

The

Berean Searchlight

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

August 2005



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

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From the Editor to You:



Dearly Beloved,

We are grateful to God for all He has accomplished through BBS since relocating the ministries of the *Berean Bible Society* to the Milwaukee area. It is hard to believe, but this year is the tenth anniversary of that move. During this time we have made great strides in our attempt to make all men see what is the fellowship of the Mystery. With God's help:

We have redesigned and reformatted the *Berean Searchlight* to bring the appearance of the magazine into the 21st century.

We have established the *Berean Bible Institute* to train men and women for full-time ministry.

We have published a number of new works, including commentaries on *Galatians* and *Colossians* by Pastor Stam; *Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, *The Institution of Marriage*, *The Supernatural Sign Gifts of the Acts Period*, *The Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter* by your Editor; and *The Memoirs of Pastor Cornelius R. Stam*.

We have redesigned and reprinted: *Moses and Paul*, *Our Great Commission*, *The Lord's Supper*, and numerous other booklets and tracts.

We have initiated a new program to develop *Sunday School Curriculum* for all age groups so our young people can be introduced to Paul's gospel at an early age. Lord willing, the entire first year of lessons for the Juniors will be completed by this fall.

We have recently published two new dispensational charts, *The Key to Understanding the Scriptures* and *According to the Scriptures* by your Editor. Pastor Kurth has also finished his new booklet, *Now That I Believe*, for those who are newcomers to the faith.

In addition to my visit to the Philippines three years ago, we sent Pastor Kurth there earlier this year with *Things to Come Mission* to minister the gospel of the grace of God and confirm the faith of our Filipino brethren. The better part of the remainder of this edition of the *Searchlight* is devoted to Ricky's missionary journey with Pastor Watkins and Ben Anderson in the Philippines.

Thanks be to God for the great things He has done! This outreach would not have been possible without your prayers and faithful support. Thus it is with a full heart that I want to convey my sincere appreciation to each of our readers. "Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen!"

Yours in His service,

Paul M. Sadler, President

Tools for God's Workmen



This writer has often thanked God for the Bible study books in his modest library. While I don't agree with *everything* in *any* of them, I have learned from all of them that I have read. Often over the years while studying these books I have paused to thank God for some insight into His Word that they provided. I am especially thankful, of

course, for the books written by men who rightly divide the Word of truth, and recognize the distinctiveness of Paul's ministry and message. I'm sure that I speak for grace pastors and Bible teachers everywhere when I say that I cannot imagine how difficult my teaching ministry would have been without the solid foundation provided by these precious volumes.

Yet such is the challenge faced by hundreds of grace pastors in the Philippines. Not only do some of these diligent workers lack basic reference books such as *Strong's Concordance* or *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, often their bookshelves are also bereft of some of the basic dispensational literature penned by the pioneers of our movement. Standard works by Cornelius R. Stam, J. C. O'Hair, Charles Baker and many others that grace pastors here take for granted are not as common in the libraries of Filipino pastors. These fundamental books on which they were trained are not always available for them to refer back to once they leave school.

Nor are these important textbooks as plenteous as we would like them to be in the five campuses of the *International Grace Bible Institute* and their affiliated field schools. During my recent trip to the Philippines, I was privileged to tour the original IGBI in Ozamis. One whole section of books in the school library caught my attention, for it had been cordoned off from use with a sign posted that said, "Do Not Use, Need Rebinding." The humidity had taken its toll on the bindings of these books and had rendered them unable to share their timeless message with the pastors of the future.

If this report troubles you as a grace believer, and you would like to do something about it, simply earmark your contribution to BBS with the notation: *Philippine Ministry*. With your help, together we can ensure that our grace Filipino pastors are well-equipped to defend the grace message against the challenges that arise from false teachers on every hand, and shepherd their flocks effectively according to God's Word, rightly divided.

—Pastor Kurth

Reflections on the Philippines

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

This writer was blessed to be saved into a grace church when still a young man. At each Wednesday night prayer meeting, my pastor would ask for prayer requests. Invariably someone would say, “We must pray for the work of *Things to Come Mission* in the Philippines.” And so long before I met Joe Watkins, I was praying for him and fellow TCM founder Vernon Anderson and their ministry abroad. In those days, I never dreamed that I would one day have the privilege of visiting the Philippines and seeing this great work of the Lord firsthand. What a thrill to live briefly among these enthusiastic grace believers, and to minister God’s Word to their spiritually hungry hearts.



Ricky Kurth, Joe Watkins,
Ben Anderson

My journey began when I met Pastor Watkins at the airport in Chicago, along with newly appointed TCM-USA Director Ben Anderson. Pastor Anderson is an “MK” (missionary kid), the son of Vernon and Darlene Anderson. Ben was born and raised in the Philippines, educated in the United States, and served as a missionary to Kenya for eighteen years before accepting the invitation to succeed Joe Watkins as Director of TCM-USA. I barely knew Ben previous to this trip, but three weeks of working with him side-by-side allowed me a glimpse of his familiarity with all things pertaining to missionary work, his vision, and his personal spirituality. TCM supporters can rest assured that the great work begun by pioneers Anderson and Watkins rests in capable hands, and will continue to enjoy the sound leadership it has always known.

After a trans-continental flight to Los Angeles, our first overseas stop was in Taipei, Taiwan, where an amazing thing occurred. The moment I stepped off the plane, I immediately began speaking in a foreign language. I was still speaking English, but there in China, English is a foreign language! After a lifetime of hearing foreigners speak their native tongue in America, suddenly *I* felt like a foreigner!

