

# The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

January 2007



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# From the Editor to You:

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Dearly Beloved,

With the recovery of the pretribulational Rapture by J. N. Darby in the late 1800's, every generation since that time has believed they would be the ones living when the Lord returned. While the rediscovery of this truth was a monumental event in the history of the Church, we must never lose sight of the fact that the Rapture has always been an integral part of Paul's epistles. In fact, it was one of the *first* recorded revelations the apostle received from the Lord of glory. "For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep" (I Thes. 4:15).

The teaching of the Rapture of the Church is *uniquely* Pauline. Both the event and everything that characterizes it stands in stark contrast to the Second Coming of Christ. Customarily, before one country declares war on another country they remove their ambassador. The same will be true of us as the ambassadors of Christ. God will remove us out of harm's way before He pronounces war on this Christ-rejecting world. Therefore, as members of the Body of Christ we will be *delivered* from the wrath to come (I Thes. 5:4-9).

This may well be the year that the Lord returns for His Church—*perhaps today!* It certainly appears the world is on the eve of destruction, as it tries the patience of God. Time may be short! Yet again, it could be another one hundred years before we hear the sound of the *trump*. As we patiently wait for the fulfillment of our blessed hope, it is essential that we live in light of the Rapture. Consequently, we need to be busy about the Lord's work.

**"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel" (II Tim. 1:8).**

Even though the unsaved are oblivious to the perils that await them, it is our responsibility to tell them that God loves them and Christ died for their sins, before it's too late. Don't put off until tomorrow what needs to be done today! D. L. Moody told his Sunday School Bible Class of young people, which was quite a large number at the time, that he would share with them how to be saved the following week. That same evening two-thirds of his class perished in the Chicago fire. Afterward Moody said he would never again delay in telling someone how Christ died for their sins.

Yours in His service,

Paul M. Sadler, President

# Should You Make a New Year's Resolution?

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

There's just something about New Year's Day that sets it apart from other days, even in Scripture. After the Flood, Noah and all mankind made a *fresh start* in "the first month, the first day of the month" (Gen. 8:13), and there are other significant New Year's Days (Ex. 40:2; II Chron. 29:17; Ezra 7:9; Ezek. 45:18). There is even a precedent for "turning over a new leaf" as far as our conduct is concerned. After Ezra commanded Israel to separate themselves from the idolatrous wives they had married, we read that all the men obeyed "by the first day of the first month" (Ezra 10:17).

But in spite of all this, we wonder if the Apostle Paul might be suggesting a better way when he says, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (I Cor. 5:7). Speaking of Passover month, God told Israel that "this month shall be unto you the beginning of months" (Ex. 12:1-11). And when we trust Christ and His Passover blood is applied to our hearts by faith, this is *also* a new beginning for us.

But Passover was followed on the Jewish calendar by seven days of unleavened bread (Lev. 23:6), in which God's people were told to remove all leaven from their homes (Ex. 12:15), leaven being a familiar symbol of *sin* (Matt. 16:12). Thus when Paul goes on to say, "let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (I Cor. 5:8), he is teaching that after we are saved by the blood of our Passover, a *daily* purging of the leaven of sin from our lives should immediately begin to follow, and not be limited to a single day that comes but once a year.

And so whether or not you decide to address your shortcomings with a New Year's resolution is up to you. But this writer has noticed that when such resolutions fail, we tend to put off addressing the problem again until *next* New Year's Day! We feel a better solution may be found in Paul's use of the word "henceforth." We like to encourage God's people to pause when they see a "henceforth" and ask "whenceforth?" The answer should not be limited to January 1st, but should rather include *every time you read a "henceforth" verse*. Thus when we read Paul say, "henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk" (Eph. 4:17), and "henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6), we should renew our determination to obey these admonitions *with every reading of such verses*. Remember,

"...He died for all, that they which live should not *henceforth* live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (II Cor. 5:15).

# PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Philippians 1:7-10

By Paul M. Sadler

**“Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.”**  
—Phil. 1:7

## TENDER MERCIES

Many seem to think that Paul was a cold, matter-of-fact soldier of the Cross. It can be said that when it came to his apostolic office he was unyielding. He refused to allow anyone to rob him of his God-given authority to minister among the Gentiles. But this does not diminish in any way from the character of St. Paul. He was a very compassionate man whose *tender heart* is exhibited here and throughout the remainder of the letter.

In the above passage, Paul is essentially saying, “It is right of me to be thus minded on behalf of you all.” That is, he was correct in his conclusion that the good work the Lord had begun in them

would continue until the day of Christ (Phil. 1:6). How could he be so sure? He knew God would honor His Word in view of the fact that He cannot lie, and because Paul had them in his heart. Paul had such a deep, abiding love for these saints that they frequently came to mind, and he, we might add, was always in their thoughts. Paul was genuinely touched by their faithfulness to his apostleship and message, which he knew was well pleasing to God.

**“For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:8).**

The original word *splagchnon* translated here “bowels” is a reference to the *intestines*. In biblical times it was believed the intestines were an inseparable link between the physical body and the innermost being. If you were walking down the street with one of your children and they unexpectedly slip on a patch of ice, as their feet go flying in the air you

are probably going to experience a wave of emotion sweep across the central part of your body. This gives you some idea of the sense of the word. It has to do with the deepest emotions that touch our lives. Another example of *splagchnon* would be the following factual account by Stuart Margel:

Last week, while traveling to Chicago on business, I noticed a Marine Sergeant traveling with a folded flag, but did not put two and two together. After we boarded our flight, I turned to the sergeant, who had been invited to sit in first class (across from me), and inquired if he was heading home. No, he responded.

Heading out I asked? No, I'm escorting a soldier home. Going to pick him up? No! He is with me right now. He was killed in Iraq. I'm taking him home to his family.

The realization of what he had been asked to do hit me like a punch to the gut. It was an honor for him. He told me that, although he didn't know the soldier, he had delivered the news of his passing to the soldier's family and felt as if he knew them after many conversations in so few days. I turned back to him, extended my hand, and said, Thank you! Thank you for doing what you do so my family and I can do what we do. Upon landing in Chicago the pilot stopped short of the gate and made the following announcement over the intercom.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to note that we have had the honor of having Sergeant Steeley of the United States Marine Corps join us on this flight. He is escorting

a fallen comrade back home to his family. I ask that you please remain in your seats when we open the forward door to allow Sergeant Steeley to deplane and receive his fellow soldier. We will then turn off the seat belt sign."

Without a sound, all went as requested. I noticed the Sergeant saluting the casket as it was brought off the plane, and his action made me realize that I am proud to be an American. So here's a public *Thank You* to our military men and women for what you do, so we can live the way we do.<sup>(1)(2)</sup>



This family's loss was unspeakable, insomuch so you cannot help but be moved by this touching account. In similar fashion when Paul thought of these dear saints a wave of emotions swept across him as he longed to see them all again. He missed them! The apostle even desired to spend time with those who were at odds with one another, as indicated by his frequent use of "you all." Paul didn't allow either side to claim him as being on their side. He was neutral when it came to personal-ity conflicts, because he knew this was nothing more than the fruits of carnality.

