glory. The *day of Christ* is a reference to the Rapture of the Church, the Body of Christ, which will take place *prior to* the Tribulation period, which marks the beginning of the day of the Lord.

Having been delivered from the wrath to come, the *day of Christ* will include the transla-

tion of the true Church into the presence of Christ in heaven. The members of the Body of Christ who have preceded us in death will rise first and be given their glorified resurrected bodies. We who are alive and remain at that day will be transformed in a moment of a twinkling of an eye and also be *caught up* to forever be with the Lord.

Once in the presence of the Lord, we will all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ to give an account of our *conduct and service*. While many will rejoice in that day for a job well done for the Savior, the question is often asked, will there be tears in heaven? Sadly, this will be the case for some. These will be tears of regret and remorse over what could have been if we had only remained faithful to Him in all things, who loved us and gave Himself for us (I Cor. 3:12-15; 4:5; II Cor. 5:10,11). The emotion at times is probably going to be overwhelming. But the greatest regret of all will be when we see the look of sorrow on the Savior’s face for how members of His Body mistreated one another. Thankfully these tears will be wiped away at the close of this judgment—no more regrets or sorrow, our eternal destiny will be set. “Then shall every man have praise of God” (I Cor. 4:5).

Since *time* will give way to eternity, the duration of the believers’ judgment is insignificant. At the Judgment Seat of Christ the *good work* that God began on the day of our conversion will be complete. We will then be seated with Christ in glory, which closes the *day of Christ*.

To Be Continued!



The following is the third of a series of articles drawn from Pastor Stam's book, *Our Great Commission, What Is It?* Since this book never appeared as a series in the *Searchlight*, many of even our long-time readers may not be familiar with these selections.

What This Commission Does and Does Not Say

By C. R. Stam

OUR
GREAT
COMMISSION



The author, in his youth, heard many messages on the so-called “great commission,” but they were all devotional or inspirational in character. Though thrown into contact from his earliest youth with great men of God from far and near, and rejoicing in the light they brought on the lately-recovered truth of our Lord’s imminent return, he does not recall one single *exposition* of the commission as a whole, or one series of Bible *studies*, in which it was explained exactly what our Lord did and what He did *not* say in this commission.

It did not take him long, however, to realize that the commission to the eleven does *not* harmonize with *our* God-given message and ministry as later revealed to Paul and outlined in his epistles.

WHAT THIS COMMISSION SAYS

As we consider all the records of what our Lord *did* say in His

commission to the eleven, it is impossible to conclude that this commission pertains to the dispensation under which we now live.

MATTHEW 28:18-20 Our Lord As King

Observe how the first record of this “great commission” begins:

“All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18). By “power” of course, our Lord did not refer to physical strength or political influence, but to *authority* committed to Him by His Father. “All *authority* is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.”¹

“Go ye therefore...” Does not this opening statement of our Lord’s commission to His eleven apostles associate their ministry immediately with His *kingdom* and His *right to reign*? (Cf., Acts 2:29-31; 3:19-21). Thus the passage continues:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...”² (Ver. 19).



Teaching Them to Observe All Things

But what should the nations be taught? What was the apostles' message to them? The next verse gives us at least part of the answer—an important part:

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Ver. 20). Are we to obey this specific command of our Lord's commission to the eleven? If we do we will surely bind our hearers hand and foot with the law of Moses, its sabbath observance, its sacrifices and all the other ceremonies.

Galatians 4:4 clearly states that our Lord, when on earth, was “made under the law,” and the records of His earthly ministry bear witness that this is so. Indeed, as we have seen, the Lord commanded His disciples to obey the scribes and Pharisees *because they occupied Moses' seat* (Matt. 23:1-3).

In this connection it is interesting to note that the disciple who baptized Paul was “*a devout man according to the law*” (Acts 22:12) and that as late as Acts 21:20 those who had been working under the so-called “great commission” said to Paul: “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there

are which believe; and *they are all zealous of the law.*”

Can we, then, carry out the commission to the eleven without bringing our hearers under Moses' law and contradicting all that Paul, by divine revelation, later taught about the law and about salvation by grace, through faith, entirely *apart from the law?*

But there is more involved here, for in His *Sermon on the Mount* and all through His ministry our Lord had given His disciples many commands besides those contained in the law of Moses. We cite a few:

Matt. 5:42: “Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.”