But feelings of alienation soon gave way to feelings of welcome upon our arrival in Manila. Pastor Gerson Bermejo greeted us warmly at the airport, and whisked us away in his son’s air-conditioned car, which helped this soft Westerner adjust gradually to the significant heat. At the hotel, we were joined by Pastors Harold Sigar and Rudy Akay of TCM-Indonesia. Pastor Akay was the #2 man in the Union



Gerson Bermejo



Rudy Akay



Harold Sigar



Jonathon Indino



Mario Indino



Abundio Boco

Carbide Corporation in Indonesia when he learned the grace message and left this lucrative position to become a grace pastor. Whenever he and Pastor Sigar ministered the Word in the weeks ahead, they spoke through interpreter Jonathon Indino, who became yet another member of our traveling entourage. Jonathon is a graduate of one of the five *International Grace Bible Institutes* in the Philippines, and the son of Mario Indino, a Filipino who has served as a TCM missionary in Brazil and, for the past six years, in Indonesia.

Our first appearance came at a Saturday night banquet given to honor this year's graduates from *International Grace Bible Institute*, Bataan Campus. As I witnessed



IGBI Banquet



Never too young

the enthusiasm and camaraderie of the young people who sang and played keyboard and guitar, I was reminded of the spirit found in our own *Berean Bible Institute* here in the States. Later that evening I learned that the dinner we had shared had included octopus. I mused that it is better to learn what one is eating *after* partaking than before. I enjoyed all the food that I tasted during our travels. Rice is a staple at each Philippine meal, and is featured even at McDonalds, where we occasionally resorted for a quick bite to eat.



The Manila Church Anniversary Theme



The graduates in prayer



Joe challenges the graduates

Sunday morning's service marked the anniversary of the founding of the first grace church in Manila. This large city's churches now

number a dozen, and representatives from all twelve assemblies came together to observe the occasion. The afternoon service honored the three men and one woman graduates of IGBI-Bataan, and included messages from Joe Watkins and Ben Anderson challenging the graduates to be strong in the grace of our Lord, and not be weary in well doing.

We closed the day with a visit to a local shopping mall, similar to those found here in the United States, but with a few noticeable exceptions. The mall was very crowded, with many people lingering just to enjoy the air conditioning. Each store featured an armed guard at the entrance, a reminder that the Philippine government does not take the threat of terrorism lightly. Each guard also serves as a greeter and a doorman; it took some getting used to never having to open a door for myself. People are plenteous in the Philippines, unemployment is 11%, and labor is consequently very cheap.



Doormen, Guards, and Greeters



Welcome to IGBI Bataan

Each guard also serves as a greeter and a doorman; it took some getting used to never having to open a door for myself. People are plenteous in the Philippines, unemployment is 11%, and labor is consequently very cheap. Hence unlike many stores here in our country, it is not difficult to find a knowledgeable sales assistant to help you. Literally three young ladies surrounded me, helping me find my size and desired colors as I selected three *barongs*. This traditional men's dress shirt is worn open at the collar and not tucked in at the waist out of respect for the ever-present heat and humidity.

Monday's schedule included a long car trip to IGBI-Bataan, a drive that follows the path of the infamous World War II Bataan Death March. A huge cross over 35 stories tall sits atop one of the mountains, commemorating this dark spot on the history of human rights. Along the way we passed an area devastated by a volcanic eruption some years earlier. A church half-buried in volcanic ash remained as a grim reminder of the power of nature, and a sad testimony to the



TCM's newest Institute



A well-organized library



Seating for open-air meetings

superstitious religion of the many who had fled there and died, vainly hoping that the walls of the sanctuary would somehow miraculously protect them. But a clever use of the volcanic ash by local engineers to make nearby roads reminded me of how God similarly turned tragedy into blessing when He wrought the forgiveness of our sins from the tragedy of the Cross.

IGBI-Bataan is TCM's newest school, and is currently training six men and eight women to serve the Lord. We were impressed with the well-organized library, which included many books from *Berean Bible Society*. The outdoor courtyard included a basketball court (this sport is *big* in the Philippines) and tiered seating carved into the hillside for open-air meetings. IGBI-Bataan is under the competent and energetic leadership of Director Don Banac, a product of one of TCM's oldest churches, and an IGBI graduate himself.



Pastor Don Banac



"Welcome Workers"



The National Conference

Tuesday found us traveling the long road to the national workers' conference in Legaspi. Along the way we passed many *Iglesio Ni Cristo* churches, a Filipino cult that denies the deity of Christ but has flourished under the teaching of the tithe. Their churches are stately in contrast to the humble houses that surround them, and seem to be everywhere. They have joined the Mormons and other cults in vying for the hearts of the Filipinos in a country long dominated by Roman Catholicism.



Eager Bible students

The Legaspi conference was situated so far from where most Filipino grace believers live that only about 100 people were expected. Despite this low expectation, they rented a large sports complex to facilitate the meetings, and it was well that they did, for well over 300 pastors and church leaders registered and closer to 400 people

to facilitate the meetings, and it was well that they did, for well over 300 pastors and church leaders registered and closer to 400 people

attended the meetings. This turnout was a strong testimony to the spirit of the grace message here, for many had driven long hours over local roads to attend this annual national event.

While some might consider the Philip-
pines a “third world” country, this conference
was first-rate in every respect. The spirited
congregational singing, the excellent special
music and sound preaching of the Word were
accented by the sales of commemorative cof-
fee mugs, tee-shirts, and other

such items. They even had a
giant jumbotron-like projec-
tion of the speaker on the wall behind the pulpit, en-
abling those sitting in the furthest seats to catch the
intensity reflected in the speaker’s face. The mayor of
the city and the governor of the province were invited
to give introductory remarks at the opening ceremony.
This conference was “top-notch” in every way.



