

The **BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

November 2014



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

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From the Editor to You

Dear Friends in Christ,

“The days of our years are threescore years and ten...so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” That was Moses’ advice, and it is as good a counsel today as it was back then, especially for busy pastors! Now that the days that I have left to number are fewer than when I was a young pastor, one of the ways I’ve learned to apply my heart to wisdom is by delegating authority. Let me share an example.

Over the years, our readers have submitted quite a few lighthouse photos for consideration to be featured on the cover of the *Searchlight*, and as the editor it is my job each month to select one. Rather than spreading all these photos out all over our conference room every month, we save time by selecting two years’ worth of covers at a time. I often ask Kevin Sadler for his input, of course, since he is trained in composition and layout work. But I also ask Vicki and Jessica Sadler for their recommendations, and not just because they work on that end of the building. Women just seem to have a natural eye for this kind of thing. So recently, when Kevin told me it was time to pick covers, and I was in the middle of writing an article, I just asked Jessica and Vicki to fill in for me, and they did so well that I think they earned themselves permanent positions as cover editors!

I share this simple story, especially for our pastors, because it is possible that you were brought up as I was. I was taught that if I had a job that needed to be done and I knew how to do it, I shouldn’t bother anyone else with it. That’s good advice when you are young, but if the number of your days is getting higher, you may want to consider delegating authority within your assembly whenever possible. It usually doesn’t take parents long to realize that time-consuming household chores is one of the reasons God invented children, but it sometimes takes diligent pastors longer to learn to avail themselves of the help of the people in their congregations who are usually more than eager to step up! At the church that I pastor, I was late to the party when it came to learning this valuable lesson, but it is better late than never!

In closing, if you are not a pastor, you might want to share this editorial with the overworked shepherd of your flock, along with your assurance that you’ll be more than happy to help him obey Paul’s twice-given admonition to be “redeeming the time.”



Yours in Christ,
Pastor Ricky Kurth



By Pastor
Ricky Kurth

Recently I saw a cartoon that featured a father and his son gazing at a broken lamp. In the caption, the father said to his son, "What do you mean it just happened? Didn't we discuss the laws of cause and effect?"

That got me to thinking about the difference between law and grace when it comes to cause and effect. Under the law, the Jews were told,

"Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live..." (Deut. 5:33).

This was the law in a nutshell. Under the law, God said, "keep My statutes, and My judgments: which if a man do, *he shall live*" (Lev. 18:5). We know that He meant they would live *eternally* if they kept His statutes, because when the Lord was asked what to do to inherit eternal life, He quoted Leviticus 18:5 (Luke 10:25,28). You see, under the law, men were saved by faith plus works, the specific works of observing the statutes and judgments of the law. That included being circumcised, keeping the Leviticus 23 feasts, bringing animal sacrifices, and so forth.

But while the law said "walk...that ye may live" (Deut. 5:33), grace presents a different cause and effect, as we can see from the words of Paul, the apostle of grace:

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25).

See the difference? Under the law, walking in God's statutes caused the effect of eternal life, but under grace, the eternal life that we are given by faith without works (Eph. 2:8,9) should cause the effect of walking in God's ways!

So how about it? Are you walking in the Spirit? Can it be said of you what Paul said to the Thessalonians?

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which *effectually* worketh also in you that believe" (I Thes. 2:13).

The words of men can come and go without having any effect in your life, but if you truly believe God when He says you have eternal life in the Spirit, why not determine to walk in the Spirit? You'll be eternally glad you did.



The Greatness of Paul's Smallness

By Paul M. Sadler, D.D.

“A truly humble man is hard to find, yet God delights to honor such selfless people. Booker T. Washington, the renowned black educator, was an outstanding example of this truth. Shortly after he took over the presidency of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, he was walking in an exclusive section of town when he was stopped by a wealthy white woman. Not knowing the famous Mr. Washington by sight, she asked if he would like to earn a few dollars by chopping wood for her. Because he had no pressing business at the moment, Professor Washington smiled, rolled up his sleeves, and proceeded to do the humble chore she had requested. When he was finished, he carried the logs into the house and stacked them by the fireplace. A little girl recognized him and later revealed his identity to the lady.

“The next morning the embarrassed woman went to see Mr. Washington in his office at the

Institute and apologized profusely. ‘It’s perfectly all right, Madam,’ he replied. ‘Occasionally I enjoy a little manual labor. Besides, it’s always a delight to do something for a friend.’ She shook his hand warmly and assured him that his meek and gracious attitude had endeared him and his work to her heart. Not long afterward she showed her admiration by persuading some wealthy acquaintances to join her in donating thousands of dollars to the Tuskegee Institute.”¹

EXAMPLES OF PRIDE AND HUMILITY

The Scriptures have much to say about *pride* and *humility*. Solomon didn’t mince words when he said of those who think too highly of themselves: “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18). One who would be the epitome of this was Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, who

ordered the slaughter of the innocents after the birth of Christ. During the reign of Agrippa, Tyre and Sidon fell out of favor with the king. Since the very existence of these two cities was dependent on Herod's commerce, they sought a reconciliation with him. In reply to their request, he summoned them to a festival that was to be held in honor of Caesar at Caesarea. When Herod arrived at the event in pomp and splendor, arrayed in his royal robes to give a public address (Acts 12:19-21), the Jewish historian, Josephus, recorded the occasion:

“On the second day of the spectacles he [Herod] put on a garment made wholly of silver, of a truly wonderful texture, and came into the theater early in the morning. There the silver of his garment, being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays, shone out in a wonderful manner, and was so resplendent as to spread awe over those that looked intently upon him. Presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another place...that he was a god; and they added, ‘Be thou merciful to us; for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.’”²

Desiring to appease the king, those of Tyre and Sidon shouted: “It is the voice of a god, and not of a man” (Acts 12:22). In defiance of God, Herod arrogantly received their adoration and worship. When he failed to rebuke his subjects and give God the glory, an angel of the Lord struck him down for his rebellion, which resulted in a horrible death (v. 23).

Humility has the idea of having lowliness of mind, modesty, or being brought low. It stands in direct opposition to pride that always tends to exalt itself. It has been said that humility is “the key to God's heart that unlocks His mercy.” A prime example of this is the Roman centurion who besought the Lord to heal his servant who was near death. This particular centurion was a man of great authority, a Gentile, who was highly respected by the Jews and all those who served under him in the Roman army (Luke 7:1-5). Here's a man that was a man's man who had compassion on his servant who was very dear to him.

