

The **BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

March 2014



Feature Article

A Mysterious Stranger, by Paul M. Sadler.....5

Articles

How to Live in the Last Days, by Ricky Kurth13

A Puzzling Prayer, by Ricky Kurth19

An Example in Forgiving, by John Fredericksen23

Departments

2014 BBS Conference Schedule4

Question Box.....18

Our Next Editor.....22

News and Announcements30

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* the Christian life, and to *encourage* the local church.

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From the Editor to You

Dear Friends in Christ,

I'd like to introduce you to some new friends of mine! They are the members of the *Juana Diaz Bible Church* in Puerto Rico. Back in January, they were my gracious hosts as I ministered God's rightly divided Word in their midst.

This historic grace church was the fruit of the ministry of Radio Station WCGB, a missionary effort founded by *Grace Mission* in 1967 under the leadership of Maurice Hammond. The radio ministry has been faithfully maintained all this time by my new friend Lawrence Trumbower, but upon the passing of Brother Hammond, the future of the church seemed unsure. That is, until several men in the church stepped up and dedicated their lives to the continuation of the ministry. Of these men, Julio Ortiz pastored the church for many years, and still serves as the official greeter after handing the reins to his son Miguel, a man whose friendship and partnership in the ministry I now treasure.

Speaking through a translator was a new experience for me, but Pastor Ortiz, his daughter Angela, and long-time church member Celeste Siino made it easy to teach this old dog a new trick. I didn't get to hear Pastor Michael preach, but the spiritual caliber of his people told me all that I needed to know about his commitment to the message that you and I hold dear. In addition, Celeste's husband Carlos Garcia taught an Adult Sunday School lesson that further assured me that Paul's gospel is being faithfully proclaimed in the commonwealth of Puerto Rico.



Lawrence Trumbower,
your Editor, and
Pastor Michael Ortiz

The day I left this official United States territory, I joined Pastor Ortiz in his Monday morning broadcast over WCGB. He wisely chose to focus on the unusual 6.5 earthquake we experienced the night before, using it to remind his listeners that life is "a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away," and together we called on unbelievers to prepare for eternity by trusting Christ.

I share all this with you to let you know that if you live on the island, there is a place you can go to be built up in the teachings of God's rightly divided Word. And if you live elsewhere, there is a place in the Caribbean you can visit where a pastor and a people are endeavoring to champion the cause of "the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery."



Yours in Christ,
Pastor Ricky Kurth

2014 BBS Conference Schedule



Puerto Rico Bible Conference

January 10-12, 2014, Juana Diaz, PR
Pastor Ricky Kurth—Contact:
Michael Ortiz at kidzon@yahoo.com

Inverness Bible Conference, March 1-2, Inverness, Florida
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: John Fredericksen (407) 952-0510

Arizona Bible Conference, March 21-23, Surprise, Arizona
Pastor Paul M. Sadler—Contact: Mark Dilley (623) 583-4186

Pennsylvania Bible Conference, April 26-27, Myerstown, PA
Pastor John Fredericksen, Pastor David Hobbs
Contact: William Schaeffer (717) 949-3020

Kentucky Bible Conference, May 2-4, Alpha, KY
Pastor Paul M. Sadler—Contact: Jeff Bertram (606) 348-3071

Southern Grace Youth Camp, June 8-12, Elberta, AL
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: William Lange (251) 401-1995

Berean Bible Fellowship Conference, June 14-19, Cedar Lake, IN
Pastors Paul M. Sadler, John Fredericksen, Ricky Kurth, and others!
Contact: BBF President David Brown (920) 693-3039

Bitely Bible Conference, August 1-3, Bitely, MI
Pastor Paul M. Sadler & others!—Contact: Ken Lyon (231) 745-9595

Northwest Regional Conference, August 29-30, Eugene, OR
Pastor Paul M. Sadler, Pastor John Fredericksen
Contact: Larry Rose (503) 873-6136

California Regional Conference, September 5-6, Calimesa, CA
Pastor Paul M. Sadler (pending), Pastor John Fredericksen
Contact: Paul Alloway (951) 849-8231

Grace Revival for Evangelism, October 10-12, Cumberland, MD
Pastor Paul M. Sadler, Evangelist Lee Homoki
Pastor Joel McGarvey, Pastor Matthew Ritchey, and others!
Contact: Jan Bultema (888) 220-3618

Central Indiana Regional Conference, November 1, Middlebury, IN
Pastor Kevin Sadler, Pastor Joel McGarvey
Contact: Luke Hunt (260) 774-9300

Faith Bible Church Meetings, November 2, Steger, IL
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Ricky Kurth (414) 719-0548



The Mysterious Stranger

By Paul M. Sadler, D.D.

Road to Emmaus

A broken man sat in the ruins of his house that once bustled with activity. His sons and daughters, whom he loved so dearly, were all taken from him in a moment of time. The painful tragedy that brought so much sorrow was only multiplied when he realized all his possessions had also been taken from him. As he sat alone with his thoughts, he looked over the remains of what was once a happy home. Then he was prompted to ask the question:

“If a man dies, shall he live again?” (Job 14:14a).

The man, of course, was Job, and his question has been asked repeatedly down through the ages. When a man is faced with death or the loss of a loved one, his thoughts go naturally to the subject of life after death—is there life beyond the grave?

The story is told of a man who was terrified of death and prayed for help. Soon after he prayed, he saw a little boy who was about to

enter a cemetery. He stopped the young boy and asked, “Must you go in there?” “Oh,” replied the little one, “I’m just passing through, I live on the other side.”

Only the child of God can look to the future with the full assurance that when he leaves this life, he will pass through to the other side to be with the Lord. But while this is comforting to know, we must understand that this state is an incomplete state. Our ultimate hope is to receive our glorified, resurrected body when the Lord returns for the Church, which is His Body. Two thousand years ago there was a body that lay in a cold, dark tomb; but, thankfully, the chains of death could not hold Him in the grave. On the third day after His death, Christ rose from the dead forevermore, which is the seal and guarantee of our future resurrection.

One of the many infallible or undeniable proofs of Christ’s resurrection was His appearances to

His own *on the day* He rose from the dead. The Lord appeared to the women in the early morning (Matt. 28:1-10), then to Simon Peter later that morning (Luke 24:34; I Cor. 15:5), followed by the two brethren on the road to Emmaus in the afternoon (Luke 24:13-16), and finally to the eleven apostles in the evening while they assembled in the upper room (Luke 24:33; John 20:19,20). “Eleven apostles” is a collective designation in Luke’s Gospel similar to a board of directors. It does not necessarily mean that all the apostles were present; in fact, we know that Peter and Thomas were absent on the evening of His resurrection (Luke 24:34; I Cor. 15:5; John 20:24).

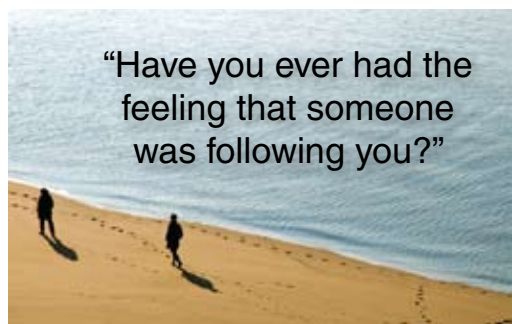
But exactly who was the mysterious stranger who engaged the two on the road to Emmaus when he inquired about the nature of their conversation?

