

The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

December 2009



Feature Articles

Studies in the Book of Revelation, Rev. 2:12-17
 Pastor Paul M. Sadler..... 5

The Abiding Trinity
 Pastor Cornelius R. Stam 13

The Measure of the Ministry (Part 2)
 Pastor Ricky Kurth..... 17

Departments

The Christ Bell..... 4

Triumphant in Christ 12

Spotlight on Grace Churches..... 16

BBS Letter Excerpts 26

Question Box 28

News and Announcements 30

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.

The *Berean Searchlight* is the official organ of the *Berean Bible Society*, and is sent free of charge to any who request it.

Editor: Ricky L. Kurth

Composition and Layout: Kevin J. Sadler

Printing: J. B. Kenehan, LLC, Waukesha, WI

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

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

Main Office: (262) 255-4750
 Fax Number: (262) 255-4195

Internet: www.bereanbiblesociety.org

NEW E-mail: berean@bereanbiblesociety.org

Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., CST

The Berean Searchlight (ISSN 0005-8890), December 2009. Vol. 70, Number 9.

The *Berean Searchlight* is published monthly (except July) at no subscription price, by *Berean Bible Society*, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022-0756. Second-class postage paid at Germantown, WI. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Berean Searchlight*, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022-0756.



From the Editor to You

Dear Friends in Christ,

Recently we received a letter here at *Berean Bible Society* that was such a blessing to all of us that I thought I would share it with all of you:

Dear Berean Searchlight,

My name is . . . , and I am sixteen years old. I want to thank you so much for the wonderful ministry you have. Thank you for sharing the gospel and rightly divided truths with others. Our church in . . . learned the grace message about seven years ago, and we are so thankful we did! It is such a victorious message, and one that gives Christ all of the glory! I hope this donation can help you in some way for the furtherance of the gospel. Thanks again and have a wonderful year!"

Wow, what pastor wouldn't be thrilled to receive a letter like that, for so many different reasons!

First, of course, it is always encouraging for those of us who serve in the ministry to see the grace of God working in the heart of a teenager! Surely the reason Solomon admonishes, "*Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth*" (Ecclesiastes 12:1) is because there is a natural tendency to *not* remember Him in the days of our youth! And so it is thrilling indeed to read of this young lady's interest in not only giving glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, but also of her eagerness to make sure that *all* the glory goes to Him! And the fact that she understands that *only God's Word rightly divided does this* is surely a testament to how the Lord is already working in her life through His Word.

But if all of this were not enough, this precious young lady then closes her letter by revealing how her heart yearns that others might come to rejoice with her in the riches of God's grace by the furtherance of the gospel among them. And far from being an empty sentiment on her part, she proves the sincerity of her love for the Lord by enclosing a financial contribution for His work! It matters little if this gift was drawn from a part-time job, birthday gifts or even from a weekly allowance, what matters is *her decision to invest her money in the work of the Lord!*

At a time of year when most adults are thinking about giving and most young people are thinking only about receiving, we hope this young lady's letter will warm your heart as much as it warmed ours.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Ricky Kurth



THE CHRIST BELL



THE BELL

I KNOW WHO I AM

I am God's child (Rom. 8:16)

I am a light in the world (Phil. 2:15)

I am sealed by God (II Cor. 1:21-22)

I am bought with a price (I Cor. 6:19,20)

I am a saint (set apart for God) (Eph. 1:1)

I am a personal witness of Christ (Acts 22:15)

I have peace with God through Christ (Rom. 5:1)

I have been saved in order to bear fruit (Rom. 7:4)

I am a member of the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12:27)

I am a citizen of Heaven living on earth (Phil. 3:20)

I am free from any charge against me (Rom. 8:31-34)

I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realm (Eph. 2:6)

I have access to God through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18)

I am a minister of reconciliation for God (II Cor. 5:17-21)

I cannot be separated from the love of God (Rom. 8:35-39)

I am assured all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28)

I may approach God with freedom and confidence (Eph. 3:12)

I have been crucified with Christ and He liveth in me (Gal. 2:20)

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13)

I am God's temple (I Cor. 6:19). I am complete in Christ (Col. 2:10)

I have been justified (Rom. 3:24). I am hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3)

I am God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works (Eph. 2:10)

I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected (Phil. 1:6)

I am redeemed and forgiven (Col. 1:14). I have been adopted as God's child (Eph. 1:5)

I belong to God

Do you know

Who you are?

Without Christ you are blind and lost (II Cor. 4:3,4), but the good news is, God loves you and Christ died to pay for your sins (I Cor. 15:3,4). The only question is, *do you believe* He died to pay for your sins, or are you still trying to pay for them in your own way, by doing good works? God says, "to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5). Why not "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Studies in the Book of Revelation

Revelation 2:12-17

By Paul M. Sadler

“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith He which hath the sharp sword with two edges.”

—Revelation 2:12

It is important to remember throughout our study of the Book of Revelation that the Apostle John was caught away in the Spirit to the future day of the Lord. This conclusion is based on the apostle’s own words found in Revelation 1:9,10. When John addresses the seven churches in Asia he is not looking back over seven successive periods of Church history, as some claim. With the precision of a GPS, the apostle is pointing the reader in the opposite direction according to the narrative.

Remember those days of the old video recorders when you could fast forward the tape to watch the end of a movie or documentary? Essentially, the Spirit of God fast-forwarded time and placed John in

the period called Jacob’s Trouble so he could record the events of the end time. Sound farfetched? It isn’t to the eye of faith, for “what is prophecy, but history written in advance,” as we are going to see.

THE THRONE OF SATAN

The next church John was instructed to address is Pergamos, the name of which has the idea of “things high or lofty.” This is fitting because this assembly will be located in the city of Pergamos where Satan will establish his throne and actually dwell, in his pursuit of lofty things on High (Isa. 14:12-14).

“I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat [throne] is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith” (Rev. 2:13).

Through the centuries popular opinion has conceived the notion that Satan is confined to hell where he reigns supreme and has

his sphere of influence. While it is true that this everlasting fire was created for the devil and his angels, Satan has yet to set foot there. Once he is confined to hell at the Great White Throne Judgment he will not have the freedom ever again to roam the *earth* or the heavens, as we see is the case here at Pergamos.

Satan's power and realm of influence must never be underestimated; he is the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). Interestingly, the Scriptures never deny these things or question his authority over the kingdoms of this world. This is clearly seen when he tempted our Lord.

“Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto Him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me” (Matt. 4:8,9).

“And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it” (Luke 4:6).

Notice the devil states that the kingdoms of this world were “delivered to him.” In the garden, when Adam sinned against God he handed over the dominion of them, which was rightfully his, to Satan. Obviously, the devil had control of these realms to be in a position to offer them and the glory of them to the Lord. He is the one who is pulling all the strings behind the scenes in the affairs of men.

So we are to understand that Satan isn't stoking the fires of hell or confined there, as much as he delights in the notion that

men think this to be the case. While his base of operations is the second heaven he still has access to the earth, as he did in the days of Job. When the Lord resumes His earthly ministry in the coming tribulation, Satan is going to set up a satellite base in the city of Pergamos, from which he will ruthlessly attack the kingdom churches. Satan not only wants to ascend on High to be like God, he also desires to reign on the earth in Christ's stead. He wants it all!