When he learned that the Lord had come to Capernaum, he immediately sent the elders of the Jews to plead his case, hoping against hope, that the Master merely passing by his home would heal his servant. Apparently the centurion understood that the Lord was confining His ministry to Israel, which explains his reaction when he heard that the Messiah actually was coming to his home. He immediately sent word to Him through his friends, saying:

“Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou should enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed” (Luke 7:6,7).

Reading this account should cause us to pause momentarily to ask ourselves, “Do we have an attitude of humility in our service for Christ?” Sadly, we often have to deal with those who glory in their selfish pursuits. In the

case of the centurion, he *humbly* acknowledged that the Lord was a far greater authority than he; thus, he felt unworthy to have Him darken his door. He also understood his lowly position as a Gentile that he wasn't even worthy to approach the Master. "Lord, simply speak the word and my servant will be healed." The Master was so moved by his humility that it struck the chord of His mercy, which resulted in the healing of the servant. The Lord said to those present that day, "I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (v. 9b). Unlike many in Israel, the centurion believed that Christ was indeed the Son of God!

PRIDE AND PAUL'S FORMER MANNER OF LIFE

"For ye have heard of my conversation [behavior] in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers" (Gal. 1:13,14).

Prior to his conversion, Paul took great *pride* in his achievements. In these two passages alone, he makes reference to three of them.

The first feather in his cap was that he had persecuted the kingdom church and sought to destroy it. He had convinced himself that he was doing God a service in ridding Jerusalem of those who believed that Christ had risen from the grave. Paul believed at the time that Christ was nothing more than an impostor.

The second feather was how he had profited in the Jews' religion. Paul was ambitious, and ambition knows no restraint! It seeks fame, power, and fortune at any cost, even if it means destroying lives and altering the course of events. So it was with Paul. He had surpassed many of his equals who were his age in order to make a name for himself. He made sure he spent time with all the right people to ensure he was well connected politically and religiously so he could advance his agenda.



Paul was also a "Zealot of the Law," which is the third feather. He was not merely zealous, but exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the fathers. As a Pharisee, he had associated himself with the extreme branch of that sect who *arrogantly* defended the customs that had been handed down to them.

The "traditions of my fathers" is a reference to the oral teachings that his predecessors taught in conjunction with the Law of Moses, which only served to place a heavier burden on the Lord's people than they were already bearing. The Lord had nothing good to say about the traditions and commandments of men seeing that it neutralized the Word of God.

When the Lord and His disciples arrived in the land of Genesaret, a number of Pharisees came from Jerusalem hoping to discredit His ministry among the people in some way. Well, it didn't take them long to find a golden opportunity to accomplish their end, or so they thought.

When they saw that the disciples failed to wash their hands before sitting down to eat, they couldn't believe their eyes. They were mortified! You see, the Pharisees and their Jewish followers would never eat before washing their hands in accordance with the tradition of the elders. This tradition also extended to washing all the pots, pans, plates, cups and even the tables that were associated with the meal. I guess in their twisted way of thinking, *cleanliness was next to godliness*. These religious leaders were so incensed that they asked the Lord why He had not taught His disciples to observe these traditions of the elders. This was a disgrace as far as they were concerned (See Mark 7:1-5).

The Lord didn't hesitate to set the record straight on the matter. "Well hath Esaias [Isaiah] prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men...Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:6-9).

The Lord isn't saying here that there is anything wrong with washing your hands before a meal; rather, He wanted it to be

known that the Pharisees were hypocrites. While they made a fair show in the flesh in performing these religious acts, in reality their hearts were far from God. They had imposed these traditions upon the people knowing full well they were never a part of the Law of Moses in the first place. By so doing, they had set themselves up as authority figures who were the only ones that could explain and police these commandments.

In America, the observance of Thanksgiving is a tradition that is rich in meaning, a time when we gather with family and friends to thank God for His goodness and mercy. On the other hand, religious traditions, as in time past, appeal to the flesh. They are a tool of Satan who uses them to blind the minds of those that are yet in their sins. The burning of candles, confessionals, reciting the Lord's Prayer, and praying to the saints give those who practice these things a false sense of security that God will accept them on the basis of these actions. If this were the case, then Christ died in vain. In reality, religious traditions and the commandments of men undermine the Word of God and make it ineffectual (Mark 7:13).

HUMILITY AND PAUL'S NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

After Paul's conversion to Christ, we witness an amazing change in his life. John Newton's hymn, *Amazing Grace*, would have struck a chord with Paul.

"Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—That saved a wretch like me!

"I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see."

The apostle who once boasted in all of his achievements now counted them all meaningless—they were nothing more than a colossal waste of time. God set his feet on a new path, a path that transformed him from a proud, self-centered offender to a humble, obedient servant of Christ. This transformation is clearly seen many times throughout the course of Paul's ministry. One example would be when Paul and Barnabas came to the cities of Lystra and Derbe to preach the gospel. During their visit at Lystra, Paul healed a man who had been crippled from birth. When the apostle instructed him to stand up, the man was instantly healed, and leaped and walked for the first time in his life.

“When we put Paul's life...under the microscope...we see...*Humility* characterized his life in Christ.”



When the people of the city saw what had happened, they concluded that the gods had come down to them in the form of men. Because Barnabas had a more pronounced presence than Paul, being the oldest, they called him Jupiter (Gr. *Zeus*), who was believed to be the father of the gods. Since Paul was the spokesman of the two, they gave him the name Mercurius (Gr. *Hermes*), who was thought to be an eloquent messenger of the gods. The townspeople

were so captivated by the events of that day, they made Paul and Barnabas garlands of flowers and even prepared to offer sacrifices to them as an act of worship (See Acts 14:6-13).

The moment Paul learned what they were planning to do, the apostle immediately ran toward the multitude saying, “Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities [profitless things] unto the living God” (Acts 14:15). A lesser man at the time might well have been flattered by all of the attention, but not Paul; he sternly *rebuked* them for their actions. His life's motto was, “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” (I Cor. 1:31), which is a touching expression of his *humility*.

While the above account took place during Paul's early ministry, the same can be said of him years later when he wrote to the Philippians:

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended” (Phil. 3:12,13).