THE IDENTITY OF THE STRANGER CONCEALED

“And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden [i.e., from recognizing Him] that they should not know Him” (Luke 24:13-16).

Christ was the mysterious Stranger who unexpectedly appeared to the two weary travelers on the road to Emmaus, and He did so with a specific purpose in mind. Luke is the only writer of

the four Gospels who gives us a glimpse of the Lord’s interaction with these two followers of the Messiah. Of all the appearances of our Lord during His post-resurrection ministry, this is by far the most touching appearance. This



particular account is indispensable for two reasons: First, it validates the fact of the resurrection of Christ beyond a shadow of a doubt, that is, if you believe the Bible is the Word of God. Second, it gives a description of some of the characteristics of our Lord’s resurrection body, which is important because our bodies will be fashioned like His glorious body (Phil. 3:21).

The “two of them” that Luke speaks of here were two disciples of the Lord. They were part of the group called “all the rest” (Luke 24:9) whom the women had told the tomb was empty, but were not numbered with the eleven apostles of the Kingdom (v. 33). We know that one of the two travelers on the road to Emmaus was Cleopas (v. 18), but his companion in travel is left unnamed. In all probability, it was Luke, who intentionally omitted his name out of humility. Being a physician, he would naturally be given to detail, which is certainly true of this narrative. Clearly, Luke

wrote the account as if he had a firsthand knowledge of the events. With this in mind, we will refer to him by name as the companion of Cleopas, but we would encourage you to be a Berean.

Luke was a faithful follower of Christ, as the gospel that bears his name substantiates. He and Cleopas would have been in Jerusalem at the time to observe the Passover, giving them a front row seat to all the events surrounding the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. With their minds still spinning from learning that Christ's body was missing from the tomb, they departed from Jerusalem to make their way to the town of Emmaus where they apparently were living at the time. The distance between Jerusalem and Emmaus was about seven miles, which would have given them plenty of time to discuss the matter at length. In fact, the sense of the original is that they were going back and forth like a tennis ball during a tennis match.



Have you ever had the feeling that someone was following you? Sure enough when you turned around, to your surprise, someone was behind you who simply wanted to ask you a question. It can be unnerving. Well, that is precisely what happened to these

two disciples of Christ. They were in deep thought as they discussed what could have possibly happened to the body of the Lord, only to look up and realize a Stranger was walking along with them.

“But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. And He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?” (Luke 24:16,17).

As Cleopas and Luke leisurely made their way to Emmaus, it was undoubtedly a bright, sunny spring afternoon with the aroma of flowers in the air, typical of the resurrection. When they realized that a Stranger had drawn alongside of them they stopped for a moment to greet him, but they did not recognize the Stranger, for two reasons. Mark gives us one of the reasons, “After that He appeared in *another form* unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country” (Mark 16:12). The Lord had purposely altered His appearance giving Him an opportunity to teach them an important lesson. This passage also demonstrates the versatility of the resurrected body, that it can change form at will to accomplish a divine purpose.

The other reason these disciples did not recognize the Lord was due to their *unbelief*. They had already convinced themselves that any hope that Christ was the Messiah essentially died the day He was crucified. They were standing in His very presence but didn't realize it.

Let me illustrate, from time to time, I'll look for something in our pantry only to discover that

it isn't where I thought it would be. Before I ask my wife where it is, I carefully scan the shelves to make sure I didn't miss it because I know what she's going to say, "It's in there." After I am fully convinced it's not there, I tell her that she must have put it in one of the other cabinets. The words are no sooner out of my mouth when she steps over to point it out to me. Of course, it was right *in front* of me, I looked right past it. Unbelievable! The disciples essentially did the same thing, they failed even to entertain the thought that Christ could have actually risen from the dead and could be the Stranger standing in front of them.

The Lord then inquired of the two as to the nature of the matter that He overheard them discussing with such passion, and why they seemed so sad. Cleopas answered Him with a question, "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" (Luke 24:18). Today



we'd probably say, "Where in the world have you been?" It would be like someone in New York City asking us on the afternoon of 9/11, "What is everyone frantically talking about?" The Lord then asked

Cleopas, "What things?" While the Lord already knew the answer, He was merely setting the stage to explain the significance of the events of the day that they had overlooked.

"And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (Luke 24:19).

Please note that both Cleopas and Luke were so taken with all that had transpired they were eager to share with the Stranger what was on their heart. They began by giving him a brief synopsis of Christ's early ministry, introducing Him as Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet that performed miracles and wonders, being mighty in word and deed. Having followed Him for three plus years, they had personally witnessed these things.

They then quickly transition to all the events of the past week showing how something had gone horribly wrong—the chief priest and rulers had Him crucified. The next statement shows us why they were so distraught, "But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel" (v. 21). They were convinced that He was the long-promised Messiah, but now their hope had been dashed. The crucifixion had put an end to it. But if this wasn't bad enough, they went on to add how the women of their number had told them an amazing tale of seeing no body and "a vision of angels, which said that He was alive" (Luke 24:23). Upon hearing this, certain of the apostles (Peter and John) immediately had gone to the tomb, but had found it empty. By

then the lie of the soldiers, that the disciples had stolen the body while they slept, had swept through Jerusalem like a swarm of locusts (Matt. 28:11-15). In essence, these two servants of the Lord didn't know what to believe.

THE STRANGER'S INSIGHT

“Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:25-27).

Notice that in the resurrection we retain our memory. We will remember (sin excluded) our relationships in life, and even recall places, events, and experiences we had during our earthly pilgrimage. This was certainly true of our Lord as this passage and others confirm. Since these two brethren were two of His own that He knew personally, the Master didn't waste any time addressing the problem of the empty tomb, unlike us who often dwell on our problems. He is the believer's Counselor and Guide who has the solution to every problem we will ever face in this life.

The Lord began by saying, “O fools,” that is to say, “O simple ones.” This was intended as a *rebuttal* since the term “fools” has a negative connotation in the original. They were like little children who failed to understand and believe the clear teaching of the Scriptures. Thankfully, we have never been guilty of this—or have we?

Everything these two disciples recounted to the Stranger was *not* contrary to what was taught in the Word of God. The prophets had foretold His sufferings and death (Psa. 22:1-18; Isa. 53:4-7), His burial (Isa. 53:9), and His resurrection (Psa. 2:7 cf. Acts 13:33; 22:22 cf. John 20:17). They even predicted the glory of the Kingdom to follow (Dan. 7:13,14). This is why the Lord asked them the question, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?”

Furthermore, the Lord had confirmed the words of the prophets when He was with them; and even though they didn't fully comprehend them at the time, they had now been fulfilled before their very eyes. They had everything they needed to connect all the dots to realize that Christ had risen from the dead, which, if they had thought it through, explained the empty tomb.

Beginning with Moses, the Lord took His disciples on a journey through the prophets pointing out along the way all the Scripture passages that pertained to Him.

