

# The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

August 2009



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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

Dear Friends in Christ,

Last November we announced that we would soon be needing a new business manager here at *Berean Bible Society* to replace Jim Tollar, who had moved up his plans to go to the mission field in Kenya. Several of our readers responded and expressed an interest in the position, and we prayerfully considered each application that came in through April of this year.

However, at that time our BBS board of directors got together for their regular Spring meeting. On the agenda was a familiar item: how to deal with the rising costs of our ministry. Just *one* example: the postage expense to mail *the Searchlight alone* rose a whopping \$9,000 a year. The board was thankful to God to learn that despite the tough economic times in which we find ourselves, contributions to *Berean Bible Society* have remained fairly steady. For this we join them in conveying our *profound* thanks to you, our faithful supporters. But the board was still left with the daunting proposition of cutting a sum of money from our budget that would amount to about the expenditure of an entire salary.

It was then that the directors decided *not* to replace Brother Tollar's position. If it be asked how we can expect to continue without a business manager, several factors have contributed to make this possible. First, former business manager Doug Cox worked very hard to streamline the accounting and other business aspects of our ministry, and Jim Tollar has contributed to this effort as well. As a result, we believe the position can now be filled on a part-time basis. But even so, our ravaged budget did not allow us to consider hiring even a part-time replacement in the business office.

The board then wondered if one of our present staff members could step up to fill this position, and Russ Miller has graciously agreed to give it a try. As of this writing, Russ is already working closely with Jim, learning the ropes. We thank God for Russ's willingness to take on these additional responsibilities, and for his wife Bunny's offer to try to assume some of Russ's work so as to enable him to do so.

In closing, many thanks to those of you who contacted us to say that you were interested in joining our staff, and to others of you who were perhaps praying about it. We invite the prayers of all of our readers now as the staff makes these adjustments, so that our work for the Lord here at *Berean Bible Society* will be able to continue.



Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Ricky Kurth

# A Soldier Lays Down His Sword



This past May our good friend Dr. Ernest Campbell was called home to be with the Lord at the age of 93. Ernie, as he was affectionately known, will long be remembered for his unwavering stand for the truth of Paul's gospel. Brother Campbell was the Founder of the *Canyonview Camp and Biblion College*, a school dedicated to training men and women in the Word, rightly divided. He also faithfully served as the pastor of the *Salem Bible Church* for 50 years, located in Silverton, Oregon.

Dr. Campbell was a prolific author, having written commentaries on nearly all of Paul's epistles, each of which are based on the Greek Text. Brother Campbell was given a very special gift to explain a passage from the original language in a clear, understandable way that is easy to follow. This method of Bible study is beneficial not only to confirm the English translation, it also sheds light on difficult passages where the English obscures the original sense.



I had the privilege of fellowshiping with Brother Campbell at the *Berean Bible Fellowship Conference* where we always enjoyed discussing the Scriptures. With his knowledge of the languages it was a great opportunity to receive further insight on a particular passage from someone who understood Paul's apostleship and message. In fact, Ernie was once referred to as "The great Pauline dispensationalist."

If you did not know in advance that Brother Campbell was a Greek Scholar, with impressive academic credentials, you would have never heard it from him. The first indication of his accomplishments would have been after you entered into a discussion with him on a biblical topic. He was a very humble and gracious man who faithfully served the Lord all the days of his life. Dr. Campbell was also very capable when it came to defending the gospel of the grace of God, but he always did so in a Christ-like manner.

Brother Campbell's wife, Fern, who is also a dear soul, could more than hold her own in the Hebrew language. I recall the time I brought a message on Genesis Chapter 4. I stated that when Cain was born, Eve believed he was the promised Redeemer. Afterwards I asked Fern about the passage in the Hebrew. She said, while the definite article was not in the Hebrew the sense did strongly imply that this is exactly what Eve believed. As you can see, God wonderfully blessed this dear couple with a knowledge of the original languages to the praise of His glory.

We extend our love and condolences to Fern, and the entire Canyonview family. May God give you the full assurance of our blessed hope in Christ Jesus.

—Pastor Paul M. Sadler



# Studies in the Book of Revelation

## Revelation 1:4-7

By Paul M. Sadler

We received so many inquiries about verses we weren't able to fully address in our series on *Revelation* that we felt compelled to give this book further consideration, especially since there's such a high level of interest in the subject.

**“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne.”**

—Rev. 1:4

It is generally agreed that the Apostle John wrote the *Book of Revelation* around 96 A.D., which historically seems to be the case. Prof. Charles R. Erdman, D.D., made the following insightful observation as to whether John was banished to the isle of Patmos under the reign of Nero or Domitian.

“Historians agree that the Neronian persecution hardly extended beyond the city of Rome, while the persecution under Domitian was spread widely over

the empire. The persecution under Nero was not on the grounds of religious belief. He wished to avert from himself suspicion of the crime of having burned the city [Rome], and therefore attempted to implicate the new sect called ‘Christians.’ This was in A.D. 64, and there is no proof that his fiendish cruelties to the infant church continued until or during the year A.D. 68.

“On the contrary, the martyrdoms under Domitian were due to a refusal on the part of Christians to worship the emperor as divine....The ground of persecution, therefore, indicates the reign of Domitian and not that of Nero. Nor did the means of punishment adopted by Nero include banishment. There was imprisonment,

torture, drenching with oil and then burning the wretched victims as torches, and crucifixion; but exile is not mentioned. On the other hand, there are detailed stories and references to a general policy of banishment as employed by Domitian.”<sup>1</sup>

The Church Fathers also confirm that John was banished to the isle of Patmos under the reign of Domitian in 96 A.D., the same year he would have received the *Apocalypse*. This would mean the vast majority of the kingdom saints, including John’s fellow apostles of the kingdom, had already preceded him in death. Paul, too, had passed from the scene. Furthermore, the temple in Jerusalem would have been destroyed by Titus in 70 A.D., which essentially ended Judaism.