Larger-than-life



Enthusiastic
Song-leader

Director Ben Anderson’s conference messages
centered on what he called “the Troas strategy.”
This approach to mission work is drawn from
Paul’s experience in Acts 16:6-11, where the Spirit
of God directed Paul to bypass certain cities, guid-
ing him instead to “chief” cities (v.12) such as
Philippi, Athens, Corinth and Ephesus. This
method of targeting key cities of importance,
rather than simply letting Paul stop and minis-
ter to every city he encountered as he traveled,
enabled him to establish churches in these key
cities, and from them to reach out to surround-
ing areas. This system proved so effective that “all they which dwelt
in Asia heard the word of the Lord” (Acts 19:10), and Director Ander-
son wishes to implement this Pauline strategy in all countries where
TCM operates.



Ben outlines
Paul’s strategy

The Friday night meeting that
closed the conference reflected a
Troas strategy all its own, lasting
until after midnight (Acts 20:6,7).
We then rose Saturday at 3 a.m.
so that the ten-hour return trip
to Manila would get us there ear-
ly enough to rest up for Sunday
morning’s 5 a.m. flight to Cebu
City. There the three local grace



Cebu churches meeting

churches combined for a service held in the conference room of a local shopping mall, with about 200 in attendance. Pastor Akay's description of the effects of the tsunami in his country brought tears to many eyes, and prompted a special offering to help the grace believers in Indonesia minister to those who had been devastated by that well-publicized disaster. Pastor Watkins later explained to me how the tsunami was able to kill so many as he showed me how, even in the Philippines, houses are built jutting out into the water, and so many Indonesians were easy targets to that monstrous tidal wave.



Courting disaster

Monday's conference in Cebu's Hotel Cendet attracted about 100 people, mostly pastors and church workers. Pastor Watkins based his message to these leaders on Paul's address to the Ephesian elders, challenging them to take heed to themselves and to their flocks (Acts 20:28), to guard the flock against false teachers and to guard their own hearts against covetousness (v. 29-35).

Tuesday a severe sore throat made it necessary for Pastor Ariel Mahilum to take me to a doctor, where the bill came to a whopping \$15. Prices are very low in the Philippines, with no prescription necessary for all but addictive drugs. One morning at Jollibee's (a McDonald's type fast-food chain) all seven of us ate breakfast for \$6.

My throat didn't hurt to talk but only to swallow, which makes me think it was not related to preaching. A subsequent visit several days later to a second doctor (this time only \$5) equipped me with an iodine-type gargle that finally brought relief.



More hungry Bible students



Joe teaches the Word



The boat to Ozamis



Our bunks

Tuesday night we boarded a ship for an overnight boat-ride to Ozamis. Hundreds of tightly joined bunks had us each sleeping inches from total strangers. As a non-swimmer, I made sure that the life jacket in the compartment at the foot of my bunk was easily accessible! The next day over a hundred people gathered to hear our messages in Pastor Alcontin's church, followed by a surprise visit to Joe's old friend Segundo Undag.



Pastor Rogato
Alcontin's church



Joe and Ben with Segundo
and son Jonathon

Segundo's husband Poten was a tireless helper of the work in TCM's early days. When Joe asked him why he would continue to preach long after people had closed their eyes in sleep, he would respond that this simply meant that they were satisfied! The touching reunion with Segundo testified to the strong bond between Pastor Watkins and the Filipinos, a bond forged by years of laboring side by side in the service of the Savior.

From the beginning, it was the goal of TCM to make the ministry in the Philippines autonomous. They equipped the saints to do the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11,12), and their success can be measured by the fact that today there is not a single American TCM missionary present in the Philippines. They are completely self-governed by their own national board of directors, who orchestrate the ministry with precision. Their five Bible institutes and numerous field schools likewise ensure that they are self-sustaining, raising up leaders from their midst to pastor their churches and to send to TCM mission fields abroad. If tomorrow morning the Philippine government were to close its doors to foreign missionaries (which has happened in other countries) the grace movement in the Philippines would continue without any adverse affect whatsoever, thanks to the presence of these home-grown leaders.



A leadership quality that Filipinos seem to come by naturally is "*given to hospitality*" (I Tim. 3:2). In one of his messages at the national conference, Ben mentioned that as a boy growing up in the Philippines, he often boasted that he so loved *biko* that he could eat seven plates of this sweet rice dessert at one sitting. On his fifth

birthday, his mother put him to the test, but he could only finish three of the seven plates—and needless to say his boast was never heard again! News of this story quickly spread throughout the country, and biko awaited us wherever we stopped! This hospitality reminded Joe of how when he first arrived he was asked what kind of food he liked, and being a true son of the South he responded, “fried chicken.” Word of this got out and he soon found himself eating his favorite dish morning, noon and night! I can testify that this hospitality is still alive and well, as homes and dinner tables were opened to us, and our laundry was often done for us with tender loving care.



The growing church in Tambulig

Thursday we visited a number of churches, including one of the original TCM churches, located in Tambulig. This church was of special interest to me personally, since it is the home church of Virginia Grosskurth, who attends the church I pastor in the south suburbs of Chicago. Virginia is a former student of Joe’s at IGBI, and an example of how when TCM Filipinos immigrate to America, they diligently seek out grace churches whenever possible. “Virgie,” as she is called, is one of our most faithful members at *Faith Bible Church*, and attends with her two daughters. Her daughter Megan at-

tends with her family, and her daughter Erin has her sights set on attending *Berean Bible Institute* this fall. Virginia’s home church building in Tambulig is doubling in size, and when finished will be one of TCM’s largest church buildings. Her father somehow recognized me nearly a dozen years after his visit to America, and greeted me warmly. Our meetings later that day in Molave were standing-room only, as some of TCM’s earliest members gathered to hear the Word of God taught, rightly divided. Once again we were well-received—and well fed!



Lucio Gudmalin



Standing room only at the Molave Meetings



The Molave Dinner

Friday morning we drove our vehicle onto a ferryboat to cross over to Cagayan. A two-hour drive then brought us to Pastor Antonio Improso's church for yet another well-attended day-long conference. Pastor Improso was one of the first graduates of TCM-Ozamis, and pastored several TCM churches. He also served as a TCM board member, field director, assistant director and national director.



