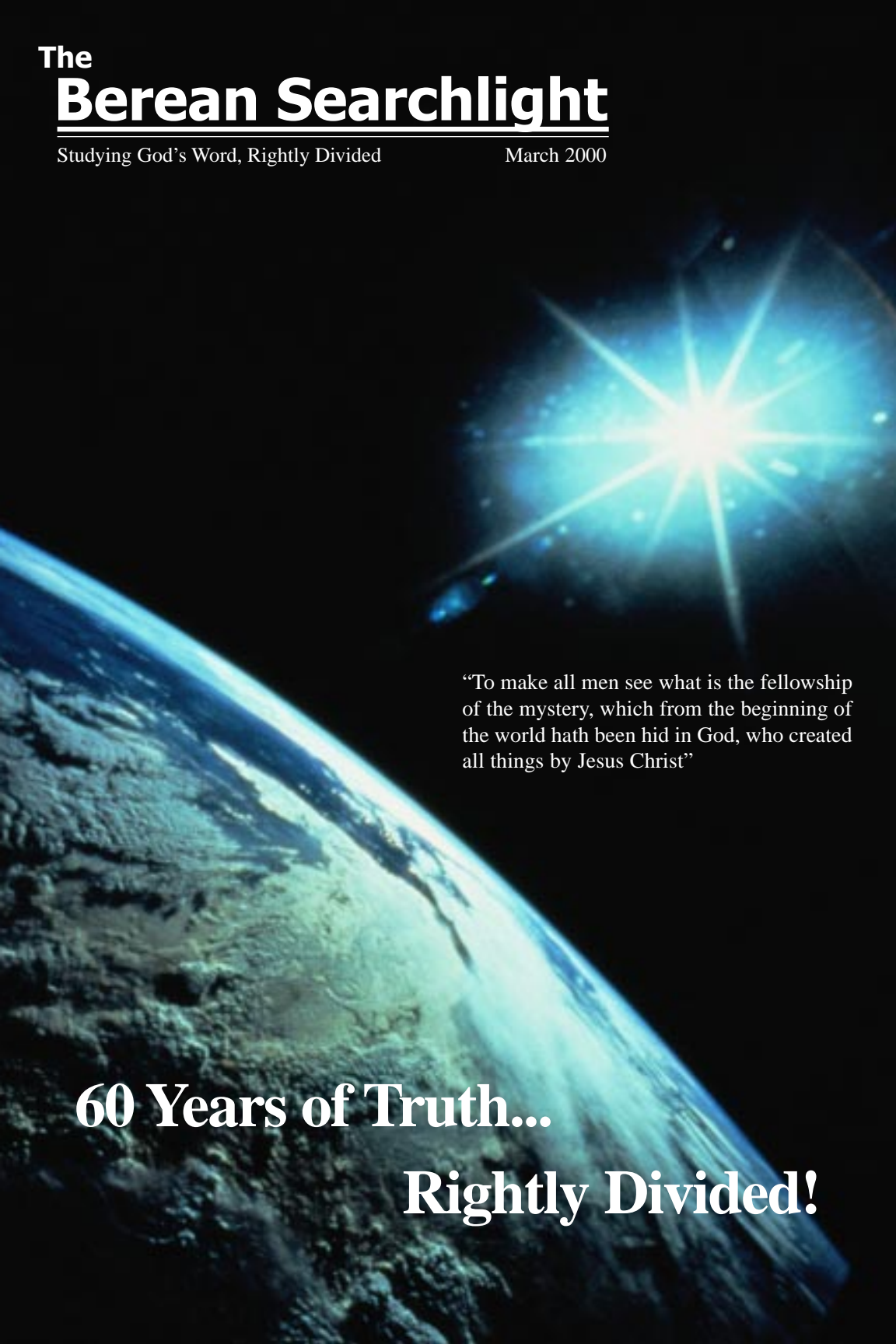


The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

March 2000



“To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ”

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By C. R. Stam



On this our 60th Anniversary, it is most appropriate that we feature *Things That Differ* by Pastor Stam. This book, more than any other, has been used to bring people to an understanding of the distinctive ministry of the Apostle Paul. It has been a cornerstone of the Grace message for over 50 years and we trust that it will continue to be used by God for at least another 50 years as well.

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The *Berean Bible Society* is an organization for the promotion of Bible study by means of newspaper series, recorded Bible lessons, and the distribution of Bible study literature. It is a non-profit organization, a work of faith supported by the gifts of Christian friends.

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

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A Walk Down Memory Lane



Dearly Beloved,

Anniversaries are like the tides of the ocean, they come and go, and with them the sands of time gradually sweep away into eternity. A special occasion such as an anniversary has a way of making us stop to smell the roses. They give us time to momentarily *reflect* upon our past. Beginning this month, the *Berean Bible Society* is celebrating its *60th* year of proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ. With God's help, BBS has become an international Grace organization, since those early days when the *Searchlight* was published in the basement of the *Preakness Bible Church*.

In the past century God has only raised up a handful of pioneers in the faith. Their insight into the Scriptures freed many weary souls from the traditions and commandments of men. Surely Pastor C. R. Stam was one of these pioneers. His groundbreaking work has allowed our roots to go more deeply into the fertile soil of God's Word rightly divided. In the face of almost unbelievable opposition, which would have buried most beneath the rubble of sorrow, Pastor Stam never wavered in his defense of the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery. He refused to give an inch to those who would rob us of this precious truth.

Anniversaries also have an interesting way of grabbing our attention in regard to the *changes* that have taken place over the years. As you can imagine, we've undergone some major renovations at the *Berean Bible Society* over the past six decades. We have relocated the ministry three times, the format of the *Searchlight* has gone through four revisions, and the number of our books and commentaries presently stands at 30 titles. In addition, a *Tape Lending Library* was added, the radio was abandoned due to expense and so many irons in the fire, and the Internet, our newest addition, is now giving BBS worldwide exposure. The list seems endless as this pictorial edition demonstrates.

While the years have brought many changes, by the grace of God our commitment to the truth of Paul's gospel has remained unchanged. We have dedicated ourselves to stand uncompromisingly for the unadulterated gospel of the grace of God. Of course, some feel it would be advantageous for us to compromise the truth for the sake of unity. But they have mistakenly confused union with unity. Brethren, we must all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Therefore, may God give us the strength and *courage* to fight the good fight of the faith.

Paul M. Sadler
President

Bible Messages for Bereans

By J. C. O'Hair

NOTE: The following preface and article are taken from an original copy of the very first edition of Pastor O'Hair's "Bible Study for Bereans" magazine published in August 1935. We hope you enjoy this excerpt from deep within the Grace archives.

We are sending forth this first edition of Bible Study for Bereans with the purpose, desire and hope that we may stimulate, encourage, or provoke, real honest, diligent Bible study among the children of God. The profound ignorance of the Bible among church members is appalling.

We earnestly solicit and covet the prayerful cooperation of every spiritual child of God who appreciates God's Grace Gospel and who really desires to receive and search the Holy Scriptures without the fear or favor of man or religious organizations. It is needless and useless to appeal to believers for whom denominational loyalty and pride, or preconceived opinions, interfere with honest, intelligent and unprejudiced study of the Word of God. So our Bible study is for Bereans.

It has been repeatedly claimed that more than ninety-five percent of church members permit church leaders to do their thinking for them, and that ninety-five percent of their instructors have been so influenced by the traditions of church fathers and by denominational church creeds that fewer than five percent of either leaders or followers are willing, if able, to study the Bible with unbiased minds and with open and honest hearts.

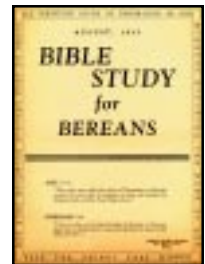
Let us ever bear in mind that no servant of the Lord has any new truth to present. Progressive revelation ceased with the close of The Revelation more than 1800 years ago. Since that time, "anything that is true is not new" and "anything that is new is not true", so far as the inspired Word of God is concerned.

No believer, or group of believers, receives any special revelation of Divine truth, or interpretation of truth, as did the holy men of old who were moved by the Holy Spirit to give to us the Holy Scriptures. The humblest, most ignorant member of the Body of Christ, the new-born babe in Christ, has just as much of the Holy Spirit as has the most gifted Bible teacher. Men are not led into truth by the Holy Spirit independent of the written Word of God. And most assuredly the millions of church members, who are in doctrinal error,




Pastor J. C. O'Hair

Pastor J. C. O'Hair was one of the "founding fathers" of the Grace Movement. He pastored the North Shore Church from 1923 to 1958.