This meant John handed down the *Book of Revelation* to a small number of kingdom believers that remained at the time, who in return made sure it was included with the other manuscripts. They were well aware that God set Israel aside in unbelief and had turned to the Gentiles; therefore, these saints understood the events recorded in the *Apocalypse* were entirely futuristic. This is confirmed by the record itself. John clearly states: “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day” (Rev. 1:10), that is, the coming *day of the Lord*, which will begin with the seven-year tribulation period.

The seven churches in Asia John is addressing, then, are *future* kingdom assemblies that will be the fruits of the ministry of the 144,000 in the early part

of the tribulation. This is why he often writes in the present tense, seeing that he was actually there as these events unfolded during the course of the vision. Domitian may have banished John to Patmos as a punishment, but God used the occasion “for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 1:9).

It should be remembered that while Paul completed the Word of God as far as *extent*, with the Mystery (Col. 1:25,26), John completed it in regard to *depth* according to Prophecy (Rev. 1:9). Under the supervision of the Holy Spirit, John takes the prophesies of “things to come,” scattered throughout the prophetic Scriptures and places them in a chronological order. He then fills in between the lines, as he was led by the Spirit, by giving connecting revelations so his readers might have a fuller picture of future events *after* the Rapture of the Church.

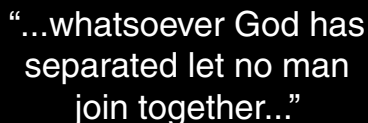
## GRACE AND PEACE

### God the Father

**“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne” (Rev. 1:4).**

The number seven (7) holds a prominent place in the *Apocalypse*. There are the seven churches in Asia, the seven Spirits, the seven stars, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven thunders, the seven bowls, which contain the seven last plagues, etc. Seven in the Scriptures is the number of

fullness, completeness—spiritual perfection. When God finished the heavens and the earth in the beginning, He ended His work on the *seventh* day and rested (Gen. 2:2). His creation was complete and perfect!



“...whatsoever God has separated let no man join together...”

But when Adam fell, paradise was lost due to sin. Thankfully, God has *promised* to redeem His creation from the bondage of corruption, the process of which is unfolded for us in the pages of *Revelation*. In the coming day of the Lord, God will overthrow the kingdoms of this world and establish the kingdom of His dear Son (Rev. 11:15-19). As we can see, the number seven is closely associated with the fullness of God’s revelation and the fact that He always honors His Word.

The declaration of “grace and peace” in this passage is from God the Father in whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning. He is “the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity” (Isa. 57:15). These tribulation saints will be able to rest assured that “grace,” not the dispensation of grace, but rather God’s *influence* in their lives will guide them through the dark days ahead. The

eternal presence of the Father will be with them every step of the way; He will even give them the very words to speak when they are oppressed and made to stand before their enemies (Matt. 10:19,20). Although the world will be in utter turmoil at the time they will have an inner “peace” that God is in control. Even in the face of martyrdom they will find peace in the fact that they will be with the Lord (Rev. 6:9-11).

### The Seven Spirits

The declaration of *grace and peace* is also from the “seven Spirits which are before His throne.” Some commentators believe this is a reference to the Holy Spirit and His sevenfold ministry, based on Isaiah Chapter eleven. We do not believe this is the case for the simple reason the seven Spirits are said to be before the throne of God, which is a position of subjection and servitude. This certainly would not be true of the Spirit of God who is co-equal and co-eternal—He is God!

These “seven Spirits” who stand before the Lord are a *special class* of angelic beings who carry out the highest service of God. This was true in time past and will again be the case during the coming day of the Lord. There is little question that Gabriel is one of the “seven spirits” who stands before the throne.

**“And the angel answering said unto him [Zacharias], I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings” (Luke 1:19).**

Michael, the archangel is probably another one of the seven Spirits who stands ready to carry out the just commands of God in the future tribulation.

**“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered” (Dan. 12:1).**

It will be comforting to these tribulation saints that these seven Spirits are on their side, as the declaration demonstrates, who will be ministering on their behalf throughout the time known as Jacob’s Trouble.

As we know, God created an innumerable host of angels in the beginning. In fact, we believe the creation of the angelic host was the first creative act of God. They actually *witnessed* the laying of the foundation of earth, “when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy” (Job 38:1-7). Angels are spirit beings who minister to those who are heirs of salvation. For example, during the Babylonian captivity the angel Gabriel ministered more than once to the prophet Daniel (Dan. 9:20-27). He imparted to him the vision of the seventy weeks of years, the last week (7-year tribulation) of which is under consideration in our study of the Book of Revelation.

During the years of the captivity, Israel lived under Gentile domination commonly known as the “times of the Gentiles.” Gabriel

revealed to Daniel that the time was appointed when the creation would witness the regathering and *restoration* of Israel, at the close of the tribulation when the everlasting kingdom will be set up. When we turn to the Book of Revelation we again witness how the ministry of angels will be very prominent, as Daniel’s prophecy of the seventy weeks of years is literally fulfilled. They will be God’s instruments of judgment as they pour out His undiluted wrath on this Christ-rejecting world. Therefore, Daniel and Revelation have much in common in regard to God speaking through His angelic creation to implement the counsel of His will.

### **The Son of God**

**“And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood” (Rev. 1:5).**

The declaration of “grace and peace” to those who endure the coming tribulation is based upon what the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished on their behalf. He is the faithful witness! The word “witness” used here by John is the Greek word *martus*, from which we get our English word “martyr.” When the Redeemer left heaven’s glory He came to bear witness to the truth. Unlike those, however, who suffer martyrdom for the sake of the truth, no man took Christ’s life from Him—He had the power to lay down His life and raise Himself from the dead (John 10:18).



With this in mind, He is the “first begotten of the dead.” Christ trod the same path as all those before Him when He entered the valley of death, not for Himself, mind you, for death had no claim on Him—He was the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. Rather, He died for the *sins of His people*. The scope of redemption in prophecy is Israel and those who would be saved through her. As the apostle says in this passage, “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.” The pronoun “us” is speaking of the Apostle John and his countrymen who believe on the name of Christ, that He is the Anointed of Israel (John 20:31). They are the ones spoken of here who are “washed” or cleansed from their sins by His precious blood.