Matt. 6:25,26: “Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?”

“Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?”

Some have neutralized the force of this latter passage by interpreting the phrase “take no

thought” to mean “don’t worry” or “don’t be anxious,” but this wrests the meaning of the next verse, where our Lord calls His disciples’ attention to “the fowls of the air,” and says: “*They sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*” Thus Verse 25 stands just as it is. As His followers they were to give freely to those in need, nor were they to lay up store for the future since their heavenly Father, who cares even for the birds of the air, would surely care for them.

“Our Lord had strong words about the importance of obedience to these commands.”

Little wonder the *Sermon on the Mount* is called “the charter of the kingdom,” for during our Lord’s kingdom reign His people will spontaneously care for each other rather than for themselves—as indeed they did in the Pentecostal foretaste of His reign.

Our Lord had strong words about the importance of obedience to these commands. As He closed this great sermon He said:

“And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it” (Matt. 7:26,27).

When the rich young ruler pressed our Lord as to eternal life and asked, “What lack I yet?” the Lord replied:

“If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me” (Matt. 19:21).

This too has been neutralized by the suggestion that the Lord said this to the young ruler because He knew that his riches stood in the way of his salvation. But our Lord had instructed His apostles to do the same!

Matt. 10:8-10: “...freely ye have received, freely give.

“Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses.

“Nor scrip [bag] for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.”

Is this the way we should send our missionaries out today?

Indeed, our Lord even gave a similar command to all of His disciples.

Luke 12:33: “Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.”

Thus the Lord gave the same instructions to *one man*, to His *twelve apostles*, and to *all of His followers*. As they *prayed* for the establishment of His kingdom (Matt. 6:10), and *preached* that it was “at hand” (Matt. 10:7), they were also to *practice* it, not laying up store for themselves, but rather caring for others and trusting God to provide for *them* (Matt. 10:8-10).

This was to be the way of life in the prophesied kingdom.

If we, then, are to work under the commission given to the eleven, teaching men to observe all that Christ commanded His followers, should we not close out our bank accounts, liquidate all our assets and distribute to the poor? Surely Matthew 28:20 is one important part of the so-called “great commission” which is not obeyed today. Presently we shall see that it *cannot* and *should not* be practiced during “this present evil age.”

Baptism Commanded

Moreover, if we would strictly obey this commission we would have to baptize our “converts” (Ver. 19). But could we then avoid associating this baptism with what John the Baptist said about the subject:

“And I knew Him not; but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water” (John 1:31).

Surely the essential purpose of water baptism had not changed since John, for under the so-called “great commission” the apostles baptized for the remission of sins just as John had done (Mark 1:4 cf. Acts 2:38).

And if we baptized our “converts” with water, would we not be doing what Paul said he had *not* been sent to do?

“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” (I Cor. 1:17).

Do we hear the objection that Paul did baptize some? Of course! He also circumcised Timothy, he

“...should we not close out our bank accounts, liquidate all our assets and distribute to the poor?”

spoke with tongues, he prophesied and wrought many miracles, but this all belonged to the program under which he was saved and *from which he emerged*. None of these things belonged to his special commission. Thus the fact remains that while the Scriptures state that John the Baptist *was sent* to baptize and the eleven *were sent* to baptize (Mark 16:15,16), it *states* with equal clarity that Paul *was not* sent to baptize. Indeed, if he had been sent to baptize it would surely have been a sin on his part to thank God that he had baptized so few among the Corinthians (I Cor. 1:14-16). All this receives even greater emphasis as we consider what Mark’s record of the commission says about baptism.

