

# The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

May 2011



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

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## *From the President's Desk*

Dear Friend of Grace,

The legacy that Pastor Stam left us in his writings is nothing short of amazing. He authored 33 books and numerous booklets and tracts, most of which are still in print, thanks to your generosity. Brother Stam once shared with me that he felt

the printed page was the most enduring form of communication to preserve the grace message.

Of all the writings of C. R. Stam, almost everyone would agree that *Things That Differ* has introduced more to the Word, rightly divided than any other work. It is a classic in the truest sense of the word. But we have always felt that Brother Stam's *Acts* commentary runs a close second. We believe there is no other work that so extensively and *effectively* explains the transition period that historically has been misunderstood by so many.

It was about two years ago that we released the first volume of *Acts Dispensationally Considered* in an updated format, which has been well received by the brethren for its user-friendly layout. In fact, many have been looking forward to the release of the companion volume. It has been a painstaking task to electronically remaster, realign, and reorganize the book, but we feel it was well worth the time and effort to do so.

With praise and thanksgiving we are pleased to announce the release of Pastor Stam's *Acts Dispensationally Considered—Volume 2*. The cover has a somewhat different appearance to distinguish it from Volume 1, but side by side they make an attractive companion set. As mentioned a moment ago, this volume has been updated to eliminate the title pages between the original Volumes III & IV. The page numbering is now consecutive and, for the first time, this volume will contain its own *Scripture Index*, making it a more factual reference work.

We are offering this valuable work through **May 31st** at a special introductory price (see page 29). You can also purchase both *Acts* volumes as a set at even greater savings. With this project now completed, we have already moved on to Pastor Stam's commentary on *Romans*. Since printers these days no longer accept or shoot film for printings, they require us to produce an electronic version of anything we want to publish. *Romans* is well underway and will be the next commentary of Pastor Stam's to be sent to press later this year.

**"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up" (Acts 20:32).**

Paul M. Sadler, President



# The Key to Boldness

By Paul M. Sadler, D.D.

**“And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel” (Eph. 6:19).**

In our modern day there is a great demand for instant success. We read frequently of how many have risen to fame and fortune practically overnight. Seldom, however, do we hear of the hours of labor, practice, sacrifice, and discipline it took to build that career. Most times we only hear and see the end result. Sadly, many have been deceived and disillusioned to think that they can have fame and fortune with little or no effort.

The world has had a profound influence on believers today, and most are, unfortunately, totally unaware of it. For this reason, many members of the Body of Christ are looking for that book, conference, or seminar that will be a *shortcut* to spirituality. When it comes to having boldness in the faith, believers want instant results without putting any time into it. As a pastor, I would have to say, if we want to follow Paul’s example of boldness, then we must make an application of these three key points—

**Time:** Just as physical growth takes years, spiritual growth takes time as well. As we come to spiritual maturity we become more and more confident to speak for the Lord. We have to learn to take our eyes off of ourselves, so that we will be less reluctant to engage in a conversation about Christ because of the fear of men.

**Discipline:** We also have to study the Word of God to acquire a spiritual understanding of the teachings of grace. We don’t mean just reading the Bible devotionally. It is said that we retain only about 20 percent of what we read. But if we read and study a particular subject, we retain about 60 percent when we compare Scripture with Scripture. The better equipped you are in the Word, the more comfortable you will be when you witness to others.

**Consistency:** When we minister Paul’s gospel, we must be consistent with the truth to gain the respect of others. Never sound an uncertain trumpet when you share Christ. Be able to substantiate what you say from the Scriptures. Not only should we speak the truth in love *consistently*, but there must also be a demonstration of it in our actions (Eph. 4:25). Our lives are the only Bibles some men will ever see.

True boldness in the faith does not come naturally; it is something that’s cultivated as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Him Who has called us into the glorious light.



# The Uncertain Trumpet of Water Baptism

By Paul M. Sadler, D.D.

**T**he story is told of a pastor who was walking down the street one day when he noticed a boy trying to press the doorbell on a house across the street. The boy wasn't very tall and the doorbell was too high for him to reach. After watching the boy's efforts, the pastor walked across the street, stepped up behind the little fellow, and placed his hand kindly on the child's shoulder. He then leaned over and gave the doorbell a solid ring. Crouching down to the child's level, the pastor smiled and asked, "And now what, my little man?" To which the boy replied, "Now we run!"

Picture in your mind's eye for a moment a group of believers from various doctrinal backgrounds sitting in a circle, discussing water baptism. After an hour or so, it becomes obvious to everyone that there is absolutely no way they are going to resolve their differences. Like when the pastor asked

the little one, "And now what...?" the group is left with the same response as the little boy gave: "Now we run!"

As a former Baptist, I am well acquainted with the bewilderment over the subject of baptism. In the Apostle Paul's day, the "bone of contention" was circumcision; however, in our day it is *water baptism*. With this in mind, it is our sincere desire to be used of the Lord to help bring order out of this chaos so that all believers may be of one mind. In order to accomplish this, we must remember a clear mandate of the Word of God: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11).

Those who minister full-time in the Lord's work seldom hesitate to acknowledge that confusion reigns supreme when it comes to the topic of water baptism. This becomes very evident when we consider the multiplicity of views



held by the various denominations. For example, *Roman Catholicism* believes that baptism washes away original sin. *Lutherans* and *Presbyterians* would take issue with this because they teach that it makes the recipient a child of the Abrahamic Covenant. The *Church of Christ* holds that water baptism is a requirement for salvation. In other words, if you are not baptized, you're not saved. "Hold on," says the *Baptist*, "salvation is by grace through faith; baptism is merely an outward sign of an inward work of grace."

on both counts, on the basis that in the Old Testament they poured the oil and the blood therefore, pouring is the proper method.

The *Baptists*, who are perhaps the leading champions of the water ceremony, cannot even agree among themselves. This became evident to me many years ago when I served as a Baptist deacon. One of our families who was in good standing in the assembly had moved away, and naturally, in the course of time, wanted to join the local Baptist church in their area. However, to their dismay,



The disagreement broadens when the discussion turns to whether or not infants should be baptized. *Presbyterians* and other *Reformed* denominations are emphatic that they should be, while the *Baptists* and the *Bible Churches of America*, generally speaking, denounce such a practice, claiming that only believing adults should be permitted to participate in this ceremony. Furthermore, it goes without saying that it's all-out war when the topic shifts to *how* the water should be applied. The *Reformed* defend sprinkling, to which the *Baptists* and the *Independents* object because they believe they can substantiate that immersion was the mode practiced in the Scriptures. Many of the *Methodists* disagree

they were *refused* membership. Our assembly held that a believer only needed to be placed under the water once in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The new assembly, on the other hand, required that they be placed under the water *three times*: once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son, and once in the name of the Holy Spirit. To say that the subject of water baptism is an uncertain trumpet today is probably stating it mildly.