As the “first born of the dead” Christ conquered death and rose victoriously over it forevermore; therefore, He holds a very unique position. While there were those who were miraculously brought back from the dead in time past, they all share one thing in common: they all died again and lie in the dust of the earth to this very hour. Christ, on the other hand, is the *first* from among the dead to receive a glorified resurrected body. He alone has immortality (I Tim. 6:16). This will be particularly *comforting* to those who face martyrdom during the coming tribulation, because to faithfully name the name of Christ will have grave consequences (Rev. 14:13). When they find themselves staring into the face of death the hope of the resurrection will be the

anchor of their souls. Of course, their hope is to be raised in the *first resurrection* at the Second Coming of Christ.

**“And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:6).**

This language is completely foreign to the Church, the Body of Christ. If we are kings, as some suppose, who are our subjects? If we are the priests of God, what Gentile dare enter the office according to the law, without finding himself under the penalty of death? Where in the Old Testament or the New Testament are the Gentiles ever called priests or promised to be a kingdom of priests? We believe you will be hard-pressed to find a passage, but we challenge you to search the Scriptures to see for yourself.

You see, the priesthood was specifically given to the chosen nation of Israel under the law. Only those of the tribe of Levi were permitted to minister in the priest’s office. Those who entered this office did so through a water ceremony, which symbolized the washing away of their sins (Ex. 29:4). The Aaronic priesthood that would give way to the superior order of Melchisedec (Christ) foreshadowed the day when Israel would become a kingdom of priests. This induction began with John the Baptist who baptized believing Israel with water. Three passages bear witness to this truth.

**The Law:** “And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Ex. 19:6).

**The Prophets:** “But ye shall be named the priests of the LORD: men shall call you the ministers of our God” (Isa. 61:6).

**The Kingdom Gospel:** “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people” (I Pet. 2:9).

So then, having been cleansed from their sins by the blood of Christ, John confirms that believing Israelites will be *made* the priests of God in the coming kingdom. They will minister in the holy things of God, not merely the tribe of Levi, but all the tribes of the chosen nation. This will be in fulfillment of the promise. They will also be *made* “kings” and their subjects will be the Gentiles. “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you” (Zech. 8:23).

### WHICH COMING?

**“Behold, He cometh with clouds and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him” (Rev. 1:7).**

Although many ignore the fact that there are two distinct returns of Christ taught in the Scriptures, God does not ignore it. We have often said, whatsoever God has separated let no man join together—to do so is to confuse the two programs of God. As we will see throughout this study, the Book of Revelation is perfectly aligned, by the Spirit of

God, with prophecy and the kingdom gospel. Consequently, if this is kept in mind we will find that the prophetic Scriptures actually interpret much of the symbolism found in the *Apocalypse*.

There is absolutely no question that John is speaking about the Second Coming of Christ in the above passage. Like most authors, John is writing the *Introduction* to the Book (Chapter 1) *after* he saw all the events of the *Apocalypse* unfold. The actual revelation of Christ’s return to earth isn’t revealed until Chapter 19. By placing it in the *Introduction*, John wanted his readers to understand and be consoled that the troublous times they were about to enter would abruptly end when Christ returns in a flaming fire of vengeance to execute judgment upon their enemies. He will have the final word in the affairs of men. “For it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”

Unlike the Rapture, which is the *invisible* return of Christ for the Church, His Second Coming is *visible*, “every eye shall see Him.” Then John is careful to point out “and they also which pierced Him.” This is a clear reference to apostate Israel; they were the ones who cried, “crucify Him, crucify Him.” “Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him,” to which Pilate responded: “Shall I crucify your King?” Amazingly, the chief priest answered, “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15).

Peter rolls out the artillery after the crucifixion of Christ and charges his countrymen with the

death of their own Messiah. He paints such a vivid picture that it was as if the blood of guilt was dripping off the ends of their fingers. Peter plainly states: “ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts 2:23). In his second Pentecostal address he made it clear they had “killed the Prince of life.” But, thankfully, God raised Him from the dead and He’s coming again to execute judgment on those who pierced Him. But are not those who were responsible for committing the evil deed dead? Indeed, dead as a door nail! A comparison of two passages will help shed some light on the dilemma:

**Christ’s first coming (crucifixion):** “Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, *and on our children*” (Matt. 27:25).

**Christ’s Second Coming:** “And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem” (Zech. 12:10,11).

You see, in the coming tribulation Israel, nationally, will *still* be in denial that Christ was their Messiah and that they were responsible for His crucifixion (Acts 5:28). But when they look up and see Him coming in power and great glory they will not be able to deny their senses, they will mourn because of Him.

“And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.” That

is, those who blasphemed Him and received the mark of the beast. Unlike the Rapture when the Lord will remain in heaven, at the Second Coming the soles of His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. He will then enter the valley of Megiddo where the blood of the armies of the earth will run to the horse’s bridle at the battle of Armageddon. Their cry will be great when they see Him coming. Men’s hearts will fail within them.



The practical lesson here is this, brethren: The clock is ticking as these events draw closer, may God give us a greater burden for those who are unknowingly walking over the rotten planks of hell, not realizing the terrible end that awaits them. May these studies give each of us a greater appreciation that we’ve been delivered from the wrath to come. When was the last time you thanked God that you are living in the age of Grace? Do it today, the Lord’s waiting to hear from you!

*To Be Continued!*



## Endnote

1. *The Revelation of John, An Exposition*, by Charles R. Erdman, D.D.