Many seem to believe that Satan and his workers of darkness spend all their time in taverns, casinos, drug houses, and brothels. In reality, those who frequent such places have *willingly* given themselves over to the evil one. He simply opened the door of these establishments and the lust of the flesh took over from there. If there is one passion that Satan has more than any other it is to destroy the plans and purposes of God. In his obsession to accomplish this goal, he sends out his ministers who transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, who in return corrupt the Word of God and deceive the unwary with their false teaching.

Sadly, many in a local assembly such as we have here at Pergamos are blindsided by Satan's subtlety. To those who aren't taken in by the schemes of the devil, the Lord says, “I know thy works...and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith.” During the tribulation the name of Christ will be blasphemed by those who align themselves with the exploits of Satan (Rev. 13:6). To call His name into question is to *deny* He

is the Messiah, the very Son of God (John 20:31).

The Lord will be well pleased with those at Pergamos who believe that He is who He claims to be and for holding fast to the truth that He is God. Therefore they will refuse the mark of the beast or the number of his name (Rev. 13:17,18). They are also commended for not denying His faith, an obvious reference to the kingdom gospel which includes the faithfulness of Christ to provide redemption for His people (Matt. 24:14; Luke 1:68,69 cf. Rev 14:12).

“Even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth” (Rev. 2:13).

We must bear in mind that when John is writing to the seven churches in Asia, the tribulation period is well underway and many dear saints will have already suffered martyrdom, one of whom is Antipas. One will search in vain to find any *credible* historical references to a man by the name of Antipas, who was martyred at Pergamos, in John’s day. This seems to be passing strange seeing that he is such a prominent figure. To some who are sure to argue, “But tradition says...” please see Mark 7:13. Once again, the Apostle John isn’t looking back to the Church, the Body of Christ, but forward to a day future to ours.

We have a number of examples in the prophetic Scriptures where a prominent figure who was to play a key role in the plans and purposes of God was named years before they were born. We believe this is the case with Antipas. For example, in the days of Jeroboam

God sent a prophet from Judah who delivered the following prophecy regarding the coming of a Reformer. “Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, **Josiah by name...**” (I Kings 13:1-3 cf. II Kings 22:1,2). This prophecy was given approximately three centuries before Josiah’s birth.

Isaiah gave the name of the future king of Persia nearly two centuries before he stepped onto the stage of the world. The Lord revealed to the prophet: “That saith of **Cyrus** He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built; and to the temple, thy foundation shall be laid” (Isa. 44:28 cf. II Chron. 36:22).

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE

The story is told of a Russian named Ivanovich who visited the Moscow Zoo for the first time. To his amazement he found a little lamb sharing the cage that held a big fierce bear. Ivanovich expressed surprise to his communist guide. The guide smiled and said, “That is peaceful coexistence.” When Ivanovich doubtfully shook his head, the guide reluctantly went on to explain, “Of course, we have to put in a fresh lamb every morning.” You see, peaceful coexistence between right and wrong, God and the devil, is not possible. You must learn to whom to say, “No.”

How true! Nothing will undermine the Lord’s work more quickly than *compromise*. It is an insidious mood of toleration of unsound teaching for the sake of peaceful coexistence. Mark these words and mark them well, compromise

is the influence of Satan to corrupt the Word of God! Regrettably he often uses believers to accomplish his purpose. Essentially there will be three groups that make up the assembly at Pergamos—those who defend the faith, those who compromise it, and those who deny it. The Lord singles out the second group who are all too willing to tolerate the unsound doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans in their midst.

“But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate” (Rev. 2:14,15).

What exactly is Balaamism? Balaam was a hireling prophet who sought to *market* his gift. This is the *way of Balaam*. When Balak, the king of the Moabites, saw how the Amorites were utterly destroyed by the children of Israel, he feared that he was going to suffer the same fate. So he sent the elders of Moab to Balaam with gifts of divination to curse Israel. Balak reasoned that if the prophet cursed the chosen nation, he would prevail and drive her out of the land.

The very fact that these bearers of silver and gold were sent to Balaam strongly suggests that the reputation of the prophet preceded him. As they say, money talks, and Balaam was listening. But God would not allow the prophet to return with the elders of Moab, nor did He permit him to curse

Israel. However, temptation always knocks at the door of opportunity more than once. Thus, it should not surprise us when the princes of Moab returned to offer Balaam riches untold and even greater honor throughout the realm. Rather than accept the will of God regarding the matter, he approached the face of the Lord again. Balaam reasoned that since Israel had sinned against God she deserved to be cursed; which, of course, meant he would reap a handsome sum for his effort. He had no concern whatsoever for others, that many of them would perish, as long as it profited him. This time God gives Balaam the liberty to go, as a *test*. This shows the true intent of his heart seeing that he fully understood it was not God’s will for him to go, yet he went. Lust filled his heart!

Interestingly, Balaam’s journey was interrupted when the ass upon which he was riding saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with a sword drawn. Although the money-blinded prophet could not see the angel of the Lord at first, the ass did and turned aside into the field. The second time she crushed Balaam’s foot against the wall. The third time she saw the angel of the Lord she collapsed beneath the prophet. Each time Balaam beat the beast of burden unmercifully. However, after the third beating the ass spoke to him. Now that would leave you speechless!

The Lord often uses unique ways to get our attention. But we must also remember that in this case, nothing is impossible with God (Jer. 32:17 cf. Luke 1:37). We are to see it was according to God’s

purpose that Balaam was “rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man’s voice forbad the madness of the prophet” (See Numbers 22). Then the Lord opened his eyes and Balaam saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way. It is important to note that this was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ, the very One who would redeem Israel from the curse of the law. This was the *error of Balaam* (Jude 11). He reasoned that a holy God must curse Israel on the basis of His righteousness. But what the hireling prophet failed to understand was the higher purpose of God to redeem Israel at the Cross, where Christ would be made a curse for the sins of His people (Gal. 3:13). Consequently, the Lord rebuked the wayward prophet: “Behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me” (Num. 22:32).



After Balaam realized God would not allow him to curse Israel, he *deceitfully* devised a plan to corrupt Israel. He taught Balak to entice the chosen nation into eating things that had been offered to idols and to commit fornication, both of which were strictly forbidden by God. This is known as the *doctrine of Balaam* made

reference to here in Revelation 2:14. Israel was only to worship the true and living God. She was to be a *separate* nation unto God; therefore, she was not permitted to marry those of other nations. So when the Israelites committed fornication with the pagan daughters of Moab, God sent a plague among His people wherein 24,000 perished (Num. 25:1-9).

The false teachers at Pergamos were promoting the *doctrine of Balaam* and in so doing were imitating the prophet. Balaamism is a system of teaching that’s based purely upon human reasoning. It is worldliness in its worst forms: lust, immorality, greed, and personal advancement at the expense of others. The face of evil may change, but its devastating effects are always the same.

The history of Israel will repeat itself in the day of the Lord when Israel will commit the same errors of the past. Those at Pergamos who compromise the faith will tolerate *idolatry* and *immorality*, probably convincing themselves that everyone’s doing it. The concept will be, “Let’s be open-minded,” which will play perfectly into Satan’s hand. Add to this the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, where a hierarchy is placed over the Lord’s people, to lord over them, and you have the following response from the Lord.

“Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches” (Rev. 2:16,17).

When the Lord calls this assembly to repentance He is primarily addressing those who

are guilty of compromising the faith. They are to have a change of heart, mind, and direction in their involvement in and toleration of promiscuity. Their idea of “progressive thinking” is met head on by the Lord’s warning that if they do not turn from their evil ways, He will “come...quickly.” This is not a reference to Christ’s Second Coming, but to the Lord unexpectedly visiting them, as He did Balaam in the way.