While the term *splagchnon* was used by the world at that time to stress human love and anger, among the household of God it had the idea of being the seat of affection, compassion, kindness, and *tender mercies*. Paul's life was so in step with Christ that the love and affection the Lord had for these dear saints was the same as the tender mercies the apostle felt for them as well. Paul often calls upon God to be his witness since his message was hidden from ages and generations past (Gal. 1:20). Only God could substantiate it, for the patriarchs and prophets knew nothing about it. The apostle also calls the Lord as his witness to prove that his feelings were genuine for those who had received his message.

### A STAND IS IMPORTANT

**“Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace” (Phil. 1:7).**

You will recall that Moses said to his hearers under the law: “Who is on the Lord’s side? Let him come unto me” (Ex. 32:26). The same can be said of the Apostle Paul’s ministry: Who is on the Lord’s side? Let him come unto Paul! He is God’s spokesman today, who has revealed the mind and will of God for the Body of Christ. To stand with Paul is to stand on the Lord’s side! Many in our day have counted the cost of standing with Paul, but the cost is simply too high for them. Consequently,

they have put the “truth on ice” as Pastor Stam used to say.

As we see here, the Philippians were not ashamed of Paul’s apostleship and message. They stood with him without apology, both in his *imprisonment* and in his *defense* and *confirmation* of the gospel. When they learned Paul was incarcerated in Rome, they didn’t *throw in the towel*; they sent one of their own to help and encourage the apostle. While others were reluctant to be associated with Paul at this time for fear of retaliation, the Philippians were more than willing to suffer the consequences, if need be, for the sake of the gospel.

The Philippians were one hundred percent behind Paul in his *defense* of the gospel of Grace. They were convinced his message was God’s love letter to the Body of Christ. The original word behind the term “defense” in this passage is *apologia* from which we get our English word *apologetics*. Paul was an able *defender* of the faith. Being in prison didn’t deter him from exposing the unsound teaching of Gnosticism at Colosse that threatened the grace of God. In addition to denying the Deity of Christ, Gnosticism emphasizes the importance of extra biblical literature, and ascetic practices which bring men into bondage—touch not, taste not, handle not. Paul wasn’t willing to simply look the other way as many are inclined to do today. He wouldn’t have found the *Da Vinci Code* an interesting topic of discussion. Nor would he have been in agreement with those who say, “But it gets people talking about Jesus

and Christianity.” Paul would have exposed this modern form of Gnosticism, as we should do, to be heresy. It’s nothing short of blasphemy!

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“Consequently, they have put the ‘truth on ice’ as Pastor Stam used to say.”

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Furthermore, we learn from this passage that those at Philippi stood with Paul in the “confirmation” or *establishment* of the gospel. Like the apostle, they wanted to see the grace of God spread throughout the world to the regions beyond. With this in mind, Paul says they were partakers of his grace, that is, they were *joint participants* in the *special* work to which God had called him (Gal. 1:15,16). What has come to be known as Paul’s missionary expeditions, in reality, were *apostolic* journeys. Paul was breaking *new* ground as he imparted the gospel of the grace of God to the Gentiles. He was revealing God’s secret purpose for the very first time.

As Paul stood on the front lines making known the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery, the Philippians were standing there alongside him, as it were, by upholding him in prayer. They were in the trenches with him fighting the good fight of the faith through their financial support, and faithfully offering him words of encouragement. You see, their deeds spoke louder than words.

They were joint participants with him in this special work; as a result at the *Bema Seat* God will reward them according to the riches of His grace for their faithful participation.

What about you my dear friend, do you know the Mystery? If so, what are you doing about it? You see, it is one thing to know the message of Grace; it is an entirely different matter to stand for it and faithfully share it with others. May we encourage you to join the growing numbers that support us in this cause through their prayers and financial assistance. As the Army used to say to their new recruits: “Be all that you can be” for the glory of God!

### A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING

**“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ” (Phil. 1:9,10).**

What is the will of God for your life? Many who are searching for an answer to this question usually miss one very important rule of thumb. You must first understand God’s plan and purpose for the present administration of Grace before you can adequately make this determination. For example, if you believe it is the Lord’s leading for you to go to the mission field, would it be within God’s will for you to sell all of your possessions and give the proceeds to the Church in accordance with the Great Commission? (Matt. 10:7-16 cf. Acts 2:44-47; 4:32-35).



Biblically your decision to become a missionary may appear to have merit based upon the foregoing passages, but dispensationally you would quickly find yourself encountering financial hardship that would only serve to hinder your service for Christ.

Paul's prayer for the Philip-  
pians, and us, is that our love for  
the Lord and one another might  
abound more and more in *knowl-  
edge* and judgment or *discern-  
ment*. You see, it is God's will first  
and foremost that we have a full  
knowledge (Gr. *epignosis*) of His  
will. In other words we must have  
an understanding of His will dis-  
pensationally before we can truly  
walk worthy of our calling. This  
can only be accomplished as we  
acknowledge Paul's apostleship  
and message. For those of you who  
may be new to the message you  
will hear us say again and again:  
While all of the Word of God is for  
us, it is not all written to us, nor  
is it all about us—we must rightly  
divide the Word of truth (II Tim.  
2:15).

Armed with a knowledge of the  
Mystery, you will have a fuller un-  
derstanding that the commission  
you will be operating under as a  
missionary is the commission of  
reconciliation (II Cor. 5:18-20). At  
Calvary, God was in Christ recon-  
ciling the world unto Himself. He  
has called a truce during the age  
of Grace and is offering amnesty  
to *all* who will place their faith in  
the finished work of Christ.

Interestingly, the order is re-  
versed regarding how God will  
supply your needs on the foreign  
field. Today, it is the local as-  
sembly (or assemblies) that is

responsible to send out and sup-  
port our missionaries (Acts 13:1-  
3 cf. 14:26,27; Phil. 4:15-18). It  
should also be noted that if God  
calls you (II Tim. 1:9) to this po-  
sition of honor He is not going to  
supernaturally endow you with  
the gifts of knowledge and wisdom  
to carry out your work abroad, as  
He did in time past. Rather it will  
be necessary for you to study and  
train for the work of the ministry  
under a senior Grace pastor or at  
one of our Grace schools (II Tim.  
2:1,2).

In the above passage, the apos-  
tle adds that it was his desire that  
they abound in discernment as  
well. We believe that the reference  
here to the importance of spiritual  
*discernment* has a twofold pur-  
pose. These believers at Philippi  
were to acquaint themselves with  
the whole counsel of God so they  
could distinguish between right  
and wrong. If you are grounded in  
the truth it will always expose er-  
ror. Paul also wanted these saints  
to discern between the "things  
that are excellent (different)." In  
short, he desired that they "ap-  
prove" or *test* the things that differ  
in the Scriptures.