Our van takes a ride



Still working hard

In view of his distinguished lifetime of service for the Lord, he was awarded the title of *Director Emeritus* at the national conference in Legaspi. While visiting his church, I was also able to spend some time with Pastor Osias Catalina, Jr., a tireless worker who knew it was time to cut back on his ministry the day he fell asleep while riding his motorcycle to yet another speaking engagement! "Jun," as he is called, is typical of the will- ingness of the Filipino leaders to spend and be spent for Christ.

Saturday a charter bus drove us six hours along winding mountain roads to Davao. Frequently we had to maneuver around stretches of the road that had been sectioned off by local farmers to dry their rice. Once we were forced to take a detour around a bridge bombed by the Muslims, a grim reminder of their strength in that area, and of their desire for a region of land in which to set up their own independent nation, something the Filipino government is resisting steadfastly. Upon our arrival in Davao, Joe remained behind



Charter bus to Davao

while the rest of us traveled another two hours to Tangub. Pastor Mario Indino had wisely elected to split us up, allowing each of us to speak in a different local church that Sunday morning.



"Spiritual songs"

I spoke at Pastor Indino's church in Tagum, where I felt very at home in this somewhat smaller church. After the service a few of the young men huddled together to play their guitars, while three

of the young ladies gathered "greens" from the church garden that soon appeared on our plates in the luncheon hosted by the church.



It doesn't get any fresher!

The intimate setting of this church had me thinking of my own church in Illinois, and when a little girl mistook me for her American daddy, I was reminded of just how homesick I was getting for my own wife and children.

Sunday night we were all together again for what would be our final meetings. IGBI-Tangub met us with a hard

rain, the only wet weather we encountered in our travels. In his message, Joe referred to himself as “one of the old carabaos,” a reference to the Filipino beast of burden used for plowing and transportation. He and Vernon Anderson had spent over half their adult lives in the ministry here, and to be able to see the fruit of their labor firsthand was a milestone in my Christian experience that I will always treasure, and one that I will not soon forget.



A hard rain

The ministry of the grace message in the Philippines is different than it is here in the United States in many ways. Termites are such a problem that the church buildings are constructed with concrete walls and metal roofs. Joe pointed out that a coconut tree in front of one new church would have to be removed lest someone be severely injured by a falling coconut. Needless to say, these are concerns we don't often encounter here in the United States!



The faithful Filipino carabao

But there are many ways in which the ministry in the Philippines is the same. Their hunger for the truth allowed us to teach for well over an hour on several occasions, and reminded me of the eager faces I address at speaking engagements here at home. The challenging doctrinal questions that I was asked revealed an intense pursuit of the truth that mirrors that which I see among grace believers here. And the warm fellowship that I felt wherever we ministered made me feel right at home.



Built to last

TCM's work in the Philippines continues to move forward with several new initiatives, two of which I'd like to share with you. Director

Anderson has a vision for a specialized missionary training school, to be situated in the Philippines for many reasons, not the least of which is the low cost of living. Next, TCM is making provision to assist

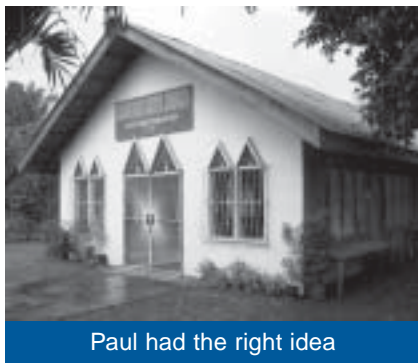


Unusual hazards

their pastors to receive college degrees in ministry-related areas. This movement has come about to reflect the rise in education in the average Filipino, both in and out of grace churches. Of course, these initiatives require financing, and so should the Lord lay it on your heart to become involved in the ministry of the grace message in the Philippines, just contact TCM to learn how you can help.

From the beginning, *Things to Come Mission* made the decision that they were not going to be involved in building hospitals, or feeding and clothing the poor, etc. Early on they determined that they would follow the example of the Apostle Paul and *establish local churches*, from which the gospel could be preached, the Word could be taught rightly divided—and also from which the poor could be given aid at the grass roots level. This is why their motto is and has been for many years: *Dedicated to Worldwide Evangelism Through the Methods of the Apostle Paul.*

I once asked Joe why he felt the Lord had so blessed the ministry of TCM in the Philippines. He explained that when they arrived there in 1958, the Filipino people were free from the ingredients of affluence to which we are so accustomed here in the United States. This opulence numbs the soul, and leaves many people in the West indifferent to eternal



Paul had the right idea

things. And so it is that even today, if you are a young person whose heart *burns* with a desire to reach people with the message of grace, you will find the greatest response to your efforts in lands similar to the Philippines, where hearts are not yet anesthetized to spiritual things by the trappings of affluence. If you are willing to sacrifice the luxuries of life in the United States, a rich harvest can be found in the vast fields that await you in “the regions beyond” (II Cor. 10:16). If interested, I would encourage you to contact *Berean Bible Institute NOW* to begin your training for a lifetime of service for the Lord Jesus Christ.



Philippine Islands



Things to Come Mission

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through the methods of the Apostle Paul*

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The Nations: Are We Reaching Them?

By Ben Anderson, Director of *Things to Come Mission*

Introduction

Long before becoming the Director of *Things to Come Mission*, I was an MK. That's short for *missionary kid*. How I came to be an MK started back in 1955 when several *Milwaukee Bible Institute* students met together to form a new mission. Their aim was to pioneer new fields with the wonderful gospel of grace. They called the organization *Things to Come Mission* (TCM) and adopted the motto, "Dedicated to worldwide evangelism through the methods of the Apostle Paul." My parents, Vernon & Darlene Anderson, were present at that meeting and immediately answered the call to foreign missionary service. Their ship arrived in Manila Bay on January 1, 1958 after a rough three-week crossing of the Pacific. From Day One they started evangelizing and planting churches with a handful of contacts gleaned from letters which had been sent to TCM founding director Herbert Palmer. Twelve Grace churches were planted that first year. In 1961, I was born into this Grace missionary family.