We do not doubt that all of these groups are sincere in their convictions and well-meaning in their use of the Word of God to confirm their positions. But something is surely amiss, for we know that God is *not* the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33), and yet

confusion does indeed reign on this issue. Has the Church overlooked something in its search for the truth? Sad to say, it has ignored the Apostle Paul who has given us a special revelation from the Lord for the Church today.

The question is not whether or not water baptism is taught in the Word of God; everyone agrees it is, including us. The question that begs for an answer is, should it be *practiced at all* in the Age of Grace? Is it possible that God *never* intended the practice of water baptism for this dispensation? This certainly would explain why there is so much confusion over the matter.

To discover the mind and will of God on similar issues, the *Bereans* searched the Scriptures daily, studying to see if the things they had been taught were so. Following their example, let's turn to Hebrews 9:10.

### **THE PURPOSE OF WATER BAPTISM**

**“Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation” (Heb. 9:10).**

To begin with, we want to establish the purpose of water baptism when it was being practiced. The theme of the ninth chapter of Hebrews is how the Old Testament types were merely shadows of the reality that we now enjoy in Christ. The Apostle Paul instructs us how the Law contained numerous ordinances which were a means of worshipping God (Heb. 9:1). One of those ordinances imposed upon the people of God under the Law was called “*divers washings*.” If

you consult a Greek word study you will find that the word *washings* here in the original language is *baptismos*. Subsequently, the Holy Spirit reveals through the pen of Paul that water baptism was one of the “ordinances of divine service.” This also indicates that the ritual of baptism did *not* begin with John the Baptist, contrary to popular belief.

Having established the above, we now want to return to the Old Testament where the Lord initiates one of the first *water ceremonies*.

**“And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest’s office....And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water” (Ex. 29:1,4).**

God ordained under the Law that the Levites were to be inducted into the priesthood by being brought to the door of the tabernacle and washed, or *baptized*, publicly before the entire congregation. After all, they were going to be ministering in the holy things of God; therefore, it was essential that they be *consecrated* publicly to their office. For the rest of the story, however, we must turn to Exodus 19:6 where Israel as a nation was promised to be a *kingdom of priests*.

**“And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel” (Ex. 19:6).**

Moving down the corridor of time from the life of Moses to the days of John the Baptist, John called the children of Israel to

repentance, that they might be prepared to become that *kingdom of priests* referred to 1,500 years earlier. But first, these believing Israelites had to be baptized with water to induct them into the priesthood. This explains why *all* of Judea went out to be baptized of John. In the future Millennial Kingdom, all believing Israelites will be priests who will minister in the things of God. This is their confident expectation.

Because baptism was *required* by God as an expression of their faith, those declining to be washed are said to have rejected the counsel of God against themselves (Mark 16:16 cf. Luke 7:28-30). Consequently, they perished in their sins. This dovetails perfectly with what James stated under this program: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?...Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:14,17).

Permit me to ask: Are you looking to be one of the priests of God in the establishment of the thousand-year Kingdom on the earth? As a Gentile writing primarily to Gentiles, during God's parenthetical period of grace, *our hope* is to be with Christ in the heavenlies, which will be fully realized at the Rapture. Since we are members of the Body of Christ, the commandment to be baptized in order to become a kingdom of priests is *not* binding upon us today. We are a new creation in Christ Jesus with a heavenly hope and calling.

The second reason John came baptizing with water was that Christ might take center stage in the affairs of the chosen nation.

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

Every time John *sprinkled* (Ezek. 36:25; Isa. 52:15) repentant Israelites with water he declared to them that the Messiah, spoken of by the prophets of old, had come and was in their midst. John was the forerunner of Christ, preparing the way before Him so all of the house of Israel would know that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.

This, along with every other aspect of water baptism, cannot be observed by the Church today for the simple reason that Israel as a nation has been *set aside* in unbelief, which means her King is presently rejected and in royal exile (Rom. 11:7,20,26-32; I Pet. 2:7,8; Eph. 1:20,21).

Finally, John baptized in the river Jordan to *symbolically* cleanse Israel of her sins.

**"John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins....and [they] were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins" (Mark 1:4,5).**

Their submission to the rite of baptism demonstrated that they were sinners who were guilty of breaking their *covenant relationship* with Almighty God. They came in droves to have their sins washed away, desiring to be right with God. Under grace, the shadow has now given way to the reality of the finished work of Christ. Through Paul's revelation, we understand that we have the forgiveness of our sins through the shed blood of Christ (Rom. 3:25;



Eph. 1:7). Mark these words and mark them well: All the oceans of water in the world could never wash away one sin. To teach that water baptism today symbolically cleanses from sin is to *minimize* the meritorious work of Christ at Calvary.

**“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His Cross” (Col. 2:14).**

Most will agree that water baptism is an *ordinance*; this is rarely disputed. If this is so, and we believe it is, then what Christ accomplished at Calvary *blotted out* or removed the ritual of water baptism. Which would you prefer if you haven’t eaten for days: a beautiful picture of a sumptuous dinner or the real thing? We need to pause and thank God that we are feasting on the riches of His grace today.

Every believer needs to accept humbly that it is *impossible* to observe these commandments during the dispensation of grace. May we most reverently submit ourselves to this blessed truth.

## A NEW ADMINISTRATION

**“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect” (I Cor. 1:17).**

The child of God will never grasp that water baptism is not for today until he first comes to see that God has instituted a new program for the Body of Christ. This program is known as the Mystery. Through progressive revelations, it was revealed to the Apostle Paul that the ordinance of water

baptism was to be *superseded* by the finished work of Christ.

Little wonder that Paul declares, “*I thank God I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius...For Christ sent me not to baptize,*” but to preach the good news of Christ and Him crucified (I Cor. 1:14-17). John the Baptist and Peter, under the kingdom program, would never have said that they were *not* sent to baptize. According to their gospel, that would have been the same as saying, “I thank God that none of you are saved.” As the Scriptures themselves set forth under the old economy, baptism was a requirement for their salvation. Please note carefully, the Holy Spirit’s order in Mark 16:16, “He that **believeth** [that Jesus the Christ, is the Son of God—John 20:31] and is **baptized** [for the remission of their sins—Mark 1:4,5] **shall** [then] **be saved**; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

God does not want us to place our faith in dead works, which never had the power to save to begin with. Instead, He wants us to *trust* in Christ, Who is the new and living Way. Paul’s gospel draws back the veil from our understanding so that we can begin to appreciate the riches of God’s grace, how that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. As Mrs. Walter G. Taylor wrote in her classic hymn, “Calvary covers it all.”