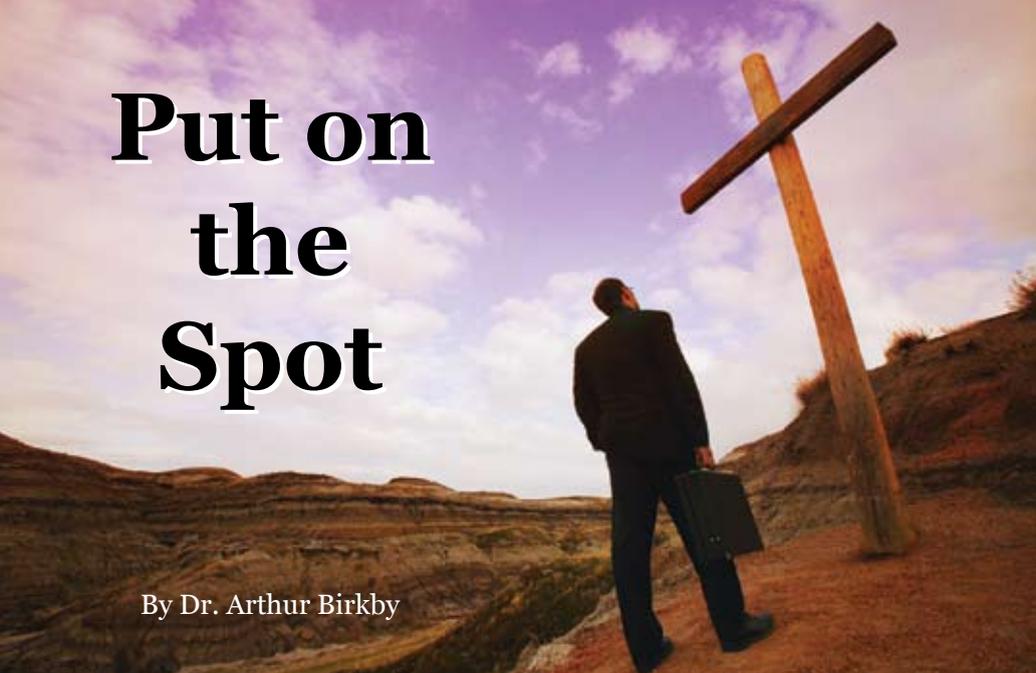
To Be Continued! 

Endnotes

1. “Heaven and earth,” because the kingdom, or government of heaven was to be established on earth (Matt. 5:3,5; 6:10 cf. Dan. 2:44).
2. The Greek word *ethne*, or nations, is generally rendered *Gentiles* when used in contra-distinction to the *Jews*. However, the *King James* translators correctly rendered it *nations* here, for the apostles were to make disciples of *all* nations, *including* Israel. Indeed, Israel was the first nation the apostles were to bring to Messiah’s feet (See Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8 cf. Acts 3:25,26; 13:46).

Put on the Spot

By Dr. Arthur Birkby



Emeritus Professor of Music Arthur Birkby has been on the faculties of Westminster College, the Philadelphia Conservatory, Western Michigan University, the University of Wyoming, and Biblion College & Seminary. In the following article, Dr. Birkby addresses the question that many people ponder this season of the year: just who was this One who was born in the manger so long ago.

Arguments about one's religious convictions have been going on for as long as people have been able to communicate with each other. In the book of Job 6:25 one reads, "But what does your arguing prove?"¹ More often than not, there is no satisfying resolution despite the bickering because matters of faith are often not proved. Furthermore, "faith," by definition, is unquestioning trust; it can stand alone and has its own virtue.

What will be presented here will not let one easily "off the hook," so to speak. Anyone who reads words ascribed to Jesus Christ in the Holy Bible, will be "put on the spot" by having to declare that Jesus is indeed the very God Himself, or that He is a liar, deceiver, and charlatan.

When considering the quotations of the Savior as they occur in the four gospels, one cannot have it both ways: that is, if what He says is true, He necessarily *must* be the divine Creator. Even those who do not embrace Christianity in all of its ramifications will perhaps reluctantly admit that Jesus was likely a good man, a moral, loving person, a great teacher, and an undeniable influence on world history. On the other hand, if what He is quoted as saying is not true, He is asking His followers to believe in a fraud and a liar. And if what He says is

falsehood, misinformation, deceit, pie-in-the-sky silliness, or ignorance, Jesus is a hypocrite and an imposter. Under such circumstance, Jesus would not measure up to minimal standards of a decent person. He would lack all credibility.

Why is it that those who hold to no particular religious tenets are unwilling or disinclined to challenge Jesus' sayings? What would happen today if someone were to say he had the authority on earth to forgive sins, thereby assuring entrance into heaven? (Matthew 9:6). Would he not be the laughing stock of those who heard him? An ultimate decision must be made by any rational person, upon being shown many of Jesus' declarations. Is He God or a phony?