I drove for a truck-  
ing company shortly  
after I graduated from  
high school. There were  
days that I had to drive  
through the Allegheny  
Mountains to reach my  
destination. As I ap-  
proached the summit of  
the mountain, before going down  
the other side there were signs at  
the top: "Check Brakes."<sup>(3)</sup> Before  
heading down those steep grades  
the Department of Transportation



wanted drivers to “test” their airbrakes before they picked up too much momentum. In like fashion, we are to *prove* the things that differ so that we might walk worthy of our calling. To do so we must rightly divide the Word of truth. For example:



Those who lived under the earthly ministry of Christ were instructed to forsake their family and livelihood so they could devote all of their time to spreading the good news of the coming millennial kingdom.

**“Then Peter began to say unto Him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee....And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life” (Mark 10:28; Matt. 19:29).**

Of course, during the administration of Grace, we are living under the heavenly ministry of Christ. Today, if a man doesn’t uphold his responsibility to meet the needs of his family he is said to be worse than an unbeliever.

**“But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of**

**his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel” (I Tim. 5:8).**

Which passage is true of your Christian experience? More importantly which command of Christ is binding upon the Body of Christ today? Seeing that Paul is the apostle of the Gentiles, we can prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that his writings reveal the will of God for believers of this age. By discerning between the *things that differ* we are delivered from being tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine and the deceitful ways of men.

The purpose of having a fuller knowledge and discernment regarding the things of God is that we “may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.” The term “sincere” has the idea of being *genuine*. Pastor Edward Drew, who was the prince of illustrators in the early 1940’s, gave this illustration of how this word was used in biblical times:

In ancient days they made many of their vessels of wood, hollowed out, such as a basin. Sometimes when the vessel was finished it was found that the wood had not been seasoned properly and it cracked, and the dealer, not wishing to throw it away, would fill the crack with wax. Of course, the purchaser did not use it long before finding the fault. And so if a man was a tradesman and wanted you to know that his goods were sound, he would say “without wax,” and that is the origin of the word “sincere.” It means that there is nothing made up in your life; it means that you are just what people see you to be.<sup>(4)</sup>

Many years ago, I had the honor of taking part in the memorial service for Pastor Win Johnson, who was one of the founding fathers of the Grace Movement. Brother Johnson will long be remembered for his gracious spirit and uncompromising stand for Paul's gospel. One of the touching moments of the service was when Pastor Johnson's daughter, Sharon Achtyes, gave a brief testimony about her father whom she loved dearly. Sharon shared with us that her dad *consistently* lived a godly life in Christ Jesus. What you saw in public, she said, is what we saw at home.

Win was the genuine article, as they say! He sought, with God's help, to allow the Word of God to guide his life to the praise of His

glory. This is what the apostle desired to see in the lives of those at Philippi. He wanted their lives to echo the words of the ancient tradesman who wanted all to know that his goods were sound—without fault! Would those who know you well be able to say that of you? May we, too, be “sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.”

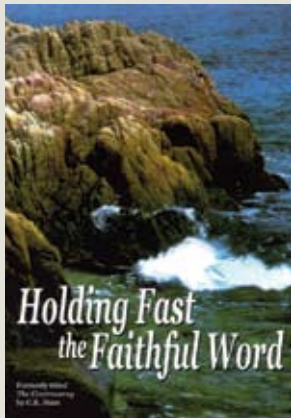
*To Be Continued!*



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## Endnotes

1. Signed: Stuart Margel—Washington D.C.
2. ©iStockphoto.com/Michelle Malven
3. ©iStockphoto.com/Tim Markley
4. *Studies in the Pauline Epistles of Philippians and Colossians*, Edward Drew, Lont & Overkamp Publishing Co., Paterson, New Jersey.



# Holding Fast the Faithful Word

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## A Noble Statesman of the Faith Called Home

By Paul M. Sadler

Our good friend, Pastor Robert Hanna, was ushered into the presence of our beloved Savior on Friday, November 3, 2006 at the age of 88. One by one the old guard, who were able defenders of the faith, is passing from the scene. They sacrificed much that we might walk in the light of the glorious gospel of Grace.

Pastor Hanna was ordained into the ministry in 1959 at the *South Gate Grace Bible Church* in southern California. He was introduced to Paul's apostleship and message under the ministry of Pastor William Root who played an important role in the early formation of the Grace Movement. From 1959 to 1996 Brother Bob faithfully served as pastor at a number of Grace churches in California. Those who sat under his ministry enjoyed his sound preaching of the Word and greatly appreciated his gracious spirit. In 1996 Bob had to step down from the pulpit at the *Bethany Bible Church* in Banning, California when his beloved wife, Margie, became ill and needed full-time care.

Those who receive the daily devotional, *Amazing Grace*, know that Pastor Hanna was a prolific writer. He was a frequent contributor to the magazine and wrote a series of Grace articles that were so well received they were placed into a booklet called: *The Truth About The Truth*. Bob was also one of our guest writers for the *Berean Searchlight*. In the early years of his ministry he was the Editor of the *Grace Evangel*. In the center section of the periodical Brother Bob would publish one of the many poems he had written, which were eventually compiled into a book entitled, *The Hope of Glory*. For those who are interested, this work is still available through the *BBS* website under: *Works by Other Grace Authors*.

I first met Pastor and Mrs. Hanna at the *Berean Bible Fellowship Conference* in the early 70's, where Bob was one of the annual speakers. Pastor Hanna *always* had a word of encouragement for this young pastor at the time, for which I was most grateful. We became the best of friends and I frequently contacted him to discuss the Scriptures. Brother Bob had a wealth of knowledge and was totally committed to the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery to the very end. He could confidently say with Paul: "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*"

We have lost a true statesman of the faith. But we sorrow not as others who have no hope for we will see Bob again at that day. Thanks, Sherry, for sharing your Dad and Mom with us all these years—only eternity will bear out the fruits of their labor. May the Lord comfort you according to the riches of His grace. The family reunion that's going to take place in glory may be sooner than we think!

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

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# What This Commission Does and Does Not Say

By C. R. Stam

OUR  
GREAT  
COMMISSION



## MARK 16:15-18 Which Gospel?

Mark's segment of the commission begins with the well-known words: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

The fact that our Lord here sent His apostles forth to preach "the gospel" is to many proof positive that we are to work under this commission.

But is it not illogical to assume that the Lord referred here to "the gospel of the grace of God," which was only later committed to Paul? To this some reply on the basis of Galatians 1:8,9, that the Bible contains only one gospel. But Galatians 1:8,9 says no such thing. How could the Bible contain only one gospel when it so clearly *distinguishes* between "the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 4:23), "the gospel of the circumcision" (Gal. 2:7), "the gospel of the *uncircumcision*" (Gal. 2:7), "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24), etc.? Does

a housewife label the jars in her pantry, "peaches," "pears," "corn," "tomatoes," etc., because they all contain the same thing?