But some will inquire, “Isn’t water baptism an outward sign of an inward happening?” I used to say that very thing until my eyes were opened to the fact that such a teaching is found *nowhere* in the Scriptures. Could it be that

many unsuspecting saints have been following the teachings and commandments of men? Tradition oftentimes binds men hand and foot to a religious system which hinders them from coming to the *truth*.

We've been told, "But Paul was baptized and he baptized others—so there!" Paul also circumcised! Would we be in the will of God if we practiced religious circumcision today? Certainly not! Once it was understood that this ordinance was fulfilled in Christ it was discontinued, which is a generally-accepted fact (Col. 2:11). Paul also took a Jewish vow. Who among us has not taught that this has also passed away with the advent of grace (Col. 2:14)? Paul performed miraculous demonstrations, signs, and wonders as well. But who can deny these too faded away with the advance of the present administration? (I Cor. 13:8-11 cf. Col. 1:25,26).

Why is it that the Church is more than willing, for the most part, to acknowledge that circumcision, Jewish vows, and demonstrative miracles have passed with the old economy, but they still *cling* to water baptism? The answer is really quite simple: It is in the nature of man to want to *do* something. May we ever be mindful of the blessed truth that *grace* is the essence of salvation without doing anything (Rom. 4:5; Eph. 2:8,9; Titus 3:5). We express our faith today by doing *nothing* in relation to salvation.

**"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death:**

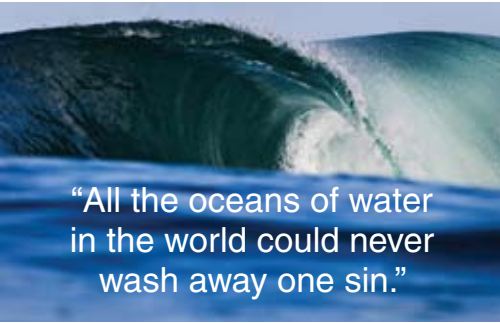
**that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection" (Rom. 6:3-5).**

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word *baptism*? Probably water, right? But the term itself has nothing to do with water. In fact, there are twelve different baptisms taught in the Bible, the majority of which do not involve water. "John [the Baptist] answered them, saying, I baptize with water" (John 1:26). Did John water with water? By no means! This passage clearly teaches us that the term *baptism* doesn't refer to water, as most have concluded. When you see the word *baptism* in the Scriptures, always substitute the term *identification*, and it will greatly help your understanding of the subject. For example, John *identified* Israel with water to manifest Christ to the chosen people.

In Romans 6, we learn that we are baptized or *identified* with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection when we believe. This is our spiritual baptism into Christ. This baptism is not at the hand of the preacher, but of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4-6; Col. 2:11-14). According to God's determinate counsel, when Christ died at Calvary, we who believe died with Him, as far as God was concerned (Rom. 6:3). Our old nature was put to death (Ver. 6).

Notice in the above passage that it does not say we died "like" Him, but "with" Him. We know beyond a shadow of a doubt that

Christ knew no sin; therefore, death had no claim on Him. You see, He was dying our death that we rightly deserved, to keep us from the Lake of Fire. His death was our death; therefore, we are dead to sin (Ver. 7). We died “once unto sin.”



“All the oceans of water in the world could never wash away one sin.”

The story is told of an American slave who had a friend in the North who was passionately opposed to slavery. After his master died, the slave’s friend in the North bought him. Of course, the slave was distraught when he heard the news until he learned he was purchased so he could be set free.

The same is true of us! The drunkard will one day be freed from the sin of alcoholism, but if he’s a believer in Christ he can be free from it *now* by simply reckoning himself dead to it. We can be freed daily from whatever sin that besets us by merely making a practical application of our standing in Christ.

We have also been identified with Christ’s burial, for as it plainly says, we were “buried with Him” in Joseph’s tomb. This is undeniable evidence that Christ actually died. It is proof that our old man is dead, as God sees it. We don’t bury people we think may still be alive.

In the same way, when Christ rose from the grave, we rose with Him. At the moment of our conversion, we are identified with His resurrection. We are not reformed but *transformed*, having been given a *new nature* which enables us to walk in newness of life. We are alive forevermore and, as a result, our desire should be to serve God, not ourselves.

When we apply the above to our daily lives, we are to yield the members of our body as instruments of righteousness to God. Our members can either be instruments that sound a wrong note to our shame and His disgrace, or they can be a symphony of praise to God’s honor and glory (Rom. 6:11-13). The choice is ours!

### IN SUMMARY


In Ephesians 4:4-6, the seven-fold unity of the Spirit, established by the Spirit Himself, declares there is “One Lord, one faith, one baptism.” Here the apostle sets forth that there is only *one baptism* in operation during the age of grace and we know it to be a *spiritual baptism* according to I Corinthians 12:13—“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” This is the baptism that saves!

The Holy Spirit does a marvelous work on our behalf the moment we are saved, when He takes us out of Adam and places us into Christ, thus identifying us with His death, burial and resurrection. We are not a part of the noisy machinery of an organization; instead we have become members of

a living organism, joined to other members. Christ is the Head of this Body, Who not only gives it life, but also purpose.

This *spiritual baptism* by the Spirit pertains exclusively to us and stresses the oneness that we enjoy as a result of being joined to the Body of Christ. It is important to note that the emphasis of the above passage is on the word *all*. We are *all* baptized by the same Spirit. *All* are indwelt by the same Spirit. *All* members of the Body have spiritual life because *all* have been made to

drink into one Spirit. This is why believers rejoice *together* when a sinner trusts Christ as his or her personal Savior. On the other hand, when a good friend who is a fellow-believer is taken in death, we *share* in the sadness of their death, along with the family.