In the quotes by Jesus that follow, when He uses the term "Son of Man," He could just as well have said, "I." "Son of Man" is dealt with in some detail in Merrill F. Unger's highly respected *Bible Dictionary*, where it is stated that the term occurs in both Old and New Testaments, and is now theologically associated with Jesus Christ. The Lord used it about eighty times in referring to Himself. "Son of Man" portrays Christ as the Representation of Man. That is, He uses this designation as it relates to His mission, His death and resurrection, and His second advent; and it is in this name that universal judgment is committed to Jesus. The term also implies that, in Jesus, the Old Testament prophecies relating to the coming Messiah find their fulfillment.

"Son of Man" is also found in the book of Ezekiel when captive Israel is assured that God will not forsake her, and that she is only a small portion of humanity about which He is concerned. With the title, "Son of Man," Ezekiel is chosen, spiritually endowed, and delegated by God. These elements apply also to Messiah; and thus it is that Christ adopts the title for Himself. Whatever other theological implications to the term, "Son of Man," it is necessary at this time only to recognize that it is naturally and freely used by the Savior to identify Himself.

Now let us consider some of the claims made by Jesus Christ that, if stated by anyone else, would be so utterly outrageous as to warrant immediate condemnation as blasphemy or raving megalomania. Imagine how an ordinary person would react upon hearing someone say, "Everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32).

When Christ said in Matthew 11:5, "[Through Me] the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them," those who heard these words never denied their truth. Jesus' miracles were evident to all of His critics. Unlike today's self-proclaimed healers whose results are selective, hit-and-miss, or bogus, Jesus healed all who came to Him.

Not only does Christ proclaim His Lordship, but He verifies Bible events that many deny as having happened. Such is the case where

He says in Matthew 12:40, "For just as Jonah was three days in the belly of the sea monster (He did not say 'whale'), so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." In the next verse Jesus puts the "cherry on the sundae," so to speak, by declaring, "and behold, someone greater than Jonah is here."

These statements as well as many others to follow occur in other gospel accounts, and need not be repeated here for validation.

After mentioning the Queen of Sheba's visiting King Solomon to verify his reputation as a mighty ruler, Christ states in Matthew 12:42, "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

Christ indicated that He was making manifest the words of the Old Testament when He stated in Matthew 13:17, "Many righteous men and prophets desired to see what you see (Messiah), and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

As in all instances where Christ identifies Himself, He said, "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:41,42). This is one of numerous references made by Christ to the reality and nature of eternal perdition. Although many people today would like to ignore the actuality of an everlasting hell for unbelievers, there are more references to such eternal damnation by the "gentle" Jesus than from any other person in the Bible.

Predicting His own future that was fulfilled exactly as He averred, one reads in Matthew 17:22,23, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered unto the hands of men; and they will kill Him. And He will be raised on the third day." When, if ever, has anyone else made such an announcement that has been the essence of belief for millions of people for centuries?

"An ultimate decision must be made by any rational person, upon being shown many of Jesus' declarations. Is He God or a phony?"

Self-styled prophets, who attempt to persuade their devotees concerning magnificent futures, usually die in ignominy and their adherents have suffered horrible ends. How different will be the destiny of Christ's disciples to whom He said in Matthew 19:28, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

No other leader of a cult or sect has had the temerity to tell his followers, as Christ did in Matthew 24:9, "They will deliver you to tribulation, and they will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because

of My name.” It is evident even today that many of the world’s ills and wars are a result of the absolute abhorrence for the name and person of Jesus Christ, and for those who follow Him.

Imagine, if you will, the reaction today to someone’s saying about himself, “The Son of Man will appear in the sky; and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30).

Throughout centuries of history attempts have been made by political as well as religious bodies to quash the Bible. Its very existence has been threatened and acted upon in ways that would surely eradicate any other document from the face of the planet. Yet, the Savior decreed in Matthew 24:35, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”

And listen to these assurances of the Lord’s ultimate victory: “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18), and, “I am with you, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

If advocates and devotees of a personage or a belief system want to portray their leader as having authority, power, or importance, it would seem reasonable to depict him as having plausible capabilities. It would be self-defeating to ascribe attributes to a champion that were clearly unbelievable. Perhaps a skeptic might reluctantly admit to a presumably miraculous healing having occurred. However, the “magic” required to pull off a stunt such as calming a storm at sea goes beyond rationality. Yet, this mighty act is related as a credible event in Mark 4:29 where the Lord commands, “Hush, be still.”