# WESTERN ROUND-UP

*Where the Deer and Pastor Sadler Roam!*

## Black Hills Mid-Week Service

**Location:** *Grace Bible Church*

23751 Pine Haven Dr., Rapid City, South Dakota

**Date:** Wednesday, August 26, 2009

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

For additional information, contact: Arlin Stratmeyer 605-399-1958

## Grace Chapel of Laramie

**Location:** *Grace Chapel*

324 S. Taylor Street, Laramie, Wyoming

**Date:** Sunday, August 30, 2009

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

For more information, contact: Pastor Dennis Moore 307-745-5801

## Denver Regional Bible Conference

**Location:** *Douglas Buck Community Recreation Center*

2004 W. Powers Avenue, Littleton, Colorado

**Date:** Saturday, September 5, 2009

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

For more info, contact: John & Kathleen Baker at 303-420-3524

## Grace Memorial Church

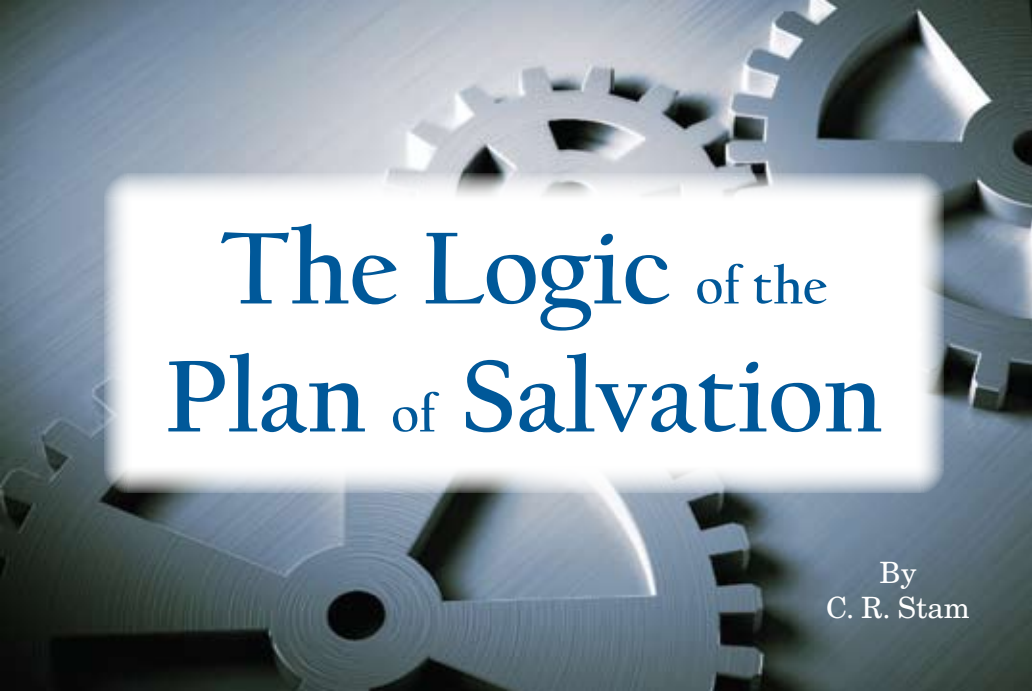
**Location:** 1370 Holly Street, Denver, Colorado

**Date:** Sunday, September 6, 2009

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

For more info, contact: John & Kathleen Baker at 303-420-3524





# The Logic of the Plan of Salvation

By  
C. R. Stam

In I Corinthians 1:22 we are told that *“the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.”* This is doubtless why God chose Paul, with his profound intellectual background and acumen, to proclaim “Christ crucified,” the “wisdom of God” as well as the “power of God” (I Cor. 1:23,24).

Paul was a gifted logician as well as a theologian, and nowhere is this more evident than in his Epistle to the Romans, where, by divine inspiration, he presents the logic of God’s plan of salvation. Again and again, throughout the Epistle, he uses that word so prominent in mathematics and in logic: *“therefore.”*

## THE FINGER OF ACCUSATION

*“Therefore thou are inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest...”* (Rom. 2:1).

The Epistle begins with an accusation, a charge. It is natural for the sinner to seek to shift the blame to others. Adam said: *“It was the woman that Thou gavest to be with me”* and the woman said: *“The serpent beguiled me,”* and so it has gone through all the centuries since, but God did not excuse our first parents and He does not excuse us.

Religious cults have arisen which encourage their followers to plead “not guilty” to the charge of moral wrongdoing. Universalism, for example, does not hesitate to charge *one Person* with the responsibility for *all* that takes place in the universe. *God alone*, they insist, is responsible. The murderer like the missionary, the thief like the theologian, is only doing what God *planned* that he should do. It was intended that he should “fill this role.” He is but fulfilling the will of God. Thus



indirectly Universalists charge God with moral wrong and, on this basis, argue that ultimately He will reconcile all to Himself.



But *God* says that the unsaved are “*the children of DISOBEDIENCE*” and therefore “*the children of WRATH*” (Eph. 2:2,3). He gave His holy law “*that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become GUILTY before God*” (Rom. 3:19).

Romans 2 indicates, however, that while men are apt to try to shift blame from themselves they are generally quite ready to condemn others. This is why the apostle specifically singles out the one who judges others, pretending that he himself is better, and says: “*Thou art inexcusable.*” Before any of us can be saved we must come to the place where we acknowledge: “*I have sinned against the light, against my better knowledge. I have sinned wilfully again and again. I am guilty, inexcusably guilty.*”

King David had to come to this after having judged another. The

prophet Nathan had called on the king, to tell him about a rich man who owned “*exceeding many flocks and herds.*” This rich man, he said, had taken from a poor man the one ewe lamb which the latter had owned and which he and his children had loved and treated as a family pet. What, asked Nathan, should be done to the rich man? David, his anger “*greatly kindled,*” answered: “*As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die.*” But what was his consternation to hear Nathan reply: “*Thou art the man*” (II Sam. 12:1-7).

Our Lord’s apostles experienced similar embarrassment when, seated with Him alone in the upper room He said: “*Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me*” (Matt. 26:21). He did not say: “*Someone shall betray Me,*” or “*One of My disciples shall betray Me,*” but “*One of you shall betray Me.*” Be it said to the credit of all but Judas, that one after another each of them, distrustful of his own nature, said: “*Is it I?,*” “*Is it I?,*” “*Is it I?*”

### **NO HELP FROM THE LAW**

“*Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight...*” (Rom. 3:20).

There was yet another segment of the human race which felt itself better than the rest, but for another reason.

Had not God chosen the seed of Abraham and made them His own covenant people? Were they not a specially privileged people? Had He not given them His holy Law, His will, in writing? Yes, and this was their chief advantage over

the Gentiles (Rom. 3:1,2) but the possession of the Law was turned into a *disadvantage* as they broke it and were condemned by it. Thus by the law *every* mouth was stopped and *all* were brought in guilty, including those of the favored nation to whom it had been committed. "For circumcision verily profiteth," says the apostle, *"If thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision"* (Rom. 2:25).

