

# *The* **BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

February 2015



Feature Article

A Call to Arms, *by Paul M. Sadler* .....5

Articles

Responding Properly to Backbiting, *by John Fredericksen* .....12

The Olive Tree Boast, *by Ricky Kurth* .....13

The Calling of the Jerusalem Council, *by Ricky Kurth*.....21

Departments

2015 BBS Conference Schedule .....4

Question Box .....20

BBS Letter Excerpts .....26

News and Announcements .....30

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.

The *Berean Searchlight* is the official organ of the *Berean Bible Society*,  
and is sent free of charge to any who request it.

Editor: Ricky L. Kurth — Graphic Design: Kevin J. Sadler

**Reader’s Rights & Responsibilities:** BBS respects a reader’s right to hold views that differ from those of our writers. If a reader has a serious concern with a specific article, it is his or her responsibility to act in a manner that endeavors to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This can best be accomplished by contacting the editor, who will then forward your concerns to the author of the article in question. We promise to address all concerns in a timely manner.



You can reach us at:

BEREAN BIBLE SOCIETY  
N112 W17761 Mequon Road  
PO Box 756  
Germantown, WI 53022

Main Office: (262) 255-4750 — Fax Number: (262) 255-4195

Internet: [www.bereanbiblesociety.org](http://www.bereanbiblesociety.org)

E-mail: [berean@bereanbiblesociety.org](mailto:berean@bereanbiblesociety.org)

**The Berean Searchlight (ISSN 0005-8890), February 2015. Vol. 75, Number 11.**

The *Berean Searchlight* is published monthly (except July) at no subscription price, by *Berean Bible Society*, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022-0756. Periodical postage paid at Germantown, WI. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Berean Searchlight*, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022-0756 and additional mailing offices.



# From the Editor to You

Dear Friends in Christ,

Every month as I prepare the Letter Excerpts for the *Berean Searchlight*, I find that many of the letters are emails, of course. That's just a sign of the times! But rather than list too many Letter Excerpts as having come "From Our Inbox" or "From Facebook," I usually access the *Searchlight* mailing list on our shared server to see if the writer receives a hard copy of our magazine. That way I can list the state or country from which the Letter Excerpt hales, which always adds interest to the writer's words.

Each month as I scroll down through the thousands of faceless names on our mailing list, I'm always reminded of how Paul wrote to the Colossians, "I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you...and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted...unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding" (2:1,2). Many of you have never seen our faces in the flesh, and we would like for you to know that we share Paul's great conflict. For three quarters of a century now, *Berean Bible Society* has been involved in the great conflict to comfort the hearts of those who long for the full assurance of understanding God's Word, a comfort that can only come from an "acknowledgement of the mystery" (v. 2).

Throughout the year, we travel to as many Bible conferences as we can to meet those of you who partner with us in this great conflict. In April, however, I am hoping that you will come to visit us here at *Berean Bible Society*. You are cordially invited to attend the Bible conference we are having on April 25 to commemorate *our 75th anniversary*. Your visit will also afford you the opportunity to tour the facilities here at BBS and meet our staff—and it will give *us* the chance to meet *you*.

So, if you've ever written to ask us a Bible question, called to order literature, sent us a check to support our work for the Lord, or prayed for our ministry, we consider you part of our family, and we would like nothing more than to meet the face behind your name. The hearts of all who enjoy "the full assurance of understanding" are already "knit together in love" (Col. 2:2), but if you stand with us in a firm commitment to Paul's gospel, we hope you'll pay us a visit, "that ye may know our affairs" (Eph. 6:22), and that I personally "may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me" (Rom. 1:12).

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Ricky Kurth



# 2015 BBS CONFERENCE SCHEDULE



**BBF Winter Bible Conference**, January 10-11, Inverness, FL  
Pastor Kevin Sadler, Pastor Richard Ware,  
Pastor Wes Barteck, David Brown, Travis LaBrake  
Contact: John Reidel (325) 382-3102

**Florida Bible Conference**, February 28 - March 1, Nokomis, FL  
Pastor Paul M. Sadler—Contact: Ed Bedore (414) 313-0928

**Texas Two Step Conference**, March 6, Dallas, TX  
Pastor Ricky Kurth—Contact: Jason Summers (972) 569-7184

**Texas Two Step Conference**, March 7-8, Willis, TX  
Pastor Ricky Kurth—Contact: Gerald Wheaton (936) 524-6625

**Community Bible Conference**, March 28, Montgomery, IN  
Pastor Paul M. Sadler—Contact: Dave Wilson (812) 583-3052

**Central Tennessee Grace Conference**, April 10-12, Goodlettsville, TN  
Pastor Paul M. Sadler—Contact: Vitis Bailey (270) 634-1881