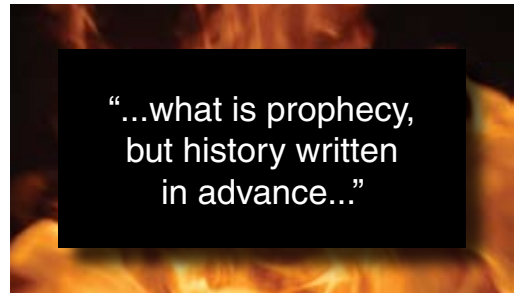
He who has “the sharp sword with two edges,” which pierces through the very intent of the heart, will fight against them with the sword of His mouth. In other words, the Lord will *chastise* them, if they fail to repent, with the sole purpose of restoring them to the faith. “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth” (Heb. 12:5,6). Those who choose to continue in their rebellion after being chastened will undoubtedly suffer the loss of the Lord’s blessing. The Lord will take up the matter with them again at the beginning of the millennium when He judges Israel and the nations. Great will be their loss!

THE REWARDS OF OBEDIENCE

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it” (Rev. 2:17).

If there is one term that stands out more than any other in the

closing of the letters to the seven churches, it is the term, *overcometh*. This particular word is **never** found in Paul’s epistles, and for good reason. As members of the Body of Christ we are more than conquerors in Him. We are to understand that we are *already* overcomers in Christ (Rom. 8:35-39 cf. Col. 2:10).



While we know the true believer will be an overcomer in the future tribulation, they won’t enjoy the assurance of their salvation, as we do. They will always wonder if they have done enough to please the Lord; consequently, they are instructed to “endure to the end,” to be overcomers, etc.

The reward for overcoming is to eat of the hidden manna. I think most Israelites from the time they’ve been knee-high to a grasshopper understand the significance of this statement. In the Old Testament, Aaron placed a golden pot of manna (hidden away, incorruptible) in the Ark of the Covenant alongside the tablets of stone and his rod. It was to be a constant reminder to the chosen nation throughout her generations of how God had made a daily provision for her in the wilderness (Ex. 16:33 cf. Heb. 9:4). Christ is the hidden manna, who is seated at the right hand of the Father,

out of view, until all His enemies are made His footstool. He is the spiritual provision these overcomers will partake of in the coming kingdom (John 6:51). He is the bread of life! In that day, they will partake of His righteousness, His peace, and receive the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 3:19). What they are promised, we already possess in Christ, by grace!

The promise of the Lord to give the overcomer a “white stone, and in the stone a new name written” is also the subject of the prophetic Scriptures. Names, of course, are used to distinguish one person from another. In biblical times they also had great significance attached to them. For example, after 400 years of silence, which was an indication of God’s displeasure with His people, we are introduced to Zacharias and Elizabeth in the first chapter of the gospel according to Luke. Zacharias means “Jehovah has remembered” while Elizabeth means “God’s oath.” When we combine the two names we have, “God has remembered His oath.” In short, God had not forgotten His people; He would honor His promise that He originally gave to Abraham.

The Lord occasionally assigned *new names* in time past. He changed Jacob’s name, which means “deceiver” to Israel, which means “a prince with God.” The new name, Israel, more accurately described his calling and relationship with God. The same will be true when those who overcome the Anti-Christ are given a new name (only known to them) that will be inscribed on a white gemstone. It, too, will express some characteristic of their devotion to

Christ. The Lord says this about those who fear Him and give thought to His name, “And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him” (Mal. 3:17).

It has been correctly said, “In the *manna* we see the appreciation of Christ by the saint, but in the *white stone* the appreciation of the saint by Christ.”

By way of practical application, Satan is using the same strategy today to destroy the testimony of members of the Body of Christ through immorality. Whatever form fornication may take, whether it is premarital sex, adultery, incest, homosexuality, sensuality, or pornography it is a very effective tool of the evil one. As Paul says regarding Satan, “we are not ignorant of his devices.” Sadly many seem to be ignorant of them these days, or is it that they are *willingly* ignorant? “A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident” (Prov. 14:16).

Another area Satan has done his work well is by subtly influencing believers to sacrifice their convictions on the altar of compromise. Dear ones, compromise is a cancer. It is a mood of toleration that promises *acceptance* at the expense of the gospel of the grace of God. It is a slippery slope that will cause you to eventually lose your identity as a Grace believer. The same can be true of a local Grace assembly if the leadership is more interested in numbers than standing for the truth. Beware!

To Be Continued!





Triumphant in Christ

By Paul M. Sadler

Every so often we have the unique privilege of working alongside a member of the Body of Christ who becomes a legend in his own time. This could surely be said of our beloved Brother Casey Groeneveld who stepped into the eternal presence of our Lord this past October.

Casey was a dear friend who was closer than a brother. I think one of the reasons for this was, we shared a mutual desire to make all men see what is the fellowship of the Mystery. Having sat under the ministry of Pastor Harry Bultema, Casey never lost sight of his “grace roots.” He established a new DVD ministry some years ago called, *Bible Studies by Casey*, in hopes of stirring up a renewed interest in Paul’s gospel. His series on *Why Paul?* is a must see! You can place your order at the *Bible Doctrines to Live By* website: www.bdtlb.org.

On a lighter note, Casey’s wit and humor was disarming, not to mention he could be a character at times. We often attended Bible Conferences together and on more than one occasion, after returning from lunch, I would find that Casey had moved our “Free” signs from our free materials section and placed them on our more expensive books. I was going to return the favor at his table but I couldn’t find any free offers. I asked him if he could say the word *free!* He tried his level best, but couldn’t, then he reminded me he was a Hollander, “It’s not in my vocabulary!”



Casey and I frequently spoke by phone and I can’t recall a time that he didn’t ask me if I was wearing my tie. He had great fun telling everyone that Pastor Sadler always wears a tie. During one conversation he said, “Paul, I have a serious question for you, When you go to bed, do you sleep with your tie on?” Actually, I said, a better question would be, “Do I sleep with it on top of the covers or under the covers?” Only Mrs. Sadler knows for sure!

Casey was truly a giant in the faith. Anyone who had contact with him the last few months of his life will agree. While most would have probably sunk into a state of despondency having learned their days were numbered on earth, not Casey; he was warm, gracious, funny, and busy about the Lord’s work until the last day of his life. He was a clinic on how to glorify God in the face of death.

Thanks, Phyllis, for sharing Casey with us all these years—only eternity will bear out the fruits of your labor. May the Lord comfort you according to the riches of His grace.



The Abiding Trinity



By Cornelius R. Stam

“Charity [love] never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

“But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

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

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity [love], these three; but the greatest of these is charity [love].”¹

—I Cor. 13:8-13

THE POPULAR INTERPRETATION

The above passage from the pen of Paul is popularly interpreted to mean that whereas prophecies, tongues and knowledge are passing things, faith hope and love will abide even after this life is over. Thus the things of our present childhood will some day be put away to be replaced by the things of our future manhood. Probably as many as nine out of ten Bible commentaries present this view.

Even the great Bishop Elliott says of this passage: “The natural childhood and manhood of this life are analogous to the spiritual childhood of this life and the spiritual manhood of the life to come.” Hence, like so many of our day who are confused on this point, he makes the sign-gifts, here classed as “childish things,”

the evidences of true spirituality, and, though indeed cautiously and half-heartedly, sanctions the apparent employment of them in the present dispensation.