Thus Israel stands condemned along with the Gentiles, *"for there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"* (Rom. 3:22,23). How foolish, then, for the sinner to look to the Law for help, as so many have done, for it is not the function of the law to help the criminal, but to condemn him.

Sad to say, the great majority of religious people suppose that the Law was given to help us to be good, while in fact it was given to show us that we *are bad* and need a Savior. It was given:

***"That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.***

***"For by the law is the knowledge of sin"* (Rom. 3:19,20).**

***"The law entered that the offense might abound"* (Rom. 5:20).**

***"That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful"* (Rom. 7:13).**

***"It was added because of transgression"* (Gal. 3:19).**

Therefore it is utterly impossible to be justified by the deeds of the Law. And this brings the inspired apostle to his next logical conclusion.

## **JUSTIFICATION WITHOUT THE LAW**

*"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law"* (Rom. 3:28).

At this point the reader should take the time to carefully examine Romans 3:21-28. It has already been proved that the Law cannot justify the sinner or declare him righteous. *"But now,"* says the apostle, *"the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested."* Christ, the righteous One, has borne the penalty for our sins that His righteousness might be imputed to us; that we might be *"justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus....Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law."*

Here a word should be said about the nature of justification, since so many confuse it with forgiveness and pardon.

Some of our readers will recall the case of Col. Alfred Dreyfus, a French military officer who became the victim of so notorious a miscarriage of justice that it almost led to civil war. After much agitation over the case, the French authorities, to save face, reviewed the case and pronounced Dreyfus guilty as before, *but issued him a pardon*. When the document was brought to him he tore it to bits, thundering: *"I do not want pardon; I want justification."*

The distinction is important. Let the defendant in a criminal case be pardoned and the pall of guilt will still hang over him. As he walks down the street the neighbors will look from behind

their curtains and say: “There goes that criminal. They pardoned him.” Had he been acquitted there would still be the suspicion of guilt. But the humblest believer in Christ has been *justified—declared righteous!* The Judge of all has not merely pardoned him, or acquitted him, or even pronounced him innocent before the bar of justice. Rather He has declared that the defendant has been *right* in all he has done—and this is true, for the defendant occupies a position “*in Christ!*”

Paul himself demonstrated this distinction at Philippi, when he refused to leave his prison cell unless the magistrates apologized for their breach of justice to him and Silas. He and Silas had not merely *not* done wrong; they had done what was good and right in their ministry at Philippi, and had been beaten and imprisoned for it. It is refreshing, therefore, to see the magistrates come to their cell to apologize and graciously lead them out of the prison. Thus Paul and Silas were not merely pardoned or acquitted; they were justified, declared righteous, before all (Acts 16:35-40).

We see this distinction exemplified also in Peter’s biting response to the Sanhedrin, upon being asked by what authority he had cured a lame man. “If we this day be examined of *the good deed* done to the impotent man,” said Peter, “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” (Acts 4:9,10). Clearly Peter was

demanding more than acquittal; he was demanding *justification*. But “how can a man be *just with God,*” or “*justified before God?*”

From the ministry of John the Baptist through Pentecost repentance and water baptism had been required for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Acts 2:38). “*But now...at this time,*” says the Apostle Paul, “*we declare His [God’s] righteousness for the remission of sins*” (Rom. 3:21-28). “*For God hath made Him to be sin for us, [Him] who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*” (II Cor. 5:21).

“I do not want pardon;  
I want justification.”

The Law *demand*ed righteousness; grace *provides* it, through the merits of Calvary, that God “might be just,” and at the same time “the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded” (Rom. 3:26,27).

What a message for a lost Gentile world! Indeed, what a revelation it must have been to the Jews gathered in the Pisidian synagogue, when Paul declared:

***“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:***

***“And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses”*** (Acts 13:38,39).

*To Be Continued!*



## Question Box

*“My friend says that organ donation is not Christian. Is that true?”*

While we see no indication in Scripture that God’s people are *required* to be organ donors, we do not believe organ donation to be sinful or unspiritual. Paul told the Galatians,

**“...if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me” (Gal. 4:15).**

This verse is one of the indications we have that Paul had an eye affliction. The Galatians were so thankful that Paul had shared the gospel with them that, had it been possible, they would have given him *their* eyes. Of course, in those days it was *not* possible to transplant eyes. But the fact that the Apostle does not *condemn* them for thinking this way indicates that God does not disapprove of organ donation. That is, Paul didn’t say, “you would have given me your eyes, *and shame on you for even thinking of that!*” This suggests that the donation of a kidney or other such organ while the donor is yet alive is acceptable to God. From this it can then be reasonably argued that organ donation after death is also acceptable. If a body needed to be intact to be raised from the dead, John the Baptist would have no hope of resurrection (Matt. 14:10-12).

You might ask your friend if she were badly burned in one area of her body if she would allow a section of skin from another part of her body to be grafted into the burned area. Our skin is an organ, and allowing this would suggest that she is already comfortable with the concept of organ transplants, albeit to one’s own self. But that is where Galatians 5:14 comes in, for God says we are to love our neighbor *as we love ourselves*. If we love ourselves enough to give ourselves an organ donation, then we should love our neighbor in the same measure.

Having said all that, Paul also says that “to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, *to him it is unclean*” (Rom. 14:14). We believe organ donation is an area where we need to “let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind” (14:5) and not “despise” or “judge” another for his conviction in this regard (v. 3).

—Pastor Kurth

# Kentucky Conference

**Location:** *Grace Memorial Chapel*  
343 Duff Road  
Leitchfield, Kentucky

**Dates:** September 12, 13, 2009

**Speaker:** Pastor Ricky Kurth

For further information, please contact:

Pastor Floyd Frank at  
Floydfrank@windstream.net

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## 19th Mid-Atlantic Fall Grace Bible Conference

**Location:** *White Sulphur Springs*  
Manns Choice, Pennsylvania

**Dates:** September 11-13, 2009

**Speaker:** Pastor Dennis Kizonas

**Theme:** *"Partakers of Grace with Me" (Phil. 1:7)*

For reservations or more information, contact: Mrs. Suzanne Potter at  
304-263-2411, or write: 208 S. Alabama Ave., Martinsburg, WV 25401.