Philippine Grace Gospel Churches

The Philippine Grace churches have seen steady growth over the decades. Many missionaries and pastors have labored to reach the predominately Roman Catholic people with the gospel of grace. At the 47th Annual Worker's Conference in April 2005, in which Pastor Ricky Kurth, Joe Watkins and I participated, 310 pastors and church leaders attended. Five Bible institutes are distributed throughout the country. The literature department prints tracts, correspondence courses, books and a bimonthly magazine entitled *The Grace Digest*. There are national organizations for all genders, ages and classes of people.

TCM is following Paul in his goal of establishing *indigenous* churches. That means national churches which are self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating. Truly, the Philippine churches have become indigenous. TCM still assists partially with the five Bible schools and a few key leaders; however, the bulk of the ministries are planned, led and supported by Filipinos.

A Missionary God

Our God is a missionary God. Throughout human history as recorded in the Bible, God has made the effort to reach out to man. It is because of obedience to God that TCM missionaries have given their

lives on the foreign mission field. Consider this key passage of Scripture which clarifies God's long-standing attitude toward the nations.

⁷Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God. ⁸Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers: ⁹And that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. ¹⁰And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. ¹¹And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. ¹²And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust. (Romans 15:7-12)

We see in verse 7 of this missiological passage that our great purpose, and indeed that of Jesus Christ, is to glorify God. This happens when we humbly accept each other in the church. Then Paul says that Jesus came as a minister of the circumcision (He came to work among the Jews) so as to confirm the many Old Testament promises of a Deliverer for Israel. Verse 8, however, is only the preamble to Paul's major argument which is stated in verse 9a, "**That the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.**" Israel's purpose, stated way back in Genesis 12:1-3, was to be blessing to the Gentiles. Paul identifies his own ministry as being a continuation of this great purpose of God. In verses 9-12 he quotes from four Old Testament authors to prove this claim: 2 Samuel, Deuteronomy, Psalms and Isaiah. Each of these passages proves that throughout the Old Testament, God had a desire to see the Gentiles enter into a relationship with Him. Israel never implemented this purpose. In fact, the Lord Jesus became angry at the Jews in the temple because they had taken the place of prayer for the Gentiles and turned it into a market (Mark 11:15-17 cf. Isaiah 56:3-7). Later, Jews stoned Stephen to death while he looked into heaven and saw the Lord Jesus (Acts 7:55-56).

Where Israel failed, Paul intended to succeed. Look at the following passage from the same chapter:

Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand. (Romans 15:20-21)

What was the purpose of Paul's arduous and hazardous life? Paul knew that with the wonderful gospel of grace, Gentiles could be won en masse while still remaining Gentiles in culture and practice. The Apostle Paul quotes from Isaiah 52:15 to prove that he was simply completing this great purpose of God which Israel had ignored.

Dangerous Ground

Are we in the West in danger of the same judgment which caused the Apostle Paul to turn from the Jews in Pisidian Antioch?

Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. (Acts 13:46-47)

Earlier, I showed that God had given Israel a responsibility to reach the Gentiles. In Antioch, the Apostle Paul turned away from the Jews because they once again refused to become that light. Fellow Gentiles, before we spend too much time patting each other on the back because God's attention has turned to us, ask yourself an important question. *Who do you suppose now has the responsibility of being a light to the Gentiles?* "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20). With authority comes responsibility. The Lord Jesus Christ has made *all of us* His ambassadors in this world. If people die without hearing the gospel, it means His ambassadors were not doing their job. If we fail to reach the nations, with our complete understanding of Paul's distinct revelation, would not our judgment be more harsh than that of these confused Jews?

STEPPING UP THE PACE

The Apostle Paul speaks of the Christian life as a fight and a race. As Christ's return inexorably draws closer, we who live in this dispensation of grace must redouble our efforts to take salvation to the ends of the earth. Here are five areas which need our attention.

Stop Being Complacent

Let's face it. Life is pretty good for a suburban American Christian. With a minimum of effort you don't have to think about what is going on in the world outside your own community. Beware that darkness is expanding across the globe and its icy tentacles are already reaching into our country, and even into our own families. We are in the midst of the spiritual warfare Paul spoke of in Ephesians 6 and 2 Timothy 3. We can fight back with the Word of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Decide to Follow Paul Fully

Paul was a missionary. He continuously sacrificed his rights in order to push the light of the gospel farther into the darkness (2 Cor. 4:4-6). In all instances where Paul tells us to follow him, he is speaking

of adopting a sacrificial lifestyle that both glorifies God and reaches out to the lost. Mission involvement is mandatory for a Grace believer. To follow Paul is to be involved with God's mission for His Church.

Partner With Third World Missionaries

Open your hearts to a willingness to support missionaries from outside the United States. They may speak English with improper grammar and tread unknowingly over American customs, and we may never have a chance to meet them personally due to international boundaries, yet their hearts are on fire for the Lord. As I write this, a TCM pastor from the Philippines has traveled to Thailand on his own to establish a Grace church. Another Filipino couple who speak English well and are experienced urban church planters are begging me to speed up their application process so they can get to the mission field.

Support A Grace Mission Agency

A mission agency such as *Things to Come Mission* is committed to the distinctive message of Paul. Although officially we are non-denominational, our missionaries and support must come primarily from Grace churches and members.