Instead of boasting in his accomplishments as an apostle, he humbly acknowledged that he had not yet come to a full knowledge of Christ and the fellowship of His sufferings. After years of service, it was still his hope to have a closer relationship with Christ so that he might fulfill what the Lord called him to accomplish for His name's sake. Moreover, he

wanted to experience the power of His resurrection more fully.

This is amazing when we consider that Paul had seen and spoken to the Savior on the road to Damascus. In the Arabian Desert soon after that experience, he sat at the feet of the Lord where he received the early revelations about the Mystery. Some years later, the apostle said that he was awaiting additional visions and revelations of the Lord to further his understanding of the gospel of the grace of God (II Cor. 12:1). Shortly thereafter Paul was caught up to paradise into the very presence of Christ.

It is this same apostle who said, “For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet [fit] to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God” (I Cor. 15:9). To this he added, “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. 3:8). When we put Paul’s life and ministry under the microscope to examine it more closely, we see the full measure of the “greatness of Paul’s smallness.” *Humility* characterized his life in Christ. While we know Paul to be a very humble man, when it came to his apostleship and message that he had received from the Lord of glory, he was bold as a lion in his defense of both (Rom. 11:13; I Cor. 9:1,2; Gal. 1:1,11,12).

THE GOAL OF SERVANTHOOD

The goal in our Christian walk is to direct all the glory to the Lord, who is worthy of praise and adoration. You see, it is not about

us; it’s about Christ and what He has accomplished for us at Calvary. Paul says in this regard, “we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord” (II Cor. 4:5a).

Every believer must guard himself against having a false humility for the sake of outward appearances. The flesh craves attention; it glories in accomplishments and happily sings its own praises. Solomon shows us the fallacy of such thinking, “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips” (Prov. 27:2).

Remember well that we have been crucified with Christ; therefore, we are dead to sin, self, and legalism. Legalism is the enemy of Grace. According to this persuasion, you can only walk pleasing to God by obeying the legalist. He becomes the standard-bearer, rather than the Word of God. Legalists love to make lists of “do’s and don’ts” for everyone to obey—if you agree with their list of man-made commandments and traditions, you are accepted by their elite group, if not, you are not spiritually minded in their eyes. Legalists always criticize and relish being judgmental of others. Never allow legalism to rob you of the liberty that you have in Christ or your assurance in Him, for that matter.

“Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud” (Prov. 16:19).



Endnotes

1. *Our Daily Bread*, sermonillustrations.com
2. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 19.8.2, 343-361.



A CONVERSATION CONVERSION

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

George Lyttelton was an Oxford-educated English statesman and author. Early in life, he set out to disprove the Bible's account of the conversion of the Apostle Paul in an effort to discredit Christianity. Upon an examination of the Bible evidence for the case, however, he was convinced of the validity of the biblical record, and became a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the passages he was sure to have examined was the story of Paul's *conversation conversion* that the apostle related to the Galatians:

“For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it” (Gal. 1:13).

An Infamous Conversation

Critics of the *King James Version* are quick to condemn the use of the word “conversation” to refer to a man’s *conduct*, but if you think

about it, the word *should* refer to more than just a man’s speech, since what you *do* says more about you than what you *say*. How many times have you heard it said that “actions speak louder than words”? If you are saved, *your* conversation should *tell people* that you are saved. But before he was saved, Paul’s conversation was in “the Jews’ religion.”

The Jews’ religion was the only religion God ever gave, so why doesn’t Paul call it “God’s religion”? Well, we might compare it to how the Lord once referred to the temple as “My Father’s house” (John 2:16); but after being rejected by His nation, He said, “*your* house is left unto you desolate” (John 2:16 cf. Luke 13:35). In the same way, the only religion God ever gave became “the Jews’ religion” because of the sin and rebellion of its adherents.

Paul’s conversation in the Jews’ religion led him to persecute God’s

people “beyond measure.” We’d say his persecution was “off the charts,” that he “buried the needle” as he set about to do all that he could to *exterminate* “the sect of the Nazarenes” (Acts 24:5).

Here we should pause to ask why the Spirit would lead Paul to provide us with yet *another* account of his conversion, what with several others already in the Book (Acts 9:1-31; 22:1-21; 26:9-20; I Tim. 1:12-16). But after asserting that he didn’t get his *message* from men (Gal. 1:11,12), I believe Paul is here declaring that he didn’t even get his *salvation* from men. Most people are led to the Lord by a Christian—and then are *immediately influenced* by that believer. When I was first saved, I believed most everything my pastor taught me because, after all, he introduced me to Christ! So in reminding the Galatians of the story of his conversation conversion, Paul was saying, in effect, “*No one* led me to the Lord. I was saved directly by the Lord Himself, so no one influenced me doctrinally—my message was *not of men!*”

A Persecution Complexity

Some people have trouble hearing Paul speak of having persecuted “the church” without thinking of “the church, which is His body” (Eph. 1:22,23), for most Christians believe that this is the only church in the Bible. However, the very fact that Paul has to add “which is His Body” when speaking of “the church” proves that there are *other* churches in the Bible which are *not* His Body! The Bible word “church” is a generic term that I like to compare to what most

people call “Scotch tape.” “Scotch” is actually the most popular brand name of *transparent* tape, but while all Scotch tape is transparent tape, not all transparent tape is Scotch tape, since there are many other brands. Similarly, the Body of Christ is a Bible church, but not all Bible churches are the Body of Christ, for there are other churches mentioned in Scripture.



For instance, God calls *Israel* a church since He called them out of Egyptian bondage (Acts 7:38), and the word *church* simply means “a called-out assembly.”

So which church did Paul persecute? He couldn’t have persecuted “the church, which is His Body,” since the Body began with his conversion and he was its first member. He rather persecuted the church the Lord mentioned in Matthew 16:18, the one we call *the kingdom church* since the Lord gave Peter “the keys of the kingdom” in conjunction with the announcement of this church (v. 19).

I know that many believe that the Lord was speaking of the church which is His Body, but if Peter has the keys to our church, we should look to his epistles for specific instructions about how to live in the dispensation of grace

(Eph. 3:2). But not only does Peter never mention the Body of Christ, he says many things that don't apply to us in the dispensation of grace. For instance, his insistence that "baptism doth also now save us" (I Pet. 3:21) matches what he said in Acts 2:38, but it sure doesn't match what Paul says about how to be saved into the church which is His Body. Today we are saved "by the washing of regeneration" (Titus 3:5), not by the washing of water baptism!