In Galatians 1:8,9 Paul simply states that if any preached to *the Gentiles* any other gospel than *he* had preached to them they would be cursed. And those who claim to be working under the so-called "great commission" should consider this solemn passage most thoughtfully and prayerfully, for it is the common disregard of this warning that has brought upon the Church the curse of confusion and division which renders its ministry so ineffective.

Those who hold that the Bible contains only one gospel should also consider that after the twelve had been preaching "the gospel" (Luke 9:6) for some two years, and the Lord, in the shadow of the cross, told them that He must suffer and die and arise again,

***"...they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they***



### ***the things which were spoken”*** **(Luke 18:31-34).**

In fact we are clearly told in Matthew 16:21,22 that when the Lord *began* to tell His disciples that He must soon suffer and die, He was rebuked for it:

***“Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee.”***

How, then, could the apostles have been preaching “the gospel of the grace of God”? They had not been engaged in “*the preaching of the cross,*” for they did not even know that Christ was to die, much less what His death would accomplish. They had been preaching about His *throne*, not His cross, about His *reign*, not His death.

With their message, before His crucifixion as well as after, went the healing of the sick. Luke 9:2 and other passages declare that:

***“...He sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.”***

And in Acts 3:19-21 we find Peter *offering* the return of Christ to Israel and the long-promised “times of refreshing,” on condition that they would “repent and be converted.” How much those early chapters of the Acts have to say about the healing of the sick! We will deal further with this subject

in connection with the “signs” of the commission here in Mark.

### **Baptism For Salvation**

But more. In connection with “the gospel” which the eleven were to proclaim under our Lord’s commission as found in Mark’s record, there was water baptism *for salvation*. Could this be stated any more clearly than it is in Mark 16:16:

***“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”***

How shallow is the argument that the latter part of this verse somehow changes the meaning of the former simply because our Lord did *not* say: “He that believeth not and *is not baptized* shall be damned”! If one did not believe would he likely be baptized? And if an *unbeliever were* baptized would that save him? Thus the meaning is clear just as the passage reads. “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*”—i.e., whether or not he is baptized.

### **Altering the Scriptures**

Bible-believers who hold that we are to work under this commission find it very difficult to accept this verse just as it reads,

thus they generally change it to suit *their beliefs*. The most popular alteration of this passage is that made by our Baptist friends. They interpret it to say: "*He that believeth and is saved should THEN be baptized.*" But this is not what it says, and to alter the Holy Word of God in this way is a most serious offense indeed. It is with such alterations of Scripture that false teaching begins.<sup>3</sup>

The man of God who does this may indeed appear to be *forced* into such a position, since he *knows* from Paul's epistles that salvation is by grace, apart from religion or works and he *thinks* he knows that we are to labor under the so-called "great commission." However, it is always better to wait for further light than to be found tampering with the Word of God.

Remember, the man in the pew has good reason to ask: "If my pastor changes this passage to uphold his own views, what other passages may he change next?" Indeed, he may well conclude that *in this measure* his pastor is already a false teacher. He is certainly not teaching *what the passage says*, and the seriousness of this fact is aggravated when it is considered that the alteration is made in no less important a matter than a divine commission to evangelize the world.

But when a man of God who believes we should be working under this commission, frankly confesses that he does not know how to explain Mark 16:16, and resolves to wait and pray for further light—that man is in the right attitude to receive further light when God imparts it to him.

## Peter's Interpretation

There is another strong argument for leaving Mark 16:16 just as it is. Surely no one would question the fact that Peter was one of those to whom this commission was given, and that he labored under this "great commission" at Pentecost.

Moreover, we read of Peter and his comrades that the Lord had "*opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures*" (Luke 24:45). With eyes thus opened, the apostles further sat under Christ's personal instructions for forty days before His ascension (Acts 1:3). And to cap it all, we read in Acts 2:4 that "*they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.*" We shall pursue this further presently, but surely under such conditions Peter *could not* have misinterpreted his commission. And are the terms laid down in Mark 16:16 omitted from his offer of salvation, or does he change or neutralize them in any way? Indeed not! Rather he emphasizes them as he says to his convicted hearers:

***"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).***

Surely Spirit-filled Peter, taught by Christ for forty days, with his understanding opened to comprehend God's revealed plan, would not have demanded water baptism for the remission of sins if he had not been instructed to do so.

## Mutilating the Scriptures

This affects one more question about Mark 16:16 which should be

answered. If Peter was working in obedience to his commission when he told his hearers to “repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins,” where do we find this commanded? Only in the account given by Mark.

We bring this matter up because there are some who teach that the last twelve verses of Mark’s account of the Lord’s earthly ministry are not to be found in the inspired text. Actually this appears to be a device to eliminate the problem these teachers have experienced with regard to water baptism and the sign gifts.

On what, then, do these brethren base their claim that these words are not in the original? They base it on the fact that the two oldest manuscripts, *Sinaiticus* and *Vaticanus*, do not contain them. We are convinced, however, that one can hardly look into this contention objectively without concluding that the last twelve verses of Mark *were* included in the original manuscripts.

First, it must be remembered that we possess none of the *original* manuscripts of the Bible. Second, the manuscripts we do have contain Mark 16:9-20 in a ratio of 300 to 1. More than 600 manuscripts contain them. Only *Sinaiticus* and *Vaticanus* do not! Third, the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts, which do not contain these verses, leave clear indications that they were *omitted*. Fourth, we have translations earlier than our oldest manuscripts which do contain them. Fifth, we have the writings of fathers who lived still earlier, containing quotations from this passage. Sixth,

*Sinaiticus and Vaticanus have by now been thoroughly exposed as two of the most corrupt manuscripts in existence.*<sup>4</sup>

The most conclusive evidence, however, that these twelve verses are part of the original, is that mentioned above: *the testimony of Peter*. Peter, in Acts 2:38, *did* make water baptism a requirement for salvation, or the remission of sins. If he was not divinely *commanded* to do this we must conclude that he arbitrarily stepped out of the will of his Master. But we know that he was “filled with the Holy Ghost,” thus we must conclude that he *did* act in obedience to our Lord’s command found in Mark 16:16 and only there, as far as baptism *for the remission of sins* is concerned.

### The Sign Gifts

The question of the miraculous signs in Mark’s record of the commission still remains. This great subject should be discussed in a separate volume, but since it is so vitally associated with what the apostles were to do and teach, we must deal with it here at some length.