THE CORRECT INTERPRETATION

In this passage the Apostle, by the Spirit, deals with three subjects:

1. That which was to be done away.
2. That which was to take its place.
3. That which was to abide throughout.

“Supernatural gifts in themselves were *never* an indication of spirituality.”

First it should be clearly understood that the things which were to be “done away”² and would “cease” were sign gifts. The passage does not teach that prophecies would fail to come true, but that the *gift* of prophecy, possessed by some at that time, would be done away. Nor does it teach that people would stop talking or knowing things, but that the *gifts* of tongues and of supernatural knowledge would “cease” and be “done away.”

The next thing which should be clearly understood is that these sign gifts were to be done away *presently, in that day*. They were part of the transition from an earthly program to a heavenly and spiritual one. They belonged to a

childhood which was consistent with that transition. The great, grand truth of the mystery was only gradually revealed to Paul himself. He was even then still receiving divine revelations as to the new economy and there was yet more to come (Acts 26:16; II Cor. 12:1). Hence he says: “*We know in part...we prophesy in part...we see through a glass³ darkly.*” But the revelation was soon to be complete (Col. 1:25) and with its completion “childish things” and “that which is in part” were to be “done away.”

From Paul’s own letters it is evident that he was not willing to wait, or to have other believers wait for heaven, to pass from childhood to maturity. Indeed, he chides these very Corinthians for failure to grow with the truth, calling them “carnal” and “babes” (I Cor. 3:1-4). And in Ephesians 4:14 he exhorts “*that we henceforth be no more children.*” Again, in Colossians he speaks of his intensive efforts to “*present every man perfect [mature] in Christ Jesus*” (Col. 1:24-29) and refers to Epaphras’ fervent prayers that the Colossian believers might stand “*perfect [mature]⁴ and complete in all the will of God*” (4:12).

THE ATTEMPTED RECOVERY OF THE SIGN GIFTS TODAY

From all this it is evident that notwithstanding the claims made by many Fundamentalists, the “great commission” and the program of Pentecost with their sign gifts *cannot* be carried out today. God has rendered this *impossible*, for these supernatural manifestations have been “*done away*” and

have “ceased.” Hence the attempt to recover them is not of God but of Satan, who would use even the Scriptures to rob God’s people of their most precious possessions.

As Satan used the Word of God itself to tempt our Lord, and used it again to cause the Galatians to “fall from grace” into the bondage of Moses’ law, so he uses it in our day, pointing to the Scriptures themselves to draw sincere believers away from a full appreciation of “all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies” to the lesser blessings of a former dispensation. Our adversary is pleased when untaught Christians say: “If it’s in the Bible it’s enough for me,” but there are two Scriptures he will never point men to: Romans 11:13 and II Timothy 2:15, for were they heeded the confusion and division in the Church would be dispelled.



It should be further observed that the attempted recovery of the sign gifts today is a distinct sign of *immaturity*. The sign gifts abounded in the Corinthian church (I Cor. 1:7 and chaps. 12-14) and the Corinthians boasted of them, yet Paul let them know in no uncertain terms that they were mere “babes in Christ” (I Cor. 3:1) unable to digest solid food⁵ (I Cor.

3:2) and their “envying and strife and division” (I Cor. 3:3) proved that he was right.

In the light of this let no modern Pentecostalist imagine that his supposed “gifts” of healing or prophecy or tongues are signs of spirituality or maturity. The Corinthians had all these, yet were pronounced *carnal* rather than spiritual, *childish* rather than mature. Supernatural gifts in themselves were *never* an indication of spirituality. They were simply temporary *signs* associated with the *Messiahship* of our Lord. Indeed, a visit to a Pentecostal meeting should convince the thoughtful student of the Word that spiritual maturity is not one of their characteristics. A man rises to speak in an “unknown tongue.” Another follows with an “interpretation.” Or a “prophet” rises with some special revelation from the Lord. And what do they say? Do they offer some refreshing light on the Word, or discuss “the deep things of God”? No. They make such statements as: “The Lord is pleased with the meeting,” or “The Lord is coming soon and we must be ready,” or “There is a backslider in our midst and the Lord wants him to know that if he doesn’t soon seek God’s face he will be cut off.” And what brings the greatest response from the audience? The speaker who goes to the greatest extremes of physical or vocal exertion, the suggestion that the Holy Spirit is about to come down in power, or the mere mention of healing. But “the riches of the glory” of God’s “mystery among the Gentiles,” which God “would make known” (Col. 1:27) and by

which believers are established (Rom. 16:25) is utterly unknown to them. No, in the words of another: “What they look upon as superior spirituality is actually instability and emotionalism that lasts only so long as the spell is upon them and then drives them into a state of depression which is closely related to melancholia.”

Referring to one who embraced Pentecostalism and had been ruined by it, Sir Robert Anderson rightly says: “This complete surrender of mind and will—his entire personality—to what he believed to be the guidance of the Holy Spirit, left him a prey to the terrible delusions in which he was at last engulfed” (*Spirit Manifestations*, p. 19).

But the Corinthians had an exaggerated estimate of the value of the sign gifts at a time when they were at least in order. What shall we say of those who make much of them after God has suspended

them and made them to cease? The surging waves of emotionalism, the constant emphasis on the miraculous, the self-deceit and the deception of others, the failure to recognize Paul as the God-appointed apostle of the present dispensation—all this is not of God, but of Satan.

To Be Continued!



Endnotes

1. ©iStockphoto.com/Pgiam
©iStockphoto.com/Ann Marie Kurtz
©iStockphoto.com/Andrea Haase
2. The word rendered “fail” and “vanish away” in Verse 8 is *katargeo*, to do away.
3. Lit. “a mirror.” The mirrors of those days were but polished metal surfaces and did not give the bright reflection of modern mirrors.
4. The same word, *teleios*, is used in the phrase: “When that which is perfect is come” (I Cor. 13:10) and refers, not to heaven, but to the full-orbed or fully developed revelation of truth which their spiritual growth was to accompany.
5. ©iStockphoto.com/Fertnig



Spotlight on Grace Churches

This month’s church is:

Grace Community Chapel

Location: 343 Duff Road, Leitchfield, Kentucky

Pastor: Floyd Frank

Sunday Service: 10:00 a.m. Worship and Bible Study

Additional ministries: Audio of Pastor Frank’s messages can be heard on their website at: gracecommunitychapelofleitchfield.com.

Contact information: Pastor Frank at Floydfrank@windstream.net or at 270-259-5121.



The Measure of the Ministry

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

(A study of the ministry in II Corinthians 1-6—Part 2)

In our study of the ministry in the first six chapters of II Corinthians, we come now to Chapter 2, where the Apostle Paul readdresses the matter of the fornicator mentioned in I Corinthians 5. In that first epistle, Paul had instructed the Corinthians to employ church discipline in regard to this man and put him out of the assembly (I Cor. 5:13). Now here in II Corinthians 2, we are given a “behind the scenes” look at this situation, a look that will give us a glimpse into the very heart and soul of the great apostle Paul. For while in I Corinthians 5 the apostle had perhaps sounded cold and heartless, here he reveals that it was “*out of much affliction and anguish of heart*” that he counseled them to break fellowship with this man (II Cor. 2:2).

Today it seems that some ministers consider themselves “the morality police,” and appear almost *gleeful* to comply with Paul’s admittedly firm instructions to ban defiant sinners from the fellowship of their assembly. By contrast, Paul himself shed “*many tears*” over this matter (v. 4). This reminds us of how some parents seem to take a perverse sort of pleasure in spanking their children, while godly parents can truthfully say, “This hurts me more than it hurts you.” Their children don’t *believe* them, of course! But they would if they knew the inside story, and that is what Paul is giving us here.