This is the cover of the first *Bible Study for Bereans* published by J. C. O'Hair in 1935.

have not been led by the Holy Spirit into the misinterpretation of the Scriptures.

Human systems of interpretation leave us with inconsistencies and seeming contradictions in the Bible, with unholy mixtures which are displeasing to the Lord. "All Scripture...is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness." But all Scripture must be rightly divided for the true interpretation, appropriation and application. 

A Simple Principle in Bible Study

By J. C. O'Hair

We are told in I Peter 1:10 that Israel's prophets foretold the sufferings and glory of Christ. In Ephesians 3:9 we are told that the "dispensation of the mystery" and the "unsearchable riches of Christ" were hid in God and not made known to Israel's prophets. All through the book of Acts and through the Epistles of Peter, Paul, James and John we must differentiate between that which Israel's prophets foretold would come to pass and that which none of them even hinted would come to pass: "not made known to the sons of men in other ages"; "hidden from generations" (Colossians 1:25 and 26; Ephesians 3:3 to 5).

If there has been no change in God's program since the Epistles were written to the Ephesians and Colossians, then this is still the Dispensation of the Mystery which means the Dispensation of that which had been a Mystery until it was revealed by the glorified Christ to and through His Apostle Paul. For the students of the Word of God, for the members of the Church which is the Body of Christ, there should be nothing mysterious, mystical or hidden concerning the dispensation of Grace and the mutual inheritance of the Head and members of the Body, made alive together, seated together in the highest heavenlies, constituting the One New Man which God is now making, while His program and purpose concerning Israel have been temporarily abandoned (Ephesians 1:9 to 22; Ephesians 2:4 to 17). Aside from the Divine preservation of Israel in the world today, God has suspended His covenants and promises with Israel and

the other nations, until He shall have accomplished that which He purposed in Christ Jesus ages before He made any covenants concerning His Nation and their land of promise (II Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 3:11).

Israel's hope is identified with the sufferings and glory of Christ foretold by Israel's prophets. That hope will be realized when Christ shall be the Son of man on the throne of His glory (Matthew 25:31). There the twelve apostles will be seated with Him (Matthew 19:28). The



*North Shore Church
Chicago, IL*

(Continued on page 12)

Will the Body of Christ Go Through the Tribulation?

By Cornelius R. Stam

In recent years, numerous arguments have been advanced to supposedly prove that the Church, the Body of Christ, will go through the “great tribulation” before being “caught up” to be with the Lord.

The present trend of events is, of course, causing many sincere believers to fear that this will be the case, but we place our confidence in the Word of God alone and we are amply confirmed in our belief that the Rapture of the Church will take place *before* the tribulation period begins, and that the members of the Body of Christ will thus escape the sufferings that the tribulation saints will be called upon to endure.

Our purpose in writing this article is not to defend or to attack anyone, but simply to consider whether arguments for a post-tribulation Rapture are valid.

NOT ONE SCRIPTURE?

Some who hold to the post-trib Rapture position say that there is not one verse of Scripture which explicitly affirms the Rapture of the Church before the tribulation.

But why need there be? There is not one verse of Scripture which explicitly affirms that our Lord was baptized before His temptation by the devil, or that He was crowned with thorns before He was crucified, or that baptism with water is no longer included in God’s program for believers, or that God is a Trinity. Yet there is abundant Scriptural proof for all these and they are accepted as the truth of the Word of God.

Years ago we printed an article entitled *First the Departure*, in which we dealt at length with a passage of Scripture which *does* explicitly affirm that the Rapture will precede the tribulation. In this article we gave conclusive evidence that the words *hee apostasia* in II Thessalonians 2:3 should have been rendered “*the departure*” rather than “*a falling away*” and that the passage thus reads:

“Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day [the day of the Lord]¹ shall not come except the departure come first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.”

The preceding verses and the preceding letter written by Paul to these same people all bear witness that



Pastor C. R. Stam
Founder

Pastor C. R. Stam started the *Berean Searchlight* while at the *Preakness Community Church* in New Jersey. With the growth of the Searchlight’s ministry, the *Berean Bible Society* was organized and additional methods were employed to propagate the gospel of the grace of God and the Word, rightly divided.

“...we place our confidence in the Word of God alone and we are amply confirmed in our belief that the Rapture of the Church will take place *before* the tribulation period begins...”

“the departure” referred to is the departure of believers to go and be with Christ.

We are quite taken aback to see how lightly some have disposed of the evidence we advanced for this rendering of II Thessalonians 2:3. We have given Scriptural proof after proof that the word *apostasia* does *not* mean departure *from the truth*, but simply *departure*, and that the original passage in question certainly does not use the words “a falling away” but rather “*the departure*.”

To all this our post-tribulational brethren reply by simply *stating* authoritatively and dogmatically that the word *apostasia* means a departure from the truth.

Lest some of our readers believe that *apostasia* means a departure from the truth, we offer again what we believe to be conclusive Scriptural proof that the words “*a falling away*,” in II Thessalonians 2:3, should have been rendered “*the departure*” and that the Greek word *apostasia* does *not* contain ideas of revolt or rebellion as does our English word *apostasy*.

APOSTASIA AND APOSTASY

Actually the Greek noun *apostasia* occurs in only one other passage in the New Testament, namely Acts 21:21, where Paul is informed of the report that he has taught “all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to *forsake Moses*.”

We suggest that “depart” here would be a closer synonym to the rendering “forsake” than would the word “apostatize.” To forsake is not exactly to revolt or rebel against, and this is the meaning of *apostasy*. Furthermore, in this case we are *explicitly informed* that these Jews were being urged to forsake or depart from *Moses*, indicating that the word *apostasia* by itself does *not* mean “a departure *from the truth*” but simply “a departure.”

But some people have evidently overlooked the root verb from which the noun *apostasia* is derived. This verb, *aphisteemi*, occurs 15 times in the New Testament and its meaning is easy to determine from those passages in which it is used. So that there may be no mistake, we present here a list of *every* New Testament use of this verb:

- Luke 2:37—“*departed not from the temple.*”**
- Luke 4:13—“*the devil...departed from Him.*”**
- Luke 8:13—“*in time of temptation fall away.*”**
- Luke 13:27—“*depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity.*”**
- Acts 5:37—“*drew away much people after him.*”**
- Acts 5:38—“*refrain from these men.*”**
- Acts 12:10—“*the angel departed from him.*”**
- Acts 15:38—“*who departed from them from Pamphylia.*”**
- Acts 19:9—“*he departed from them.*”**
- Acts 22:29—“*they departed from him.*”**
- II Cor. 12:8—“*I besought the Lord...that it might depart.*”**
- I Tim. 4:1—“*some shall depart from the faith.*”**
- I Tim. 6:5—“*from such withdraw thyself.*”**
- II Tim. 2:19—“*depart from iniquity.*”**
- Heb. 3:12—“*in departing from the living God.*”**

The reader should observe carefully that in 11 out of these 15 occurrences the verb in question is rendered *depart*, *departed*, or *departing*.

Only three of the 15 are concerned with departure *from the truth*. In two of these it is clearly *stated* that the departure is “*from the faith*” (I Tim. 4:1) and “*from the living God*” (Heb. 3:12) while the third clearly implies a departure, or “*falling away*,” *from that which was “for a while believed,”* leaving the meaning of the verb *aphisteemi* in each case simply *depart*. And these are the only three passages of the above fifteen where departure *from the truth* is even *involved*.

In the other twelve the meaning of the word itself is again simply that of departure—nothing more.

In Luke 4:13 we read that the *devil* “departed” *from Christ*. In Acts 12:10 an *angel* “departs” *from Peter*. In Acts 15:38 we read how a *man* had “departed” *from Paul and Barnabas*. In II Corinthians 12:8 we read of Paul’s thrice-repeated prayer that a *thorn* might “depart,” or be removed, *from his flesh*. And so with all the others.

Indeed, in two of the 15 cases above the very *opposite* of apostasy or departure from the truth is involved.

In I Timothy 6:5 Timothy is told to depart (“withdraw thyself”) from men who are “*destitute of the truth*,” while in II Timothy 2:19 all who “name the name of Christ” are exhorted to “depart *from iniquity*.”

If one carefully considers these fifteen occurrences of the root verb of the noun *apostasia*, he would surely not declare with finality that the meaning of *apostasia* is “apostasy” or “a departure from the truth.”