First let us read again, thoughtfully and prayerfully, the exact words of our Lord’s instructions to His apostles regarding miraculous signs, as we find them here in Mark 16:17,18:

**“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;**

**“They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.”**



We often stand amazed at the lengths to which some otherwise objective teachers of the Word will go to explain away those parts of the commission to the eleven with which they have problems! A case in point involves the first statement in the above passage, which has been interpreted by some to mean that “these signs shall follow those who believe *they can perform them*,” or “who believe *deeply enough to perform them*.” The fallacy of this interpretation is exposed by the verse that precedes (Ver. 16), for here believing is clearly associated with salvation: “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*” It is against this background that our Lord continued: “And these signs shall follow *them that believe*,” i.e., those who are saved.

**“If this commission is binding upon us today, then this author is not even saved....”**

Considering the whole passage, then, water baptism was a *requirement* for salvation, and miraculous signs the *evidences* of salvation. If this commission is binding upon us today, then this author is not even saved, for he was not baptized when he believed, nor does he work miracles. This would be true also of many great men of God down through the ages whose lives and labors have borne witness to the genuineness of their

conversion to Christ. Indeed, this was what troubled John Bunyan as he considered this record of the commission to the eleven.

But the miraculous demonstrations of our Lord’s earthly ministry and of His commission to the eleven had a very particular purpose. *They confirmed His Messiahship*. In Acts 2:22 Peter declared to his hearers:

**“Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.”**

Later, just after Pentecost, Peter stated in connection with the healing of the lame man:

**“Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole” (4:10).**

Thus we read in Hebrews 2:3,4 about the “great salvation

**“...which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him:**

**“God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will.”**

This “great salvation,” which “began to be spoken by the Lord” was, of course, that of Luke 1:67-77, and concerned His reign on earth. And now, under the so-called “great commission” this message was “confirmed...by them that heard Him,” so that Peter

could offer to Israel “the times of refreshing” and the return of Christ upon condition that they would repent and turn to Him (Acts 3:19,20).

These miraculous demonstrations, unlike those of our day, were so evidently supernatural that no one, apparently, questioned their genuineness. Saved and unsaved alike were compelled to acknowledge the mighty miracles

of the Pentecostal era (Acts 3:11; 4:14,16, etc.).

*To Be Continued!*



## Endnotes

3. See the author's booklet, *False Teachers*.
4. Here the reader may consult *Which Bible?* and *True or False?* both compiled by Dr. David Otis Fuller, and containing the writings of some of the greatest scholars on the subject. Both contain much evidence of the corruptness of these two manuscripts.

## Question Box

*“Pentecostals teach from Isaiah 53:5 that there is physical healing in the atonement of Christ. Is there?”*

**“But He was wounded for our transgressions...and with His stripes we are healed” (Isa. 53:5).**

Since Isaiah 53 speaks of how Christ bore the sins of Isaiah's people that He might “justify many” (v. 4-12), some Bible teachers try to evade the claims of Pentecostalism by insisting Verse 5 speaks of the *spiritual* healing of *souls*. However, this verse is interpreted in Matthew 8:16,17:

**“...He...healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.”**

We cannot argue with the Bible's interpretation of itself, and so our Pentecostal friends are correct when they say there is healing in the atonement. When you think about it, Adam reaped sickness and *physical* death because of sin, just as he reaped *eternal* death because of sin. It makes sense then that the same Sacrifice that saves men from the latter can save them from the former. The Cross is the basis for all the good that God can do for men in any dispensation, including the future restoration of our physical planet for Israel. The same Cross that saves us from the curse of eternal punishment (Gal. 3:13) will someday save the earth from the curse of Genesis 3:17 (cf. Rev. 22:3). And it is the Cross that will ultimately heal our bodies at the Rapture (Phil. 3:21) and Hebrew bodies in the kingdom (Isa. 35:1-6).

However, those who teach that men today have the gift of healing ignore the fact that the gift of healing was withdrawn at the close of Paul's ministry (I Tim. 5:23; II Tim. 4:20).

—Pastor Kurth



# Access Your Grace and Joy!

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

From a message given September 30,  
2006, at *Berean Grace Church*  
in Genoa City, Wisconsin

**“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**

**“By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:1,2).**

In 1888, a poem appeared in the *San Francisco Examiner* that soon swept the nation. It was a ballad about the then relatively young sport of baseball, and was entitled, “*Casey at the Bat.*” The last line of this epic poem reads: “But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck out.”

What a telling example of how the world about us views the subject of joy. When things are good, and their team has won, there is joy! But when things go bad, and their team has lost, their joy is lost. And so it must always be for the unbeliever, or even for the believer who knows no better than to find the basis for his joy in his *circumstances*. How much better is the joy that God offers to those who understand what His Word teaches on this important subject! Our text says that we can *rejoice* in hope of the glory of God. The word *rejoice* is the verb form of the word *joy*. If you are rejoicing, you have joy, and if you have joy, it means that you are rejoicing.

The Bible study principle known as *The Law of 1st Mention* says that the first mention of a word in Scripture often defines the word, or sets the tone for its use throughout Scripture. And while Romans 5:2 is not the first mention of joy in *the Bible*, it is the first mention of joy in *Paul’s epistles*. Since Paul is the apostle of the present dispensation, we can conclude that the basis for all of our joy as members of the Body of Christ is found here in these verses.

The primary source of the believer's joy here is knowing that we have been "*justified by faith.*" What does it mean to be justified? It means to be *made righteous*. We have no English word *righteous-fied*, and so if you are justified, it means that you have been made righteous, and if you have been made righteous, it means that you are justified. But what does it *mean* to be made righteous?

Many years ago, if a man in England shot and killed a man who was raping his wife, it was considered "*justifiable homicide.*" This means that not only was the husband not guilty of any wrong-doing in shooting the rapist, he was actually considered to have done the *right* thing. Similarly, when we get saved, God gives us so much more than just *forgiveness*. We are actually *justified*, "made the righteousness of God" in Christ (II Cor. 5:21). The very righteousness of God is imputed to us in Christ.

But *how* is God able to impute such righteousness to sinful men? The answer to this question is important, for it differs greatly from the justification offered by Greek mythology.

Has the reader ever wondered why the "gods" of the Greeks were frequently portrayed as lying, cheating, stealing, and lusting after human beings and other gods? Why would men fabricate gods who behaved so poorly? Ah, to *justify their own behavior!* After all, if their *gods* conducted themselves so sinfully, it was easy to rationalize and *justify* such iniquity amongst themselves.

How different is the justification offered by God in His Word. God justifies us not by *lowering Himself* to our level, but rather by *raising us to His!* He did not lower His standards of absolute righteousness so as to allow sinful men to be justified. He rather sent His Son to live a life that fully met His perfect standard, who then died a sacrificial death on our behalf. This explains how God could be "just, *and* the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). God then is able to impute His righteousness to us when we believe the gospel, and thus as our text says we are "*justified by faith.*" The word "faith" is the noun form of the word *believe*. If you believe, you have faith, and if you have faith, that means that you have believed.