If the *one baptism* of Ephesians 4:5 is the *spiritual baptism* of I Corinthians 12:13—and we know it is—then there are no other baptisms that are to be observed today. CHRIST PAID IT ALL, “that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” 

## 43rd Annual Berean Bible Fellowship Conference

# “REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS”



**Location:** Cedar Lake Bible Conference Center  
13701 Lauerman Street, Cedar Lake, Indiana

**Dates:** Saturday, June 18th through Thursday, June 23rd, 2011

**Bible Hour Teacher:** Pastor Timothy Baker

***Guest speakers from around the country will be present to proclaim the riches of God's grace!***

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The following Sunday school lesson is from the newly released Middle School Book 3, *Christ in My World*. To order, call 262-255-4750 or visit [www.growingupingrace.com](http://www.growingupingrace.com).



Key Verse: **2 Corinthians 4:2**

“But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

**LESSON 31**

## **COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS** Part 3 **BIBLE-BELIEVING CHURCHES**

By Pastor Ken Lawson

The importance of moderate dispensational teaching

### **ENGAGE**

What are the differences between Bible-believing groups in Christianity, and how do the so-called Christian cults fit in? What should we look for in a reliable, Bible-believing church?

## **ENLIGHTEN**

### **Introduction**

Tom’s idea of having different ministers from the various churches share their beliefs was enlightening to all the young people in the after-school Bible study. They found out that all the churches do not recognize dispensations in the Bible. Susan tried to get a girl from her class to attend but she replied, “I am not allowed to attend Bible studies with other churches.” Susan was shocked to learn that her friend’s group did not believe that Jesus Christ is God, nor did they believe in Hell for the lost people. These people were called Jehovah’s Witnesses. They called themselves Christians, but were they?

### **Fundamentalists, Evangelicals, and New Evangelicals**

In our last lesson, we learned of the religious movement called

“modernism.” It has its roots in human reason and denies the divine inspiration and truth of Scripture, especially the miracles. With the popularity of modernism and the compromising of the Christian message, Bible believing Christians started a powerful movement called “fundamentalism.” It was simply Christian leaders and their churches who wanted to take a stand against modernism and for the Bible as the inspired Word of God. They were called “fundamentalists” because they stood for the *fundamentals* of the Christian faith. There were originally five of these: 1) the inspiration of the Bible, 2) the depravity of man, 3) redemption through Christ’s blood, 4) the true Church made up of all believers, 5) the coming of the Lord to set up His reign on earth.

Later, different fundamentalist churches added more and more until there was a rather long list.



While the movement was overwhelmingly positive, in the minds of many, they became associated with an over-emphasis on externals such as proper clothing, hair length, conservative music, and no dancing. It was recognized that a person could observe all these things and still not be saved because of a lack of faith in his/her heart. Many began to desire a holiness of life based upon the grace of God in the heart rather than obeying a list of external rules. Many of today's Bible believers prefer to be known as "evangelicals." That is because they believe in actively sharing their faith and evangelizing the lost. They also believe in the fundamentals of the faith but prefer a title that they believe is more positive.

After the progress of the fundamentalists and the evangelicals came a new movement called "the new evangelicalism." This was considered a compromise of the faith, especially by the fundamentalists. That was because they failed to properly emphasize the fundamentals of the faith in their teaching and evangelism. Many of them believed the key Christian doctrines but choose to de-emphasize them to make the Gospel more appealing to the masses. For example, they "soft-pedaled" the sinfulness of man and said things like "Try Jesus, put your hand in the hand of the Man from Galilee, and come to Christ." They also became notorious for violating their Biblical separation as Christians. In order to win the world for Christ, they became like the world themselves. Many would go with their unchristian co-workers to the bar or gambling casinos to show

that they were just like them in the vain hope of sharing their faith. It did not work, and they mostly lost their testimony as faithful witnesses of God's power.

### **Discussion:**

#### **What is wrong with becoming like the world in order to win the world for Christ?**

(Answer: Right motive, wrong method. The end does not justify the means. God wants His people to be holy and separate from the moral looseness of the world. People do not respect those whom they see as untrue to their beliefs. Before there can be a conversion to Christ, there must be a conviction of sin.)

### **Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology**

Most of the original fundamentalists were "dispensationalists." That is, they believed in the system of Bible interpretation that generally distinguishes seven dispensational epochs in the Bible including: 1) Innocence, 2) Conscience, 3) Human Government, 4) Promise, 5) Law, 6) Grace, and 7) Kingdom. Another factor that set the dispensationalists apart was that they took Bible prophecy as literally as other parts of God's Word and saw that there had to be a spiritual rebirth of the literal nation of Israel for these prophecies to be fulfilled. They see two great channels of God's blessings in the Bible, Israel and the Church. These each have a special place in God's overall plan and should not be confused or combined.

That is in contrast with a rival system of interpretation called

“covenant theology.” They agree with the dispensationalists in that the main teachings of the Bible are to be taken literally, but they make an exception with Bible prophecy. This is to be spiritualized or taken in a non-literal way. There is no room for a literal rebirth of Israel in their system. All the prophecies about the blessings of regathered Israel in the Promised Land are “spiritualized” into the Church’s blessing and their ultimate entering into Heaven. Regarding this non-literal method of explaining the Bible, the well-known pastor and Grace leader, J. C. O’Hair probably said it best when he quipped, “He who would spiritualize the Scriptures tells spiritual lies because he lacks spiritual eyes!” Covenant theology is also known as “replacement theology” since they seek to replace Israel with the Church.

Actually, if the distinctive Pauline doctrines of the Mystery and Dispensation of Grace had been better understood, the covenant theologians would not have had to resort to this kind of replacement idea. The Church is the result of the Dispensation of the Grace of God which is a divine, temporary, interruption of Israel’s prophesied program. Therefore, the Church is distinct and separate from Israel.

Perhaps we should not be too hard on the early covenant theologians. In the history of the church, the early reformers brought the Church out of the dark ages by re-emphasizing the Word of God and striving to make it available to the masses. They stood for the key teachings of the Scriptures but Israel was kind of a riddle. The old land of Israel had no Jews and

everywhere the Gospel of Christ was preached, it was resisted by them. Surely God did not mean that literal Israel would be restored to their literal land. History and experience were against it. Israel, in the Bible, was God’s people, and now God’s people are the Church. Therefore, the Church must be spiritual Israel. It seemed a reasonable conclusion for them.

Fortunately, the past one hundred years has seen an unparalleled interest in the study of Bible prophecy and the distinctive truths of the Mystery through Paul’s writings. These two together form a powerful and illuminating system of dispensationalism that explains why Israel is spiritually dead today, and how we can take the prophecies of the Bible literally. Unfortunately, for the “replacement” Christians, covenant theology had been deeply ingrained for centuries before the new light of understanding came. It is now a part of their religious tradition and has been codified in many confessions of their churches. This has caused many to either misrepresent dispensational truth or to denounce it as a recent heresy. The debate continues to this day.