Not surprisingly, there are supposedly Christian churches these days that say Jesus never really asserted that He was divine. Such obstinacy is hard to believe, given the unassailable declaration of Jesus Himself. When asked whether He was the Christ, the Son of God, He gives His answer in Mark 14:62, which reads, “I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

This is not an isolated or obscure mention of Christ’s admitting to being divine. Luke 22:70 relates when asked by the chief priests and scribes whether He, Jesus, was the Son of God, He replied, “Yes, I am.”

Among the many usurpers of divine status who have made outlandish claims about themselves, few indeed have gone so far as to establish their reputations upon being recognized aforesaid in the Old Testament. That this was unequivocally declared in behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ occurs in Luke 4:18-21 where He was reading the Scriptures in the synagogue. The passage from Isaiah 61:1,2 stated, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, and

to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.” After reading this passage, Jesus said, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

One reads in Luke 11:53 that the religious leaders in high places were hostile to Jesus; and this becomes evident in Luke 7:48 when Jesus forgives sins, and the scribes and Pharisees ask, “Who is this who can forgive sins?”

“No beginning, no ending. Christ was from eternity past, and ever shall be for eternity future.”

Often one hears the charge that Christians are arrogant when they say that Jesus is the one and only way into the presence of God. The believer is obligated without compromise to confess the truth found in Luke 10:16, “He who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.” Similarly, in Luke 10:22,24 Jesus says, “All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son.”

Another among the abundant references in which Christ clarifies His exclusive access to God is His saying, “Everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God; but he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God” (Luke 12:8,9).

Many declarations by Christ are so unequivocal and striking that, despite what may appear to be hyperbole, they are affirmed without compromise. While the Lord was being adulated by the throngs during His triumphal entry into Jerusalem only a few days before His crucifixion, He acknowledged His worthiness to receive worship, when He said, “I tell you, if these became silent, the stones would cry out!” (Luke 19:40).

Again, identifying Himself as the subject of Old Testament Scripture, Christ quotes Psalm 118:22 by stating in Luke 20:17,18, “What then is this that is written: ‘The stone which the builders rejected, This became the chief cornerstone? Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.’”

Recognizing His being the essential topic of the Old Testament, Jesus cites another relevant passage from Isaiah 53:12, saying, “For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, ‘And I was numbered with transgressors’; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment” (Luke 22:37).

Yet another citing in which Christ identifies Himself in Old Testament Scriptures is found in Luke 24:44 where He says, “All things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

The Lord gives an answer to those who deny His bodily resurrection following the Crucifixion, when they concoct dubious hallucination theories or some other ephemeral pretext. Luke 24:39 quotes Jesus as saying, “See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

The issue of whether heaven is a real place rather than a state of being or some other identity, and what characterizes it, is put to rest when one reads John 3:13: “No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.”

Emphasizing His direct association with God and His heaven, Jesus also stated in John 6:46, “Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.”

For those who throughout the ages, and even now, yearn for the appearance of the Messiah, their longings are put to rest when Jesus says about Himself to the woman at the well in John 4:26, “I who speak to you am He.”

The Lordship of Jesus Christ can hardly be more unambiguous than that found in John 5:37,39 where one finds, “The Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You seek the Scriptures because you think in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me.”

True Christians should be the first to acknowledge that they, like everyone else, are sinful human beings who required regeneration and forgiveness, which is available through the blood sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Entrance into blissful realms in heaven is not dependent upon one’s morals, behavior, works, heredity, or any other factor.

Evidence that true believers in Christ Jesus as Savior have a personal relationship with Him is verified by this declaration in John 6:40 which says, “For this is the will of My Father, that everyone that beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.” Now, that’s personal!

One of the generalities that pervade the minds of many people is that they are essentially “good,” and that everybody is a child of God. This notion is seriously flawed by Christ’s telling the religious elite in His day that, “You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father” (John 8:44). John 8:24 states, “Unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”

Even the so-called “do-gooders” of Christ’s era recognized their sinfulness, as evidenced by their strict regulations regarding temple worship and the offering of sacrifices for atonement. With this in view, it is astounding that the religious leaders were unable to respond to Jesus’ question in John 8:46, “Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak the truth, why do you not believe me?”

When confronted by the religious rulers, Jesus infuriated them by His series of assertions as recorded in John 8:51, 8:56, and 8:58. “Truly,

truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad. Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM.” The religious experts of that time recognized that the term, “I AM,” was synonymous with Jehovah.