But what is it that we must believe in order to be justified? Well, our text begins with the word "therefore." Students of the Bible know that when we see a "therefore" in Scripture, we must look to see what it's there for! In this instance, if we back up one verse, we learn what it is that we must believe in order to be justified. Speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ in Romans 4:24, Verse 25 says:

**"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."**

The most important word in this verse is one of the smallest words, as is often the case in Scripture. It is the word "*for.*" Believing that

Christ died and rose again is not enough to save anyone, for these are merely well-documented facts of history. It is only when we believe that Christ died *for our sins* and was raised *for our justification* that God can impute His righteousness to us. What a wonderful source of joy!

Additional grounds for the believer's joy can be found in our text when Paul speaks of our "*peace with God.*" The peace that God makes with us is unlike the peace men make with one another, which is only temporary in nature. When we hear the announcement of a "cease-fire" in the Middle East, we know it will only last until the next shot is fired! Similarly, Hitler made "peace" with Stalin, but it wasn't long before the German panzers were rolling eastward into Russia. Contrariwise, the peace that God offers is *irrevocable!* The believer in Christ will *never again* be the enemy of God that he was before salvation (Rom. 5:10).

If you stop and think about it, justification and peace with God are the only things we *should* rejoice in, for they are the only things we have *that cannot be taken away!* Many a man rejoices in his house, his car, his riches or his health, but all of these are things that can be lost. When husbands rejoice in their job, and wives rejoice in their children, these things are certainly more noble things in which to rejoice, but these too are things that can be taken away from us. When Christians rejoice in their church or in their pastor, this appears even more virtuous, and yet these too are things that can be lost. The only safe things in which to base our joy are immutable truths like our justification and our peace with the Almighty.

Further joy can be found in our text in the "*access*" we have "*into this grace wherein we stand.*" Our personal computers contain many files, and they are *our* files, but we must be able to *access* them for them to be of any use to us. Similarly, the believer in Christ has *grace*, but we must be able to *access* this grace for it to be of any functional value in our spiritual lives.

But of what grace does the apostle speak when he uses the phrase "*this grace*"? When he writes of "*this grace*" in II Corinthians 8:7, the context tells us that he speaks of the grace of *giving*. But here the context determines that the phrase "*this grace*" speaks of the grace of *our justification and our peace with God.*

But if we "*stand*" before God justified and at peace with Him, why do we need to "*access*" this grace? The answer lies in the difference between our *standing* as believers and our *state*. Sometimes expressed in other terms, such as the difference between our *position* and our *practice*, this Bible study principle points out the difference between the perfect standing that believers have before God in Christ, and the *outworking* of that position in our daily lives (Phil. 2:12). Ideally the two should be the same, but even the best of us falls short of the absolute perfection we have in Christ.

Likewise our text tells us that we stand fully justified and at peace with God. However, when we sin, it is natural to fear that we have provoked God. Likewise when we get sick, or suffer an accident or experience some other adversity, we are prone to think that God is angry with us. When these things happen, we must *access* the grace that tells us we stand before Him justified and at peace.

How do we access this grace? Paul says that we do so “*by faith*,” and faith comes by hearing the Word (Rom. 10:17). Thus when your conscience whispers that God is angry with you, or when some preacher on TV suggests that God is judging you for your sin, you must by faith access His Word, and remind yourself that God says you have irrevocable peace with Him. Our joy is based in our peace with God, but we must *access* this grace by faith if we are to have the joy that God wants us to enjoy.

Next, Paul says that we “*rejoice in hope of the glory of God*.” Here we know that Paul is speaking of the Rapture, because the words “hope” and “glory” remind us of how Paul describes the Rapture as “that blessed *hope*, and the *glorious* appearing” of the Lord Jesus (Titus 2:13).

But has the reader ever wondered what the glory of God *is, specifically*? We needn’t speculate. When Moses asked God to show him His “*glory*,” the Lord replied that He would do so by showing him His “*goodness*” (Ex. 33:18,19). God’s *glory* is His *goodness*. Romans 3:23 says, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” The glory of God is that He is *so* good that He has never sinned, and we have all fallen short of this. This is why the natural reaction of men to the glory of God is *fear* (Luke 2:9). It is natural for unholy men to fear the absolute holiness of God.

How then can Paul say that we “*rejoice*” in hope of the glory of God? Ah, it is because at the Rapture, God’s glory will not just be revealed to us, as it was revealed to the frightened shepherds at our Lord’s birth, it will be revealed “*in*” us (Rom. 8:18). And so we needn’t *fear* God’s glory, we can rather *rejoice* in it, because in that day *we will share it!*

Imagine sharing *the glory of God!* People pay big bucks to buy JFK’s golf clubs, or a dress worn by Princess Diana, but these purchases can hardly enable the buyer to share the glory of these celebrities. Yet the God of all creation, who declared He would not give His glory to another (Isa. 42:8; 48:11), has given this glory to the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:5), and will someday give it to *us* through Him. Surely this is grace to rejoice in!

**“And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulations worketh patience;**

**“And patience, experience; and experience, hope” (Rom. 5:3,4).**

The Greek word for “glory” in Verse 3 is the same as that translated “rejoice” in Verse 2. Coupled with the word “also” here, Paul is saying that we glory in tribulations *as much as we rejoice in the Rapture!* To which most of us would reply—“*We do?* How can Paul say such a thing!”

The key is in the word “*knowing.*” The key to glorying in tribulation is convincing ourselves that God is correct when He says tribulation works patience. As adults we endure going to the dentist, working out in the gym, etc., because we know that these things work *physical* good in us. Likewise as sons of God, we should be able to endure anything if we truly believe that it is working *spiritual* good in us.



If the reader wonders if tribulation really works patience, just imagine a Christian who was born wealthy and whose parents shielded him from all tribulation in life. Such a man is likely to be very *impatient*, and so we can prove by reverse reasoning that the Bible is as right about this as it is about all other things. But as tribulations begin to work patience in our shielded wealthy friend, his “*experience*” with tribulation will begin to work “*hope*” in him. A believer who experiences no tribulation in life is unlikely to be hoping for the Rapture.

But can we ever get to the point where we actually *rejoice* in tribulations? Perhaps the reader has heard of Ivan Pavlov, the Russian scientist who rang a bell when he fed his dog, then noticed that his pet would salivate even before being presented with food. In a lesser-known experiment, Pavlov administered an electric shock to the dog, who understandably growled at him. He then began to administer shocks to the dog followed by a treat, and soon his pet ceased growling after receiving a shock. Eventually the animal actually began to wag his tail upon receipt of the unpleasant jolt, joyfully realizing that a treat would follow.

In like manner, the believer in Christ can also learn to stop growling when we are on the receiving end of the many shocks and traumas of life, and actually learn to *rejoice* in tribulations. This is high spiritual ground indeed, but it is a level that Paul was able to attain in II Corinthians 7:4, where he said, “*I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.*”

Of course in Scripture, “*glory*” is the opposite of “*shame*” (Psa. 4:2; Prov. 3:35; Isa. 22:18; Hos. 4:7; Hab. 2:16; Phil. 3:19). And so if as a believer you have not yet attained to the level of spirituality needed to actually *rejoice* in tribulations, you can at least know that tribulation in our lives is nothing of which to be ashamed.