- He is the “prophet” Moses foretold would come.
- He is the One David spoke of Who was “fairer than the children of men.”
- He is the “Prince of Peace” referred to by Isaiah.
- He is the “Righteous Branch” of Jeremiah.
- He is the One Daniel identified as the “Son of Man,” the King of a Kingdom that will never be destroyed.
- He is the fulfillment of the “sign of Jonah,” who was three days

and three nights in the belly of the great fish.

- He is the “Sun of Righteousness” spoken of by the prophet Malachi.

The solution to the disciples’ dilemma was the Word of God. The Lord effectively used the Scriptures to resolve the problem so that the faith of these two weary travelers would have a firm foundation. The mark of a good counselor is his use of the Scriptures. It’s also allowing those being counseled to share what is on their hearts, as the Lord did. He listened and followed along closely to ascertain the nature of the problem, as we should. Once this was determined, He didn’t dance around the problem fearing that He might offend them, nor should we; but He addressed it *directly* from the Scriptures.

THE STRANGER REVEALED AND RECOGNIZED

“And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and He made as though He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them” (Luke 24:28,29).

When the three travelers neared the end of their journey, the Lord indicated that He was going to continue on, but the two disciples pleaded with Him to stay the evening and join them for dinner. His acceptance of their gracious invitation teaches us that the Lord never imposes His will upon us, whether in regard to salvation or our daily walk with Him. These two brethren were given to

hospitality, which is not merely an eastern custom; it is also a biblical principle. This passage is a good example of how they opened their home to strangers.

You will recall the three strangers who unexpectedly approached the tent of Abraham. He immediately went to greet them and invited them to join him for a meal. Bear in mind, he didn’t know any of these men, but he humbly washed their feet and had a calf killed while Sarah baked cakes (Gen. 18:1-8). Hospitality is essentially making a stranger a friend. This also carries over to the age of Grace; we too are to be given to hospitality (Rom. 12:13; I Tim. 3:2).

A pastor, who was concerned that this grace is vanishing from the Church today, visited ninety-five local assemblies to make his point. He was a stranger in their midst. Of the ninety-five churches, he was only invited to two homes, and both invitations came from the pastor and his wife. So the next time a couple visits your assembly, consider inviting them over for lunch. You may well find a life-long friend in Christ.

“And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?” (Luke 24:30-32).

When the Stranger and the disciples sat down to eat, the Lord took the bread and after offering thanks, broke it and served it to

the disciples. The moment He did so, their eyes were opened and they knew it was the Lord. Like Thomas after them, they undoubtedly saw the nail prints in His hands, and knew it was the Redeemer who had indeed risen from the dead. The instant they realized who He was, the Lord vanished from their sight, demonstrating that the resurrected body is not subject to the normal order of things.



“Hospitality is essentially making a stranger a friend.”

As amazing as that experience was, and it was remarkable beyond words, what left a lasting impression on the disciples was the Lord’s instruction of the Scriptures on the road home—“Did not our heart burn within us.” Their faith now rested on the Word of God. It, not experience, was the channel through which their eyes were opened to the Truth. Always remember and remember well, experience is an uncertain guide; most times it will leave you with false hopes when it comes to spiritual things.

“And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered

together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how He was known of them in breaking of bread” (Luke 24:33-35).

Luke and Cleopas couldn’t keep the good news to themselves; they left immediately for Jerusalem to inform the brethren that they had seen the Lord. He was alive, just as the angel had said! In their excitement, they failed to take into account that the sun was setting and travel would become extremely hazardous. Despite being a two-hour journey back to Jerusalem, it probably took them less time since there was such a sense of urgency to relate all that had happened on the road to Emmaus.

Now late evening, Luke and Cleopas found the apostles who were hiding in fear, believing they were next to be crucified. They shared with them how the Lord had opened the Scriptures to them in the way, and revealed Himself to them while He was breaking bread. But the apostles, still skeptical, refused to believe it was true in spite of all the evidence otherwise (Mark 16:12-14).

Without warning, the Lord appeared in the room without opening the door. Those present were terrified, thinking they were in the presence of a spirit. After the Lord *rebuked* them for the hardness of their hearts and unbelief, He identified Himself, once again, by showing them the nail prints in His hands; and this time, He also showed them His feet. The Apostle John could confirm that they were the exact locations of

the wounds having watched the soldiers nail Him to the Cross (John 19:25,26).

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTED BODY

Luke's report of the appearance of Christ to the apostles on the night of His resurrection is very informative. What he witnessed gives us an eyewitness account of the nature of the Lord's resurrected body. As we noted earlier, this is of special interest to us, in that, when we are raised from the dead our bodies will appear like His glorious body (I Cor. 15:51-53; Phil. 3:21). Luke records for us the Lord's words that He spoke to the apostles that evening.


“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when He had thus spoken, he showed them His hands and His feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them” (Luke 24:39-43).

The following is a brief list of observations taken from these passages about the Lord's resurrected body:

- He could pass through solid objects, such as a wall.
- He had a visible form.
- His identity was preserved, they eventually all recognized Him.
- He spoke to them in a tone of voice they knew well.
- He had flesh and bone, but there was the *absence* of blood.
- He ate with them.
- He reasoned with them.
- He had a memory of things past.

“And He said unto them, These are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures” (Luke 24:44,45).

The Lord again turned to the Scriptures to confirm that He is the fulfillment of all those passages that spoke of Him in the Law of Moses, the prophets, and even the poetic book of Psalms. Notice that this spiritually eye-opening revelation was *limited* to the prophetic Scriptures. Nothing is said about the terms of salvation in relation to Paul's gospel, nor is there anything stated about the revelation of the Mystery. These truths were yet a secret soon to be revealed through the Apostle Paul's ministry (Rom. 16:25).

There are two things we should take away from the Lord's ministry to His own that we can apply to our own Christian life. Our faith must also be founded on the solid rock of God's Word, with an understanding of it rightly divided. This will keep us from being led astray by those who pervert the Gospel of Grace. This portion also reminds us of the importance of being excited about the things of the Lord, as the two on the road to Emmaus were. May the Lord rekindle our joy and enthusiasm that we experienced on the day we were saved to the praise of His glory. 



How to Live in the Last Days *of the* Dispensation of Grace

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

Last month we presented an article in which we pondered the question, “Are we living in the last days of the dispensation of grace?” We shared some thoughts about what Paul says about the last days in II Timothy 3:1-9, but left it up to you to decide if Paul’s description of the last days matches the days in which we live. With this article, we want to consider the words that Paul wrote to follow up his description of the last days, words that he used to instruct Timothy about how to live in the last days that he just finished describing.

Having warned Timothy about the false teachers that will resist the truth in the last days (3:6-9), you would think that Paul would go on to tell Timothy all about their false teachings in order to prepare him for the last days. Instead, he reminded his son in the faith, “thou hast fully known *my* doctrine” (v. 10). This is significant

in that we are often told that if you live among Mormons or Buddhists, etc., you have to study their teachings to be prepared to deal with them.¹ Similarly, many are convinced that the biggest threat to our faith in the last days will be the teachings of Islam, and that to prepare ourselves for the last days we must familiarize ourselves with Islamic teachings. Contrariwise, Paul tells Timothy that since he fully knew *Pauline* doctrine, he was fully prepared for the last days! Maybe you’ve been preparing for what many believe are the last days of America, storing up food, water, ammunition, and so on. May we suggest that it is infinitely more important that you prepare for the last days of the age of grace by *fully knowing Paul’s gospel*.