Does anyone think for a moment that Jesus and His betrayer, Judas Iscariot, were in collusion when Jesus in John 13:18 quoted Psalm 41:9 which states, “I know the ones I have chosen; but it is as the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats my bread has lifted up his heel against Me?’”

Further evidence that Christ was omniscient becomes obvious in John 13:19 where He comments, “From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He.”

Finally, one of the most touching elements in Christian doctrine is described by Christ in His “High Priestly Prayer” documented in John 17:5. Jesus is clearly identifiable as the inimitable personage of being One with God Almighty, and existing from all eternity as He prays, “Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.” No beginning, no ending. Christ was from eternity past, and ever shall be for eternity future. This is the essence of infinity!

At the outset of this essay it was postulated that anyone reading it would find it difficult to arrive at a middle-of-the-road decision concerning the Scriptures contained therein. These are some options: 1) All of the writers of the Old and New Testaments were complicit in managing to avoid errors and contradictions throughout the Scriptures. 2) Jesus must of necessity be fraudulent in order to make the bizarre statements attributed to Him. Most of the statements here would have no credence whatsoever if they were made by any mere mortal being. 3) Jesus, being God, cannot lie; and no one except an omnipotent Deity could make such statements. Choosing option 1) or 2) will assure an unequivocal eternity of abject misery, gloom, wretchedness, and desperation with no reprieve forevermore. Selecting 3) guarantees an eternity of bliss with the loving, omnipotent Creator of the universe. Are there other viable alternatives? 

Endnote

1. All Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Version*.

Dr. Birkby will be happy to respond to any question you might have regarding his comments in this article. You can write him at: abirkby@comcast.net.

Question Box

“What verse in the Old Testament predicted that Christ would rise from the dead on the third day (I Cor. 15:4)?”

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

Many Bible teachers hold that Paul speaks only of how *the fact* of the Resurrection was predicted (Psa. 16:8-11 cf. Acts 2:25-31). But for those who believe otherwise, there are a couple of possible solutions.

First, some teach that Paul refers here to *New Testament* Scriptures, some of which had been written by then. This would include at least Matthew, if traditional dates for the New Testament are accepted. But for those who are not satisfied with this explanation, we offer a few possible Old Testament references.

It is possible that Paul is referring to the *type* of Jonah. As we know, the Lord Jesus also recognized Jonah was a type of His death and resurrection *on the third day* (Matt. 12:40). However, it is also possible Paul had Hosea 6:2 in mind.

“After two days will He revive us: *in the third day* He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight.”

Hosea’s use of the words “us” and “we” indicate *God’s people* are the subject here. We believe this refers to the resurrection of the Old Testament saints two days after the Lord’s Second Coming. But when we consider the Lord’s close identification of Himself with His people, we could extrapolate and make this a prediction of a third day resurrection for the Lord also.

It is also possible that Paul is referring to Leviticus 23 and the order of Israel’s feasts. The feasts of Passover and Firstfruits spoke of the death and resurrection of Christ (I Cor. 5:7; 15:20), and the year that the Lord rose, Firstfruits fell on the third day after Passover.

Finally, in the Resurrection passage in Psalm 16, it’s predicted that the Lord would say to His Father, *“Thou wilt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption”* (v. 10). Biblically it would seem that “corruption” of a dead body begins on the *fourth* day after death. When the Lord commanded the removal of the stone covering the grave of Lazarus, Martha said to Him, “Lord, *by this time* he stinketh: for he hath been dead *four days*” (John 11:39). From this we might identify a prediction of a *third-day* resurrection for the Lord from Psalm 16.

—Pastor Kurth

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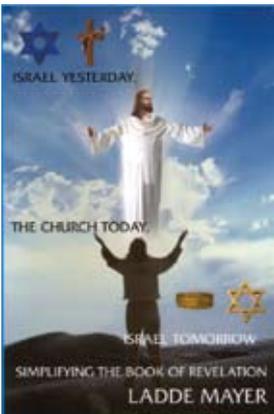
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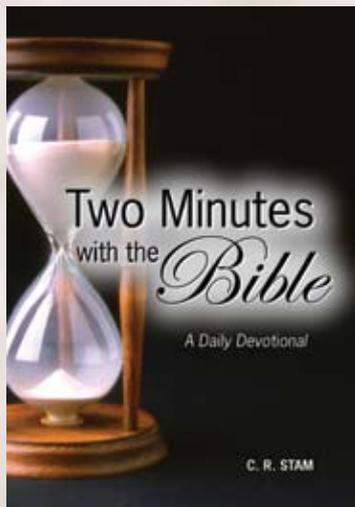
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From Nebraska:

“What a great time at the BBF conference in Slinger! And now it’s back to the grind, but we have been refreshed. I was involved in a nursing home ministry, and used *Now That I Believe* as a guide. I left the booklet with one of the attendees, who said he could use more of these booklets to give out. I said how many. He said 5, 10, 100, maybe a thousand! I think he may be a little excited.”