Invest in Missions

Time, energy, lives and money spent on missions is an investment. It brings eternal rewards. Would the exciting work in the Philippines have been established without years of financial and physical sacrifice on the part of Grace believers? We who know and love the gospel of grace preached by Paul (Acts 20:24), need to go back to our roots of evangelism, church planting and missions. The missionaries who were raised up after the Auca incident in 1956 are now retiring. Who is willing to go to replace them?

“If people die without hearing the gospel, it means
His ambassadors were not doing their job.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German theologian who wrote against the Nazi system. His firm stand caused the Nazis to hang him in 1945 at the age of 39. Ten years before his execution, Bonhoeffer penned these words, which should cause all of us to rethink our level of participation in God's purpose.

Cheap grace is grace without the cross, grace without the living, incarnate Jesus Christ. Costly grace is the gospel. It costs people their lives. It cost the life of God's Son, and nothing can be cheap to us which is costly to God. (*Discipleship*, 1935)



Question Box

“What happened to all the water in the days of Noah?”

In our last issue we established that the waters of the flood in the days of Noah stood twenty-two feet over the highest mountain. The Scriptures are also clear that the flood was universal. But what did God do with all the water after this catastrophic event? It is important to remember that not only did God judge all flesh, with the exception of Noah and his family, He also *destroyed the earth* (Gen. 6:13). The Apostle Peter confirms this when he states:

“For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished” (II Pet. 3:5,6).

With the collapse of the vapor canopy above, “the earth standing out of the water,” and the breaking up of the subterranean waters of the deep, “and in the water,” the earth was inundated with water (Gen. 7:11 cf. 8:9). In Psalm 104:6-8 we learn what God did with all the water after the flood.

“Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them.”

The sense here is, God supernaturally raised the mountain ranges and lowered the ocean basins, which allowed the waters to recede from the earth to the place that He ordained for them. This is confirmed in Genesis 8:3 where it says: “And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.” Therefore, the topography of the earth is much different today than it was prior to the flood. The biblical account of the flood is the deathblow to the teaching of uniformitarianism.

We also know that some of the water was trapped at the poles forming the Arctic and the Antarctic. With the collapse of the vapor canopy that surrounded the earth, the tropical conditions preceding the flood suddenly became a tomb of ice at the north and south poles. Interestingly, a few huge woolly mammoths that once roamed the earth were recently discovered frozen in place in Siberia’s Taimyr region. A team of explorers from *National Geographic* are currently attempting to exhume these mammoths for further study and research.¹

—Pastor Sadler

1. For more than a century the remains of these mammoths, estimated to be over five million, have been sought after for their ivory tusks along the Siberian coast.

Berean Bible Fellowship Fall Conference

Hosted By:

Grace Fellowship Bible Church
103 W. Pine Street
Sheridan, Arkansas 72150

Dates: Thursday & Friday, September 29-30, 2005

Guest Speakers:

John Fredericksen, Dave Siegmann, Dennis Kiszonas, Ed Bedore,
Joel Finck, Ricky Kurth, Floyd Baker, and Paul Sadler

Theme: *The Book of Galatians—“The Grace of Christ”*

For more information or to receive a brochure, please contact:

Pastor Floyd Baker (386) 851-0744 or
Pastor Richard Ware (870) 941-6110 or (870) 942-2799 or
Berean Bible Society (262) 255-4750



Spotlight on Grace Churches

This month's church is:

Grace Gospel Church of Christ
Things to Come Mission

Location: Maningcol, Ozamis City, Philippines

Pastor: Rogato “Dodong” Alcontin

Services: 8:30 a.m. Sunday School for All Ages
9:45 a.m. Worship Service
7:00 p.m. Young People's Service
6:00 p.m. Wednesday Prayer Meeting

Our church is committed to win the Lost through the Gospel of the Grace of God, to establish the Believers through the revelation of the Mystery, and to plant Grace churches. For further information, you can contact us at: (088) 521-1033, (088) 521-1198, or e-mail: jalprinters@yahoo.com. Our church will host the *50th Things to Come Mission Anniversary* in 2008.

BBS Southern Regional Meetings

Dates: August 26-28, 2005

Location: *AmeriSuites, Nashville/Northeast*
330 East Main Street
Hendersonville, Tennessee

Theme: *Practical Grace Living*

Guest Speakers:

Pastor Ricky Kurth of *Berean Bible Society*
Pastor Bill Frank, *Grace Community Fellowship*
Pastor Joe Watkins of *Things to Come Mission*
Casey Groeneveld, Bible Teacher, *Have Bible Will Travel*

For more information or to receive a brochure, please contact:

Pastor & Mrs. Bill Frank (615) 554-0425 or
Mrs. Patsy Davenport (615) 851-7490

All are welcome!
And don't forget to bring a friend!

Mid-Atlantic Fall Grace Bible Conference

Dates: September 9-11, 2005

Location: *White Sulphur Springs*
Manns Choice, Pennsylvania

Theme: *The Everlasting Gospel*

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Pastor Paul M. Sadler, Pastor Brent Biller
Pastor David Hobbs, Pastor John Hollis

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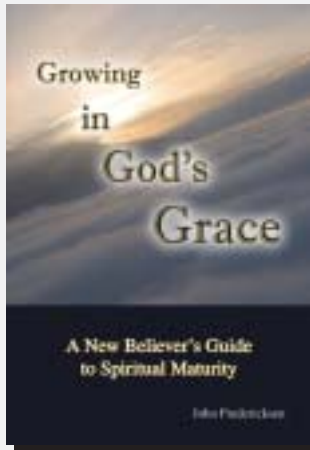
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to the praise of His glory in Christ Jesus!

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By John Fredericksen



The studies found in this book are intended to help any believer grow in their knowledge of key subjects in the Scripture. More importantly, we desire that each reader be assisted in their spiritual growth, considering how the Saviour wants to transform their lives by their yielding to the will of God, as revealed in the Holy Bible. May we begin in earnest a life long journey of growing in God's grace, and growing up unto Him in all things.