What Do You Know?

To be prepared for the last days, it is important to know Paul’s

“manner of life” (II Tim. 3:10), and Paul’s manner of life from his youth (Acts 26:4-5) was to be “*exceedingly zealous*” (Gal. 1:14). As an unbeliever, Paul lived his life *all out*, pedal to the metal, full speed ahead, pulling out all the stops *with no holding back*. And that’s the way he lived for the Lord after he got saved—and *so should you*. Paul says that “as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness...even so now yield your members servants to righteousness” (Rom. 6:19). How did you live for uncleanness when you were unsaved? *With all your might!* Even so, live that way now for the Lord! It’s the only way to live in the last days.

To further prepare for the last days, our text says that you’ll also need to know Paul’s “purpose” (3:10). Not surprisingly, Paul’s purpose in life was the same as the Lord’s purpose for this dispensation, that of making known the “eternal purpose” of the fellowship of the mystery (Eph. 3:9), God’s purpose for the heavens. Of course, this purpose was different than “the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth” (Isa. 14:26). Isaiah says that God’s purpose for the earth is to allow the Antichrist to conquer Israel, then defeat him and establish the kingdom of heaven on earth (vv. 24,25). God’s purpose for the heavens is to call out a people destined to rule and reign with Christ over the angels (I Cor. 6:3).

May we ask you a personal question? Is it your purpose in life to make this calling known as well? If not, you should know that “all things work together for good”

only “to them who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28). If you are called according to God’s purpose of making known the mystery, then God can make everything that happens in your life work toward *that* good, and if your purpose in life is the Lord’s purpose in life, then His good is your good too. If you are rather called according to the purpose of just having an easy life with no pains or troubles or struggles—how’s that working out for you? The verse doesn’t work that way, does it? Walking according to God’s purpose is the *only* way to live in the “perilous times” of the last days” (II Tim. 3:1).

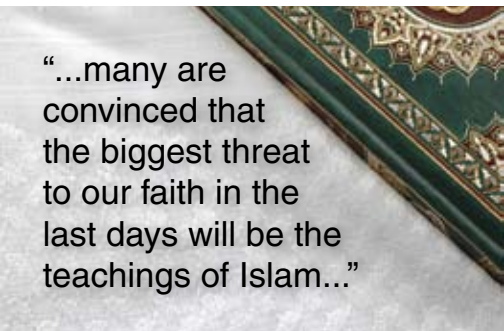
To prepare for the last days, you must also know Paul’s “faith” (3:10). This doesn’t refer to the faith in Christ that saved his soul, it refers to the faith that he *continued* to have despite the unbelievable amount of things that he endured (II Cor. 11:23-33),² things that usually *shake* people’s faith to the very foundation. When the adverse things that happened to Paul happen to most Christians, they lament, “Why is God allowing this to happen to me?” When *enough* of these adversities enter their lives, some get bitter and *lose* their faith.

How strong would your faith remain if, like Paul, you lost a trusted coworker and friend (Phile. 24; II Tim. 4:10)? How strong would your faith remain if, like Paul, two years of your life’s work suddenly *vanished* (Acts 19:6-10; II Tim. 1:15). Timothy had “fully known” that Paul’s faith stood *strong* amidst these trials, and you must know it too if *your*

faith is to remain strong in the trying times of the last days.

What Do You Show?

To survive and thrive in the last days, you'll also need to know Paul's "longsuffering" (v. 10). This word means to *suffer long* with the things men do to you without complaining or retaliating, as in Ephesians 4:2: "longsuffering, *forbearing one another*" (cf. Col. 3:12,13). Paul suffered long with the Jews who dogged the steps of his ministry in every city in which he ministered. Rather than retaliating, he *prayed* for them (Rom. 10:1). He suffered long with the government (Acts 16:37), but rather than retaliate, he taught believers to *obey* the powers that be (Rom. 13:1-6), and directed Timothy to *pray for them* (I Tim.



"...many are convinced that the biggest threat to our faith in the last days will be the teachings of Islam..."

2:1-3). If you are suffering long with members of your family, your friends, your boss, or your fellow members of the Body of Christ, are you complaining about them, retaliating, or praying for them? Being longsuffering is the only way to prove that you love them (I Cor. 13:4), and it is the only way to walk in the last days.

To fully prepare for the last days you must also fully know

Paul's "charity" (v. 10). Charity is more than love, it is *love in action*. You can love someone without doing anything for them if you don't know where they are, or are unable to help them. But you cannot be charitable to someone without helping them, for charity *by definition* is love in action. Paul showed his love for people in the same way the Lord did (Mark 6:34), by *teaching them God's Word*. Paul didn't start hospitals or orphanages to prove his charity, he planted *churches* that taught people God's rightly divided Word. We know that it's okay to start soup kitchens and go on medical missionary journeys, etc., since the Lord fed and healed people in addition to teaching them. But if you can only do one or the other, *do what Paul did* and love people enough to *teach them God's truth* in the perilous times of the last days.

Paul's "patience" (v. 10) is something else you'll need in the last days, as the Lord directs your heart "into the patient waiting for Christ" (II Thes. 3:5). Many of the Thessalonians got so excited when they heard that the Lord was coming that they impatiently quit their jobs, as did many followers of a popular radio preacher a few years ago when he erroneously predicted a date for the Rapture.

You must also be patient when sharing the grace message with others (II Tim. 2:24). You want people to see the truth right away, just like you did, right? Yeah, right! It's more likely that someone was patient with you; can't you be patient with others just like you?

Are You Sure You Want to Buy a Ticket on this Ride?

Of course, you won't be fully prepared for the last days until you know Paul's "persecutions" and "afflictions" (II Tim. 3:11). We don't have to guess what he meant by these words, for he tells us that these were things that he experienced "at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra." At Antioch, he was persecuted *with words* (Acts 13:45). At Iconium, those words elevated to an "*assault*" (14:5). By the time he got to Lystra, the assault escalated to *murder*, for this is where Paul was stoned to death (Acts 14:19), and God raised him from the dead after a trip to the third heaven (II Cor. 12:2-5). If you plan on remaining as faithful as Paul, you need to know that the level of opposition will continue to rise against you as well.



"...love people enough to teach them God's truth in the perilous...last days."

The question is, *what are you going to do about it?* Will you be able to say with Paul, "what persecutions I endured" (v. 11)? Before you answer, notice carefully what Paul *says* and *doesn't say* to Timothy. After saying of his persecutions, "out of them all the Lord delivered me" (v. 11), Paul warned

Timothy that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (v. 12). Hearing this, if I were Timothy, I'd say, "and the Lord will deliver me out of all of my persecutions too, right Paul?"

But he doesn't say that. And you know why. The transition from God's kingdom program for Israel to His plan for the Body of Christ was now over, and with it the time of miraculous deliverances and resurrections from the dead. Because of this, Paul could not promise Timothy the deliverances from which he himself benefited during his ministry.