This is different than under the Law. In Jeremiah 14:1-4, the farmers in Israel were “*ashamed*” when they experienced the tribulation of a drought. Why would a farmer be embarrassed about a lack of rain? In the dispensation of grace, such a dearth is in no way the farmer’s fault. But under the Law, the people of Israel brought drought upon themselves. The terms of their covenant with God stated that if they were disobedient, God would chasten them by withholding precipitation (Lev. 26:19). And so to experience a drought under the Law *was* a cause of shame and embarrassment, for it meant that they had been disobedient to God. Now it is possible that the farmers’ shame in Jeremiah 14 was also due to embarrassment caused by calling in vain upon false gods for rain (cf. Jer. 2:26,27), but the fact remains that tribulation under the Law was a cause for shame, not glory.

How different things are under Grace! What a blessing it has been over the years for this Grace pastor to be able to visit God’s people in the hospital and *not* have to suggest that perhaps they were hospitalized because of some secret sin! If the reader of this page is currently going through some tribulation in life, you needn’t be ashamed in such circumstances as people were under the Law.

**“God justifies us not by *lowering Himself* to our level, but rather by *raising us to His!*”**

One more thing about *experience*. As we all know, experience is a great teacher, and our experience with tribulation teaches us that we are not under Law (Rom. 6:14,15). When we sin, we sometimes experience tribulation afterward—and sometimes not. Sometimes when we experience tribulation, we can think back to a particular sin that we have committed—and sometimes we can’t. In other words, our experience with tribulation teaches us that our tribulations have *nothing to do with our conduct!* For the believer today, tribulations are just a result of living with the results of Adam’s fall. We *do* experience trouble as a result of reaping what we sow (Gal. 6:7), but that is quite different than tribulation sent from God under the Law as a result of disobedience.

**“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Rom. 5:5).**

At the risk of sounding irreverent, I would suggest to you that without the blessed hope of the Rapture, *you should be ashamed of God!* In the dispensation of grace, are you guaranteed prosperity, as was the experience of Abraham and Lot (Gen. 13:2,5,6), Job (1:3) and others? Should you be pursued by men intent on doing you harm, and you find yourself cornered at a large body of water, will God part



the waters to facilitate your escape? When you are hungry, does He provide manna for you as He did for Israel?

These things and more might cause us to be ashamed and embarrassed to name such a God as our own. Ah, but *“hope maketh not ashamed”!* The blessed hope of living eternally with God in heaven takes away all “shame” of worshipping a God who does not defy nature to meet our needs and deliver us from tribulation in life. Paul was right when he said that *“if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable”* (I Cor. 15:19). Thank God, we have hope in Christ *in the next life as well!*

God’s love may not be shed abroad in our health or our wealth, but *“the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts”* (Rom. 5:5). The word *“shed”* in Scripture is almost always used in conjunction with the shedding of *blood*, and so the Apostle uses this word here to remind us that *“God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”* (Rom. 5:8). Of course, while the Lord’s blood was shed at Calvary, the love of God that was manifest in the Cross is only shed abroad *“in our hearts” when we believe.*

We must always remember to measure the love of God by the love expressed at Calvary. We have ways of measuring just about everything, including the amount of electricity and natural gas that comes into our homes. But in order to get a correct measure of things, we must use the proper measuring device. Every cook knows that if the recipe calls for a dry measure and you employ a liquid measuring cup, you are going to come up with a faulty measure! Every electrician knows that you can’t measure amps with an ohmmeter, or ohms with a voltmeter. And every Christian should know that we cannot measure the love of God in our lives by the amount of tribulation in our lives. The only accurate standard by which to measure the love of God is the Cross of Christ.

The story is told of a young man in ancient times who was convicted of adultery, a crime punishable in those days by the putting out of the two eyes of the perpetrator. But after he levied the sentence, the judge revealed that he was the young man’s father. He then announced that he would execute the sentence by putting out just *one* of his son’s eyes, *and one of his own.* In this way the justice of the law was satisfied, but the judge’s son would be spared total blindness.

While this story is a touching one indeed, it cannot begin to illustrate the love that God showed to us at the Cross. For there the Lord Jesus did not just volunteer to “go halves” with us in satisfying the just demands of the Law. He rather bore *all* the punishment that was justly due to us, as He *“bare our sins in His own body on the tree”* (I Pet. 2:24). When the trials of life seem almost too great to bear, what joy can be ours as we access by faith this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God!





## BBS Letter Excerpts

### **From Virginia:**

“Thank you for giving me this understanding. Praise God that I am able to distinguish what dispensation we are in, and how to walk accordingly. Praise Him indeed.”

### **From Michigan:**

“Because He lives, we can face all of life’s struggles. Thank God for the gospel of the Grace of God!”

### **From Minnesota:**

“We received some mail from you addressed to our former pastor. He is no longer pastor here, and we have no pastor as yet. Please delete his name and continue sending the information to First Baptist Church....”

### **From Texas:**

“Thank you again for your help! Y’all have many faithful readers at our Baptist church.”

### **From Arizona:**

“Oh, my, I have never heard this before. Where can I find out more? I’ve been striving so long to feel the Holy Spirit that it has left me feeling that my salvation did not take.” (Our feelings make a good caboose, but a poor engine to the train of our spiritual lives.—RK).

### **From Wisconsin:**

“I read your paper on the confession of sins and was very moved by it and it really opened my mind to the reality and completeness of Jesus Christ. Thank you!”

### **From Florida:**

“Pastor Stam has a way of provoking interest in Bible study rightly divided and cutting through the odd traditions I was taught from childhood. I now see the danger of well-intended teachers not giving instruction from the Word of truth, rightly divided.”

### **From Wisconsin:**

“Thank you for your wonderful *Searchlight* books. I have passed them on to others who think they are just wonderful to study by and make the verses in the Bible so much easier to understand.”

### **From the Internet:**

“Your response was very interesting and backed up Scripturally how I already felt about the subject. I passed your response along to my parents, and I’m sure we will have a short discussion about it, much like our discussions about articles that appear in the *Searchlight*.” (The family that discusses the Scriptures together stays together!—RK).

### **From Oklahoma:**

“I am so grateful to you for sending Dr. Bedore’s writings on *The Practical Beginning of the Body of Christ*. For many years I was utterly confused when I would attempt to study certain topics in the Scriptures. Not until I was introduced to the writings of Pastor Stam did I believe that there truly was hope in being able to understand God’s precious Word.”

**From Illinois:**

"I met my husband 13 years ago. He was a new believer, having learned the Grace Message through Jim Kirkwood's radio ministry and Stam's writings. I was very open to learning what all of this meant. It has opened my understanding so much!"