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New Works by Pastor Joel Finck

Commentary on 1 Corinthians



Parson's Publishing Company is pleased to announce the availability of a Commentary on 1 Corinthians by Pastor Joel Finck. Volume One was completed last year, and Volume Two is now available. **The cost is \$10.00 each, or the pair for \$18.00.** Please specify which volume is desired if only ordering one. Volume One covers 1 Corinthians chapters 1-8, and Volume Two covers chapters 9-16. Study guides are also available for each volume for \$6.00 each or \$10 for the pair. **Please include an additional 15% for shipping and handling.**



El Misterio

We are also excited to announce the availability of Pastor Finck's book "The Mystery" in Spanish. Spanish is the third largest language group in the world, and our Spanish-speaking friends need to know the Word, rightly divided! **This book is available for \$10.00, plus 15% for shipping and handling.**

These books must be ordered directly from Pastor Finck at:

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30448 427th Avenue
Tabor, SD 57063

Checks and money orders may be made out to "Parsons"

From the Internet:

"I am stunned and amazed at your answer to my question on water baptism. You know how it is very often when reading the Word and it is suddenly illuminated by the Spirit and you KNOW? Well, that is what happened to me as I read your explanation. I must admit to shedding a few tears as I read your e-mail, I was so very touched at the love of Christ."

From Pennsylvania:

"I have been a *Searchlight* subscriber for some time now, and a 'Paul's Distinct Ministry' believer for over a year. What an impact it's had on my Christian life!"

From Florida:

"*Moses and Paul* rocks. Stam is the man. Truly he is one of the few people who understand the truly deep things of the Bible." (Who says young people can't understand the deep things of God?—RK).

From New Zealand:

"I have some questions regarding some Bible passages and how to interpret them dispensationally. Your answers in the past have helped my own faith so much. My parents receive the *Searchlight* and the ones I've read are awesome!"

From British Columbia:

"My friend and I have both undergone dramatic changes in our thinking and our faith, due to studying the Word from websites such as yours. I am so excited to have this new understanding. I was so humbled and grateful after reading your articles on eternal security. Thank you so much for helping me understand the surety of our salvation, and the unfathomable love with which it was given to us. I have never read anything so clear and accurate on this subject."

From the Philippines:

"Thank you so much for being a part of the recent TCM conference in the Philippines! The messages and lectures that you have shared with us were used of the Lord to challenge us more in the ministry. Comments and reactions from the conference evaluation sheet and text messages received were very encouraging! The 'Spiritual Impact' column of the evaluation sheet was rated 'excellent.' Also, your team's pre- and post-conference visits brought great encouragement to many who were not able to make it to the conference. Each meeting had more attendance than what was expected. The Filipino Grace Community was blessed—really blessed—greatly by your team's missionary journey!" (We're thankful for this good report from Jun Pielago, one of the leaders in the Philippine Grace movement.—RK).

From the Philippines:

"It was a great privilege for me to have spent time listening, and even talking to a man of God like you. I was so blessed by the message you delivered at Ozamis City about holiness. In full honesty, I have been away from the ministry for so long. After graduation from the Bible Institute, I pursued my secular studies and never looked back to the ministry. A few months ago, God began working on me, and made me see and understand that there is no greater job than serving Him. I would like to solicit your prayers for my plans of getting back to the ministry."

From the U.S. Virgin Islands:

"Missing your *Two Minutes With the Bible* in our local paper. What's up?" (When *Two Minutes* does not appear, be sure to ask your local newspaper about this. This lets editors know that it is missed.—RK).

From New Mexico:

"Thanks to BBS for all the marvelous stuff that is now available on your web page. I love it!"

From South Africa:

"You answered one of my long-standing questions: Filling up the sufferings of Christ for His body. How do we do this, what does this mean? And there was the answer in your January *Searchlight*. So simple and so beautiful! I view my sufferings in a brand new light! I read Pastor Stam's *True Spirituality* years ago and it was one of the stepping stones to bring me to the revelation of the Mystery. What a wonderful tool in the hands of our Master....Thank you that you truly stand as a searchlight in a Christian world that is getting darker by the minute."

From Arkansas:

"I would like to re-subscribe to the *Searchlight*. Thank you for being there after all these years." (Welcome back!—RK).

From Kentucky:

"That totally sounds like a reasonable explanation. I appreciate that you are there and willing to answer. Being a member of a large megachurch in Louisville, it is hard to find someone who is willing to search the Scriptures and discuss the meaning. I so love just to hear Scripture taught in context without all of the trappings of the world that you find in churches today. The Word of God is exciting to me. I don't need anything else. When I went through your tapes on the Book of Acts, they were all I could talk about for weeks. It was so eye-opening, I hated for them to come to an end."

From Illinois:

"Thank you so much for your response. This is a huge help, and I forwarded this e-mail to my friend. She is very confused about the Bible, due to the church she has been attending. Much good has come out of this, for she is now reading the articles on your site as well as talking to me about rightly dividing God's Word."

From Kentucky:

"The dispensational charts...are excellent...I believe that they will go a long way. Print more!"

From Oregon:

"It is a privilege to be able to study the Word, rightly divided. I thank God for all your hard work in furthering the truth of Paul's gospel."

From Missouri:

"Oh, the article by Brother Joe Leftwich was truly appreciated. I sent him a thank you....Reading through Ephesians, one might wonder if the Apostle Paul played the accordion. This glorious epistle gives us so many of the 'accordings' that always thrill and fill with joy." (Since Paul uses the word "according" *sixteen times* in such wonderful ways in Ephesians, I think you may be on to something here!—RK).

From the Internet:

"I really needed today's *Two Minutes With the Bible* devotional on "The Christian's Prayer Life."

From Illinois:

"Please apply the enclosed contribution toward the new *Searchlight* addressing machine. Thank you for the opportunity and privilege of participating in your ministry."