Key Verses: Romans 12:1-2

"I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service.*

And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

## LESSON 1

# GRACE IN DAILY LIFE Part 1

Theme: The Grace life begins with salvation and continues as a relationship with Christ.

## ENGAGE

Most Christians have been frustrated and have had thoughts of giving up. You will be pleased to hear that God can use such events to bring about spiritual growth.

## ENLIGHTEN

### Introduction

Have you ever been frustrated with your Christian life? When you have failed God have you thought you're not worthy? Ever think this Christian stuff might not be real? These thoughts are normal. In fact, God often uses such frustrations and failures to help us grow spiritually.

How we react to these frustrations and failures is the key! Some just ignore them. Some give up. In giving up, some live like they did before salvation. Some turn to other religions. Some try to prove Christianity false. Some try harder. Some turn to God with a new and fresh trust.

Christianity isn't like a hobby that we just try for a while and then set aside when something new comes along. It's a life-long relationship with the living God. It's real. It's powerful. It's exciting. It gives life meaning. It's rewarding—both now and eternally.

### The Way to Begin—Salvation

This relationship with God begins the moment you trust Jesus Christ as your Savior. The Scriptures addressed to us (Paul's Epistles), clearly spell out the message of salvation. By salvation we mean being saved or rescued from something and to something; like a drowning man needs to be saved from the water and brought to the air. So we, according to the Scriptures are drowning in sin (Rom. 3:10,22-23). The

moment we trust Christ, we're rescued from the consequences of sin (Hell), and given a heavenly home.

We have the opportunity for a relationship with the Lord. That relationship grows as we walk with Him. That's essentially what these lessons on the Grace Life are about.

## The Way to Continue—Walk

Like salvation, from our perspective, our relationship begins when we trust the Savior with our lives. However, we're not talking about salvation when we talk about our walk. Too often the message of salvation is compromised by tying it to our deeds. Our salvation is secured by God the moment we believe. Our walk, on the other hand, is dependent upon continued trust or faith. That's grace life!

### First Step

One of the first steps is to personally apply the truth of Romans 12:1-2: "I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, **which is** your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what **is** that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Paul begged these brethren, based on God's gift of mercy in salvation, to give their lives to Him, "present your bodies to God." Just like the Old Testament saints presented a sacrifice to God, we're to present our lives to Him! Old Testament sacrifices were final. The animal was slain. They never got the animal back. It was completely given to God! A living sacrifice on the other hand has the possibility of being taken back. Even if we intend to present our bodies in a final sense, at some time we'll take them back! Through certain circumstances or human desires we'll forget about the sacrifice and decide to displease God, to sin, and thus take our bodies back from God.

That's why it is so important to have this verse before us on a regular basis, to remind us of our commitment to the Lord. We may go for days without taking our bodies back, or we may go for minutes. The key is to recognize where our bodies are at all times and to continually present them to the Lord in every situation.

For example, if you are struggling with a test in school, you have the opportunity to present your body to the Lord or take it back. If our bodies are in the Lord's hands, it means our minds, our eyes, and the hand holding the pencil over the paper. It may be difficult to know the answer to a question on a test, but there's a bigger question before us at those times: the question of presenting ourselves to the Lord. Often the times we fail to present ourselves to the Lord are times we should have prepared, so as not to put ourselves in that predicament—like studying for the test.

As we return to the verse, notice that it isn't about how to get saved, it's a willing, faith response of the saved. It's different from salvation in that salvation is a one-time transaction—the moment you trust Christ, God permanently saves you and makes you His child. This is the response as God's child, offering ourselves to Him, to live for Him who died for us (2 Cor. 5:15).

Do you have this type of relationship with Christ? If not, you can begin by presenting yourself to Him. If you once did and failed, God's grace is sufficient to allow you back on track! Accept His perfect forgiveness (Col. 2:13). Turn to Him by faith, depending on Him for the ability to do His will (2 Cor. 5:7). That's merely taking God at His Word about your forgiveness and stepping out in faith in Him for the power to please Him.

## The Way to Sustain

Once we've begun the spiritual walk by presenting our bodies to the Lord, we may experience the same euphoria that a new believer experiences. Yet feelings don't last, so we can't depend on them! When good feelings don't last, we'll experience not so good feelings. So when they come, and they will, we need to be careful not to make the wrong choices. These not-so-good thoughts and feelings should be a trigger to cause us to turn to God rather than turn away from Him. The answer is still in God and His Word!

That is demonstrated by our position in Christ. No matter who we are, or how old we are, we all can be spiritually refreshed by remembering who we are in Christ and what He has provided for us. Bible scholars identify more than 30 things that identify us or that are ours the moment we believe. Each one is the work of God and not dependent upon our actions. While we may not make the sports team because of our lack of skill, we're on God's team because of His grace.

These are provided by God's rich grace. His grace is so rich that He can provide complete forgiveness. It would be an insult to God Himself to think that our forgiveness wasn't complete.

These are only a few things that are ours in Christ as His children that should bolster our confidence in God. So when we fail or find ourselves frustrated, we need to come back to the basics and be assured that God hasn't changed His relationship toward us. We may feel removed from Him, but He hasn't moved from us! His forgiveness is total. In fact, He forgave us even when He knew exactly how and when we would fail Him. Reminding ourselves of these basics should draw us to Him!

## Further Steps

Now let's get back to our context and consider Romans 12:2 in relation to sustaining our spiritual walk: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what **is** that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Many get sidetracked with the first part of the verse and demand some sort of performance to prove we are not conformed to the world. However, this verse not only commands us not to be conformed to the world, it gives the plan by which we won't be conformed. That's being transformed by the renewing of the mind. We need a new way of thinking! It's not the old way of trying not to conform, but the new way of allowing God to work in and through us with His power to conform us to Christ. This renewed mind can only come as we allow God's Word to impact our lives through the power of the Spirit. That's the faith response!