THE AUTHORIZED VERSION AND ITS PREDECESSORS

Before leaving this subject we would call attention to Mr. Kenneth S. Wuest’s rendering of II Thessalonians 2:3 in his *Expanded Translation of the Greek New Testament*. It reads as follows:

“Do not begin to allow anyone to lead you astray in any way, because that day shall not come except the aforementioned departure [of the Church to heaven] comes first and the man of lawlessness is disclosed [in his true identity], the son of perdition.”

Now however Mr. Wuest’s translation of the New Testament may be appraised, we doubt that in thus rendering the verse he was trying to establish some private theory as to the timing of the Rapture. He was just trying to produce a good English translation of what the Greek actually says, and he proves this in his preface to II Thessalonians, parts of which we quote below.

“If *apostasia* and *aphisteemi* meant what our word ‘apostasy’ and ‘apostatize’ mean, why did Paul when using *aphisteemi* in I Timothy 4:1 feel the need of adding the qualifying phrase, ‘from the faith’ to complete the meaning of *aphisteemi* in that instance of its use?...The word *apostasia*, therefore, in its original and pure meaning, unadulterated by the addition of other ideas imposed upon it by the contexts in which it has been used, means ‘a departure.’”

In explaining why the *Authorized Version* failed to retain the rendering “a departure,” which they found in the five versions which preceded A. V., Mr. Wuest points out a mistake contained in *all six* versions. Says Mr. Wuest:

“The fatal mistake the translators made was in failing to take into consideration the definite article before the word *apostasia* which appears in the Greek text of Eberhard Nestle, in that of his son, Erwin Nestle, and in that of Westcott and Hort. A. T. Robertson in his monumental work, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, asserts that the translators of the A. V., under the influence of the Vulgate, dealt with the Greek article in a loose and inaccurate way (p. 756). He goes on to say that the vital thing is to look at the matter in hand from the Greek angle and find a reason for the use of the article in any given instance. The use of the article here is classified by Dana and Mantey in their *Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* as that of denoting previous reference. In this usage the article is used to point out an object the identity of which is defined by some previous reference made to it in the context (p. 141). The word ‘previous’ is all-important here. The translators of the A. V. looked for the definition of the word in the *subsequent* context, whereas the Greek article points here to a *previous* context, namely, to the coming of the Lord Jesus into the air and the gathering together of the saints to Him and their consequent ascent to heaven. Thus, instead of speaking of a departure of men from the true Faith, Paul is referring to the departure of the saints to heaven. It is this departure of the Church which is preventing the coming of the day of the Lord and the disclosure of the man of lawlessness in his true identity.”



Old Berean Bible Society Building
Chicago, IL

Dr. E. Schuyler English, too, has made a comprehensive study of the Rapture in relation to the tribulation and has written a book on the subject entitled *Re-thinking the Rapture*. In it he deals at length with the meaning of *apostasia* and its verb root, *aphisteemi* and goes on to say:

“The day of the Lord will not come, then, until the man of sin be revealed. And before he is revealed, there must be ‘the departure.’ Departure from what or to what? It must have been something concerning which the Thessalonian believers were informed, else the definite article would hardly have been employed, and without any qualifying description with the noun.² *Why do we assume that this departure must be from the faith?* It has been shown that, in its verb form, the word frequently signified separation other than religious revolt. Have we not based our interpretation upon what may quite possibly be an inappropriate rendition of the Greek noun? And since the definite article suggests strongly that the departure was something with which the Thessalonians were familiar, why do we think of the departure as apostasy? There is nothing in either of the Thessalonian epistles, to this point, about the great apostasy. To submit that, while the apostle did not write to this

church about the apostasy he must have talked to them about it, is pure conjecture.

“Again, how would the Thessalonians, or Christians in any century since, be qualified to recognize the apostasy when it should come, assuming, simply for the sake of this inquiry, that the Church might be on earth when it does come? There has been apostasy from God, rebellion against Him, since time began. And if it be proposed that the man of sin, sitting in the temple of God and showing Himself to be God, is *the* apostasy, we must ask ourselves a question: Is this act, on the part of the man of sin, apostasy, a falling away, or is it blasphemous denial by one who never at any time acknowledged God?

“There is a departure concerning which the Thessalonians had been instructed by letter. This is not conjecture but fact: it is the Rapture of the Church, described in I Thessalonians 4:13-17. It was on account of the confusion in the minds of these young Christians, in the matter of events associated with the coming of the Lord, that this epistle was written—for some had sought to deceive them, as by spirit (claiming, perhaps, some new revelation from God), or by word (possibly a misinterpretation of something Paul said), or by letter as from Paul, telling the Thessalonians that the day of the Lord was already present. And how could the apostle set their minds at rest? He could assure them, ‘by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him,’ that the day of the Lord will not come ‘except there come the departure, the Rapture, first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.’ The day of the Lord was not present; for they themselves, members of Christ’s mystical Body, were still on earth. The Rapture had not already taken place, they being left behind; for the man of sin was not revealed.

“This interpretation corresponds perfectly in sequence, with that in verses 7 and 8, if the restraining power is, as we believe to be the case, the Holy Spirit. The Church departs, and the man of sin is revealed (vs. 3); the Holy Spirit, the restrainer, is taken out of the way, ‘and then shall that wicked one be revealed’ (vss. 7,8).”

CONCLUSION

1. The word *apostasia* and its root verb, *aphisteemi*, do *not*, used by themselves, mean “apostasy” and “apostatize.” They mean “departure” and “depart,” nothing more.

2. II Thessalonians 2:3 states in the Greek, that the day of the Lord will not come “except *the departure* come first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.”

3. The term “*the departure*,” with the definite article, denotes previous reference.

4. Paul *had* written to the Thessalonians in his previous letter about the departure of the members of Christ’s Body from this earth (I Thes. 4:16,17) and had even *dissociated* this from the prophesied “day of the Lord” with the “But” of I Thessalonians 5:1. He had also referred to this “departure” in the phrase “*our gathering together unto Him*,” in II Thessalonians 2:1. Indeed, this was the basis for his appeal to the Thessalonians

not to be “shaken” or “troubled” by those who would make them think that “the day of the Lord” was at hand. He had also “told” them about “these things” while he was yet with them (II Thes. 2:5).

5. “The man of sin” must also be manifested before the “day of the Lord” can come (II Thes. 2:3,4) and *he* cannot be manifested until “the departure” takes place “first.”

6. Thus, in addition to many clear *proofs* that the Rapture of the Body will precede the great tribulation we also have a passage which “*explicitly affirms*” this.

“Wherefore comfort one another...” (I Thes. 4:18).

“Be not soon shaken in mind, or...troubled...” (II Thes. 2:2).

“Let no man deceive you by any means...” (II Thes. 2:3).



Endnotes

1. I Thessalonians 2:2 properly reads the “day of the Lord” not the “day of Christ.”

2. “Such a noted scholar as Dr. George Milligan, in his commentary on the Greek Text (Macmillan, New York), although holding to the traditional translation of *apostasía*, states that the use of the definite article proves [that the *apostasía* referred to is one] regarding which the apostle’s readers were already fully informed.”

A Simple Principle in Bible Study

(Continued from page 6)

Son of man is coming in power and great glory (Luke 21:27 to 31). He will bring about the restitution of all things (Acts 3:21). Moses, Samuel, and all of the prophets, spoke of “these days” (Acts 3:24). “These days” were promised in the covenants (Acts 3:25). At that time Christ will govern from David’s throne (Isaiah 9:6 and 7).

“These days” of grace, “these days” of the Body of Christ, are not the “these days” of Israel’s hope, foretold by Moses, Samuel and others. “These days” were foreordained before the foundation of the world, but not foretold by Israel’s prophets.

None of the twelve apostles, in their “Acts” ministry, spoke of these days. They referred to a hope and blessings promised by the pen of David, Joel, Amos, Moses, Samuel, and others. Let us be careful not to confuse prophetic promises with the mystery. Let us not confuse the hope of the Body of Christ with Israel’s hope.



“J. C. O’Hair preached at a series of meetings at the *Fundamental Bible Church*, Madison, Wisconsin on April 24-28, 1955. My notes from the first meeting (Sunday evening, 8 o’clock) read: ‘I first met J. C. O’Hair at this first-day meeting with him at the *Fundamental Bible Church*, Madison. He impressed me as being very common. He preached like nobody I ever heard before. I just sat fascinated. So clear and simple yet deep. A wonderful man of God.’”