Perhaps you are thinking, "Let me get this straight; I can expect all of the persecutions but none of the deliverances? I'm not sure I want an invitation to that party!" And you're right, this is indeed a threatening place to have to stand—but it is where you *need* to stand if you want to walk faithful to the Lord in the perilous times of the last days.

If you are thinking that the verse is not true, that you walk godly but don't suffer persecution, remember that one of the Bible definitions of persecution is "mocking" (Gal. 4:29 cf. Gen. 21:9). If you have ever been *mocked* for your faith, you've been persecuted. If you are thinking, "Ah, what's a little mocking?" may I say to you that *derision* is the most effective weapon in Satan's arsenal. "More effective than violent persecution?" you ask? *Infinitely so!* Violence doesn't *extinguish* Christianity, *it fans the flames*. When Pastor Stam's brother John and his wife were beheaded in China in 1934, hundreds of students at *Moody*

Bible Institute responded—not just by volunteering to take their place on the mission field, but begging to go to *the very village where they were murdered*.

Satan's Most Effective Weapon

Satan is smart enough to know that “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” He also knows that people are way more concerned with getting their feelings hurt than they are about dying. A well-known survey showed that the number one fear of most Americans was public speaking; number two was *death*. In other



words, people are more afraid of a little embarrassment than they are of dying! Satan knows this and makes sure you get mocked and embarrassed every time you open your mouth to speak for the Lord.

The question is, *are you going to let him win?* Or are you going to testify to God's grace anyway? It is what you have to do if you want to be faithful in the last days.

As Paul continues to instruct Timothy as to how to walk in the last days, he has some more bad news for the young man. He goes on to tell him that the “evil men

and seducers” he warned about earlier in this passage are going to “wax worse and worse” (II Tim. 3:13). In the face of such accelerating opposition, what was Timothy to do? And what are we to do, now that we are faced with the prospect of living in the last days? Paul didn't leave us wondering:

“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them” (v. 14).

When opposition to Paul's gospel continues to worsen as you continue in the faith, *continue anyway!* Isn't that what Paul did when the afflictions against him escalated? Hey, folks, Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra were *the first three stops* on Paul's *first* apostolic journey! You'd think that after the verbal opposition rose to the level of an assault he would have quit continuing! You'd think that after the assault morphed into murder that he would have quit continuing! But some guys just can't take a hint!

An Easy Solution

When my son Jesse was young, he would sometimes move his arm in a certain way and say, “Dad, it hurts when I do that.” You know what I told him, don't you? “Then don't do that!” It was tough being my son! But imagine being *Paul's* son in the faith. Paul says to Timothy, “They might *kill you* if you continue in my gospel, *but do it anyway!* Are you continuing in Paul's gospel despite escalating opposition? It's the only way to walk in the perilous times of the last days.

Of course, if you don't care for persecution, if you've had your fill of afflictions, there's a simple solution to your problem, one that reminds me of the solution to mosquito bites. Did you know that mosquitoes are attracted to the carbon dioxide in your breath? All you have to do to stop being afflicted by them is quit breathing! Similarly, all you have to do to stop the persecution from escalating in your life is to quit continuing in Paul's gospel. But it is our sincere hope that you find

continuing in Pauline truth to be as natural as breathing. And if it isn't, why not determine to make it so *right now*. You'll be eternally glad you did.



Endnotes

1. See the writer's article *What Do You Know?* in the February 2013 Searchlight.
2. It is obvious from these verses that Paul's life wasn't working out for his *personal* good (cf. Rom. 8:28), but for the good of God's purpose of making known the mystery. These things only worked out for *Paul's* good because He made God's purpose *his* purpose.

Question Box

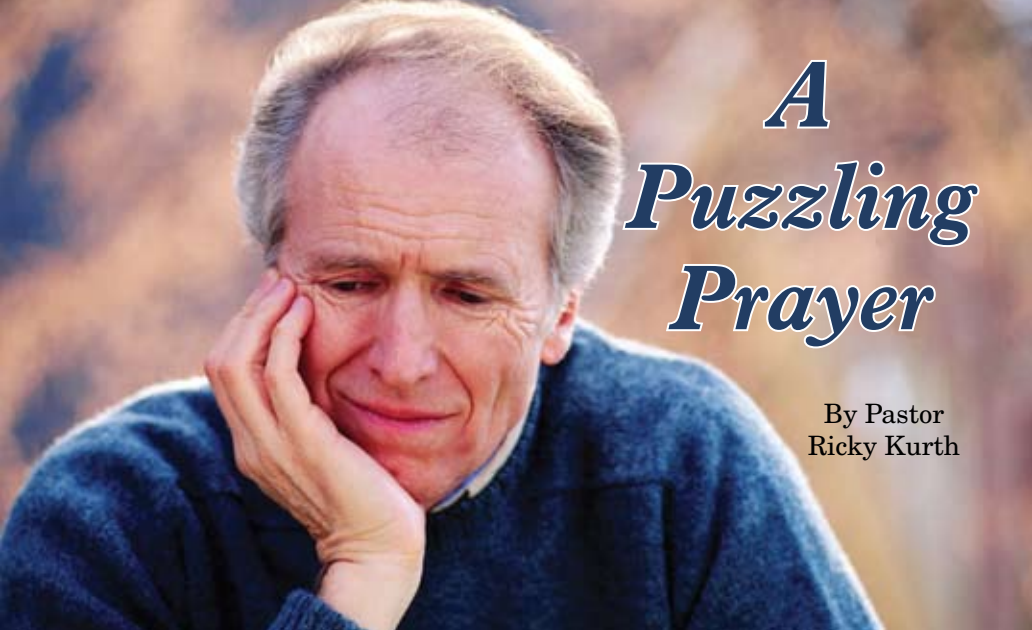
"Was Paul saved under the kingdom program?"

No, Paul was "a blasphemer" (I Tim. 1:13) who, as a strict, Law-abiding Pharisee (Acts 26:5), would never blaspheme the Father, but was among those who blasphemed the Spirit when they stoned Stephen (Acts 7:51-8:1). This rendered him ineligible for salvation under the kingdom program, for the Lord had warned, "him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost *it shall not be forgiven*" (Luke 12:10).

How then could God save Saul? Well, remember that the Lord had warned, "whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, *neither in this world, neither in the world to come*" (Matt. 12:32). The nation of Israel blasphemed the Spirit in the world that the Lord spoke of as "this world" when they rejected Stephen, a man filled with the Spirit (Acts 7:55). "The world to come" is defined in Hebrews 2:5 as the kingdom, the "world" which God will "put in subjection" under Christ, where people will fully know "the powers of the world to come" (Heb. 6:5) that they only tasted at Pentecost.

Since blasphemy against the Spirit was unforgivable in both those worlds, we know Saul was saved under the program of a whole *new* world, the dispensation of grace, "this world" in which we live (Eph. 1:21), "this present world" in which we are to walk and please God (Titus 2:12).

—Pastor Kurth



A Puzzling Prayer

By Pastor
Ricky Kurth

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thes. 5:23).