Before we make reading and studying God's word a rule for spirituality, remember our spiritual life is a relationship, and relationships aren't built around rules, but a desire to be together. Paul longed to know Christ in a very real and personal way and experience His power in his life (Phil. 3:10), "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection...." Lists and rules are but a false substitute for a real relationship.

There's no list of things to do for instant spirituality. Relationships aren't built around lists of things to do, they're built around love. True spirituality is a response to God's love for us. That love was demonstrated on the Cross when Christ died for our salvation, and is the basis of our spiritual walk. Because God reached out to us in mercy, we're to respond in faith, presenting ourselves to Him and allowing His Word to renew and transform us so as not to conform to the world but to Him.



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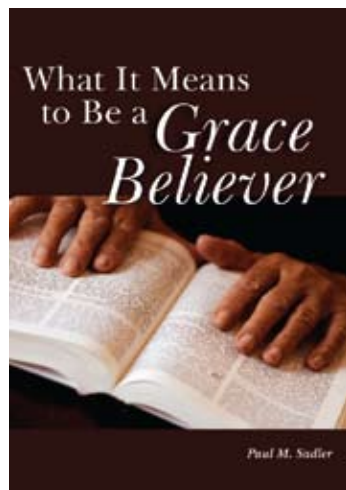
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Green Lake, Wisconsin

**Dates:** September 29-October 2, 2009

**Guest Speakers:**

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Joe Watkins, Dick Ware, Matthew Ritchey,  
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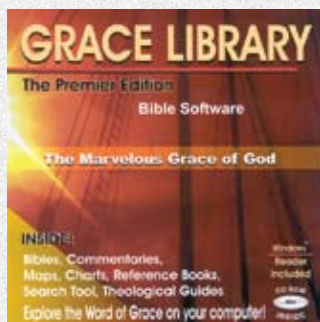
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Theme: True Spirituality



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Ashland, Ohio  
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*Guest speakers include: Pastor Ricky Kurth, Dr. Sam Vinton, Dr. Ed Bedore, Pastor Kevin Sadler, Pastor Roy Kelsey, Pastor Don Sommer, Dr. Tony Sistelos, among others*



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## BBS Letter Excerpts

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### From our Inbox:

"...that was my initial question when I came across your website. What are they talking about (rightly dividing the Word)? Anyway I have gone through some of the Bible study articles and I praise God for opening my mind on this truth."

### From Michigan:

"I would like two copies of *Things That Differ*. A friend loaned me that book and that is what got me on the right track."

### From our Inbox:

"You will never know what your letter did for me...I've been trying to study the Bible for over 20 years now. It has been virtually impossible for me to go it alone. I thank God that the *Berean Searchlight* and you in particular are here to finally give me some peace. I could never stay with a Bible study group for very long because I wouldn't get any answers to my questions."

### From Colorado:

"Really enjoy your monthly booklet. Rightly dividing makes the Bible come alive."

### From Florida:

"I've studied baptism closely and believe, like you brothers, that not only is it not essential, but it appears to have been laid aside just like blood sacrifices...You have challenged me to delve deeper and try to accept God's grace as what it is, and you've managed to make me look with a different eye at such things as the Great Commission. God bless your ministry."

### From Nigeria:

"It is a real celebration of God's glory, when one finds the truth from the pen of those that know the truth. My family and I have been readers of your magazine for a couple of years, and our lives have not been the same. We were born again in a Christian organization where grace is preached and law practiced, and it was when my son introduced your magazine to the family, that my eyes were opened through the writings of the apostle Paul. The Pauline epistles have meant so much to my family. Keep it up." (Grace is preached and law is practiced in many churches here too!—Ed).

### From Colorado:

"Your teachings in the *Searchlight* on 'Godliness' are such a blessing. I read them over and over as I apply them to my life."

### From Minnesota:

"Thank you for your ministry. I tried some of your tapes from the lending library and really enjoyed them."

### From Pennsylvania:

"It was your *Berean Bible Society* studies on tape that got me interested in prophecy to start with, and I really can't thank you enough for all the Bible knowledge I've learned from you."

### From Australia:

"I am up to date with my daily Bible reading plan. I have to admit that I struggled with the 4 gospels, mainly because they are all Kingdom gospel and I wanted to get into the Epistles of Paul as soon as possible. I have just finished Romans and got a lot out of it this time around. Just so vastly different when you read the Pauline Epistles, especially with an understanding of the difference between prophecy and the mystery." (We're delighted you are reading the Bible through from cover to cover. Even the kingdom gospel is "profitable" when *rightly divided*! [II Tim. 2:15; 3:16]—Ed).

### From Illinois:

"I'm very excited about this GUIG Sunday School program. I have been looking for a good resource for home Bible study/family devotional. It is nearly impossible to find teaching that rightly divides. Thank you very much for this resource."

### From Oregon:

"As I read your April 2009 letter a tear came to my eye, with a grateful thought. I feel privileged and blessed to be a part of rightly dividing the truth."

### From Alabama:

"Pastor Sadler was here at *Grey-stone Bible Church* in March and we thoroughly enjoyed his ministry with us...I now subscribe to the *Two Minute Devotional* because of his visit!"

### From Ohio:

"I was so blessed and privileged to attend the two Sunday morning services you did at *First Grace Gospel Church* in Ashtabula, Ohio today, Pastor Sadler. Hearing you preach was so amazingly refreshing, and filled my heart up completely...You have encouraged, challenged, and empowered me. Praise God for you and your ministry."

### From Cameroon:

"While waiting for my maiden issue of the *Berean Searchlight*, I wish to once again say thank you."

### From Georgia:

"The importance of understanding 'one faith' in the believers' 'inner man' has been woven into a number of messages in the *Searchlight*. I appreciate your focus toward this aspect."

### From Canada:

"Please accept the enclosed donation for the *Berean Searchlight*. I am re-reading all of my Berean books (Pastor Stam, etc.) also the little *Searchlights* of the past. They never grow old." (The magazines grow old, but the truth within does not.—Ed).