### **Pauline Dispensationalism**

Often “dispensationalism” is seen as a bad word because it is a threat to other churches and because it challenges their traditions. However, anyone who sees the difference between Law and Grace or even between the Old and New Testament is a dispensationalist to some degree. At Growing Up in Grace, we strive to adopt a consistent approach to dispensationalism

that resolves contradictions while avoiding the traditional errors of the past and the extremism of some modern groups. We believe that the present-day Church began with Paul before he wrote his first epistle. That means that all of Paul's writings are written directly to members of the Body of Christ and are like our own private mail as Gentiles.



This is often called Pauline dispensationalism. It brings stability and balance to those who see it because they are able to clearly understand what God is doing today in the Dispensation of the Grace of God. It resolves a multitude of contradictions and recognizes that most of the divisions in the Christian community are due to a failure to acknowledge that Paul's apostleship and message was different and distinct.

Growing Up In Grace Sunday School lessons and its parent organization, the Berean Bible Society, are associated with the Grace Movement and are independent of any denomination. The churches of the Grace Movement are also independent and are often called, Grace churches, Berean churches, or simply Bible churches. These churches are overwhelmingly associated with the following traits:

1. **Protestant**—We are separate from Roman Catholic traditions and teaching.

2. **Fundamental**—We hold to the fundamentals of the Christian faith as opposed to modernism's denial of miracles in the Bible.

3. **Evangelical**—We have a desire to proclaim the Gospel of Grace so that all people can have an opportunity to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.

4. **Dispensational**—We are moderate and Pauline in our dispensational views and see this as the best way of explaining the Bible. We see a rebirth of literal Israel in the future after the Rapture of the Church.

5. **Independent and Searching**—We are not tied to a group that must uphold old church beliefs. We are free to do independent Bible study in search of forgotten truths and new light on old truths, e.g. the Mystery, the Rapture, eternal security.

6. **Grace**—We believe that God's grace (or unmerited favor) has been shown to man in every age and dispensation but we are now living in a dispensation in which grace is on the throne (Rom. 5:20-21). That is, it is being shown in a much greater capacity than in past ages and reaches out to all people without distinction.

7. **Not a Cult**—Unlike the cults, we believe and stand for all the fundamentals of the faith. (Water baptism was never considered a fundamental of the faith.)

### **The Marks of a Cult**

What is a cult? It is any religious group that denies one or more of the fundamentals of the Christian

## Discussion:

### **What are some of the Jewish beliefs and practices that many Christians think are for today?**

(Answer: Tongues, sign gifts, miracles, water baptism, priests, temples, tabernacles, foot washing, praying the Disciples' prayer, feast days, no pre-tribulation rapture.)

### **What is the solution to these?**

(Answer: Right division of the Bible including recognition of Paul's unique apostleship and message for the Gentiles in the present Dispensation of Grace.)

faith. Some of these groups claim to be Christian because they talk a lot about Jesus Christ. These are sometimes called the "Christian" cults but, because of their false teaching, they are considered heretical by true Christians. The two large ones are the Mormons, also called, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and the Jehovah's Witnesses. Some also include the Seventh Day Adventists. All cults show certain marks or characteristics that separate them from genuine Christians. Large volumes have been written exposing their false teaching as compared to the Bible. Because of space limitations, we will simply list the marks of a cult as a warning for those who may be exposed to them or their teaching.

**1. The denial of the Person and work of Jesus Christ.** The first thing is to deny the deity of Christ; that is, that He is fully God. Next, there comes a denial of His work on the Cross. If Christ was not

God, the Son, He could not have perfectly paid for the sins of the world when He died on the Cross. (Answer: Matt. 1:23; John 20:28; Phil. 2:6; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8.)

**2. Extra-biblical revelation.** *The Book of Mormon* by Joseph Smith and *Health and the Scriptures* by Ellen White are good examples. They must add their new revelations to the Bible and elevate them to the status of Holy Scripture. (Answer: The Word of God was already completed in the Apostles' day, Col. 1:25; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3; Rev. 22:18.)

**3. A modern prophet or apostle whose word is law.** Examples: Joseph Smith and Brigham Young of the Mormons; David Koresh of the Branch Davidians; Jim Jones of Jonestown. (Answer: The offices of apostle and prophet were foundational gifts and positions prior to the completion of the Bible. After the Word was fulfilled, they passed off the scene, Eph. 2:20, 4:11.)

**4. They use fear, intimidation, and guilt motivation** (See 2 Tim. 1:7; 2 Cor. 11:20).

**5. Works salvation—Christ plus something else** (See Rom. 4:5; 3:28; Titus 3:5; Eph. 2:8-9).

**6. They cannot leave the organization without fear of Hell.** (Answer: All those in Christ are eternally secure in Him. See Eph. 1:13-14, 4:30; Rom. 8:31-39.)

**7. They believe that they are the only ones with the truth.** All other Christian groups are deceived and lost (Answer: Luke 9:49-50.)

**8. They encourage or command a break-off of communication with family and friends who do not agree with the group's teaching.** Those who leave the

organization are shunned by the others, including family and friends still within the group (See 1 Cor. 13:1-7,13).

**9. They practice forms of mind control in which you cannot think for yourself or question anything the leadership says or does.**



If you find a group that believes and practices any of the above, watch out! You are probably dealing with a cult. Your main defense is to be able to recognize these marks and know what you believe and be able to show from the Bible why you believe it. Only the love of Christ shown through His people can deliver a person from a cult.

## **ENERGIZE**

### **Summary**

Fundamentalists are Bible-believing Christians who stand against the unbelief of modernism. They hold to the fundamentals or essentials of the Christian faith. Evangelicals also believe in these fundamentals and evangelism, but are considered not as strict in the externals of their faith. New Evangelicalism is known for trying to lead others to faith in Christ by

compromising some of the fundamentals and trying to mix well with the unbelieving world.

Dispensationalists are Bible-believing Christians who recognize the dispensational epochs in Bible history and interpret prophecy literally. Covenant theology tries to make the Church, which is Christ's Body, into a sort of "spiritual Israel." They do not believe that there is any future to literal Israel as the nation which will once again be God's people. Pauline dispensationalism views the Church as beginning with Paul before he wrote his first letter, so all of Paul's writings are addressed directly to us as believers under Grace. The cults all have certain identifying marks that should be known by all believers in Christ.