—Mr. Donald Weffald, BBS Board Member

CONFERENCE AND SPEAKING SCHEDULE FOR MARCH AND APRIL 2000

Grace Church/Things to Come Mission *Special Meetings*

Location: *Grace Church*, 2200 English Avenue,
Indianapolis, Indiana

Date: Sunday, March 26, 2000

Speaker: Paul M. Sadler, President of
Berean Bible Society

For more information, please contact:
Pastor Joe Watkins or Mr. Don Sommer (317) 262-8806

Northeast Bible Conference

Location: *Berean Bible Church*,
2902 Old French Road,
Erie, Pennsylvania

Dates: April 14-16, 2000

Speaker: Paul M. Sadler, President of
Berean Bible Society

For more information, please contact:
Pastor Bud Hughes (814) 899-4353

Northern Indiana Regional Meetings

Location: *Holiday Inn*, I-94 & US 421,
Michigan City, Indiana

Date: Saturday, April 29, 2000

Guest Speakers:

Ricky Kurth, Pastor of *Faith Bible Church*, Steger, IL
Paul M. Sadler, President of *Berean Bible Society*, Milwaukee, WI
Joe Watkins, Director of *Things To Come Mission*, Indianapolis, IN

For more information, please contact:
Mr. Dan Sanborn (219) 465-6215

Welcome to ...



(Left) Our new building is a real blessing from the Lord! Those who worked at or visited our Chicago facility will especially understand.

(Right) The BBS Sign proclaims the good news day and night to all that drive by: "Christ Died For Our Sins!"



(Left) In addition to better surroundings, our new location here in Germantown is more cost efficient as well.

Berean Bible Society Layout



- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Entryway | 11. Lunchroom |
| 2. Waiting Area | 12. Utility Room |
| 3. Bookstore | 13. Print Room |
| 4. Mrs. Bedore | 14. Pastor & Mrs. Miller |
| 5. Stam Library | 15. Warehouse |
| 6. Conference Room | 16. Pastor Bedore |
| 7. Pastor Sadler | 17. Tape Room |
| 8. Pastor Havard | 18. Kevin Sadler |
| 9. Pastor Ware | 19. Jessica Sadler |
| 10. Fran Ochalek | 20. BBI Classroom |

the Berean Bible Society



Mrs. Linda Bedore

My husband Ed was raised on a farm in northern Missouri and I was raised in a small town in New York state. We met in Oklahoma while he was in the Air Force and were married in 1968. We were both saved in late January 1981 while watching Christian television.

We worked with *Kansas City Youth for Christ* as sponsors for 5 years and were on staff there for 1 1/2 years. In December of 1984 Ed pastored his first church in Blue Ridge, Missouri. In December of 1985, we

came to see the Grace message and moved back to Kansas City, Missouri in March of 1986.

During the next 2 1/2 years, we studied the Word “rightly divided” and held Bible studies in our home, as well as doing some interim pastoring in Ankeny, Iowa which was 225 miles from us.

In October of 1989, we moved to Bethany, Missouri and ministered there and at Lucerne, Missouri until the end of 1993 when we began preparing for the mission field.

In July 1994, we left for Kenya as missionaries for “Things To Come Mission” where we served for almost 2 years as Bible teachers in *Grace Bible School* in Embu, Kenya.

In March of 1996, we returned to the States and Ed became the Director of *Berean Bible Institute*. For about 6 months I worked part-time for BBI and then went to work full-time for *Berean Bible Society* as their receptionist/order clerk. I still do volunteer work for *Berean Bible Institute* as their registrar/bookkeeper.



(Above) Our main door brings you into our reception area and bookstore.

(Right) We are especially thrilled when people from “off the street” come to know and accept the Grace message as a result of coming to our bookstore.



I was born and have lived my whole life in Milwaukee. In 1996 I joined the staff of the *Berean Bible Society* as Pastor Sadler's personal secretary. I work with mounds of paperwork and find it's truly a joy to be able to serve the Lord through one's job. It is such a blessing to be working with the Lord's people that are sincerely dedicated to His service.



Fran Ochalek

I enjoy collecting, observing, and growing unusual plants—mainly cactus and succulent. My collection has grown in 20 years to where I have a greenhouse. I find it fascinating studying the beauty and diversity of design by our Creator. Also, I have cats—each different in personality and so lovable.

I did consider myself a Christian when I was a Lutheran, but I did not have a personal relationship with my Lord, Jesus Christ. My knowledge of the Scriptures was limited and it definitely wasn't rightly divided. I believed that baptism, confirmation, the Ten Commandments, repeated repentance with confession through the Lord's Supper, church attendance, and commitment to giving regularly could save me, yet I could lose it at any time.

Through a dear friend, Wayne Gessner, I attended *Falls Bible Church* under the preaching of Pastor Paul Sadler. It took some time, but finally the grace of God registered that all I needed was to believe and trust in Jesus Christ that He died for my sins at Calvary. I was born again June 30, 1987.



(Left) You cannot say “Berean Bible Society” without thinking of its founder, Pastor C. R. Stam. Pastor Stam continues to influence and inspire all of us here at BBS. We carry on his legacy to the glory of God. Nowhere is that legacy felt more than in the C. R. Stam memorial library.

(Below) Here we find Pastor Sadler's library, a collection of books from over 30 years of study.



(Above) While these books have great sentimental value because they belonged to Brother Stam, many of these are out of print, making them even more valuable.





Pastor and Mrs. Russell Miller

It's hard to think of the BBS without also thinking of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Miller. Except for Pastor Stam, Russ has been here longer than anyone else—now at the 30-year mark! His wife, Bunny, has been with BBS since 1987.

Bunny was raised in a Christian home and came to know the Lord at an early age. Russ was saved in 1966 while stationed at *Chanute Air Force Base* in Illinois. It was the same year that Russ and Bunny met each other under what has to be described

as “providential” circumstances. They were married the same year and have now celebrated 33 years of marriage. They have also been blessed by the Lord with two excellent sons.

After four years in the US Air Force, God opened the way for Russ to serve full-time at the Society. Russ started out in printing, as well as doing maintenance and whatever else needed to be done at the facility in Chicago. As the BBS migrated into the computer age, Brother Miller adapted as well and he now works on a PC where he maintains our mailing database and *Two Minutes with the Bible* and other duties. He is currently working on transcribing Pastor Stam's radio messages on Colossians. He was also a part of the team who helped to bring Pastor Stam's commentary on Galatians to printed form.

Bunny came to BBS in 1987 when she was hired to assist with the *Bible Time* broadcasts and the tape ministry. She also ran the bookstore in Chicago and helped with receptionist duties. Then, about 8 years ago, she was given the job of assisting Russ in the mail room. Bunny sees to it that all orders are properly packaged and shipped out. Now, Russ and Bunny serve the Lord together in this department. One of their main tasks is preparing the *Searchlight* for mailing each month. They also supervise our crew of faithful volunteers who come out each month and supply much needed help.



(Left) This is a real blessing—our warehouse! It is so nice to have ALL of our book, booklets, tracts, and *Searchlights* in the same location. Plus, it's well-lit, clean, and most of all, dry!

(Right) Right next to the warehouse is the mailroom. After orders are processed by Linda it is here that they are pulled from inventory and sent out. This is also where the *Searchlight* is labeled, sorted, bagged and prepared for mailing.





Pastor David Havard

I was saved when I was five years old. I can still remember sitting on the edge of our driveway listening to the radio broadcast and receiving Christ as my Savior. That was over 35 years ago and I still rejoice because of God's wonderful grace and faithfulness!

After high school, I went into the Air Force. It was then, while attending a college class on the base, that I met my wife Denise. We have been married for 22 years and have two sons, Jonathan (17) and Matthew (13). While in Alaska, I felt called to

the ministry so I got out of the Air Force and attended Bible college, graduating in 1985 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Bible.

A few years later I started a small Bible church in northwest Florida which caused Pastor Dennis Lyons to call and inquire as to whether we were "like minded." He sent me *Things That Differ* and everything changed! This was the answer I was looking for!

In 1989, I was contacted by the *Friendship Congregational Bible Church* in Friendship, Wisconsin. I pastored there from September 1989 to September 1995. From there, I worked in Little Rock, Arkansas for a couple years before coming to BBS in September 1997 where I work as Pastor Sadler's Executive Assistant.