**From Florida:**

"I recently started to listen to Les Feldick on TV. He speaks about the difference between the gospel of the kingdom and the Pauline gospel of grace for this dispensation. I remembered your ministry and found a tract by C. R. Stam. For years I knew something was wrong in the way most of the Church mixes up all the Scriptures. I am seeing more light, but I need more understanding to see how to study the gospels and what they mean to us, plus the other Scriptures in light of the gospel Paul preached. Les spoke about your book *Things That Differ*. Please send me a copy."

**From the Philippines:**

"I received my first issue of the *Berean Searchlight* yesterday and I was very much excited as I turned every page. I was so blessed with the contents, especially about spiritual revival. It really touched my soul."

**From Ohio:**

"In April I was inducted into the Rockabilly Hall of Fame. I played and recorded this music in my youth, 1956 to 1966. But my greatest award was in 1968 when I accepted Christ as my Savior and God immediately inducted me into the Body of Christ. Thank you and all my friends at BBS." (Our friend Bobby Lawson has been getting the *Searchlight* since 1972.—RK).

**From South Dakota:**

"This weekend I met with my two sisters to enjoy some time together. I had your book on Ephesians laying in my car, and my sister commented that she'd read the book for a college class several years ago. She said that the professor who taught that religion class was fascinated by the Apostle Paul."

**From Florida:**

"I feel I owe you and BBS prayers and thanks for opening my heart to God's Word, rightly divided, and removing the confusion caused by the traditions of men. I am using *Things That Differ* to lead a Bible study."

**From Illinois:**

"I would like to receive the *Searchlight*. I enjoyed reading my boyfriend's copy, and would dearly like to receive copies sent to me."

**From Michigan:**

"Several people commented to me that they really appreciated your conference messages. We would like to invite you to join us next year. Also, my friend said he sure enjoyed his time talking with you about the Word." (We too are blessed by our conference ministry!—RK).

**From New York:**

"I've been a bit discouraged, not knowing just what I can continue contributing. The house is for sale, and I hope to make up for the lost contributions after the house sells."

**From Missouri:**

"We have been enjoying the blessings of your work for the past year and a half, and feel it is time to help with the work."

"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

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## THINGS THAT DIFFER

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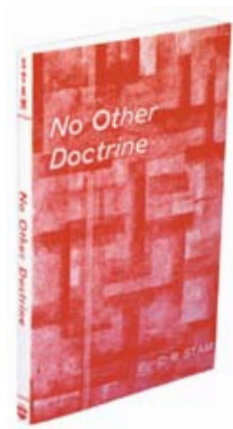
## NO OTHER DOCTRINE

By C. R. Stam

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**Don't Forget!** These two works are also available on audio tape, narrated by our good friend, Dave Allen. The prices are:

**Things That Differ:** \$15.00 *without album*, \$20.00 *with album*

**No Other Doctrine:** \$9.00 *without album*, \$14.00 *with album*

## This New Year Resolve... to Enroll at Berean Bible Institute

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

**BBI** is a non-accredited school of college level adult education that provides sound Biblical and doctrinal studies, along with training in ministry and leadership skills, to help individuals become prepared to do the work of the ministry in local churches and on the mission field, with the overall goals of making the Gospel of Jesus Christ known to the lost throughout the world, the edification of believers, and the promotion of personal Bible study. Without reservation, all teaching at **BBI** is carried out according to the Biblical principle of “rightly dividing the Word of Truth” (II Tim. 2:15), in light of the distinctive message of God’s matchless grace revealed to and through the Apostle Paul. **BBI** promotes the universal proclamation of “Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery” (Rom. 16:25) both to the world and to the church.

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**Bible Institute** exists for the purpose of helping individual believers prepare themselves to effectively serve God by teaching them the Word of God “rightly divided,” and providing them with the skills necessary to put their knowledge into action.

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### Spring Semester begins January 22, 2007!



For more information about **BBI**, please contact Dr. W. Edward Bedore at: **Berean Bible Institute**, 116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086, phone: (262) 644-5504, e-mail: [bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org](mailto:bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org), web: [www.bereanbibleinstitute.org](http://www.bereanbibleinstitute.org).

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# NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**Morganton, NC Bible study:** Our friend Brad Truitt, who was teaching a Bible study in Etowah, has moved with his wife Carol to Morganton, where they already have yet another Bible study up and running. This new group meets in their home at 101 Henry's Glen Drive, Morganton, NC 28655. For more information you can write them at this address, or e-mail them at [thetruitts@gmail.com](mailto:thetruitts@gmail.com).

**Etowah, NC Bible Study still going strong:** The Truitts have left their old Bible study in the capable hands of our good friend Doug Lee, who with his wife Ruth have served the Lord faithfully in the Grace Movement for many years. If you live in the area, why not join the fellowship, which meets Thursday nights at 34 Meadow Drive in Horseshoe, NC. They have also started up a Sunday morning fellowship that meets at Brother Russ Bancroft's home, 309 Rosewood Lane, Hendersonville, NC 28791. Just write Russ for more details, or e-mail him at [rbancroft@planetusa.net](mailto:rbancroft@planetusa.net).

**Looking for Like-minded believers:** Peter Landowski has reluctantly left the friendly confines of Pastor John Kirkwood's *Grace Gospel Center* in Bensenville, Illinois, for warmer climates. He is looking for Grace believers with whom he can meet in the Prescott, Arizona area. You can contact Peter at 928-713-1463, or write him at P.O. Box 3082, Prescott, AZ 86302, or at [Pet455@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Pet455@sbcglobal.net).

**Looking for San Francisco Grace Believers:** Priscilla Carranza is endeavoring to get a Grace group going in the San Fran area, including South Bay. If you live in the area and would like more information, please contact Priscilla at: [pcarranza8@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pcarranza8@sbcglobal.net).

**Looking to start a Wisconsin Grace church:** A small group of Grace believers are looking for others in the Sparta, Tomah, West Salem, Black River Falls and Lacrosse area who might be interested in establishing a new Grace fellowship. They are also looking for someone who could teach the Word and lead such a group. For more information, contact Niles or Marcia Knutson at 608-269-0302, or toll-free at 877-834-2014.

**New Music CD:** Our old friend Ellie Rukin has recorded a collection of gospel songs that sells for \$9.97 each. You may order from: CD Baby, 5925 NE 80th Ave., Portland, OR 97218, or [cdbaby.com/cd/ellierukin](http://cdbaby.com/cd/ellierukin).

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\*Our cover lighthouse photo was taken by Pat Fisher of Gillett, WI. The *Cape Race Lighthouse* is located in Newfoundland, Canada on the southeast coast of the Avalon Peninsula. This was one of two land-based locations that received the distress call from the *RMS Titanic*.

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“You may as well quit reading and hearing the Word of  
God, and give it to the devil, if you do not desire to live  
according to it.”

—Martin Luther

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