A Church Is a Terrible Thing to Waste

Now I'm from the Chicago area, and when Paul testified that he "wasted" the kingdom church, *that's Mafia talk!* This euphemism for *murder* fit Paul to a tee (Acts 22:4), and he acknowledged two motivations for his murderous rampage. First, as he says, he wasted the church,

"And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers" (Gal. 1:14).

Paul's first motivation in wasting the church was a financial one, and his second motivation was *zeal*.

If you are wondering how he might have profited by being zealous of the traditions of his fathers, don't forget who his fathers were! Paul was "the son of a Pharisee" (Acts 23:6), and one of the traditions of the Pharisees was extorting money from widows on the pretence of praying for their dead husbands (Matt. 23:14). Rome has "profited" from this tradition for centuries, and Saul may have also. It is also possible that there

was a bounty on the heads of the believers whom he hunted so mercilessly.

Paul mentions his profits because *nobody walks away from that kind of money*. Indeed, this was one of the things that convinced George Lyttelton that Paul's conversion was genuine.



If you think that men weren't as driven by money back then as they are now, just recall what happened when the Lord cast the demons out of the man and they entered the swine, leading to their demise. Rather than being grateful that He had delivered one of their citizens, the Gaderenes "began to pray Him to depart out of their coasts" (Mark 5:17), because He had severely damaged their finances.

Shaking the Family Tree

Add to Saul's profits the fact that he was the son of a Pharisee. Even today there is often pressure on a man to follow in his father's line of work, but this was even more the case in ages past. Names like Baker, Smith, Weaver, Potter, Tanner, and Sadler all came about because if your father made saddles, it was expected that you would too! When they asked of the Lord, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matt. 13:55), the implication

was that He should have been working in Joseph's shop instead of preaching the gospel. Of course, if your dad was a *Pharisee*, there was *tremendous* pressure to follow in his footsteps. No son of a Pharisee would leave the fold unless he was called of God! This supplies us with even more proof that becoming an apostle wasn't Paul's idea.

He tells us whose idea it was when he goes on to say,

“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His grace” (Gal. 1:15).

Did God *literally* separate Paul from his mother's womb, or is this a figure of speech? Well, he *could* be speaking literally, since there is a sense in which God separates all of us from our mother's womb, “seeing he giveth to all life, and breath” (Acts 17:25). But I think Paul is using a figure of speech, similar to the one Job used in Job 1:21. That is, he was speaking about his *spiritual* birth, not his *physical* birth, saying, in effect, “When I got saved, God separated me from the warm, comfortable womb of the *Jews religion*.” That's the context, and context is king when it comes to interpreting Scripture. He may even have been making a play on words, since the word *Pharisee* means “separated ones.” The Pharisees were separated from the Gentiles and lesser Jews *and proud of it*, and Paul may have chosen this analogy to express how God had separated him from the separated ones!

From Reviler to Revealer

When God called Paul by His grace, He called him, as he says,

“To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood” (Gal. 1:16).

God called Paul to be saved and to serve Him all in the same day! If you're thinking that this is a lot to put on one man's plate at the same time, may I remind you that He has called you in the same way? God didn't just save you to keep you out of hell, He called you to serve Him! Have you answered the call?



**“...context is king
when it comes to
interpreting Scripture.”**

Notice that Paul doesn't say that God called him to reveal His Son “to” him. That's true, for the Lord was revealed to Paul on Damascus Road. But then He revealed His Son *in* Paul. You see, Saul was a Jew who rebelled against the Lord, but he was also a Gentile, a Roman citizen (Acts 22:25-27), who rebelled against the Lord. So saving him was a perfect picture of what God is doing in the dispensation of grace. The Gentiles rebelled against God at the tower of Babel, and the Jews joined them in their rebellion when they crucified God's Son and stoned His prophet Stephen.

When that happened, God was supposed to send *judgment*

on both Jews and Gentiles (Psa. 2:1-5). Instead, he *saved* a man who was both a Jew and a Gentile, revealing *in* him what the Son is doing in this dispensation. We might compare this to when God told Pharaoh, “even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, *that I might shew My power in thee*” (Rom. 9:17). When God ripped the Jews away from Pharaoh and the most powerful nation on the planet, He showed His *power* in Pharaoh. But when God ripped Saul away from his bloody career of rebellion, it showed His *grace* in him. Paul was a living demonstration of what God is doing in this dispensation.

Now how 'bout you? Are you a living demonstration of what God is doing? Are you being gracious to those who sin against *you*? Grace is easy when we are on the receiving end of it. It gets a whole lot harder when we are on the giving side, but this is what we are called to do (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13). If you are an ungracious, unforgiving Christian, or if you are a proud, arrogant, impudent Christian, please do God a favor and don't tell anyone you're a Christian. If God can't reveal His Son *in* you, He doesn't want to reveal His son *through* you.

The Hebrew Heathen

Notice that Paul was called to preach Christ “among the heathen.” Who are they? Well, it depends on what dispensation you are in! God spoke to the Jews about “the heathen *that are round about you*” (Lev. 25:44) because in time past, the heathen included any nation other than Israel. Under the law, Balaam declared

that Israel “shall not be reckoned among the nations” (Num. 23:9). So in time past, there was *the* nation of Israel and all the other nations—but this is no longer the case! Today, “there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him” (Rom. 10:12).

In asserting that Israel is today just another one of the nations, I'm not trying to be anti-Semitic, I'm trying to be *helpful*. If Jews are not part of the nations, then God has no plan of salvation for them. Paul, the apostle of the nations (Rom. 11:13), is the only one in the Bible who teaches salvation by grace through faith alone. If the apostle of the Gentiles is not the apostle of the Jews as well, they cannot be saved. In time past, God had twelve apostles for Israel, but there is no *current* apostle for them outside of the apostle of the Gentiles. When Paul vowed to go to “the heathen” (Gal. 2:9), but then proceeded to preach in every synagogue he saw (Acts 17:1,10,17; 18:4,19; 19:8), it demonstrated that “the heathen” now constituted *unbelievers*, whether Jews or Gentiles.