### **Application**

Our enemy, the Devil, is still very active in the world of religion and tries to oppose the truth of God. There are many tricks he uses to fool people. Sometimes he plants seeds of doubt in their minds by saying something like, "Did God really say that?" Later, he may flatly deny the Word of God by saying, "God's Word is not true!" Modernism is the recent movement that supports these lies and says that the miracles of the Bible could not have happened. Since many people will not be fooled by the direct approach, he cleverly uses partial truth by saying, "Go ahead and give people the gospel but don't be too concerned with the essentials of the Christian faith. Don't tell them they are sinners and on the way to Hell. It will just turn off those you are trying to reach.




Don't act so holy. Show them that you are just like they are." This is the error of the New Evangelicalism and it short-circuits the power of the gospel. Satan deceives people by making his lies look similar to the truth, but it lacks the essential parts that bring conviction and conversion to the sinner. We must always believe God, even though we may not see how His Word could ever be fulfilled.

### **Gospel**

Modernism teaches that we do not need to be saved because we are already children of God. The cults teach that we do need salvation but that we need to help God by our good works and following the cult leadership. The grace of God teaches us that, before we receive Christ as Savior, we are sinners and under the judgment

of God. However, because of His great love, He willingly went to the Cross and died in our place so that we could live. Our character or good works have nothing to do with it but rather a humble faith in Christ's sacrifice for us gives us a right relationship with God. That way God gets all the credit and glory and we get all the blessing.

### **Encouragement**

Knowing the content of these lessons will help you see how the various Christian groups came about and the harmful effects of not knowing and believing the Bible. We praise each teen that stands faithfully for the Word of God. Your love for the Lord will provide stability, power for service, and correct Christian living which will draw others to the light of Christ. Now that is a powerful witness of His grace! 



# **Ohio-Penn Bible Conference**

**Location:** *Grace Gospel Church*  
5730 Adams Avenue, Ashtabula, Ohio

**Dates:** May 27-29, 2011

**Speaker:** Paul M. Sadler, *Berean Bible Society*

For additional information, please contact:  
Pastor David Adams at 440-992-9008

*May God bless these meetings to the praise of His glory!*

# BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

## Graduation and Awards Ceremony



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

**Date:** Saturday, May 21, 2011

Graduating students will receive their diplomas, and others will receive certificates that are awarded upon completion of the first and second year curricula.

*In addition, Dr. Robert Nix will be officially recognized as the new president of BBI.*

For directions or more information, contact the Berean Bible Institute at 262-644-5504, email [bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org](mailto:bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org), or visit the BBI website at [www.bereanbibleinstitute.org](http://www.bereanbibleinstitute.org).

## Midwest Grace Fellowship

### Spring Bible Conference

**Dates:** June 3-5, 2011

**Location:** *Miracle Hills Ranch*  
35556 W. 200th Avenue, Bethany, Missouri

**Theme:** *The Teaching of Grace*

**Guest Speakers:**

Pastor John Fredericksen, and others!

For additional information, please contact:

Pastor Ken Lawson (217) 498-6958  
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*What better way to start the summer than to join with those of like-precious faith!*





# Trafficking in Time

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

**“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Eph. 5:16).**

Many years ago, while touring San Francisco’s storied *Alcatraz Prison*, our informative tour guide noted that when prisoners were given a choice of a cell facing the ocean or a cell facing the city, they always made the same choice. When he asked what choice we thought they made, our tour group reasoned that prisoners would choose to face the city. After all, how boring would it be to never see anything but ocean waves! But we were wrong. While free men would of course enjoy the sight of cable cars and other traffic maneuvering the hills of this scenic city by the bay, our guide explained that the men incarcerated on “The Rock” found that the hustle and bustle of this picturesque panorama only served as a daily reminder that *life was passing them by*.

This writer corresponds with a number of incarcerated men, and we have noticed that men who are “doing” time have a unique perspective on time. Thus it is no coincidence that both of Paul’s admonitions to be “*redeeming the time*” are found *in his prison epistles* (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). You see, as a prisoner, Paul too had come to have a different perspective on time.

But what does it mean to *redeem* time? Obviously, Paul is speaking about making the best use of our time for the Lord. But why does he use the word *redeem*?

## Redeeming the Time

To *redeem* something means to *buy it back*. Stores often issue coupons in newspapers and magazines to entice you to shop with them, and when you present the coupon at the store, *they buy it back*. Under the Law, when a Hebrew waxed so poor that he had to sell his possessions, his brother could come and “*redeem that which his brother sold*” (Lev. 25:25). But how do you *redeem time*?

Since Paul doesn’t mention redeeming the time until he was confined to a prison cell, we believe the key to fully understanding this

phrase is to look at it from the perspective of a prisoner. You see, when you become a prisoner, time is *taken away from you*, in the sense that your time is no longer your own, to do with as you please. You must somehow find a way to redeem it, to buy it back, and make your time your own again.

Modern prisons offer many and varied ways that an inmate can redeem the time *by using it profitably*. Exercise equipment is often available to help stay physically fit, and prison libraries provide the opportunity to develop the mind in a variety of different areas. When a prisoner uses these facilities, that prisoner is buying back the time that has been taken away.

Of course, the incarcerated prisoners we hear from here at BBS are grace believers seeking to grow in grace and in their understanding of God's Word, rightly divided. These inmates are redeeming the time *spiritually*, by studying their Bibles, witnessing to the lost, and sharing the grace message with guards, chaplains, and other inmates. We believe this is what Paul had in mind when he exhorts us to be redeeming the time. He meant we should be buying back the time that has been taken away from us by using it profitably for the Lord.

Now perhaps you are thinking, "But I am not a prisoner! How can I redeem time, if time hasn't been taken away from me?" We would suggest that while you may not be behind bars, much of your time is not your own, for a variety of other reasons.

We invite you to think back to when you were a small child, and your time was all your own, to spend as you pleased. Then you started school, and a portion of every weekday was taken away from you! Add to that the chores your parents assigned, and more of your free time disappeared. When you got a little older and took a part-time job, it gave you more spending money, but even less time that you could call your own.



Upon graduation, you took a full-time job in order to pay for your first apartment, and perhaps an additional part-time job when you took a wife and started a family! The years passed and chauffeuring your children, caring for your elderly parents, and a variety of other demands on your time left you with very little time you can call your own.