At the society, I answer most of the correspondence that comes in by regular or electronic mail, take care of BBS' computers, and oversee our website. I also provide some office management, help some with the *Searchlight*, and teach a class or two at the Institute.

First, I must give thanks to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for it is because of Him and His grace that I am saved completely and eternally. And it is because of Him that I am blessed with a wonderful wife and son and have an opportunity to work in the ministry here at BBS.

Both Jessica and I were saved at an early age under the ministries of our fathers in their pastorates. Through our parents and faithful Sunday School teachers, we came to understand the Word, rightly divided.

And since that time, the instruction that we have received at the *Berean Bible Institute* has helped us to grow and to be established in the faith.

For the past four years, I have been a typesetter for the *Berean Bible Society*. My main duty each month is the *Berean Searchlight*; laying it out, placing the text, working with the graphics, etc. And during the time that I'm not working on the *Searchlight*, I work on typesetting the current book to be published, or booklets, tracts, price lists, newsletters, etc.

Jessica has been working at the *Berean Bible Institute* for the past two years. She is the BBI secretary and librarian. She (with Cody) works three days a week and her responsibilities include: typing lessons and letters, answering phones, working with the library, etc. We are both humbled to be able to serve our Savior daily in our jobs because of the contributions of gracious saints.



Kevin, Jessica, and Cody Sadler

I was saved in January of 1981 at the age of 36 through a television ministry in Kansas City, Missouri. Having been forgiven of my sins and given the gift of eternal life through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ I knew almost immediately that I wanted to devote my life to the ministry of the gospel. In preparation for the ministry I left my job and enrolled in a Bible Institute that fall. I was introduced to the “*revelation of the mystery*” in the fall of 1995 by Jerry and Judy Worthley while in my first pastorate in north Missouri.



Dr. W. Edward Bedore

Little did I know that through my continuing education and varied ministry experiences in youth work, as a pastor, and a missionary that the Lord was preparing me for the ministry that I am now involved in. After 2 years in Kenya as missionaries my wife, Linda, and I returned to the U.S.A. in March of 1996. At that time I was asked by the BBS Board of Directors to establish the *Berean Bible Institute* and begin classes in September of that same year. By God's grace BBI's first classes began on schedule and is now in its fourth year of operation.

The challenges of overseeing the day-to-day operation of BBI include preparing class schedules as well as class notes and outlines, teaching, counseling, interviewing prospective students, answering questions about the school, editing the quarterly newsletter, as well as general administration of the Institute. The primary purpose of BBI is to train faithful men who will boldly preach “*Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery.*” Your faithful support of this ministry and letters of encouragement are genuinely appreciated.

Pastor Richard Ware came to know Jesus Christ as His Savior at the age of 25. Shortly thereafter he enrolled in a Bible Institute to begin preparing to serve Christ in the gospel ministry. He has pastored churches in Missouri, Iowa, and Wisconsin. He presently divides his time as pastor of *Grace Bible Church* in Oshkosh, Wisconsin and as instructor and dean of pastoral ministries at *Berean Bible Institute*.



(Left) This multi-purpose area serves as a BBI classroom, BBI chapel, and BBI library—plus whatever else needs to be done in here when classes are not in session.

(Right) This is the BBS conference room, which also doubles as a classroom for BBI students.



Our Board of Directors

Any organization is only as good as its leadership. That the *Berean Bible Society* has been able to continue ministering for 60 years is a great tribute to the godly men who have served on its board over the years. In times of crisis, a wise board can make or break an organization. We thank God for those who have served in the past and for those who continue to serve today.

The Life and Times of Brother Paul



Paul M. Sadler (here pictured with his wife, Vicki) is President of the Board of Directors.

When Christ left heaven's glory to redeem mankind, I was one of the poor sinners for whom Christ died. Oh, the wonder of His grace that saved a wretch like me! And how He accomplished it was memorable indeed. Ironically, a Baptist pastor led both my wife, Vicki, and me to the Lord on March 15, 1971. Well known as a soul winner, it was the first time in thirty years of ministry that he had led a married couple to Christ on the *same* day. I remember he shared with us that the Lord must have something very special for us to accomplish in His service. At the time we didn't give it much thought, but as we look back over the years his words have proved to be prophetic.

After graduating in 1977 from the *Berean School of Bible and Theology*, where we were introduced to Paul's gospel, we had the distinct honor of ministering the gospel of the grace of God at three Grace assemblies: The *Grace Christian Church* of Independence, Kentucky, the *Falls Bible Church* of Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, and the *Berean Bible Church* of Chicago, Illinois. In 1987 Pastor Stam invited me to join him in the work here at the *Berean Bible Society*. When I first came to BBS I thought I knew something, but after working with Brother Stam I quickly discovered how much there was yet to learn.

Since my first love was preaching at the time, I wasn't so sure that I was cut out for the task set before me. But during those early years God was laying the foundation for me to become an author. No one was more surprised about this than I, but it does demonstrate how the grace of God can change a life. After editing *250 Searchlights* and authoring 3 books I feel as comfortable with the pen these days as I do preaching.

While I will never fill the shoes of Brother Stam, nor shall I try, it is an honor before God to continue his legacy. As we know, Pastor Stam has been charged with everything under the sun, most of which was unjustified (none of us are perfect), but one thing must be said about him, he has always been faithful to the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery. Thanks so very much for your thoughtful letters of encouragement and faithful support through the years; it has meant a great deal to us.

We are privileged to have these men serving on our board. We appreciate the time and talent they volunteer to help direct the operations and ministry of the *Berean Bible Society*.



John and Terri Fredericksen

Chairman

- Board Member Since 1988
- Pastor of Fellowship Bible Church, Orlando, FL

Secretary

- Board Member Since 1995
- Pastor of Grace Community Church, Sioux Falls, SD



Jeff and Barb Seekins

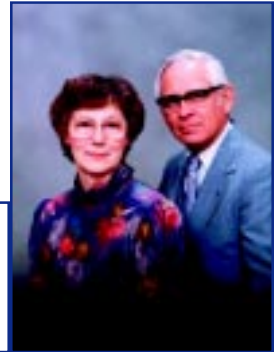


David and Lorri Brown

Treasurer

- Board Member Since 1995
- Pharmaceutical Instructor at Lakeshore Technical College

- Board Member Since 1980
- Retired Design Draftsman for Oscar Mayer Company



Donald and Mynn Weffald



Stephen and Ruth Shober

- Board Member Since 1983
- Engineer for Wisconsin Department of Transportation

- Board Member Since 1999
- Pastor of Grace Bible Church, Altoona, WI



Rollin and Jetty Wilson

That Precious Deposit

By Paul M. Sadler



Pastor Paul M.
Sadler

After many years of pulpit ministry, Pastor Sadler now proclaims the riches of God's grace to an international audience as President of the *Berean Bible Society*.

"We are one in Him. Therefore, what rightfully belongs to Him, we have come into possession of, and will share it mutually with Him for eternity (Rom. 8:17 cf. Eph. 3:6)."

The story is told of how a wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art. When the Vietnam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son. About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands. He said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art."

The young man held out his package. "I know this isn't very much, I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this." The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. "Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift." The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the great works of art he had collected.

The man died a few months later. Shortly thereafter, there was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having the opportunity to purchase one for their collection. On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. "We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?" There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, "We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one." But the auctioneer persisted. "Will someone bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?" Another voice shouted angrily. "We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids!" But still the auctioneer continued. "The son! The son! Who'll take the son?"

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the long-time gardener of the man and his son. "I'll give \$10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford. "We have \$10, who will bid \$20?" "Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the masters." The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. "Going once, going twice, SOLD for \$10!" A man sitting on the second row shouted, "Now let's get on with the collection."

The auctioneer laid down his gavel. "I'm sorry, the auction is over." "What about the paintings?" "I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets every thing!"

God gave His Son 2000 years ago to die on a cruel Cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is, "The Son, the Son, who'll take the Son?" Because, you see, whoever takes the Son inherits everything!¹

EARTHEN VESSELS

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

—II Cor. 4:7

In biblical times earthen vessels were clay pots that had been thoroughly baked in an oven. They were fraught with imperfections, which meant that no two were exactly alike. Archeologists have discovered that those who lived during that period secretly buried their treasures in clay pots for safekeeping. As we shall see, the master illustrator uses this facet of everyday life to illustrate a grand spiritual truth.