Deferring to Confer

Now what's the first thing a man does after getting saved? He usually starts going to church to fellowship with other believers, especially Christian leaders, so he can learn from them, right? How strange, then, to hear Paul's testimony that after *he* got saved, “immediately I conferred *not* with flesh and blood.” But didn't he meet with Ananias immediately after he was saved (Acts 9:10-18)?

Yes, but he didn't *confer* with him. This word means *to examine by comparison*, the kind of thing that goes on at Bible *conferences*, where you compare what the speakers say to the Scriptures to see if those things are so. Paul didn't have a Bible conference with *anyone* after he got saved!

Not even with the twelve apostles? Paul knew that someone was bound to raise this objection, so he hastened to add:

"Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus" (Gal. 1:17).

Now you would think that Paul would *want* to confer with the men who spent three years listening to the Lord teach, but not only did he not do so, he made it a point to avoid them. I believe it was because he was following the instructions of the One who saw a problem coming in Galatia, a problem that continued to come for the next two thousand years—the problem of thinking that Paul preached the same message as that of the twelve. To avoid this problem, the Lord told Paul to steer clear of the twelve so that no one would think that he got his message from them (Rom. 15:20). Notice carefully *how long* Paul shunned Jerusalem:

"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days" (Gal. 1:18).

Three years is a significant length of time in this context, for it is the number of years the Lord trained the twelve apostles. I believe Paul is implying that he himself was trained by the Lord

during his three-year absence from Jerusalem, leading us to conclude that the twelve consequently had no part in his training!

A Historic Sight

But if it was the Lord's intent to keep Paul apart from the twelve, why allow him to go see Peter at the end of his training? Well, the Greek word for "see" here is *historeo*, from which we obviously get our word *history*. I frankly don't know enough about Greek to know if this word suggests that Paul went to Peter to learn a little history from him, but I do know that Paul has already spelled out in no uncertain terms that he didn't go to see Peter to get his message from him (Gal. 1:11,12). I also know that fifteen days would be an insufficient amount of time to learn the message that the twelve took *three years* to learn.

Of course, fifteen days would also be an insufficient amount of time to get a history of Peter's three-year sojourn with the Lord, since there were so many "things which Jesus did" that "if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25). Besides, if that's what Paul was after, historians like Matthew, Mark, Luke or John would be a more logical source from which to obtain it. There *was*, however, a history lesson that only Peter could give to Paul, one in which the apostle would be *intensely* interested. I speak, of course, of the rooftop event that Peter experienced in Acts 10, the incident wherein the Lord revealed to him

that the Gentiles were no longer unclean (Acts 10:1-28).

Paul would naturally be interested in the vision that Peter received that day, since the Lord gave it for the specific purpose of using Peter to introduce Paul's ministry to the Gentiles at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:7-11). Who better to introduce the Lord's new chief apostle than His old chief apostle?

Passing the Mantle

Years ago, the Maytag company ran TV commercials that featured "the loneliest man in town," the Maytag repairman whom no one ever called since Maytag washers never broke. Once his phone rang and he headed out the door chanting, "I get to fix a Maytag," only to arrive at the caller's home to find that the machine had somehow become unplugged! As the actor playing the part aged, the company knew they would need to introduce a new repairman, so for awhile their commercials featured both men.

That's what the Lord had in mind with Peter's sheet vision, and history testifies to the Lord's wisdom in giving it to Peter. The testimony of God's former spiritual repairman certainly seemed to factor in to James' decision to accept Paul's new ministry among the Gentiles apart from circumcision and the law (Acts 15:12-27).

"But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not" (Gal. 1:19,20).

Paul was so eager to prove that he didn't get his message from the

twelve that he raised his right hand and said, in effect, "I swear to God that it is true." Isn't that what men do in court, with one hand on a Bible? Even outside



of court, this is the strongest oath that men can swear, one that they employ only in matters of *extreme* importance. "I swear to God I didn't kill that man!" "I swear to God I didn't rape that woman!" So why is *Paul* taking such an oath? For the same reason! The uniqueness of his message was a matter of *extreme importance*!

Be Importunate About What's Important

Not as important as things like murder or rape, you say? If that's what you think, we'd like to share with you some of the letters we receive here at *Berean Bible Society* from anguished Christians who are tormented to *their very souls*, because mixing Paul's message with that of the twelve has caused untold confusion in their spiritual lives.

Did you know Paul is the only writer in the New Testament to swear such an oath? If you knew, did you ever wonder why? Wasn't the message of the other New Testament writers also of extreme importance? Of course! But they

could appeal to the Old Testament Scriptures to authenticate their message, while Paul could not. His message of the “mystery” (Eph. 3:1-9) was “hid from ages and from generations” past (Col. 1:26), so when it came to corroborating his message, all Paul could do was lift his right hand and say, “I swear to God that it is true.”

But the good news is, that’s not all *we* can do as we teach Paul’s

message. His words are now part of God’s completed revelation, and so we can now point to the Scriptures themselves to champion the cause of Paul’s gospel. As Pastor Stam used to say, if our message isn’t the answer to all the religious confusion in the world, let’s forget it! But if it *is* the answer, it’s worth all the sacrifices we can make to get it out to others. Who’s with me?



Question Box

“Someone is telling me that Galatians 1:23 proves that Paul didn’t get a new message.”

When we teach that Paul had a unique new message, people sometimes respond by pointing out that this cannot be, since it was said of Paul, right after he got saved, that he “preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.” They insist that this means that the message he preached existed before he preached it. However, you’ll notice that Galatians 1:23 says that they “heard” this. Have you ever heard something spoken that turned out later to be untrue? That could easily be the case here.

Remember, Paul’s gospel and the kingdom gospel were both centered in Christ, and so when Paul got saved and began preaching Christ, that could easily explain how “the churches of Judaea” (Gal. 1:22) “heard” that Paul preached their faith. They would have had to have heard this second hand, from easily confused unbelievers, since believers were afraid to go near Saul in those early days (cf. Acts 9:26).

If there was any truth to the rumor, then the phrase “the faith” was being used in the generic sense. When this phrase is used by Paul, it refers to the body of truth that was given to him (Acts 14:22; 16:5; Rom. 1:5; Gal. 3:23; Eph. 4:13; Col. 1:23; I Tim. 3:9; I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 3:8; Titus 1:13). When this phrase is used by Bible writers other than Paul, however, it refers to the body of truth of the kingdom message (Acts 6:7; I Pet. 5:9; Jude 1:3).