We who yearn to serve the Lord like to spend the little free time we have left in the study of God's Word, and in various ways of sharing it with others. But what of the time we all must spend meeting our

many daily responsibilities? If you feel *imprisoned* by the weight of your many obligations, Paul is calling on you to *redeem* the time that adulthood has taken away from you, and he doesn't leave us without example as to just how to do it.

### Paul the Pattern

When Paul's imprisonment in "the palace" of the emperor<sup>1</sup> robbed him of the opportunity to minister the gospel in city after city as he had done for many years, he could easily have chosen to spend his time stewing and bemoaning his fate. Even today, many prisoners become embittered over their incarceration and do not take advantage of the many ways that are available to them to redeem their time.

But had the Apostle Paul chosen not to redeem his time, he would not have been able to later write the Philippians about "*the saints... that are of Caesar's household*" (Phil. 4:22). Obviously, rather than grumbling about all the souls he couldn't reach beyond his prison walls, Paul saw his imprisonment as a unique opportunity to reach people within them. It would have been difficult for the gospel to pierce the obstructions surrounding the royal family from without, but Paul's arrest gave the Lord "an inside man" in the household of the most powerful and influential man on the planet, an opportunity that he did not allow to go to waste.

### Following the Pattern

If you are lamenting the loss of the time that has been stolen from you by fatherhood, motherhood, neighborhood, and all the other time-thieving "hoods" in your life, don't let it embitter you. Rather, go on the offensive by heeding Paul's challenge to *redeem* the time that you have lost. You are in a unique position to reach the people in *your* life. You are God's "inside man" in every situation in life in which you find yourself. You may be the only one God can use to pierce the obstructions surrounding the people around *you*. Why not follow the example of the Apostle Paul and capitalize on the unique opportunities available to you.

We spend so much time wishing that our circumstances were different that we often neglect the exclusive opportunities that our unique circumstances afford us. If you feel frustrated that you cannot preach the gospel as a missionary on the foreign field, redeem the time and share Christ at the market or over the backyard fence. If you'd gladly trade your job for the teaching ministry of a grace pastor, don't forget that it is your job to share the grace message with your co-workers and with your children. Rather than waiting for free time to serve the Lord, serve the Lord *all the time* by redeeming the time.

We need to redeem the time for the same reason that financial advisors used to advise us to buy land: because "they ain't makin'




any more of it.” There is only so much land in a country, and there is only so much time in a lifetime. Are you making the most of yours? You may not be able to call most of your moments your own, but that doesn’t mean they can’t be used for the Lord.

When the armies of Israel needed just a little bit more time to defeat the Amorites, “then spake Joshua to the Lord” about it, and God Almighty kept the sun from going down “about a whole day” (Josh. 10:12-14). I’m sure Joshua was as weary as his armies and could easily have longed for the respite that nightfall would have brought, but instead of praying for twilight, *he prayed for more daylight!* If you too are weary in well doing, it is natural to long for the relief that the Rapture will bring us all, but I would encourage you to take heart from Joshua’s courageous example. Of course, I don’t have to tell you that God will not stop the sun to grant you even a moment’s more time to serve Him. This is why we must redeem the time that we have for Him. We must be as careful with the stewardship of our time as we are in the stewardship of our finances, and honor Him in both.

### Time is Running Out

We are told that the great renaissance artist Raphael died in 1520 at the young age of 37. In his funeral procession, someone carried his painting known as *The Transfiguration*, a work that lay unfinished when this highly acclaimed master breathed his last. Apparently, he thought he had more time.

Time is running out for us as well. Later today you may reach for a heartbeat that isn’t there. The Lord may come tonight. If He does, let’s be found *redeeming the time*, and making the most of every moment for the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ. 

### Endnote

1. See Philippians 1:13. High-profile prisoners like Paul were kept in Caesar’s palace.



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While you can always renew later, beating the May 31st deadline will ensure you won’t miss a single issue of the *Searchlight*.

# Be Strong in the Lord

By Pastor Kevin Sadler



**“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might” (Eph. 6:10).**


As Paul begins to close the letter to the Ephesians, he addresses the spiritual warfare of the Body of Christ. Paul’s instruction is for us to “be strong *in the Lord*, and in the power of *His* might.” In this spiritual battle, we need spiritual strength. As we are on the Lord’s side, Paul points us to the Lord Almighty, from Whom we are to get our strength. In this epistle, Paul has been showing believers that we are “in Christ,” in perfect, eternal union with Him. Being in Christ, we find that His life is our life and His power is our power. We, the Body, draw the strength and power for living the Christian life from our living Head.

**“What is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead...” (Eph. 1:19,20).**

Being strong in the Lord and in the power of His might has to do with living by faith in the resurrection life and power which resides in every believer through Christ. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is the same power we’re to use to stand in this spiritual battle. The strength of the Christian life is dependence on God. So Paul points the Church to be “strong *in the Lord*,” to depend upon *Him*.

Before salvation, Paul says we are “without strength” (Rom. 5:6). We are weak and absolutely unable to please God or save ourselves. Salvation is only through trusting Christ, and by Him alone we have victory over sin’s penalty and punishment. After trusting Christ as our Savior, we are still weak in ourselves, and in the Christian life our sufficiency must be of God (II Cor. 3:5). Victory over sin’s power in our lives occurs the same way we are saved from sin’s penalty, by wholly trusting Christ and Him alone. His strength is more than sufficient for the battle, and we are guaranteed victory over anything Satan throws at us when we turn to our Lord (Phil. 4:13).

The question was asked in a Sunday School class: “How can we defeat Satan?” One little girl answered, “Let Jesus answer the door when Satan starts knocking.” To be instructed to be “strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” tells us that *our* might is not strong

enough for us to be able to stand in this spiritual battle, and it tells us that we face an enemy much stronger than we are apart from Christ. Therefore we need the infinite power of our Lord in this spiritual battle, and we appropriate that strength by yielding to the indwelling Spirit, through prayer and dependence on God, and by knowledge of, faith in, and obedience to His Word, rightly divided (cf. Eph. 6:17,18). 

## Question Box

*“It can’t possibly be the correct interpretation that Paul’s usage of the term ‘accursed’ in Galatians 1:8,9 meant believers could lose their salvation. What is your position on this issue?”*

**“As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:9).**

Let us look to Deuteronomy 7:26, which is the first place in our English Bibles that the Hebrew word *ghehrem* is translated “a cursed thing.” This will help us understand Paul’s usage of the term. It is important to bear in mind that the apostle had a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament, from which he often borrowed his terminology, even when writing in Greek.