Those who have *taken* the Son are heirs, joint-heirs with Him. As members of the Body of Christ, we are partakers of His glory, His power, and His reign. In short, we are the recipients of the wealth of heaven! While the believing Gentiles will partake of the blessings of the kingdom, they are not said to be heirs. In the kingdom, heirship is a question of *nationality*. In the present dispensation of Grace, heirship is based upon *relationship*. We are one in Him. Therefore, what rightfully belongs to Him, we have come into possession of, and will share it mutually with Him for eternity (Rom. 8:17 cf. Eph. 3:6).

Today when men want to safeguard their riches they place them in vaults made of steel and concrete. But God's ways are not man's ways. God has deposited the riches of His grace in earthen vessels. We need not wait until we arrive in heaven to learn what we presently possess in Christ. We have this treasure, that is, the gospel of the grace of God in earthen vessels. Those who have been saved by grace are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. But what we positionally enjoy in


Christ must become a *practical* reality in the Christian experience if we ever hope to maintain a godly testimony among men. For example, we are forgiven in Christ, but grace teaches us that we are to forgive others even as Christ has forgiven us.

In the year 1818, Tamatoe, King of Huahine, one of the South Sea Islands, believed the gospel. He discovered a plot among his fellow natives to seize him and other converts and burn them to death. However, he organized a band to attack the plotters and captured them unawares. Having exposed the plot, he forgave them, and set a feast before his would-be captors. This unexpected kindness amazed the savages, who burned their idols and became Christians.²

But why would God place these unspeakable riches in such an insecure place? We are unworthy sinners, weak and frail, who have the sentence of death within us. Perhaps the hymn-writer, Robert Robinson, has expressed it best, “Prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love.” The answer to the question is found in the latter part of our passage. “That the excellency [exceeding greatness] of the power may be of God, and not of us.” While others usually think more highly of us than they should, essentially it is the power of God working through us that produces results in the Lord’s work.

Many years ago I was invited to minister the gospel at a Bible camp in the Rocky Mountains. On the last evening, I spoke on “The Danger of Falling Into the Hands of An Angry God.” Earlier that day I hadn’t been feeling well, due to altitude sickness. In addition to being exhausted that night, I was short of breath. At ten thousand feet it doesn’t take much to get winded. I now understand why it took Moses so long to return from Mount Sinai with the tablets of stone. He undoubtedly had to keep stopping on his way down to catch his breath! As I arose to speak that evening I thought to myself, this is going to be an absolute disaster. It was, or at least I thought it was, until I learned two months later that an entire family was saved that night. Brethren, the gospel is the “power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Rom 1:16).

At the Judgment Seat of Christ no one will be able to boast regarding what he or she has accomplished, for the power is solely of God and not of us. “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” In the final analysis, God will receive all the glory and honor and praise and adoration for the great things He has done. We are merely vessels through whom God has poured out the riches of His grace to a lost and dying world.

What is your *attitude* toward the Mystery? When the final chapter of your life is written and the book is closed, will you be able to say with the Apostle Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”? May you have no regrets at that day! 

Endnotes

1. Author unknown.
2. Paul Lee Tan, *Signs of the Times, Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*, Assurance Publishers, Rockville, MD, 1979.

Another outreach arm of the BBS is its conference ministry. Following the example of the Apostle Paul, we take advantage of opportunities to proclaim the gospel of the grace of God by the spoken word as well.

Pastor Stam introduced hundreds of people to the distinctive message and apostleship of the Apostle Paul. He faced intense opposition at times, but what joy he brought, and continues to bring through his writings, to those who know and understand God's Word, rightly divided. What joy to have the Bible make sense without having to explain away what it clearly says!



The junior member on the BBS team, Pastor Havard also speaks at Bible conferences as his schedule permits—and no, he's not booked a year in advance....

...preach
the
Word!



“...the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” Pastor Stam passed the torch to Pastor Sadler, who ably carries on an extensive conference ministry. Brother Paul has blessed many saints across the country with his clear presentation of the revelation of the mystery. He speaks at many Bible conferences and churches throughout the country. It may be hard to believe, but Pastor Sadler is usually booked over a year in advance. At the time of this printing, his 2000 conference schedule is already booked! We praise the Lord for the opportunity to minister to our local churches this way and in helping to spread the good news of the gospel of the grace of God.

Are We Hyper-Dispensationalists?

By David M. Havard



Pastor David M.
Havard

In addition to his duties at the *Berean Bible Society*, David also pastors the *Berean Grace Bible Church* in Pewaukee, WI (greater Milwaukee area). He previously pastored a Grace church in Friendship, WI for 6 years.

“A ‘hyper-dispensationalist’ is simply someone who is more ‘dispensational’ or sees more distinctions between God’s programs than you do. It’s a relative term. We could call them ‘hypo-dispensationalists.’”

Many years ago, H. A. Ironside¹ published a booklet entitled *Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth* in which he threw Charles Baker and C. R. Stam into the same bucket as E. W. Bullinger. Ever since then, we have been labeled as having the same extreme views as Bullinger. Men who have never looked into what we really teach continue to spread the slander started by Ironside back in the 1930’s. Besides, it’s much easier to label us as “hyper” and dismiss us than it is to address us based on the Scriptures.

This was recently done again in the July/August 1999 issue of *Uplook* magazine (published by the Plymouth Brethren). In this their *Dispensationalism Issues* issue, they presented an excellent overview of dispensationalism. As a matter of fact, we would agree with the majority of what was written. But then, one writer had to add this statement:

“One final word. Like all good things, the study of dispensations can be abused. There are some Christians who carry dispensationalism to such an extreme that they accept only Paul’s Prison Epistles as applicable for the church today. As a result, they do not accept baptism or the Lord’s Supper, since these are not found in the Prison Epistles. They also teach that Peter’s gospel message was not the same as Paul’s....These people are sometimes called ultra-dispensationalists or Bullingerites (after a teacher named E. W. Bullinger). Their extreme view of dispensationalism should be rejected.”²

This article was then followed by the following excerpt from Ironside’s book:³

“What is Bullingerism or Ultra-dispensationalism? This system was first advocated some years ago by Dr. E. W. Bullinger (1837-1913), who was educated at King’s College, London, and was a clergyman in the Church of England. These views have been widely spread through the notes of the *Companion Bible* which he edited. Dr. Bullinger’s positions are glaringly opposed to what is generally accepted as orthodox teaching. **This movement has been carried forth in our day by ardent proponents such as Cornelius Stam, J. C. O’Hair and Charles Baker.** [emphasis mine]

“There are a number of outstanding tenets of Ultra-dispensationalism. First, it is insisted that the four Gospels are entirely Jewish and **have no real message for**

the Church. Secondly, it is maintained that in the book of Acts we do not have the Church, the Body of Christ, but that the word *ekklesia* (church), as it is used in that book refers to a different Church altogether than that of Paul's Prison Epistles. **Thirdly, it is contended that Paul did not receive his special revelation of the mystery of the Body until his imprisonment in Rome, and that his Prison Epistles alone reveal this truth and are, strictly speaking, the only portion of the Holy Scriptures given to the members of His Body.** All of the other epistles of Paul are relegated to an earlier dispensation and were for the instruction of the so-called Jewish Church of that time. Fourthly, the Christian ordinances, having been given before Paul, are supposed to have no real connection with the present economy, and therefore are relegated to the past, and may again have a place in the future Great Tribulation.

“Beside these points, there are many other unscriptural things which are advocated by Bullingerism. Many boldly advocate the **sleep of the soul between death and resurrection, the annihilation of the wicked, the universal salvation of all men and demons, the denial of the eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the denial of the personality of the Holy Spirit. All these evil doctrines find congenial soil in Bullingerism or Ultra-dispensationalism.**”

“But wait!” You're thinking, “I don't believe those things!” Well, neither do I, but these are their tactics. As far as most Acts 2 folks are concerned, we agree with Bullinger's far out views regarding soul sleep, annihilation of the wicked, universalism, and that the Body of Christ did not start until Acts 28. You either believe in their interpretation of dispensationalism or you are an extremist like Bullinger. They do not recognize any middle ground. This is what we are up against.

In the above quote, Ironside lists some the “outstanding tenets” of what he calls “ultra-dispensationalism.” While this is a convenient label, it does not Biblically address the issues. Let us examine what Ironside said (and everyone else seems to repeat) and see if we agree or not.