Paul’s prayer here that God might sanctify the Thessalonians “wholly” was already *partially* fulfilled even as he was praying it. The Thessalonians, like all members of “the Church, which is His Body” were already sanctified in spirit, for they were “sanctified *in Christ Jesus*” (I Cor. 1:2). The word “sanctified” just means to be *set apart unto God* (Ex. 13:2 cf. 13:12) and this is something that happens to everyone who trusts in Christ *the moment they get saved*. People cannot save or sanctify themselves by good works, of course; but our apostle Paul declares that, for believers, Christ “is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and *sanctification*” (I Cor. 1:30).

However, as Paul goes on to say, our sanctification is something that needs to be “preserved” in our spirit, soul, and body. This suggests that sanctification might be something that we could lose if we live in sin. We know that such is not the case, however, since Paul could write to even the carnal Corinthians and tell them: “*ye are sanctified*” (I Cor. 6:11). Obviously, their carnal behavior did not affect the preservation of their sanctification in the slightest.

This is because sanctification is like salvation itself; people don’t *get* saved by their works, and they don’t *preserve* their salvation by their works either. In the same way, people don’t *get* set apart unto God by their works, and they don’t *preserve* their sanctification by their works either. Both our salvation and our sanctification depend not on what *we* do, but on what *Christ* did on Calvary’s cross, where “by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb. 10:14).

The Puzzling Questions

But if this is so, why does Paul need to lift his voice to heaven and say, “I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”? If our sins cannot negate our blameless sanctification, and nothing else can separate us from being set apart unto Him (Rom. 8:35-39), why does Paul have to pray this prayer?

We need look no further than the very next verse to find the answer to this puzzling petition. As is always the case when interpreting Scripture, context is king! How wonderful then, after hearing Paul pray that we might be preserved blameless to the coming of the Lord, to read the assurance that he gives us about this in the very next verse:

“Faithful is He that calleth you, *who also will do it*” (I Thes. 5:24).

Here we see that the preservation of our sanctification doesn’t depend on *our* faithfulness, it depends on the faithfulness of “He who calleth you.” If you are wondering who called you, elsewhere Paul declares that “God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (I Cor. 1:9). That means that the preservation of our blameless sanctification depends on *God*, “who also will do it.” We can’t do it, we’re not faithful enough; but “faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.”

But this raises yet another question. If Paul knows that God will preserve our blameless sanctification all the way to the Rapture, why does he make it a matter of prayer in the preceding verse? That is, why would he pray for something that he assures us is a sure thing?

The Biblical Answer

We believe that what we have here is an example of how we should pray today in the dispensation of grace. You see, Paul was praying *in accord with the revealed will of God*. It was God’s expressly revealed will that we would be preserved blameless to the Lord’s coming, and so that is the thing for which Paul prayed. While this may sound strange at first, this is always how men of God prayed throughout the Scriptures. For example,

“Elias...prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

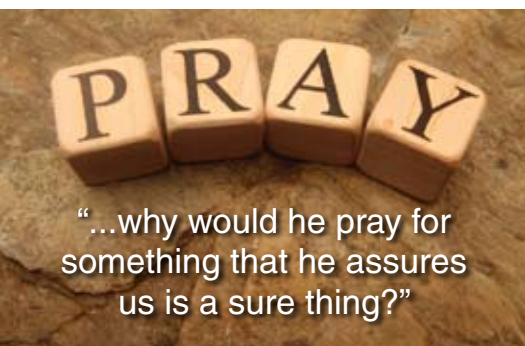
“And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit” (James 5:17,18).

On the surface here, it appeared that God answered Elijah’s prayers because he was a righteous man, for “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,” as James declared just a moment before giving us this example (v. 16). It would seem from this that God rewarded him for his personal righteousness by answering his prayer. However, as we dig a little deeper, we see that Elijah’s righteousness,

in and of itself, was not the reason God answered his prayers. It was rather because, being a righteous man, he prayed in accord with the revealed will of God. You see, in the Law, the contract that Elijah's nation had made with God, He made this stipulation:

“...if ye will not hearken unto Me....I also will do this unto you....I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass: And...your land shall not yield her increase” (Lev. 26:14-20).

If you are wondering what God meant when He threatened to make their heaven as iron and their earth as brass, the meaning of this idiom is readily understood by the words that follow. When the heaven is made as iron and the earth as brass, the land cannot bear any crops. Obviously, the Lord is warning them that if they disobeyed Him, He would make the heaven as iron *by withholding the rain* in Israel, which in turn would make the earth as hard as brass, rendering agriculture impossible.



Well, if you know your Bible, you know that in Elijah's day, the people of Israel were living in sin and rebellion against God, led by King Ahab, who “did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him” (I Kings 16:33). That's not something that you want to see on the resume of the king of God's people! It is because of this rejection of

God's commandments that Elijah could confidently announce that “there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word” (I Kings 17:1). You see, he knew that God would answer his prayer, for he was praying in accord with the revealed will of God.

After three years of drought had softened the spiritually hardened hearts of the people of Israel, the nation was brought to its knees by the mighty contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, which proved that Jehovah was God and Baal was not (I Kings 18:25-40). Once the nation had been brought back to God, the prophet confidently prayed for God to relent, after which “Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; *for there is a sound of abundance of rain*” (v. 41). Once the nation was again rendered obedient to God, He was free to answer Elijah's prayer to restore rain to their parched land.

In both of his prayers, Elijah was praying according to the revealed will of God—as was Paul in our text. Paul knew that God had *promised* to preserve us blameless to the coming of the Lord, and so he *prayed* that we'd be preserved blameless to the coming of the Lord! He prayed according to the revealed will of God.

A Dispensational Warning

Of course, there's something you should know about praying in accord with God's revealed will.

If you are praying, "I paid my tithes, so now I can confidently expect that God will bless me," you are praying in accord with the will of God, but you are praying in accord with the will of God that He revealed *to Israel* (Mal. 3:10), and not in accord with the will that He revealed to us through the Apostle Paul. If you are praying and expecting to receive everything you ask for in prayer, you are again praying in accord with the will of God that was revealed to Israel (Matt. 21:22), for at the time the Lord made that promise, He was "a minister of the circumcision" (Rom. 15:8). If you quit your job and are praying and asking God to provide you with things like food and clothing, you are praying in accord with the will of God that was revealed to Israel (Matt. 6:31-33), and not according to the will of God that He revealed through Paul to us.

Do you see how important it is to pray—not just according to the will of God, but according to the will of God *rightly divided*, in accord with God's will for you as a Gentile living in the dispensation of grace? Imagine the disappointment of unanswered prayer that could be avoided, imagine the bitterness and sorrow of heart that could be evaded, if *all* of God's people would learn to pray in accord with the will of God revealed to us through the Apostle Paul. Let's get busy and get this soul-restoring solution to the problem of unanswered prayer out to others!