—Pastor Kurth



Bless the Lord, O MY Soul

By Pastor Kevin Sadler

“Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities...As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us” (Psa. 103:1-3a,12).

King David, the author of this psalm, directs himself to bless the Lord. He doesn't tell the angels to bless the Lord, or the works of creation to bless the Lord, or for other believers to bless the Lord, or for the nation Israel to bless the Lord. He says, “Bless the Lord, O my soul.” David speaks here of *himself*. This shows us that praise and thanksgiving is a personal thing. It's something that can be done corporately as a group, but it's also something we each need to do individually.

Sometimes it's necessary to stop all your activity and get away from all the noise by taking a drive or a ten-minute walk, to just *think*. Think of the things that God has done for you. Think of His vast, endless blessings in your life. Think of your salvation and your Savior. And all alone, personally give Him thanks, and bless the Lord.

We should do as David did and bless the Lord with, as he says, “all that is within me.” That is, we should worship and praise Him *with every part of our being*. Remembering what the Lord has done for us should inspire *passion* in our thanksgiving. And with all that is within us, with all our heart, holding nothing back, we should focus on giving praise to God. Half-hearted praise and worship is not enough. God is deserving of *whole-hearted* praise and *all* of our thanksgiving.

As we do so, we will “forget not all His benefits.” We all tend to forget. We've all forgotten someone's name. We've all forgotten appointments.

We've all forgotten what we were looking for, or why we entered a room, and what we were supposed to be doing. There probably isn't one of us who wouldn't like to be able to remember better. But one thing for which we should strive hard is not forgetting God, His working in our lives and the great blessings He has poured upon us. In the Book of Hosea, God speaks of how He had filled Israel, blessed them, and exalted them, yet laments that they had "forgotten" Him (13:6). How this must grieve His heart!

David says that we should not forget all His "benefits." The "bene" part of the word *benefit* means "good." Gratitude involves three *bene(s)*.¹ First, gratitude involves a *benefit*, something that is good, and finding it a good and favorable thing to have been received. Our lives are filled with benefits from God. Sometimes we're blind to them, or we forget them, or overlook them. Gratitude requires that we notice them, recognize them, and see and know that they are good.

The second factor of gratitude is a *benefactor*. The word *benevolence* means "to will the good." And a *benefactor*—which is related to our word for *factory*—means "one who does good." To be grateful, we must believe—not just that benefits are coming our way—but that they don't come at random or by accident. They come from *somebody*, somebody who *manufactured* these benefits. And we must believe this benefactor has good intentions towards us. If I'm to be a grateful Christian, I must believe this about God. *God* is the One who does good, the One who *is* good, and is good all the time. James 1:17 says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Our God is good, and He gives to us, and expresses His goodness by blessing us both physically and spiritually (Acts 17:25; Eph. 1:3).

There has to be a *benefit*, and a *benefactor*, and finally there has to be a *beneficiary*: one who *receives* the good. That's you and me. We are the beneficiaries of the benefits of a benevolent, kind, and good God, who loves us more than we could ever imagine. The beneficiary needs to have a crucial feature however: for there to be gratitude, beneficiaries must believe they are receiving something they did not merit, earn, or deserve. Gratitude always involves a posture of humility. If I believe I am owed something, I will not be thankful for it because I will think that I'm entitled to it. The more we think we're entitled to, the less we will be grateful for.

It is not our job to always try to feel grateful. Sometimes I wake up grumpy. Sometimes I let my wife sleep in and wake up before



she does! It's been said, "There are two kinds of people in the world: people who love to wake up early in the morning, and people who hate people who love to wake up early in the morning." But it is not every day that we wake up feeling pleasant, or feeling like the world is a bed of roses. Gratitude comes, not just from a feeling or trying to feel thankful, but from a biblical worldview that comes from faith and from knowing God and living by His Word (1 Thes. 5:16-18).



"...just as east and west will never face one another, so we...will never be faced with the consequences of our sins."

Godly gratitude comes from an awareness of God's continual presence and goodness. It comes when you see the reality that all benefits come from a wonderful Benefactor, from God, of which we are the grace-given beneficiaries, and it's an overflow of joy in recognizing how good God is to us! Ingratitude is the blindest of all sins. Gratitude is living with our eyes open to God's working, presence, and goodness to us.


David says to "forget not all His benefits." There's a difference in "forget none of" and "do not forget all." We are only human, and we are going to forget some. So the pen of David puts it down in a more realistic fashion: "Do not forget all of His benefits." Don't forget them all, but take notice, look around and see *some* of what God is doing in your life, and praise Him for it. God is continually kind, and we can always find something for which to be grateful.

Psalms 103:3a says that God is the One who "forgives all your iniquities." We're glad for our homes, for our jobs, for our health; but take all these things away from the believer and this should not prevent us from continuing to be grateful for God's greatest gift: salvation, the forgiveness of our sins. In plenty or in need, in palaces or in prison, in security or uncertainty, we must thank God for the unspeakable gift of His Son, His sacrificial death, His triumphant resurrection, and the forgiveness of all of our sins that we have because of Him.

Verse 12 says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." If we draw a line from north to south on this planet, we find that it is a finite distance. If we travel north from a given point, sooner or later we will reach the north pole, a definite point. Then if we travel south we will eventually reach the south pole, another definite point. The north-south measure is finite, but east and west are a different matter. We can start to travel east and there is no point, so long as we continue in that direction, at which we start to travel west. Or we can start to travel west and, no matter how far we continue, there is no point at which we start to travel east. West is always west; east is always east.²

The psalmist vividly describes the forgiveness of God as being “as far as the east is from west.” The implications of this are huge because, just as east and west will never face one another, so we who have believed the gospel will never be faced with the consequences of our sins. Our sins are completely removed from us. Just as “east is east, and west is west, and never the twain shall meet,” so the believer and his sins will never meet. Those sins have been put out of God’s sight and entirely taken away forever by a miracle of love, by the Cross of Christ.

Our sins have been paid for and removed from us as far as is possible; an infinite distance that cannot be measured or comprehended or imagined. Our sins could not be removed farther away than they are. They are so removed that they cannot affect us anymore. We are absolutely safe from all condemnation for our sins (Rom. 5:1). As we cultivate a grateful heart, forgiveness is first in order, thinking of the good, forgiving hand of God (Col. 1:12-14).