**“Neither shalt thou bring an abomination [an idol] into thine house, lest thou be a cursed [accursed] thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed [accursed] thing” (Deut. 7:26).**

In other words, the idol was to be removed from their presence; it was to be *avoided*. In like manner, those who reject Paul’s gospel are to be *avoided* lest we be drawn away to another gospel, which is exactly what happened at Galatia. As we know, two cannot walk together in close fellowship unless they are agreed (Amos 3:3).

So Paul isn’t speaking about saints who teach another gospel losing their salvation, because we know that those who are saved are eternally secure in Christ. Thankfully, salvation doesn’t depend on our actions, but on Christ’s finished work at Calvary on our behalf. Clearly the apostle is speaking about *separating* ourselves from those who deny his gospel. However, there may have been some who believed a false gospel and therefore were not saved in the first place. Those who believed such a false gospel and went on to teach it to others were accursed indeed.

—Pastor Paul M. Sadler



## BBS Letter Excerpts

### From Washington:

“Your ministry has helped me learn much, and answer questions that pastors in the past could only sidestep!”

### From Nebraska:

“My reason for writing is to request permission to reproduce your Personal Testimony from the March *Berean Searchlight*...Your testimony brought a very strange mixture of long-past and recent emotions to the surface, and many joyful remembrances of my own path (and my dad’s) to the truth.” (Permission granted.—PS).

### From Kentucky:

“When I first discovered you, I already understood what you teach. It was revealed to me many years ago while I was reading the Bible. Just didn’t have a name for my beliefs. Now I do.”

### From Michigan:

“The article in the March issue on the Lord’s Supper is so wonderful, and meant so much to me.”

### From Illinois:

“Each month has been fine, but February’s *Searchlight* has outdone itself. There is so much I need to look up!”

### From Illinois:

“About ten years ago, Pastor Sadler sent me his book *Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ*. It changed my life. I set out to read one or two chapters the first night and every time I tried to set the book down, God made me open it back up.”

### From Colorado:

“We have been blessed by your articles in the last two issues of the *Searchlight*, Brother Paul...We, too, miss the preaching of the precious blood of Christ and of why it is at the core of the message of grace and the Body of Christ.”

### From Texas:

“I am the pastor of *Faith Fellowship Bible Church*, located in Rio Vista. I am looking for curricula that teach from the dispensation-of-grace perspective. I want to review your *Growing Up in Grace* material before I purchase a full order. From what I’ve seen on your web page, your material looks like exactly what I’ve been looking for.” (The sample is in the mail!—Ed).

### From Virginia:

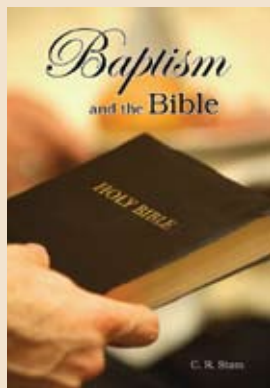
“I can only pray you understand the impact your publication has in my life.”



“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

# Suggested Reading

to go along with this month's article on *Water Baptism*



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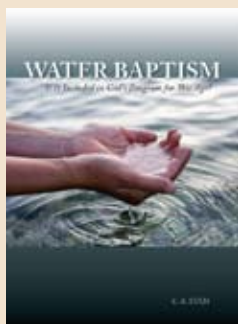


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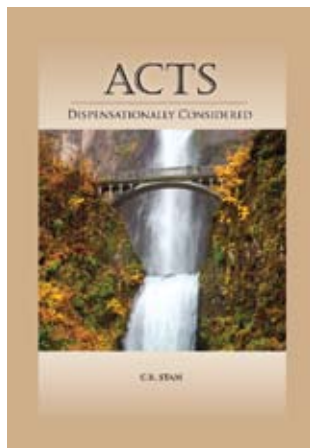




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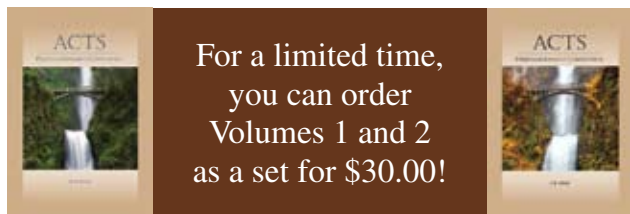
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# News and Announcements

**Thank You** for the good response to our request to renew your subscription to the *Searchlight*. Your confirmations are pouring in, and we are busy making sure that all who respond will continue to receive the *Searchlight* without interruption. However, if you are writing to ask to be removed from the mailing list, be sure to give us your full name and address so that we can make sure we are removing the right person! Thanks so much for your help.

**O'Hair Library Update:** All who enjoy the writings of Pastor J. C. O'Hair will be pleased to learn that our good friend Ric Jennings has located seven more articles by Brother O'Hair that have now been added to the nearly two hundred titles already posted on our web site. Just click on "J. C. O'Hair Online Library," and let the blessings begin!

**New Dates for a Historic Conference:** The *Grace Believers' Bible Conference*, the annual event hosted by the *Bitely Community Church* in Bitely, Michigan, will be held this year on August 5-7. Here is your opportunity to hear speakers Paul M. Sadler, Ed Bedore, Ken Lyon, Dwight Reed, and Don Webb as they address this year's theme of *Searching the Unsearchable Riches of Christ*. If you've never enjoyed the hospitality of this warm and gracious church, you don't know what you're missing! If all this sounds good to you, now is the time to contact Pastor & Mrs. Ken Lyon (231-745-9595), while rooms are still available at the nearby *Legends Ranch*.

**Bible Teacher Les Feldick** will be speaking at the Bible conference commemorating the 50th anniversary of *Faith Bible Church* in Steger, Illinois, your editor's home church. Be sure to mark your calendar for August 13 & 14, and email us at [pastorkurth@msn.com](mailto:pastorkurth@msn.com) for further information.

**Our cover this month** features a photo taken by Ken and Barb Wardius, a couple who travel extensively in search of unique photo opportunities. You can view some of their impressive gallery of photographs and e-mail them with any questions at their website: [www.crestwoodcreek.com](http://www.crestwoodcreek.com).



The *Outer Island Lighthouse* sits atop a 40-foot cliff on the northern tip of Outer Island, in Ashland County, Wisconsin. It is at the northeastern limit of the Apostle Islands. Outer Island was so named because of its being the most distant of all the Apostles from the mainland.

# PRICE LIST

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“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;  
The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing  
of birds is come...” (Song of Solomon 2:11-12).

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