Just as parents spank their children *because they love them* (Prov. 3:12; 13:24), Paul directed the Corinthian church to disfellowship the

fornicator, as he says, “*that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you*” (II Cor. 2:4). Paul loved the man too much to allow him to continue on in the degradation of sin, and he loved the Corinthians too much to allow the man to remain in their midst and let his evil influence spread.

In our own day, the difficult role of such spiritual discipline falls to the local church, and the pastor must lead the way in this area. Now, just as not every man has what it takes to love his children enough to discipline them, not every man has what it takes to love a congregation enough to spearhead the discipline of the local church. But if you think you can learn to love and discipline the children of God as much as you love and discipline your own children, perhaps you are the kind of man God is looking for to serve Him in the challenging role as the pastor of a local church.



But here let’s pause and consider the description of the ministry that Paul is inadvertently giving us. When the apostle uses phrases such as “*much affliction,*” “*anguish of heart*” and “*many tears*” to describe his profession, it just makes you want to run out and enroll in Bible school and begin to train for the ministry, doesn’t it? *Hardly!* Compare these words to the ads you sometimes see on television promoting interest in careers such as nursing or auto mechanics. The schools that run such ads often cry things like, “Make a lot of money! Earn the respect of others!” Conversely, the Apostle Paul is not afraid to paint an accurate picture of the *heartaches* of the ministry. Doesn’t he know that few will want to follow in the footsteps of a man whose vocation involved such anguish and affliction?

Maybe he rather knew that once the truth of God *burns* its way into the heart of a man, as it had burned its way into his own heart, that no amount of difficulty will daunt the man who is truly committed to the proclamation of that truth. Years ago we heard the expression, “*it’s the hardest job you’ll ever love.*” A quick check of the internet finds this phrase is used of such diverse professions as teachers, firemen, motherhood and the military. While we would not contend that men and women in these professions don’t have difficult jobs that they earnestly love, we guarantee that *the ministry* is the hardest job you’ll ever love.

Some months ago this writer kept an all-night vigil at the hospital bedside of a believer whose 107.7-degree temperature made his death seem inevitable and imminent. Since only a few days beforehand, this forty-nine year old man who had never smoked nor drank appeared

to be in perfect health, his wife and the mother of his nine children was understandably in shock and great distress. Although the family did not attend our church, we prayed with the wife, and read the Scriptures to the man until just before dawn, when we finally had to sit down, too hoarse to talk and too exhausted to think. Just then the man's fever began to break, and he started to respond to his attending nurse. While he himself is still in a rehabilitation center, his wife and children have attended our church ever since, and are growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, the ministry is a challenging profession, but the rewards are great, both in this life and in the next, in the service of the King.

Have you ever wondered if the Corinthians gave heed to the “tough love” Paul prescribed in the first epistle? The answer is *yes*, they had indeed put the fornicator out of their assembly. But then a new problem had arisen! The man had repented, but now they were refusing to allow him back in their midst! This prompted Paul to write and advise the church here to receive the remorseful man back into their church and back into their hearts (II Cor. 2:6,7).

Here we are reminded that the goal of church discipline is *restoration*, not *permanent exile*. Church discipline is not to be employed because the rest of us are “*holier than thou*” (Isa. 65:5), and it is our God-given obligation to weed out riff raff sinners from amongst us. This kind of thinking is common, and the permanent banishment of repentant sinners has given Christianity the reputation of being the only army that shoots its wounded! Thankfully this is not true of all churches, but the fact remains that there are many deeply embittered believers walking around who were put out of an assembly, and never received back after repenting. And so it is that Paul told the Corinthians to “*confirm your love*” toward the penitent believer (II Cor. 2:8). They had *proved* their love for him by putting him out, and now they must *confirm* their love by allowing him to return.

Then in Verse 9, Paul confesses to the Corinthians that one of his purposes in advising the exile was “*that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.*” It is *hard* to disfellowship the beloved member of a local assembly, and frankly Paul was wondering if they really had what it took to take this difficult step. When Miriam sinned, it was *easy* to obey God's command to put her out of the assembly, for she had become leprous as snow (Num. 12:10-15). While she was no doubt known and loved by many, they knew that the risk of contagion was too great to allow her to stay. Today the danger of leavening the whole lump with the contagion of *sin* is just as serious, it is just not as obvious. But a man who insists on living in sin, oblivious to all rebuke, is a clear and present danger to the spiritual health and vitality of any assembly (I Cor. 5:6).

When such a danger presents itself, it is *particularly* difficult for a *pastor* to obey Paul's instruction. Pastors likewise love the members

of their flock, and they face the *additional* hurdle of a natural inclination to keep the pews warm and the offering plates filled. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that disfellowshipping a believer means one less seat filled and less money in the church budget! But it is still the right thing to do, and it is imperative that a pastor be faithful at such a time. And so if the reader is even thinking about entering the ministry, be advised that you are going to experience this and many more such tests of your character over the course of your ministry. But God is looking for a few good men who will always do the right thing, and if you think you've got what it takes, maybe you can be one of us.

When the Corinthians forgave and received the fornicator back, they did so with the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ (II Cor. 2:10). This is similar to how when they broke fellowship with the man in the first place, this too was done with the authority of the Lord Jesus (I Cor. 5:4,5). Under the kingdom program, the Lord gave *the twelve apostles* the right to act with His authority in His absence (Matt. 18:18). But if you are considering entering the ministry, it is important that you realize that today in the dispensation of grace, this delegated authority resides in *the local church*, and *not* in *the local pastor*. Many a church has been ruined by a pastor who felt that the authority of God was vested in him and in him alone. And so if you are interested in being a prima donna, do God and everyone else a favor and please look into another line of work.

Perhaps the reader is thinking, "But you don't know our local church! It is not very spiritual!" Oh, and the Corinthian church *was*? Surely if *they* could act with God-given authority, your church can too! Will your church make mistakes? Unquestionably. But we are reminded of an old adage we learned many years ago in the workplace: "The boss isn't always right, *but he's always the boss!*" Similarly, the local church isn't always right, but they are *always* God's authoritative body in the dispensation of grace, and He always works through it, one way or the other, to the praise of His glory.

Next, the minister must not be ignorant of Satan's "*devices*" (II Cor. 2:11). In the context, we submit that Satan's devices are *extremes*. In the matter of the fornicator, the Corinthians at first practiced an extreme form of "grace" in allowing the man to continue in their fellowship. Once Paul corrected this perversion of grace by insisting that they put the man out of their midst, they then moved to an extreme form of legalism in refusing to allow the man back in after he repented!



Pastors must beware of these and any and all other extremes as they seek to administer the doctrines of grace in the local assembly.

Moving on in our text, we see the importance of *fellowship* for the man of God. Paul very frankly admits that he chose not to enter an open door of opportunity to preach the gospel when he was deprived of the undergirding strength of the fellowship of Titus (II Cor. 2:12,13). The world would have us think that “real men” don’t need anyone, but if even the great apostle Paul needed the sustaining power of Christian fellowship, especially the fellowship of other spiritual leaders, then *you’ll need it too* if you choose to make the ministry your life’s work.

Perhaps by now the reader is wondering what *results* you can expect in the ministry. Well, it is the testimony of the apostle of grace that God “*always causeth us to triumph in Christ*” (II Cor. 2:14). Your ministry may never look like much in the eyes of the world, but if as Paul says here your ministry “*maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge,*” then God will consider it a *triumph* in Christ.