As the hymn “It Is Well with My Soul” says, “My sin—O the bliss of this glorious thought—My sin, not in part, but the whole, Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more: *Praise the Lord, O my soul!*” 

Endnotes

1. John Ortberg, “The Great Gratitude Experiment,” PreachingToday.com (11-13-12).
2. Ted Sutherland, “The Thanksgiving Catalogue,” SermonCentral.com (Nov. 2001).

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A person in a dark jacket stands on the peak of a large, rugged rock formation. They are holding a telescope or a long, thin object up to their eye, looking towards the sky. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The rock face is textured and layered, with some shadows and highlights.

A Forward-Thinking Man

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

Recently, *Fox News* told of a 13-year-old girl who got in trouble at school for wearing a shirt that said, “Virginity Rocks!” The back of her shirt was equally delightful and showed that she was one very forward-thinking young lady. It read, “I’m loving my husband, and I haven’t even met him yet!”

This sweet girl’s wonderful testimony reminded me of how the Lord Jesus showed that He was one very forward-thinking Man when He prayed to God about His eleven disciples:

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word” (John 17:20).

Most Bible commentaries maintain that the Lord was talking about you and me, and all of the other members of the Body of Christ who had not yet believed on Him at that time. The problem with this view is that you and I didn’t believe on Christ through the words of the twelve apostles. We believed on Him through the words of the Apostle Paul! Paul is the only biblical writer who presents salvation by grace through faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:25). If someone introduced you to Christ using the words of the twelve apostles, they had to read Paul’s gospel into their words, for he is the only biblical writer to preach the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as the gospel that must be believed in order to be saved (I Cor. 15:1-4).

So who were those who were saved through the word of the apostles? Well, the twelve preached their word *at Pentecost*, which tells us that those who believed through their word *were all Jews*, for they were the only people that Peter addressed on that day (Acts 2:14,22,36). So in praying for “them also which shall believe through their word,” the Lord was praying for future *Jewish* believers. Of course, this means that He had only Jewish believers in mind when He went on to pray for these future saints.

“That they all may be one...that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me” (John 17:21).

Here again, the commentaries all contend that the Lord was talking about us. After all, didn't Paul say of Christ, “He is our peace, *who hath made both one*” (Eph. 2:14), speaking of how Jews and Gentiles were all “baptized into one body” (I Cor. 12:13). The commentaries insist that this is what the Lord had in mind when He prayed “that they all may be one.”

But we've already seen that this couldn't be what the Lord had in mind, since those who believed on Him through the word of the apostles were all Jews. So why was He praying that *the Jews* might be made one?

Well, if you know your Bible, you know that there came a time in Israel's history when the ten northern tribes broke away from the two southern tribes and formed their own kingdom (I Kings 12). While God allowed this, He had no intention of letting His people be divided forever! To illustrate this, God instructed Ezekiel to take a stick and write “Israel” on it to represent the ten northern tribes, and then to take another stick and write “Judah” on it to represent the two southern tribes, then to join them together and “make them one stick” (Ezek. 37:15-19). He was told to do all this to illustrate God's plan to take Israel and Judah and “make them *one nation*” (v. 22). This, then, is the oneness for which the Lord prayed in our text.

Was His prayer answered? You know it was! At Pentecost, “there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews...*out of every nation under heaven*” (Acts 2:5). “And all that believed...were *together...continuing daily with one accord...with...singleness of heart*” (Acts 2:41-46).

Of course, the Lord had a purpose in mind for praying for the reunion of Israel's two houses. It was, as He said, “that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me”; and when the reuniting of Israel's two houses continues in the millennial kingdom, their oneness will cause the world to believe on Christ.

Do you think this will work today? That is, when the world sees the oneness that we have in Christ, do you think maybe they might want in on it? I know for sure that it works the other way! When we bite and devour one another, the world about us finds this most UNattractive. Brethren, do you know who does the most to keep people from believing on Christ? It is not murderers, rapists, and thieves; nothing that men like that do keeps men from believing. No, it is *Christians* who can't get along with one another, and who present a poor testimony to the world in other ways, that keep men from believing on Christ. Why not determine *right now* that as a Christian you are going to “walk worthy of this calling...*that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you*” (II Thes. 1:11,12).





Lincoln's Wise Counsel

"Abraham Lincoln's secretary of war, Edwin Stanton, was angered by an army officer who accused him of favoritism. Stanton complained to Lincoln, who suggested that Stanton write the officer a sharp letter.

"Stanton did, and showed the strongly worded missive to the president. 'What are you going to do with it?' Lincoln inquired. Surprised, Stanton replied, 'Send it.' Lincoln shook his head. 'You don't want to send that letter,' he said. 'Put it in the stove. That's what I do when I have written a letter while I am angry. It's a good letter and you had a good time writing it and feel better. Now burn it, and write another.'"

Today in the Word, February, 1991, p. 9



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BBS Letter Excerpts

From Pennsylvania:

"I'm sending this small check to help defray your shipping expenses to send me your *Berean Searchlight* each month. I know it costs something to send it...I'm going to try to send something more often now since I got over my heart attack...."

From Wisconsin:

"I want to thank you for your response, and have been reading a lot of the BBS information on the age of grace. It all makes sense. Throughout the years I have mixed law and grace together...."

From our Inbox:

"There aren't words in the English language to express how much I appreciate *Two Minutes with the Bible*." (From a pastor.—Ed).

From West Virginia:

"You hit a 'home run,' Pastor Sadler, in the September *Searchlight* with your message: 'God's Recipe for a Meaningful Christian Life'...Your message opened my mind and heart to the revelation that my life can still have meaning...Thank you for the Word you revealed to me."

From Wisconsin:

"The *Two Minutes* 'You Can't Get By With This' is informative, and right on. The English lesson on pronoun and preposition will not last long in my mind, but the lesson on the difference between *with* and *by* is common sense to me."

From Facebook:

"Thank you!...I had not considered these things so specifically...for the first time ever, this passage made sense to me!"

From Michigan:

"Your article on *Spiritual Leadership* was awesome. We have too many leaders trying to 'clean up the pond' while preaching the gospel becomes a lesser concern. God help them discover His will!"

From Kansas:

"I have been a Southern Baptist for at least 60 years and just learned about you when I lived in Rocky Ford, Colorado, when I picked up a copy of the *Searchlight* in a laundry room where someone had placed some issues...." (You just never know where you'll find the *Searchlight*.—PS).