### From Texas:

"I lift your work up in prayer every day. I know your message of grace blesses others as it has me... Wouldn't Pastor Stam be excited about the many new ways you get the message out?"



"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's Fall Semester Begins *This Month!*

Classes resume at *Berean Bible Institute* on August 24th, presenting yet another opportunity for you to train for a lifetime of service for the Lord Jesus Christ. As the unemployment rate rises, more and more people are wondering what to do with their lives, including many grace believers. If this includes *you*, may we suggest that you consider preparing for the noblest of all callings, the work of the ministry.

As of this month, some of our BBI courses will be available by extension for the very first time, with more correspondence courses becoming available as time goes by. However, this valuable opportunity is primarily intended for those who cannot relocate to attend BBI in person, but wish to be trained for service in their local grace church. For those who have no local grace church, your desire for full-time Christian service is going to require you to relocate. Why not begin by relocating to *Berean Bible Institute*, where you will receive the instruction you long for alongside others who are longing for the same. Together you can train to make a difference in the world for the Lord Jesus Christ, for time and for eternity.

**Fall Semester begins August 24, 2009!**

For more information about **BBI**, please contact Dr. W. Edward Bedore at: **Berean Bible Institute**, 116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086-0587, phone: (262) 644-5504, fax: (262) 644-5507, e-mail: [bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org](mailto:bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org), web address: [www.bereanbibleinstitute.org](http://www.bereanbibleinstitute.org).





## Paul Beseeches the Church (Part 7)

### II Corinthians 2:5-8

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.

Executive Director, *Berean Bible Institute*

In this passage, Paul is referring back to a grievous situation in the Corinthian Church that he had dealt with in his last letter to them. It seems a man in the Church was having an open and continuing incestuous affair with his stepmother (I Cor. 5:1). Paul had rebuked them because of their tolerance of such ungodly behavior within the Church and directed them to discipline this man by putting him out of the church if he did not repent (I Cor. 5:2-5). Explaining how allowing this sin to persist would corrupt the entire church (I Cor. 5:6-8), the Apostle reminded them he had written to them before about not keeping company with professed believers who embrace ungodly life styles (I Cor. 5:9-11).

In response to Paul's letter, the Corinthians had indeed put this man out of the Church. He had responded by renouncing his sinful behavior and turning from it. He desired to rejoin the fellowship, but the Church had gone to the other extreme and would not allow it. So, Paul points out that the disciplinary action taken had produced the desired effect, which was to bring the man to repentance. This being the case, he tells them they needed to forgive him and restore him to fellowship, lest he be overwhelmed with sorrow (II Cor. 2:6-7).

They had missed the point of what Paul asked them to do in regards to this man. Failing to understand that the main purpose was to restore him

to fellowship within the local body of believers led them to reject him as a person. The idea was to separate from him in order to help him understand that both his attitude and lifestyle were sinful and that there were consequences for them. The goal of administering this discipline was not to tear down and destroy, but to edify and restore. Therefore, as this man had turned from his sinful ways and was sorrowful over his poor testimony as a believer, and the harm he had done to the local church, they were to reaffirm their loving care for him (II Cor. 2:6-8).

Three other important matters were highlighted by Paul concerning this matter. "*That I might know the proof of you*" (II Cor. 2:9). Carrying this out would demonstrate that the Corinthians had the maturity to properly deal with sin in the church. *Whom you forgive, I forgive*" (II Cor. 2:10). Paul recognized the authority of the local church to deal with such issues by saying he would abide by their decision. "*Lest Satan should get an advantage*" (II Cor. 2:11). If this kind of sin within the church was not properly dealt with, the enemy could use it to destroy its ministry and dishonor the Gospel Message of Jesus Christ.

These lessons about administering grace within the local church in difficult situations are as important to the Body of Christ today as they were when Paul wrote them. Let us be mindful of them.

# News and Announcements

**Fond Farewell:** This month we here at *Berean Bible Society* say a reluctant good-bye to Jim Tollar, who has served faithfully as our business manager for the past year and a half. Jim and his wife Missy were recently accepted as missionaries with *Things To Come Mission*, and will now begin their deputation work in preparation for their departure to Kenya late next year. If you would like to have them come and present their ministry in your church, you can arrange it by contacting TCM director Ben Anderson at [tcm@tcmusa.org](mailto:tcm@tcmusa.org), or Jim and Missy at [jimmissysam@hotmail.com](mailto:jimmissysam@hotmail.com).

**Kentucky Conference:** Pastor Floyd Frank and the saints at *Grace Memorial Chapel* of Leitchfield have extended an invitation to Pastor Ricky Kurth to hold special meetings at their church on September 12,13. Now they would like to extend a cordial invitation to all our *Searchlight* readers to join them for a blessed time of feasting on the riches of God's grace, and fellowship around His Word. To learn more, contact Pastor Frank at [Floydfrank@windstream.net](mailto:Floydfrank@windstream.net).

**Dakota Bible Institute Graduation:** This past May, four South Dakota students saw all of their hard work come to fruition, as they completed the requirements for graduation. Director Joel Finck reports that three of the graduates intend to remain involved in the ministry at DBI and *Grace Bible Church* of Tabor, while one will return back to his home church in Wisconsin. For more information about *Dakota Bible Institute*, contact Pastor Finck at [joelfinck@parsonspublishingcompany.com](mailto:joelfinck@parsonspublishingcompany.com).

**New Bible Study:** Our good friend Don Anderson has contacted us to let us know of a Bible study meeting at the Senior Center in Logansport, Indiana, located at 115 S. 6th Street. They are currently studying the book of Ephesians with the help of DVDs from Les Feldick, and enjoying good discussions and fellowship around the Word. Rides to and from this study are available through the Senior Center, who have also been advertising this meeting in the local newspaper. For more information, give Don a call at (574) 889-2465.



Pastor Brent and Saundra Biller of Ridgeley, WV took this photo on the Isle of Cyprus at the ancient capital of Paphos, where the Apostle Paul converted the Gentile Roman governor Sergius Paulus. From this port, Paul sailed on to Perga and the Roman province of Galatia.

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Pastor Jim Kirkwood

**“Being justified freely by His grace” (Rom. 3:24).**

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