There are many careers for which you can train at schools where they have what are called “placement programs” to help you find employment once you graduate. However, no legitimate school will *guarantee* that you will be a *triumph* in life. But if you enter the ministry, you have a *promise from God Himself* that your life will be a *triumph in Christ*. And when it comes right down to it, isn’t that the only place in the world worth triumphing?

In Verse 15, we must be careful to notice that Paul is *not* saying God savours the eternal death of the unbeliever as much as He savors the eternal life of the believer. He rather says *of ministers* that “*we*” are unto God a sweet savor of Christ “*in*” both the lost and the saved. That means that if you as a minister faithfully proclaim the gospel of the grace of God, *He will savour your ministry* and consider it a triumph in Christ, no matter who believes your report.

Want proof? Let’s consider the example of the minister mentioned in Isaiah 49. When the prophet cries, “*He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword*” (v. 2), we know he is speaking prophetically of *the Lord Jesus Christ* when we compare what is said of the Lord elsewhere (Rev. 1:16; 2:16; 19:15,21). We know it *sounds* like Isaiah is talking about “*Israel*” (49:3), but the Lord is the *true* Israel. Remember, Israel is the vine (Psa. 80:8), but the Lord is the *true* vine (John 15:1), and Israel is said to be the light of the world (Matt. 5:14), but the Lord is the *true* light of the world (John 1:6-9). And so as we say, the Lord here is the true Israel of whom the prophet is speaking.

Moving on in Isaiah 49, one can easily understand why the Lord would then say, “*I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for nought, and in vain*” (v. 4). His ministry certainly seemed to be “a failure” in the eyes of the world, and humanly speaking He was probably tempted to feel that He had let His Father down. How wonderful then to hear the prophet predict how the Lord would encourage Himself:

“And now, saith the Lord that formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel be *not* gathered, *yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord*” (Isa. 49:5).

God the Father sent the Lord to gather Israel (Matt. 23:37). Since Israel had not been gathered, He was a failure in the eyes of men, *but He was glorious in the eyes of God*, because He had faithfully delivered the message God had sent Him to deliver. Similarly, as a grace pastor you may be considered a failure in the eyes of the world, but you will be glorious in the eyes of God if you are faithful to the message God has given you to proclaim.

It is sometimes forgotten that before our nation dropped atomic bombs on two Japanese cities during World War II, leaflets were dropped on those cities first, warning of the impending devastation. To our knowledge, these warnings went largely if not completely unheeded. This does *not* mean, however, that the pilots who dropped those warnings were failures, for they had successfully delivered the warning they were sent to deliver. Likewise the minister who faithfully proclaims the gospel he is sent to proclaim is a sweet savour to God, no matter how many or few believe his message.

If you choose to enter the ministry as a grace pastor, at some point you may be tempted to say with the Lord, “*I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain...*” Feeling that way is natural, and would only mean you are as human as He was. But at such a time it will be important to remember what the Lord added to His lament: “*...yet surely My judgment is with the Lord, and My work with My God*” (Isa. 49:4). The Lord Jesus Christ didn’t *dare* judge His life’s work, *and neither should you!* “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come” (I Cor. 4:5).

To those who refuse to believe the gospel that we proclaim, “*we are the savour of death unto death*” (II Cor. 2:16), “*and to the other the savour of life unto life.*” This dichotomy reminds us of how the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified between two thieves, one of whom believed on Him, and one of whom did not. How symbolic this is of the human race, which is similarly divided into those who believe on Him, and those who do not. As a minister, you will have to bear in mind that *even the Lord Jesus Christ* could not convince everyone to believe on Him, *neither will you.* But if you’ll spend your life faithfully proclaiming the gospel as He did, then “*your labour is not in vain in the Lord*” (I Cor. 15:58), you’ve got God’s word on it.

As we approach the end of this chapter, it is almost as if the enormity of the eternal matters he has been discussing stops the apostle dead in his tracks, and he asks, “*and who is sufficient for these things?*” That is, who can be trusted with the issues of eternal life and eternal death when it comes to the souls of men? The answer is, if you choose to enter the ministry, *you can!*—IF you faithfully preach the gospel that Paul preached, the gospel of the grace of God.

This writer never wanted to be a doctor, as we never wanted people's lives depending on *us* and *our ability*. If the reader is thinking, "But Pastor, you became a *minister*, and people's *eternal* lives depend on you," *think again!* Paul says of *the gospel* that "IT is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). The eternal destiny of men depends upon *the gospel*, not on our ability to present it. All we have to do is preach it, and we are "sufficient for these things."

In closing, in the interest of full disclosure, the apostle reveals that there is *one* thing that can keep a minister from triumphing in Christ, and being a sweet savour unto God, and that is *corrupting the word of God* (II Cor. 2:17). The phrase "the word of God" usually refers to the Scriptures themselves, but sometimes the phrase has a special reference to the gospel message (Acts 13:5,7,44,46; Rom. 10:17), and we feel that in the context that this is the meaning here as well. Such unscriptural phrases as "ask Jesus into your heart," or "make Him your Lord and Savior" can only *corrupt* the simplicity of the gospel message, and prevent the minister from being the savour of triumph that God wants him to be in Christ. Worse, these and other phrases are diluting and polluting the gospel in our generation, and threatening it with extinction. This generation *desperately* needs pastors who will take an unwavering stand for the purity of the gospel. *Can you be such a man?*

To Be Continued!



Bible lessons make great gifts!

Family devotions - Sunday school
Women's Bible studies - Youth groups
Prison ministries - Personal Bible study

Junior Series
Study through the Bible
Price: \$39.00 per quarter*

*Shipping: \$6 each

THE GRACE LIFE Series
Book 1: Christ in My Heart
Price: \$19.00 per book*

262-255-4750

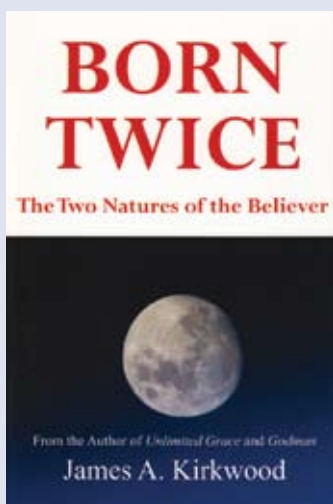
GrowingUpInGrace.com





Born Twice

By James A. Kirkwood



Paperback

216 Pages

Price:
\$14.00

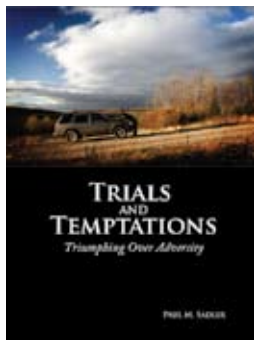
The book was written for those born only of Adam, as well as those born also of God. It is because so few people understand the second birth and because all of us could benefit from a greater knowledge of this all-important event that these thoughts are shared.

Orders up to \$30.00, please add **\$4.00** for postage and handling.
Orders over \$30.00, please add **15%** for postage and handling.

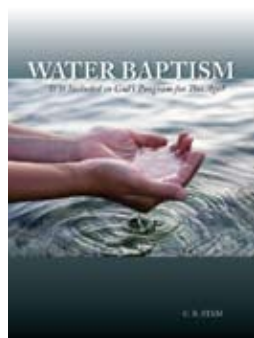
Foreign orders must be remitted in U. S. currency!