“First, it is insisted that the four Gospels are entirely Jewish and have no real message for the Church”: We do not believe that the four gospels have no real message for the church—Paul says that ALL Scripture is profitable. However, we do believe (because we hold to a **literal** historical interpretation of the Bible) that Christ's earthly ministry was in keeping with Israel's prophetic kingdom program (Matt. 10:5-6; 15:24). We find application in the gospels to be sure, but to say that the basic message of the gospels is directed to the Body of Christ is not being consistent or literal. As Scofield says in his reference Bible, “The Epistles of the Apostle Paul have a very distinctive character....Through *Paul alone* we know that the church is not an organization, but an organism, the Body of Christ; instinct with His life, and heavenly in calling, promise, and destiny. Through *him alone* we know the nature, purpose, and form of organization of local churches, and the right conduct of such gatherings. Through *him alone* do we know that ‘we shall not all sleep,’ that ‘the dead in Christ shall rise first,’ and that living saints shall be ‘changed’ and caught up to meet the Lord in the air at His return. But to Paul was also committed the unfolding of the doctrines of grace...Paul, converted by the personal

ministry of the Lord in glory, is distinctively the witness to a glorified Christ, Head over all things to the church which is His Body, as the Eleven were to Christ in the flesh.” And if, according to traditional dispensationalism, the Body of Christ started at Pentecost, how can it be found retroactively in the gospels? The message that Peter preached at Pentecost was an offer of the millennial kingdom to Israel (Acts 2:22) conditional upon their repentance and recognition of Jesus as their Messiah—something that we now know will not happen until after the tribulation.

“Secondly, it is maintained that in the book of Acts we do not have the Church, the Body of Christ, but that the word ekklesia (church), as it is used in that book, refers to a different Church altogether than that of Paul’s Prison Epistles”. You’d think they would at least understand this! Regarding the assembly in the book of Acts, we have both “churches” mentioned, depending on the context. If you see the Body of Christ in the gospels, you are closer to a covenant position than a dispensational one. If the Body is found in the gospels, then to be consistent, it also has to be found in the Old Testament prophetic program as well. It was Bullinger (with whom we **do not** agree) who said that the Body of Christ did not start until the close of the book of Acts and that only Paul’s prison epistles are for us today.

“Thirdly, it is contended that Paul did not receive his special revelation of the mystery of the Body until his imprisonment in Rome, and that his Prison Epistles alone reveal this truth and are, strictly speaking, the only portion of the Holy Scriptures given to the members of His Body”. We **do not** agree with Bullinger on this point either. We do say that Paul received a special revelation (Gal. 1:11-12), but we do not agree that only his prison epistles are applicable to us today. Paul began to receive his special revelation of the mystery upon his conversion in Acts 9.

“Fourthly, the Christian ordinances, having been given before Paul, are supposed to have no real connection with the present economy, and therefore are relegated to the past, and may again have a place in the future Great Tribulation”. Regarding the “ordinances” of the church, there is no place in Scripture where water baptism and the Lord’s supper are linked. The Lord’s Supper is a memorial that we are instructed in I Corinthians 11 to keep “until He come.” However, we do feel that water baptism is a Jewish ordinance and is something that was phased out during the transition period. It is also rarely pointed out that we are not unique in understanding that water baptism is not for today. Other groups throughout church history, such as the Quakers, have also come to this same conclusion.


“Many boldly advocate the sleep of the soul between death and resurrection, the annihilation of the wicked, the universal salvation of all men and demons, the denial of the eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the denial of the personality of the Holy Spirit. All these evil doctrines find congenial soil in Bullingerism or Ultra-dispensationalism”. This is the worst sort of guilt by association, but I’m sure you see the implication. If you believe in a mid-Acts position, then, according to them, you also believe in these extreme and unscriptural viewpoints as well.

By associating us with these cult-like beliefs we can be discredited without ever having to answer our Biblical arguments.

This is what we are up against. These are the same battles, misunderstandings, and deliberate misrepresentations that Pastor Stam has had to fight against for over 60 years—and we must continue to do so today if the gospel of the grace of God is going to continue to go forward.

Yet rather than discourage us, these things should motivate us. We know what we have found. We know how confused we used to be. We can honestly say that this is a more consistent and literal approach to Scripture. We no longer have to explain away what the Bible clearly says in verses such as Acts 2:38. We know that by reading the Body of Christ back into the gospels, we rob them of their distinctive kingdom character. By not understanding the difference we either have to make the clear statements in the gospels (such as a distinction between Jew and Gentile and water baptism) conform to Paul's epistles (where he says there is no difference between Jew and Greek, and that he is the apostle to the Gentiles) by explaining them away or we have to read the gospels into Paul's epistles and make them conform to the message in the gospels (which is what John MacArthur has done with "Lordship Salvation").

We are not the wild-eyed radicals that the theological media tries to portray us as. We are in agreement with the overwhelming majority of traditional dispensationalism. Our two primary points of disagreement are that we see the Body of Christ starting with the conversion and call of the Apostle Paul and that water baptism is not a requirement for this dispensation.

Let us stand firm in proclaiming the *unique* message revealed to and through the Apostle Paul. It is like telling others about our faith in Christ. We *know* what it has done for us. We *know* that it has cleared away our confusion. Let us graciously and boldly share with others what this message has done for us. 

"If you see the Body of Christ in the gospels, you are closer to a covenant position than a dispensational one. If the Body is found in the gospels, then to be consistent, it also has to be found in the Old Testament prophetic program as well."

"We do say that Paul received a special revelation (Gal. 1:11-12), but we do not agree that only his prison epistles are applicable to us today. Paul began to receive his special revelation of the mystery upon his conversion in Acts 9."

Endnotes

1. If you can find someone who has a copy of *The Controversy* (it's now out of print), you can read more about Ironside's history as related to the Grace Movement.
2. William MacDonald, "Distinguishing things that differ," *Up-look*, July/August 1999, pp. 11-12.
3. *Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth*, H. A. Ironside, Loizeaux Brothers, New York, 1938.

Impacting Lives for 60 Years

In the 60 years that we have been publishing the Searchlight many lives have been blessed by coming to understand the unique apostleship and ministry of Paul. Here are some excerpts from over the years.

40's

"I would suggest you call all your missionaries home if you have no use for the great commission." CA

"I have just received the *Berean Searchlight*...How anyone can refuse to accept the distinctive ministry of Paul is more than I can figure out." IL

"Sirs: Please drop my name from your mailing list. I never read your childish silliness anyway and I don't want it seen in my home lest someone should think that I approve of it." IA

"I sold \$123.83 worth of young roosters yesterday, besides a few eggs and some milk, so I am sending you \$15.00. Hope we can keep the *Berean Searchlight* shining for those who don't know the truth." IL

"Last night my wife came into the knowledge of the mystery of grace and she is just as happy and thrilled as the day she was saved. Hallelujah!" NE

"One thing about preaching THE message; it certainly makes life interesting. There are no dull moments." AL

"It would be nice if you could make the paper larger." IN

"Words can't express my appreciation for the *Searchlight*. May God richly bless you in your labors. We are bound to be opposed if we take a stand for the truth." MO

"You pack your *Berean Searchlight* with a lot of stuff that wallops the thinking of a guy." WI

50's

"Quite a number of years ago I came to see that the ministry of the Apostle Peter was different from that of the Apostle Paul...but not knowing any one at that time who made any distinction between them, I wondered whether I really had seen anything...so I am thankful to the Lord for you people." MN

"The Pauline gospel is certainly an eye-opener. The more we study it the more light we receive as to the wonderful grace of God." MI

"Please give me more information on the joint-body you speak of. This is one point I do not grasp." CA

"I write to you because since I started reading your booklets I've seen for the first time in my life real harmony and purpose in the Scripture. Many of the contradictions I knew, have passed away." WY

"It seems to me you are trying to start a new doctrine and there are far too many now." TN

"Would you please send me an anointed handkerchief for an unsaved friend of mine? (Ed. Note: Someone has grossly misread our writings!)" AL

"We do not care for your paper. We believe in GRACE from start to finish, but don't care for your super-duper dispensationalism." TN

"Next to my salvation, the Word, rightly divided, is the most precious thing I have." AL

...by the grace of God

“And when they were come...they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.”