From Michigan:

“I have been in the Grace Movement for seven years. Before learning of the Mystery, I never could be saved under the Law. But through Paul’s gospel, I came to understand how I could be saved. Thank you for your ministries.” (Only a recognition of Paul’s distinctive ministry can keep even the simple gospel of salvation clear and plain—RK).

From Nevada:

“Thank you for the October issue. I found it great reading, especially *Paul’s Prayers from Prison*.”

From Oregon:

“I have never had such personal trials and tragedy in my life since embracing the gospel of Grace and the Word, rightly divided. I reached out to Pastor Sadler, and he was so kind to actually call me on the phone to help me through that dark place. I have taken his advice and started a Bible study in my home.”

From Ohio:

“The *Berean Searchlight* blesses so many. We look forward to receiving it each month. I enjoy the articles and mostly look forward to reading the *Question Box*. There always seems to be a question that I have been wondering about myself.”

From Illinois:

“I gave some *Searchlights* to my sister five years ago. Last winter she started reading them and her Bible, and she is really enjoying them. She said she didn’t know the Bible was so interesting!” (Our motto remains, *To Help You Understand and Enjoy the Bible*.—RK).

From Wisconsin:

“Your books *Triumph of His Grace* and *Exploring the Unsearchable Riches* have done a great deal for my understanding. That’s why I’m enclosing a check in memory of Cliff Meyer, a Berean who put my name on your mailing list years ago. I’m forever grateful to Pastor Stam. The gift is to help spread the Grace Movement. I’d like to be part of it.”

From Oklahoma:

“This past September’s issue blessed me greatly with the articles by Pastors Bury, Rueweler, and LaVier. PRICELESS! The Plumline and the article on Philippians are terrific blessings as well. And of course, Pastor Stam’s articles are a constant blessing.”

From the Internet:

“I want to thank you for sending me *Berean Searchlight* issues. It’s been a great tool for studying and enhancing my knowledge about the Bible.”

From Texas:

“Ever since I first read *Things That Differ*, I wanted to get it in Spanish. This wonderful book is the best and clearest presentation of the Grace Message I have ever read. So please rush my copy to me.”

From the Virgin Islands:

“I’ve been studying *Things That Differ* very carefully and find I am in agreement with most of what I’ve studied. Enclosed is a gift to aid the presentation of in-depth, serious Bible teaching, believing that it is the hearing of the Word that opens the door to an individual’s heart.”

From Arizona:

“I was a new believer and hearing Jim Kirkwood on the radio sparked my curiosity. I finally attended the *Grace Gospel Center* in Bensenville, Illinois, where I received my first copy of *Things That Differ*. After reading that book, it literally changed my life.” (Pastor Kirkwood is retired, but his ministry reached many in the Chicago area with the Grace Message over the years!—RK).

From Ohio:

“Thank you for the response. You wouldn’t believe how emotionally drained I have been for the past three weeks, trying to get away from the teaching of the past. My pastor is still trying to convince me I am wrong, and will probably lose my salvation and cause the demise of my family. I finally wrote to tell him that I believe in ‘rightly dividing,’ and I didn’t want to debate it further. My heart is filled with joy. I feel as I have been born again *again!*” (People who learn the Grace Message often say that it is like getting saved all over again!—RK).

From Minnesota:

“Words cannot express our appreciation for your work. We came to see the Mystery through the Bible study books written by Pastor Stam. Our hope is that you can continue publishing them so others can profit from them as we have. We are sending a memorial gift for our daughter, who is now with the Lord.”

From Wisconsin:

“Please accept this donation on behalf of my mother, who went home to be with her Lord on May 3. Mother was a long time supporter of BBS. I thank her for my own coming to know our Lord. After attending *Grace Bible Church* in Beloit, so much was revealed to me about how fortunate I am to live in this dispensation, and to have had a mother who took the time to search the Scriptures for the truth.”