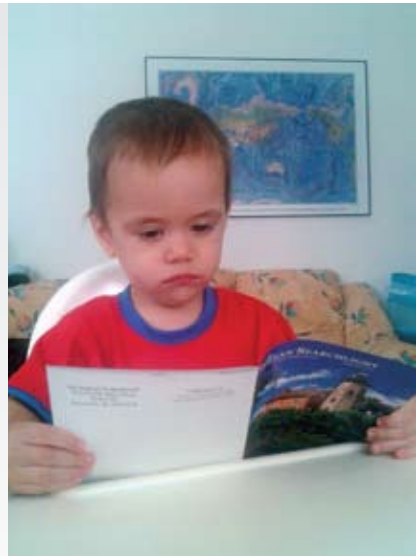
Our Next Editor

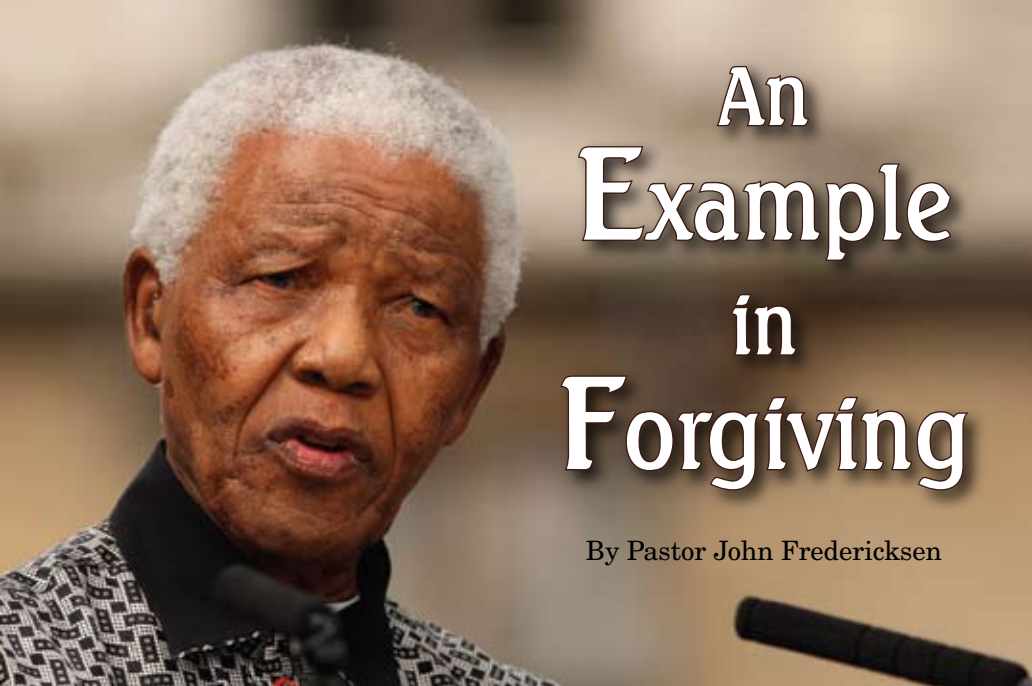
Imagine our delight when not long ago we opened an email from two of our readers to find this darling picture of their young son engrossed in the pages of the *Berean Searchlight*. We can almost hear him thinking, "I agree, anyone can see that the Body of Christ began in Acts 9!"

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Prov. 8:17).

"O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works" (Psa. 71:17).

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 3:15).





An Example in Forgiving

By Pastor John Fredericksen


Recently, the news of the death of South Africa's Nelson Mandela dominated all newscasts. He was heralded as one of the greatest men of our day. People equated him to Martin Luther King Jr., Gandhi, and Mother Teresa, "all rolled into one." His acclaim originated over his stand against racial injustices and inequalities in a country predominately ruled by whites. He spent 27 years in prison for his protests and alleged crimes, even refusing a release that was offered to him on the condition of renouncing his calls to revolution. Once released, he did not seek any revenge against those who had him incarcerated. Instead he preached forgiveness and healing. Eventually, Nelson Mandela rose to the highest office in his country, and at his funeral presidents, kings, prime ministers, and celebrities from all around the world came to honor him at a memorial service.

While witnessing all this worldwide news coverage for days, and hearing the constant acclaim for this man, this writer could not help thinking: "I know a far greater man who gave forgiveness to many and preached the good news of forgiveness." Do you know this man? It was the God-man, God in the flesh, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Savior came to Israel with the offer of the Gospel of the Kingdom, therein offering the forgiveness of sins. He taught His followers to pray to the Father for forgiveness (on the condition they must forgive others [Matt. 6:12-15]). When He healed a man sick with palsy he stated: "Son...thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matt. 9:2), and He taught Peter the necessity to forgive one who came asking forgiveness and to do so as many times as the one asking was sincere (Matt. 18:21-35).

Actually, the Lord Jesus Christ came offering divine forgiveness to all of Israel. Peter told his fellow Jews that Christ was now exalted to the right hand of God the Father in heaven “to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). This was the message of our Lord throughout His earthly ministry. He told His disciples He had come “to seek and to save them that are lost.”

Once Israel was set aside and the Apostle Paul was raised up by the Lord to minister to Gentiles, the message of forgiveness remained the focal point. The risen Savior explained Paul’s mission was to go to all the world, “to open their (sinners) eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive the forgiveness of sins” (Acts 26:18). This would be done by pointing Jew and Gentile, man and woman, young and old, to personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their only hope for eternal life.

The Savior was the greatest example of forgiveness. Even after His enemies had Him falsely imprisoned, beaten, and crucified, He asked His Heavenly Father from the cross to “...forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). We know He could have called ten thousand angels to command His release from prison or the cross, but He refused, that He might pay the sin debt of the world so that you and I could be forgiven. Colossians 2:13 tells us that every believer has forgiveness so complete that He has “forgiven you ALL trespasses.” This God-man, our Savior, is one most worthy of our love, respect, and dedication. Rejoice in Him. Exalt His name! 



What’s in your Treasure House?

The Persians kept the records of the executive orders issued by their kings “in the king’s treasure house” (Ezra 5:17), right alongside their riches of silver and gold (Ezra 7:20). Obviously, they considered the commandments of their king to be of equal value as their jewels and other treasures.

At the risk of sounding like a Capital One commercial, what’s in the treasure house of *your* heart? Can you say with the psalmist, “I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, *as much as in all riches?*” (Psa. 119:14)? Or have you matured in the faith to where you can honestly stand before God and say to Him, “I love Thy commandments *above* fine gold” (Psa. 119:127), “more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold” (Psa. 19:10). If not, it might be time for a prayerful reevaluation of the spiritual portfolio of your soul.

—Pastor Kurth

SANCTIFIED SERVICE

In Hezekiah's day, "the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently" (II Chron. 30:3), and "the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests" (II Chron. 29:34). Imagine that—men who wanted to serve the Lord, but who didn't want to sanctify themselves; that is, they didn't want to set themselves apart unto God (Ex. 13:2 cf. v. 12).

How about you? Are you long on wanting to serve the Lord but short on wanting to set yourself apart as holy unto Him? If so, you should know that "this is the will of God, even your sanctification" (I Thes. 4:3). The Lord gave Himself for the Church "that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word" (Eph. 5:25,26). Why not determine to *bury yourself* in God's Word, with the goal of learning how to be as pure as He died to make you *now*, in *this* life (Titus 2:14), and become "a vessel unto honour, *sanctified*, and meet for the Master's use" (II Tim. 2:21).
—Pastor Kurth



Arizona Bible Conference

Location: West Valley Grace Fellowship
12213 West Bell Road, Suite #211, Surprise, Arizona

Dates: March 21-23, 2014

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

For questions or additional information, please contact:
Pastor Mark Dilley at 623-583-4186 or email: jjdster@gmail.com or
Jim Humphrey at 623-466-7636 or email: jhumph783@gmail.com



BBS Letter Excerpts

From Florida:

"I gave myself to the Lord on November 13, 1991. From that time I have been studying the Bible and have run into a lot of different interpretations taught, but the best I have ever read is of Cornelius R. Stam."