From Florida:

"I am writing, Pastor Sadler, to express to you concerning your recent article on 'God's Perfect Plan for Your Life'...I enjoyed your article very much."

From Georgia:

"Over the past few months I have studied your article in detail. Based upon your clear explanations, with Scripture references, there is no need for a saint to remain ignorant of the purpose of water baptism...words cannot express the joy I have received from the study of your article, 'The Water That Divides.'"

From our Inbox:

"Love *The Author's Choice* by Pastor Stam! Great read and information. Thanks for making this item available!"

From New Jersey:

"I want to congratulate you, Pastor Sadler, on your in-depth study on the Rapture and Second Coming of Christ in your book, *The Triumph of His Grace*. It's the best I've read on the subject!"

From Louisiana:

"Really enjoyed reading the book *Suggestions for Young Pastors* by Pastor Stam and recommend it highly to others." (It's part of this month's special offer. See page 29.—Ed).

From Indiana:

"I recently bought two more of Pastor Sadler's *Unsearchable Riches* to give to some Baptist friends. The technician that makes my hearing aids and her receptionist keep Scofield Bibles on their desks, and the Lord always seems to give me extra time after an appointment, so we have had some lively discussions concerning Pauline truth...So it seems God can still use a forgetful old man in his late eighties to proclaim the truth. My memory is failing badly, but somehow the Scriptures that answer their questions always seem to be on the tip of my tongue...My Nazarene preacher friend and I still meet for Bible study. He is getting a real hold on dispensational truth...."

From our Inbox:

"I've just a day or two ago learned of your teachings on the BBS website. I have already listened to the first five Colossians messages. Great stuff!"

From our Inbox:

"Thank you for your answer. It was a delight to receive...You folks have over the past years served a banquet to those who listen to those recordings."

From Indiana:

"I discovered two people very much interested in grace literature last week and I promised them I'd send you their addresses for the *Searchlight*...also wanted to mention that great 'apple' article by David Adams. It is so concise and just what a new grace believer needs to understand." (From veteran missionary Darlene Anderson, still busy serving the Lord!—Ed).

From Georgia:

"Just wanted to say how much we enjoyed the DVD series *What It Means to Be a Grace Believer*...I plan on loaning this to my parents and others here in Georgia so that they might see what they have been missing in rightly dividing the Word!"

From Kentucky:

"I have started a new part-time job, and I am so thankful for the opportunity to support the ministry once again! God is so good...A special hello to...all the dear friends and saints I was able to meet at the Bible conference last October, while staying with Pastor Ken and Bonnie Lawson."

From our Inbox:

"Attached is a picture of the church I pastor. Your lessons help me much. I haven't gone to Bible school even one day, so I am always in need of God's grace on this work. Thanks to God for bringing you all there in BBS to my ministry here, and others abroad."



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

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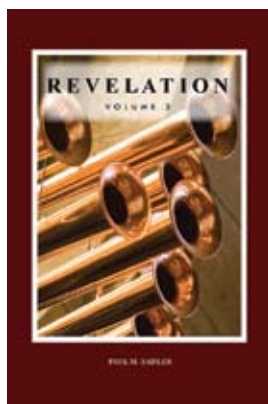
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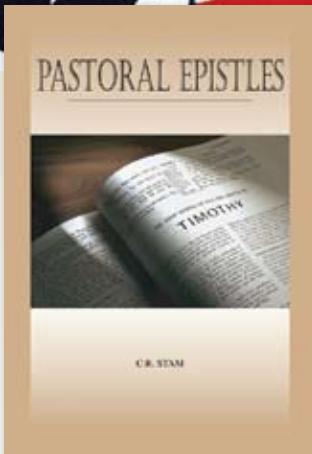
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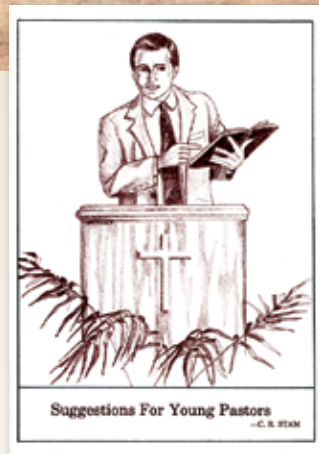
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News and Announcements

Permission granted! We sometimes get asked if it is okay to make photocopies of *Searchlight* articles to use in church or Bible study groups, and we always say yes! All that we ask is that your copy include the name of the article's author and the *Berean Searchlight* notation at the bottom of the page. We'll even make a suggestion that will help ensure a better quality copy. Just go to our website, and you can look up the issue you wish to use and print out as many copies as you need!

It only takes a few seconds! We all have friends and loved ones with whom we are trying to share the gospel of Christ or God's rightly divided Word. Sometimes after reading one of our *Two Minutes with the Bible* daily devotional emails you might say to yourself, "That's just the approach that will help Aunt Sue see the truth!" When that happens, you can forward the devotional to your loved one in two clicks of a mouse's ear. It only takes seconds, but it might make an eternal difference in someone's life.

Pastoral Opportunity: After many years of faithfully proclaiming Paul's gospel, Pastor Dwight Reed is retiring from the ministry. That means that the *Croton Community Church* in Croton, Michigan, is looking for a pastor. Interested men can contact Board Secretary Jack M. Adam at (231) 924-4273, or at edistowoods@ncats.net, or by mail at 5750 Wealthy Street, Newago, MI 49337.

Forward with care! Every day we receive replies to our *Two Minutes with the Bible* daily devotional emails, and that's great! We love to hear from our readers! But every week we also get a few replies that were meant to be sent to friends and loved ones, but someone hit "reply" instead of "forward." We usually respond, so that the sender will know that the intended recipient didn't receive it. We don't mind taking the time to do this, but these replies often contain personal messages that the senders are sometimes embarrassed to learn were misdirected! The moral of the story? As you partner with us in getting the message out to others, forward with care!



The *Point Betsie Lighthouse* is just south of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, five miles north of Frankfort, MI. Built in 1858, this last manned Lake Michigan light was one of the earliest Life Saving Stations, established to save shipwreck victims. These stations later became the U.S. Coast Guard.

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And tell the world His grace;
Sound through the earth His deeds of fame,
That all may seek His face. —Isaac Watts*