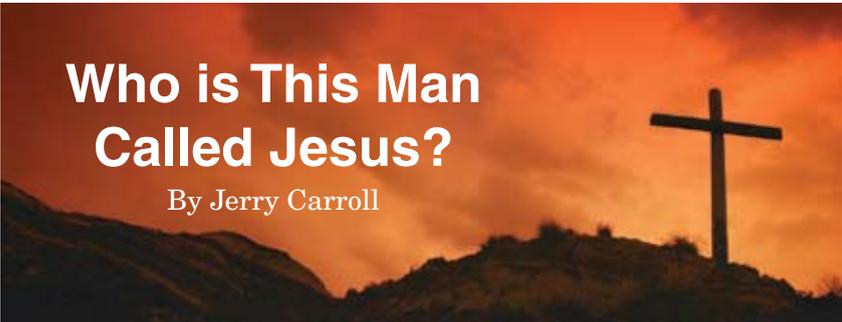
From Washington:

“I was transferred for a few months but am back, and even have my same employment. So I am grateful again to have the opportunity to give to this faithful ministry.”

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

Who is This Man Called Jesus?

By Jerry Carroll

A wooden cross stands on a hill against a sunset sky. The sky is a mix of orange, red, and yellow, with dark silhouettes of hills in the foreground.

Who is this man called Jesus,
Whom some men call their friend?
This humble One of Nazareth,
Whom they say never sinned.
Some say He always spoke the truth,
While others say He lied.
He was tried without a lawyer,
And He offered not a plea.
Pilate found no fault in Him,
Yet He was nailed upon a tree.
Some say He lies in a borrowed tomb,
While others say He arose.
But all agree, without dispute,
He still has friends and foes.
Who is this man called Jesus,
Who died on Calvary's cross?
This caring One who claims He came,
To seek and save the lost.
I'll tell you who He is, my friend,
And then you can decide.
To believe on Him as Savior,
Or perish in sin and pride.
For He's the Prince of Glory,
Yes He's the great I AM.
Who sacrificed Himself for us,
As the Father's spotless Lamb.
He didn't have to die that day,
For in Him was no sin.
He's the Alpha and Omega,
The Beginning and the End.
I love to talk about Jesus,
The God-man who never sinned.
He's King of kings and Lord of lords,
And longs to be your friend!

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Attention photographers: We are always “on the lookout” for lighthouse photos for the cover of the *Searchlight*, like this picture taken by our good friend Robert Penney of Eastport, New York. Your submission should be upright, or what our computers call “portrait” as opposed to “landscape” in orientation (blimps are optional!). If your photo is horizontal rather than vertical, then simply provide us with the largest print possible, so that we can adjust it. The resolution must be sharp, and allow room at the top for our name and date. Why not join the ranks of the readers who over the years have contributed the attractive images that have graced our cover. Then pray with us that these eye-catching pictures will be used of God to invite many a reader to open our magazine and learn to rejoice in the grace we proclaim.

Gainesville, GA Grace Bible Study & Fellowship: Our friend Dr. Tom Miles has been teaching a pair of Bible studies for several months now, and would like to extend an invitation for you to join them. One meets on Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. in the Re/Max office in the 700 block of Queen City Parkway. The Thursday night study meets at 7:30 at a home in Murrayville. If you are interested in attending either of these studies, please contact Dr. Miles at P.O. Box 454, Lula, GA 30554, phone: 770-869-7777. Or e-mail him at tmiles_2@hotmail.com.

At Home with the Lord: Long-time friend and BBS supporter Geneva Lisenby went to be with the Lord on September 4th. She had many friends and family members who read the *Searchlight*, and they will miss her dearly, but they rejoice in knowing that “to depart, and to be with Christ” is “*far better*”! May “the God of all comfort” be “the Father of mercies” to all who mourn, until that blessed hope reunites us all once again.

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

*Our cover lighthouse photo was taken by Ken and Barb Wardius. The *North Point Lighthouse* is located in Milwaukee, WI. The structure standing today was completed in 1913 when the 39 foot 1888 tower was placed on top of a 35 foot steel structure, because of tall trees.

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“Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail th’ incarnate Deity!”

—*Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*, Charles Wesley

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