From Arkansas:

"We love the *Searchlight*! We do not have a 'rightly divided' church located near us that we know of. The works of Paul Sadler and C. R. Stam are all we have to help us with the study of God's Word."

From Mississippi:

"My husband and I greatly enjoy reading the *Searchlight*. My husband in particular has recently discovered the gospel of grace and finds Paul Sadler's articles especially helpful."

From Oklahoma:

"After studying...Charles Welch and Stewart Allen, I have accepted the Acts 28 position. BBS helped me grow a number of years and for that I am thankful, but I must leave this ministry behind." (Please pray for this brother, to whom we sent a link to our MP3 messages contesting the Acts 28 position.—Ed).

From Wisconsin:

"Thank you for your informative and thought-provoking articles, especially in the December and January *Searchlights*. I will make sure to pass them on to others *after I re-read them!* Keep on keepin' on!"

From Pennsylvania:

"I can't thank God enough for having been introduced to BBS. Thanks for the *Searchlight* and the library which I am building with many BBS books. Thanks to Paul and Ricky for speaking and enriching us in the Bible conferences over the last years."

From North Carolina:

"I am 91 years young, but I remember reading (and highlighting) Pastor C. R. Stam's book *Things That Differ* 34 years ago. I am still studying daily in the sunshine of my bedroom, and weekly with a small group. Thank you for sending me the *Berean Searchlight*."

From our Inbox:

"I just read the conclusion of *The Spiritual Resurrection of a Nation*. Wow!! You have given me a new insight on how I should read the words of Christ. Thanks for helping me connect the dots of Scripture."

From Pennsylvania:

"I want to commend you on keeping the writings of Pastor J. C. O'Hair on your website. He was surely one of the greatest teachers of the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery. I know of no other source that does more than yourself to maintain his teachings. Incidentally, the recent article 'Ambassadors of Reconciliation' was wonderful!" (We are grateful to Pastor O'Hair's family for giving us permission to post his writings.—Ed).

LETTER EXCERPT EXTRA

After coming to know the grace message and then sharing it with your pastor, would you be willing to wait *sixteen years* in order to see him come to a knowledge of the truth? Not many would, but the following letter from this dear sister in Christ clearly demonstrates the importance of *patience* in sharing the truth with others.

“From my first read-through of the Bible as a newly-indwelt, churching, ‘baby’ Christian, I was troubled by the traditional division of Old and New Testaments. From *Genesis* to the middle of *Acts*, there was a comfortable theme and thread, resuming in *Hebrews* through *Revelation*. But this Saul/Paul fellow changed the tone and message dramatically. Yet when I called my preacher and asked how the Four Gospels could be grace when Jesus was still alive, he merely responded that some people think that may be true.

“Sixteen years later, that same man has begun a series that rightly divides the Word, though up until a couple of months ago he preached a completely different message. Perhaps my lone voice, continually asking him to whom Jesus was giving His message (and many other thoughts, too) helped him listen to the Holy Spirit. He is as excited as a newly-saved Christian, and I delight in his eagerness to share his discovery.

“Not only did I send him copies of *Two Minutes with the Bible* for years, as well as your website, I also refused to give up on him. He loves our Lord with such passion, and I feel blessed to have had, perhaps, some part in this change.

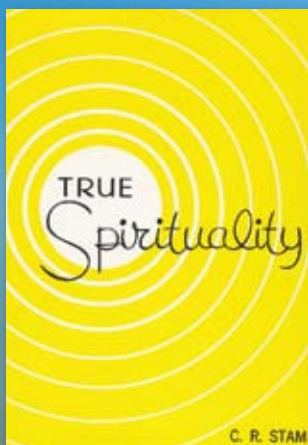
“Many people who protest over the importance of Paul may be found to be too steeped in traditional teaching to be able to truly think for themselves and ask for the assistance of, and listen to, the Holy Spirit. What they have heard all their lives in church *must* be true, just because of *where* it was taught in Scripture!

“Thank you for your daily encouragements to myself and others who have rightly divided the Word of truth.”

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient” (II Tim. 2:24).

Truly Spiritual Prayer

If *A Puzzling Prayer* (Page 19) left you
hungering to learn more about prayer...



True Spirituality

By Cornelius R. Stam

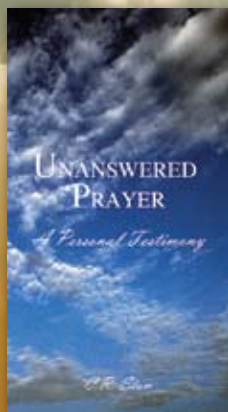
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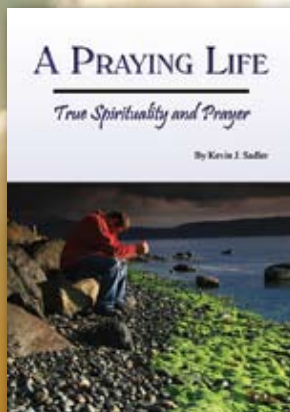


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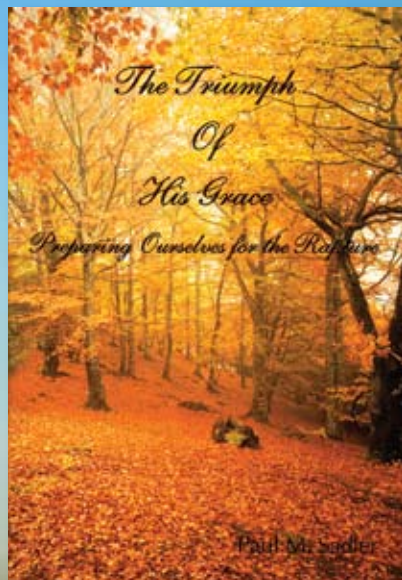


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Kentucky Bible Conference: Quick! Check your schedule and cancel all prior May 2-4 engagements! The saints of *Old Bethel Bible Church* want you to join them in welcoming BBS president Pastor Paul M. Sadler for a series of meetings packed with so many blessings that it would be selfish to keep these sessions to themselves! Just be sure to let Pastor Jeff Bertram know you are coming by giving him a call at (606) 348-3071.

Our Fellowship File: Here at BBS, people often write to ask if we will give them the names of others in their area who receive the *Searchlight*. While we respect the privacy of our readers too much to comply with such requests, we do maintain a file containing the names of readers who have given us their permission in advance to give out their names. If you would like us to give your name to people who might contact us from your area, why not write and ask to be included in the Fellowship File? It just might be the first step toward establishing a grace church in your neck of the woods.



The *Peggys Point Lighthouse* is located at Peggys Cove, Nova Scotia. Visitors should explore the granite outcrop around the light with care. Despite numerous signs warning of unpredictable surf (including one on a plaque on the lighthouse itself), several visitors each year are swept off the rocks by waves.

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