NEW RELEASE!

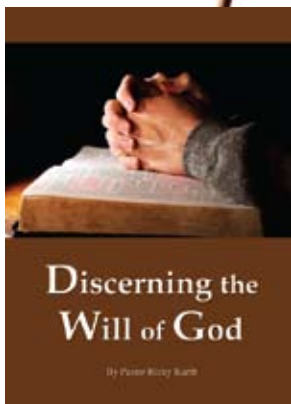
BOOKLET BARGAIN



**Trials and
Temptations**
24 Pages—\$2.00



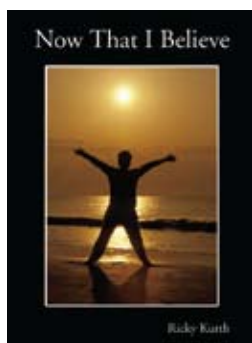
Water Baptism
20 Pages—\$2.00



**Discerning the
Will of God**
48 Pages—\$3.00



**Seven Times
a Failure**
24 Pages—\$2.00



Now That I Believe
40 Pages—\$3.00

Set of 15 booklets (3 of each title)

Special Price: \$26.00

THIS OFFER ENDS DECEMBER 31, 2009

(Extended 21 days for all foreign orders)

Orders up to \$30.00, please add **\$4.00** for postage and handling.

Orders over \$30.00, please add **15%** for postage and handling.

Foreign orders must be remitted in U. S. currency!





BBS Letter Excerpts

From West Virginia:

“My uncle used to get your reading materials and tried to instill the values therein in me while I was growing up. I’ve been a seeker most of my adult life, bounced around from church to church, but no one talks of God’s grace the way you all do. Thank you!!!”

From Louisiana:

“I had been studying Romans 8 for about a week and it was like I was stuck there...I picked up a copy of the *Berean Searchlight*...I never heard of this magazine...I got to Page 15 and guess what? I see in big bold letters, NO CONDEMNATION...I read somewhere that I could have it sent free of charge...I am being blessed spiritually...I got to a certain part that made me jump up and unto my knees. Thank you Jesus!”

From Florida:

“I’m attending a holiness congregation and having to listen to their doctrine, then reading yours, is driving me bonkers! Your magazine opens my heart and mind. Thank you.”

From Tennessee:

“Thank you so much for your website, the information and materials available there is great! I have been receiving the *Searchlight* for many years, and soak it up like a sponge. There are no grace believer groups or churches in this area besides my immediate family, so we are very thankful to have access to your site.”

From Florida:

“I do not know where to begin to tell you that I fully understand now what those Scripture verses are saying...THANK YOU for your guidance in rightly dividing the Word, and the clarity that God has shown you to teach the Word as it should be taught. I kept that link and printed out those pages so that I would have it as a reference.” (Our motto is still “*to help you understand and enjoy the Bible.*”—Ed).

From our Inbox:

“What a source of joy you are! I keep a notebook of lessons and articles I copy from the *Searchlight* and other grace authors. Your copied and pasted letters are certainly joining the others. How I appreciate you steering me a little straighter.”

From North Carolina:

“Our little Berean fellowship group has so much enjoyed your DVD, *What it Means to Be a Grace Believer*...Our group is small, but we are so blessed to have had some good teaching so far. Thank you for the good contribution.”

From our Inbox:

“I want to thank you for your time and research on these matters, and also let you know how much we are enjoying and learning from Pastor Sadler’s DVD series on *What It Means to be a Grace Believer*. He has done an excellent job on breaking it down for us. Thank you.”

From Florida:

“The series by Pastor Sadler on, *What It Means to be a Grace Believer* is fantastic! Can’t wait for more of his teachings on DVD.”

From New Zealand:

“My copy of *Things That Differ* has been used so many times the front cover has been cello-taped on time and again. I think this book has had such a remarkable effect on my life. I say to myself, ‘Why did I not see this before?’ I am involved with a deep debate with my Baptist denomination over the temporary nature of the sign gifts. The charismatic movement has invaded all denominations in New Zealand. I am expecting a torrent of abuse to my letter in the Baptist magazine on the gifts. I could use some help please...I think your *Contrast with the 12 Apostles to Israel to the Apostle Paul* is a ‘ripper.’ I debate this issue with friends tomorrow evening.” (For those of us who live *up over* as opposed to *down under*, a ripper is slang for “*an excellent example of its kind.*”—Ed).

From Kenya:

“Kindly send me the *Berean Searchlight*, for I have had to borrow a friend’s copy for a long time. They have built my faith.”

From Georgia:

“For a number of years I have been able to see, to a degree, the dispensational aspects of the Lord’s prayer. However, until now I didn’t fully grasp the true dispensational meaning. At present, based upon your explanation, I feel confident that I can explain and show from Scripture that Tribulation saints, not members of the Body of Christ, will welcome this prayer.”

From South Africa:

“Thank you for this wonderful *Growing Up in Grace* material. This is used in our Sunday School, of which we have nearly 300 children from the toddlers to Grade 7.” (From our friends at *St. Mark’s Congregational Church* in Port Elizabeth.—Ed).

From Florida:

“Thank you for taking the time and talking with me. Our conversation was a blessing and brought a peace and understanding to me. It was a comfort for me knowing that I am on the right path just wanting to know and understand the Grace Message and Paul’s teaching for today.”

From Florida:

“Please keep my *Searchlight* coming! I so enjoy their teaching. Looking forward to Pastor Sadler’s ‘Philippian Commentary’ when published!”

From Washington:

“We have received the *Growing Up in Grace* Sunday School lessons, and my wife has begun teaching them in our home weekly. The children are ages 7-12 and how they have loved these lessons. My wife is going on 84 years old. Guess you are never too old to serve the Lord.”

From Florida:

“Pastor Stam on the radio made the statement, ‘stop trying, start trusting,’ which became my new motto! Immediately I wrote him knowing nothing about him or his theology or doctrine. It took awhile to understand the Mystery, but praise the Lord it is now clear and understandable. I shall never cease to praise the Lord for your faithfulness in preaching with no apologies.”



“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

Question Box

“What did the Lord mean in John 10:34?”

“Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods?”

Here the Lord was answering the Jews who had complained to Him, “that thou, being a man, makest thyself God” (v. 33). His response was to quote a passage where *other* men were called gods by *Scripture itself* (Psa. 82:6).

But *who were these other men*, and why were they called “gods”? Well, the Lord called them men “unto whom the word of God came” (John 10:35), and frequently when we read the phrase “the word of the Lord came unto...” in the Old Testament, it was coming to Israel’s *rulers* (I Kings 6:11; 16:1; I Chron. 22:8), often through her prophets (II Sam. 7:4,5; I Kings 12:22,23; 21:17-19; II Kings 20:4,5). This agrees with the passage the Lord was quoting, for after saying that God “judgeth among the gods” (Psa. 82:1), He then asks these gods, “how long will ye judge unjustly?” (v. 2).

If it be asked why rulers are called gods, it’s because government is a divine institution (Rom. 13:1-7). This is why it is still not a good idea to curse rulers (Ex. 22:28 cf. Acts 23:5). Today’s rulers can also hear from God through His Word and His people, and we should rather pray that they will (I Tim. 2:1,2).

All this helps explain a puzzling verse in Micah 4, where the prophet describes the kingdom (v. 1-3) as a place where “all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord” (v. 5). Did Micah mean to predict that Jews in the kingdom would walk in God’s name, but that all other men would be allowed to walk in the name of false deities? No, the “gods” under whom they will walk will be the rulers in Israel symbolized by the “vine” and “fig tree” in Verse 4. God has promised to make faithful Jews into “kings and priests” (Rev. 1:6; 5:10) in the kingdom of heaven, and they will reign over the “cities” of the Gentiles (Luke 19:17,19).