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

BBI Graduation and Awards Ceremony

On May 20th, *Berean Bible Institute* held their 2005 Graduation and Awards Ceremony. Several students received one and two-year certificates, while Ken Board, Tim Board, and Dean Reinheimer (all of *Faith Bible Church, Steger, IL*) graduated the three year program, and are now well equipped to serve the Lord in whatever capacity they choose.



Ken Board
receiving diploma



Tim Board
receiving diploma



Dean Reinheimer
receiving diploma



Pastor Jeff Seekins'
Commencement Address



Pastor Dan Wolgast, Ken Board, Dean
Reinheimer, Tim Board, Dr. Ed Bedore

If you have a desire to prepare for the ministry, it is not too late to register for **Berean Bible Institute's** fall semester *if you act now!* Fall semester begins August 22nd. For more information about **BBI's** program, please contact Dr. W. Edward Bedore, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086, or phone: (262) 644-5504, fax: (262) 644-5507, e-mail: bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org.

www.bereanbibleinstitute.org

How Grace Worked

In the Life of Joe Mason



While living the life of a vagabond, riding freight trains around the country, Joe Mason was led to the Lord at age 23. Says Joe:

“I was a university drop-out, a man with a drinking problem and many other bad habits. It was when I heard a personal testimony given in a gospel meeting that I came to realize my life was a mess. It was a life of deep sin and selfishness, without any interest in our Lord Jesus Christ. So it was in the evening of November 4, 1933 that I made the great decision—that is, I turned my life over to Christ to use as He wished, whatever that may be.”

Several years later while working in Albuquerque, Joe began visiting jails and prisons to share the gospel. Later he felt led to receive ministry training and studied at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA). When his daughter died of polio, Joe and his first wife Helen left school and moved to Weatherford, Texas, where Helen's parents lived. There Joe again started visiting county jails to share the gospel and teach the Word of God.

One day when Joe asked an inmate if he believed the gospel, the man responded “no” because he could not speak in tongues, handle serpents or drink poison, signs that Mark 16:15-18 says “*shall follow*” believers. This bothered Joe and Helen considerably and they felt if they could not respond to that issue that they should get out of prison ministry altogether. One Sunday, however, they visited a small church in Mineral Wells, Texas, and were amazed to hear the pastor, R. B. Shiflett, teaching a Bible lesson on the signs of Mark 16. Joe had never heard the explanation that Pastor Shiflett was giving to this passage, that those signs were part of a program that God had designed for Israel and that with the Apostle Paul, God began a new, previously unrevealed “dispensation” in which the gospel of salvation by grace alone went to all men, Jew and Gentile alike, and that the signs were no longer necessary. Joe couldn't accept these teachings immediately, but he committed himself to study these concepts more thoroughly. When he finally realized the truth of the Pauline revelation he embraced it with an enthusiasm that few others have experienced.

That was 1954. A year later Joe organized a ministry dedicated to reaching prisoners for Christ and providing sound biblical instruction based on the principles of dispensational truth. That was the beginning of *Prison Mission Association*, which for the past 50 years has gone on to reach out to tens of thousands of souls, inmates and non-inmates alike, with the life-giving message of salvation and the soul-freeing truth of God's grace-centered program for the Body of Christ. Joe is now with the Lord, but PMA has never wavered from Joe's original vision and commitment.

PRISON MISSION ASSOCIATION
PO Box 2300
Port Orchard, WA 98366-0690

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Churches needing pastors: *Grace Bible Church* in Venice, Florida is seeking a full-time pastor. For more information, please contact Jeff Riley at jriley@swfla.rr.com or at 239-292-3515, or FAX him at 239-549-6536. Beginning Monday, September 26th, *Grace Bible Church* of Beloit, Wisconsin will also be in need of a full-time pastor. If interested, please contact Jim Tollar at 608-676-4599 or Art LeFeber at 608-365-9136.

Congratulations to BBS typesetter Kevin Sadler and his wife Jessica on the birth of their fourth child Tyler Paul on June 21st. Now Cody, Katie and Carissa will have an additional ally when they invade Grandma Vicki Sadler's house on their weekly visits. All questions about Baby Tyler should be directed to proud Grandpa Paul Sadler here at *Berean Bible Society*.

Two grace milestones: The list of people receiving *Two Minutes With the Bible*, our daily devotional, has now reached 1,000. If you too would like to receive this daily e-mailing, simply visit our BBS website at www.bereanbiblesociety.org, click on *Two Minutes*, and follow the directions to sign up. By the way, since its inception on October 12, 1998, more than 100,000 people have now visited our BBS website.

Cliff Kinkaid went to be with the Lord on April 22nd. Cliff and his wife Lou Ellen were *Things to Come* missionaries in Kenya for several years. Cliff was a dedicated Christian who was willing to sacrifice everything—health, money and comfort—for the sake of the gospel.

Merle Beauchamp was promoted to glory on May 6th. Merle served the Lord faithfully as Sunday School Superintendent at the *Berean Church* in Denver for many years. He was a long-time friend of Pastor Stam and of *Berean Bible Society*.

Prison Mission Association founder Joe Mason was ushered into the presence of the Lord on April 23rd. See Page 29 for Joe's testimony.

The Beacon of Grace Conference is scheduled for September 16-18, 2005. Guest speaker Pastor Joel Finck will be addressing this year's theme: "Where is God and What is He Doing?" For additional information, please contact: Jim Bartkiw at 905-562-7170.

*The picture of the lighthouse on the front cover was taken by Pastor Joe Watkins of *Things to Come Mission*. The *Bagacay Point Lighthouse* is located in Liloan, Consolation on the island of Cebu, Philippines. The 72-foot light was built by the U.S. in 1904. It is still an active aid to navigation guiding ships along the Mactan Channel.

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“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnessses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (II Timothy 2:2).

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