Acts 14:27

60's

“It is wonderful how the dispensational view of God's Word straightens out so many of the seeming problems and contradictions.” England

“My son is in Vietnam. Would you please add him to your mailing list for the *Searchlight*?” AL

“Stop sending me the *Berean Searchlight* immediately, starting with November. I am an Episcopalian and will die an Episcopalian. I mean, I do not want this magazine, ever, in my house.” IN

“Your book has taken me much deeper in my understanding of the Bible...I thank you heartily for making the Bible so clear and simple.” Fiji Islands

“The *Berean Searchlight* has helped me to understand so many Scripture verses which I could not understand before.” IN

“Today I had the misfortune to receive, for the umpteenth time, a copy of your worthless periodical, called the *Berean Searchlight*. I have had this garbage delivered to my home now at regular intervals for quite some time...I have not read any article whatsoever in any of the last five issues, and they have been destroyed unread...You may be delighted to learn that one issue, complete with its brown envelope makes a very excellent firelighter.” England

“I would like to apologize on behalf of the Englishman who sent you that disgusting letter. I assure you the Bereans who receive this stimulating magazine in this country really enjoy it.” England

70's

“The *Berean Searchlight* is truly an eye-opener as far as God's word is concerned. I used to be so mixed up when I read the Bible that I just quit reading it altogether, but now I know the difference: II Tim. 2:15!” PA

“Please take us off your mailing list and stop wasting your money, the postman's time, and our country's woodpulp.” MT

“Rightly dividing the Word is a wonderful thrill. I thank God and look forward to the *Searchlight* every month. I only wish I could have had it years ago.” AK

“I am amazed that the simple truth was hidden so long from me that ours is an entirely new dispensation! Please do send the *Berean Searchlight* regularly.” India

“The understanding of the mystery has done more for my Christian life than anything else, save salvation and the assurance of it. Bible study is no longer a chore, but joy unspeakable.” VA

“Dear Mr. Stann. I lisson to your surmans often. I bleve your surmans and I epreshate them. It's relley been just like having my Sunday School Teacher telling me a Bible storey.” (age 7) TX

“We believe the time has come to declare our conviction that the KEY to the understanding of the truth of Scripture lies in its being rightly divided DISPENSATIONALLY. So we thank God for putting us in touch with you and your ministry.” New Zealand

We keep printing...

80's

"As we see the isms moving into the area of the Caribbean with much force we are motivated more than ever to press forward with the message that truly sets men free." Curacao

"In reading the latest *SEARCHLIGHT* I was given the impression that all of the articles were written by people greatly CONFUSED." CA

"Since I started reading your booklets I've seen for the first time in my life real harmony and purpose in the Scriptures." WY

"I have found out that this magazine has helped me a lot to understand the Bible." Philippines

"You are the kind of person responsible for the apostasy, because you seek to divide those who love the Lord unless they agree with the Fifth Gospel, 'The Gospel According to Stam.' I seldom hear you and do not plan to do so soon." WI

"Please do not send me any more of your diabolical literature." IL

"If you want peace, keep your mouth shut." MI

"Praise God for the revelation of this wonderful truth! My only regret is that I spent nearly twenty years in the ministry without it." NY

"Things I have wondered about and worried over have been explained to my complete satisfaction." CA

"My prayer to God is that you and your disciples will be put to silence and immediate destruction for your perversions of His Word and will...May your pen and mouths be stopped by the mighty power of God." IL

90's

"I wanted to tell you that your booklets have taught me more in one month than from the last 10 years from other people. I had many questions about tongues, healings, baptism, prayer, among others that your booklets and my looking into the Word have brought a great relief to me. I just wanted to offer you a sincere thank you." Japan

"I thank all of you at the *Berean Bible Society* for helping me to find Christ." WI

"No other approach than a dispensational one makes much sense of the Bible, but *yours* makes so much sense so *obviously* and *clearly* that I fail to see why it is not more widely accepted." TN

"I would appreciate this letter in your mailbag as everything I read there is always so sweet and syrupy, and no one seems to criticize you. I know when I read your magazine that it is pure 'dry cleaner' doctrine, much of it true, but Hyper-dispensationalistic, and in error in most things." NY

"*Berean Bible Society* rescued me from the ocean of religious confusion Gracias Dios!" Guatemala

"I just received your newsletter and I take offense to the fact that you deny an ordinance, such as baptism, and also you seem to elevate Paul's epistles above the rest of Scripture. I would, therefore, appreciate it if you could take me off your mailing list." NJ

"I had never heard your teaching on the uniqueness of Paul's gospel before, and it is really tugging at my heart." SD

"Thanks very much for sending us the *Berean Searchlight* every month. Although we often get it very late it is still a blessing to read." Finland

and the letters keep coming

90's (cont.)

"The purpose of this letter is to respectfully request that you cancel my subscription to the *Berean Searchlight*. I have...come to the conclusion that Protestantism, and in particular DISPENSATIONALISM, is a false doctrine of man...There is only one faith that has been teaching the same doctrine since the time of the Apostles...I rejoice that I have come 'home to Rome,' the Mother church." WA

"Please may I say a word of thanks to this ministry for it has been a blessing to me and the church I am ministering in. God bless the *Berean Bible Society*." Kenya

"For years I struggled with grace and law. Your ministry has made it all too clear that *rightly dividing* the Bible is the only way to understand salvation for the grace age." OK

"I am thanking the BBS for sending me the *Berean Searchlight* periodical...Since I came to know BBS two years ago, I have introduced many people (Zimbabweans) to BBS literature. Thank you for the good work you are doing." Zimbabwe

"Thank you for the *Berean Searchlight* being sent to us in Bluff. These God-given messages are being passed on to others eager for the Word." New Zealand

"My wife and I really appreciate your explanation of the Scriptures. Also, we do thank you for your faithfulness in sending us the *Berean Searchlight*. We do read it from 'Quiver to Quiver.'" United Kingdom

"It looks like Pastor Stam has had to start Paul's gospel all over again some 1900 years later. Something sure got lost somewhere between Paul's time and now." Internet

2000

"We so much enjoy the *Searchlight* for the *light* it shines on the truths of God's Word as we study it. We thank God for revealing the Mystery of Paul's gospel to us and for the peace it has brought to us." AL

"I would like to take the time to thank you all at *BBS* for all that you have done for me in my journey to understand more about right division and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery. It is through you at *BBS* and the ministry of Pastor Stam, that the Lord has opened my eyes to His plan for man from beginning to end and because of this I have been able to share my understanding with others." FL

"This is all new to me and I am truly hooked on studying the Scriptures from the Grace dispensational viewpoint." Internet

"I pray that God may use you to clarify the distinction of Paul's 'gospel of grace' to those who confuse the kingdom message with that of grace. All praise and honor to Him who sits on the throne and whose loving kindness never fails." MA

"Just a thank you for your faithfulness to the Word of God rightly divided. God brought my family and me to a Grace Church 17 years ago after attending a Reformed Church all our life. What a wonderful blessing it has been to know the full assurance of the knowledge of Christ." NJ

"Thank you all so much for being there and helping. Even when at times you may doubt your effectiveness for others, **DONT**. May your work there continue to result in many thanksgivings to God for His indescribable gift to us in Christ Jesus our Lord." MI

The Dawn of a New Era

By Paul M. Sadler

Life is full of uncertainty! The Scriptures teach us that life is merely a “vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” It is like the morning mist that rises gently from the earth, only to become a passing memory as the warm rays of the sun break upon the horizon. We simply cannot say with any assurance what tomorrow may bring. Since the future is divine ground, we must always plan for it in the context of “as the Lord wills.”



We have stood without apology for Paul's gospel when it wasn't popular to do so. Thus, with God's help, we plan to maintain this stand as we enter the new millennium. While some these days are like the Athenians, who were always searching for something new, we believe it is far better to build upon those Pauline themes that have stood the test of time. With so many departing from the faith to join ministries that provide flowery beds of ease, there is an ever-growing need to *preserve* the message of grace.

Perhaps the most effective method to accomplish this goal is through the printed page. It is by far the most enduring way to retain the truth of Paul's gospel for future generations when our present ministers lie in the dust. Therefore, we plan to continue transcribing Pastor Stam's radio messages that he delivered years ago on the Pauline epistles. In fact, Brother Miller is presently editing *Colossians*, which we hope to publish early next year. Eventually, we want to place all of our commentaries on CD's. This would provide our readers with a quick reference library which could be used to search for “key words” or locate a subject with a click of a button.

Your partnership in this outreach over the past 60 years has been indispensable. It has enabled us to reach hundreds of thousands who otherwise would have never heard about the distinctive apostleship and message of Paul. Thus, “we give thanks to God always for you, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.” We sincerely pray that God will continue to richly bless our efforts to make known the Mystery to the praise of His glory in Christ Jesus.

“...the future is divine ground, we must always plan for it in the context of ‘as the Lord wills.’”

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