This is what the Lord meant when He predicted that Moses would be to Pharaoh “instead of God” (Ex. 4:15,16), later saying “See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh” (7:1). Similarly in the kingdom, Israel’s leaders will be “gods” to the rulers of the world.

—Pastor Kurth

Paul Beseches the Church (Part 8) II Corinthians 5:19-6:2

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D., Executive Director of BBI

In this passage of Scripture, we find two distinct beseechments by the Apostle Paul. One towards the lost and the other towards the saints of God.

In 5:19 Paul explains that through the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of the world God has done all that is necessary for sinful men and women to be reconciled to Him. Sin is no longer an insurmountable barrier between man and God because Christ's death was sufficient to pay the sin debt of the whole world. His death "propitiated" or "satisfied" the righteous demands of God the Father for justice. The benefits of His finished work of redemption are applied to those who appropriate it by faith in His blood (see Rom. 3:23-25). "In Christ" the believer has "*redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*" (Eph. 1:7).

Those who trust in Christ as Savior are reconciled to God and are given the ministry of reconciliation. This ministry is carried out through sharing the Good News of Christ's reconciling work on the cross with the lost, beseeching them to be reconciled to God through faith in

the One who was "*made sin*" in our place on the cross that "*we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*" (II Cor. 5:20-21). He died for our sins that we might be forgiven and He was raised from the dead that we might be justified (declared righteous) in Him (see Rom. 3:25-26; 4:24-25; I Cor. 15:3-4).

Paul continues in chapter six by beseeching the saints at Corinth (and us) to "*receive not the grace of God in vain*" (II Cor. 6:1). That they had received God's grace indicates that they were believers. But now, as saints of God, they were to live according to the grace that had been bestowed upon them. Believers are to walk by faith, allowing the Holy Spirit to work in their lives (see Gal. 5:22-24). They are to live separated from the world. Since He is speaking to believers who have been redeemed through His blood, the "*salvation*" that is mentioned in 6:2 is not a reference to salvation from the penalty of sin in the Lake of Fire, but to the deliverance from the power of sin in the believers life (see Gal. 5:16-17). It is only by faith that the believer can live a life that is well pleasing to God (see Col. 1:9-14).

Spring Semester begins January 25, 2010!

For more information about **BBI**, 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, web address: www.bereanbibleinstitute.org.



News and Announcements

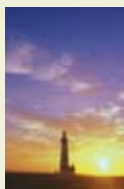
New Email Address: You'll think you missed the Rapture the next time you email us, if you forget to use our new address! That's because as of January 1st, emails sent to our old address berean@execpc.com will bounce back to you, causing you much unnecessary alarm and concern! Fortunately, there is an easy fix. Just open your address book and change our address to berean@bereanbiblesociety.org and all will be well!

New Chart Mart: Some of the Bible study charts that appear in our literature are now available for free download on our website. Many a grace believer will attest that when it comes to sharing dispensational truth with others, there's just something about a chart that makes it easier! Why not check us out today at www.bereanbiblesociety.org/charts. If we don't have just the chart you are looking for, be patient—we'll add more!

New Grace Church: The newly-formed *Grace Bible Fellowship* of West Salem, Wisconsin, is now meeting at the *Coulee Region Christian School*, with *Dakota Bible Institute* graduate Pastor Niles Kenutson teaching the Word. Sunday School starts at 10, church starts at 11, and the blessings start as soon as you decide to make this assembly your new church home! For more information call Pastor Kenutson at 608-269-0302.

New Pastorate: *Grace Bible Church* of Madison, Wisconsin, has called Pastor Wes Bartek to lead their assembly. A former BBI student, Pastor Bartek has spent the past few years ministering the Word at *Grace Bible Fellowship* of Inverness, Florida. We know that Wes and his wife Debbie will appreciate your prayers as they get settled into their new work. Meanwhile, don't feel sorry for the folks in Florida, because there's...

Another New Pastorate: Pastor John Fredericksen and his wife Teri have accepted a call to pastor *Grace Bible Church* of Inverness, Florida. A veteran grace pastor and chairman of the board of directors here at *Berean Bible Society*, John is a popular Bible conference speaker and grace author. If you live or vacation near Inverness, be sure to stop in for a visit, join in the happy fellowship, and make their welcome complete.



The *Yaquina Head Lighthouse* is located in Newport, Oregon. During its construction, which began in 1871, strong winds blew one of the workers off of the cliff. Amazingly, his oil skins acted as something of a parachute, and he only sustained minor injuries.

PRICE LIST

BIBLE STUDY BOOKS BY CORNELIUS R. STAM—FOUNDER (Hardcover—Gold Stamped)

Acts, (Commentary) Volumes III & IV (w/Bible Index).....	\$21.50
Author's Choice, The	11.50
Colossians (Commentary, w/Bible Index)	14.50
I Corinthians (Commentary)	12.50
II Corinthians (Commentary).....	12.50
Divine Election and Human Responsibility	10.50
Galatians (Commentary, w/Bible Index).....	14.50
Hebrews, Who Wrote It and Why?	10.50
Holding Fast the Faithful Word (w/Bible Index)	14.50
Man, His Nature and Destiny	12.50
Memoirs of Pastor Cornelius R. Stam, The.....	13.50
Pastoral Epistles (Commentary)	12.50
Paul, His Apostleship and Message (w/Bible Index)	11.50
Sermon on the Mount, The	10.50
Suggestions for Young Pastors	10.50
Thessalonians (Commentary).....	11.50
Things That Differ (w/Bible Index)	13.50
True Spirituality (w/Bible Index).....	11.50

Paperbacks

Baptism and the Bible	\$9.00
Lord's Supper and the Bible, The	7.00
Moses and Paul (w/Bible Index)	7.00
No Other Doctrine.....	9.00
Our Great Commission (w/Bible Index).....	9.00
Present Peril, The.....	9.00
Satan In Derision.....	9.00
Things That Differ (English or Spanish, w/Bible Index)	10.00
Twofold Purpose of God, The (w/Bible Index).....	7.00

WRITINGS BY PAUL M. SADLER—PRESIDENT

Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ (HC, w/Bible Index).....	\$12.50
Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter, The (HC, w/Bible Index).....	13.50
Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (HC, w/Bible Index)	16.50
Studies in James (Paperback, w/Bible Index).....	10.00
Triumph of His Grace, The (HC, w/Bible Index)	13.50
According to the Scriptures (Booklet).....	2.00
Are You Secure? (Booklet).....	1.00
Historical Beginning of the Church, The (Booklet)	3.00
Institution of Marriage, The (Booklet)	4.00
Key to Understanding the Scriptures, The (Chart).....	0.50
Supernatural Sign Gifts of the Acts Period, The (Booklet)	4.00
Trials and Temptations (Booklet).....	2.00
Water Rite, The (Booklet)	1.00

Orders up to \$30.00, please add **\$4.00** for Postage and Handling
Orders over \$30.00, please add **15%** for Postage and Handling

Foreign Orders must be remitted in U. S. Currency

The Gift that Keeps on Giving

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,
how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32).

THE BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT

1112 W17761 MEQUON ROAD

PO Box 756

GERMANTOWN, WI 53022-0756

PERIODICALS

PAID AT GERMANTOWN, WI