**BBS 75th Anniversary Conference**, April 25, Menomonee Falls, WI  
Pastors Paul M. Sadler, John Fredericksen, Ricky Kurth  
Contact: Christine Mulholland (262) 255-4750

**Northeast Ohio Bible Conference**, May 15-17, Ashtabula, OH  
Pastor Paul M. Sadler—Contact: David Adams (440) 992-9008

**47th Annual BBF Conference**, June 20-25, Cedar Lake, IN  
Pastors Paul M. Sadler, John Fredericksen, Ricky Kurth, and others!  
Contact: Kevin Sadler (262) 305-6860

**2nd Annual Central Michigan Conference**, July 10-11, Flint, MI  
Pastor Paul M. Sadler, Pastor Kevin Sadler  
Contact: Phil Long (810) 444-0670

**Southeast Bible Conference**, August 8-9, Tupelo, MS  
Pastor Ricky Kurth—Contact: John Smith (662) 706-4086

**BBF Fall Bible Conference**, October 9-11, Burkesville, KY  
Pastor John Fredericksen, Pastor Kevin Sadler, and others!  
Contact: Jeff Bertram (606) 348-3071

**Gulf Coast Fall Bible Conference**, November 6-8, Mobile, AL  
Pastor Paul M. Sadler—Contact: James Healan (251) 753-6891

**Central Indiana Regional Conference**, November 7, Middlebury, IN  
Pastor Ricky Kurth, Pastor Joel McGarvey  
Contact: Luke Hunt (260) 774-9300



# A Call to Arms

By Paul M. Sadler, D.D.

**“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:10,11).**

History bears witness to an endless stream of conflicts between the nations of the world. Those who fought in these campaigns affirm that *war* is nothing short of mass *confusion*. The army with the most comprehensive plan of attack to minimize confusion is usually victorious. The same can be said of the *spiritual warfare* in which we are engaged as we fight the good fight of the faith. Satan’s strategy is a simple one, namely, to cause confusion in our ranks. Therefore, to be forewarned is to be forearmed!

Before a country enters into a conflict, it must prepare its army in *advance*. In your mind’s eye, picture for a moment a battlefield strewn with barbed wire, bombs exploding, and bullets flying. Now

imagine a young soldier hunkered down in a foxhole asking his commander, “Sarge, how do I load this gun?” This may seem rather absurd, but it is a fairly accurate assessment of how unprepared most believers are to engage in battle with the enemy. When an attack is launched against us by the workers of darkness, we must be *prepared* beforehand to wield the sword of the Spirit effectively in defense of the gospel. Those who fail to do so are either lost in action, or they become spiritual casualties lying about on the battlefield.

As Paul calls us to a state of readiness, he says, “*Be strong in the Lord.*” A similar phrase is found in the Book of Joshua. “Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all



the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee” (Josh. 1:6,7).

Through Moses, God promised His chosen people that they would *inherit* a land flowing with milk and honey (Ex. 3:8). This massive piece of real estate, called the *Promised Land*, rightfully belonged to Israel—all she had to do was *claim* it. But there were enemies in the land, some of whom were giants. Hence, Jehovah’s charge to Joshua, “Be strong and of a good courage.” In other words, God would go before them as a Mighty Man of war to do battle on behalf of His people. *If* they obeyed the Word of the Lord, they would be more than conquerors. This would result in physical and material blessings flowing from Zion like a mighty river.

With the change in dispensations, however, God is making known His manifold wisdom through the Church, the Body of Christ. Through the revelation committed to the Apostle Paul, we understand that the members of Christ’s Body have a *heavenly* hope and calling. Unlike Israel, we have been *unconditionally* blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies (Eph. 1:3). The apostle has spent the better part of three chapters in Ephesians explaining our *position* in Christ, and the spiritual blessings that flow from it.

It is advantageous for every member of the Body of Christ not only to familiarize himself or herself with these blessings, but more importantly, to understand the *significance* of each. You see, the battle scene has shifted from the earthly to the *heavenly* realm. But this realm is presently occupied by

Satan and his fallen angelic host (second heaven). And be assured, he is not about to relinquish any of his authority or territory without a fight.

Throughout the ages, Satan has sought to hinder, and in some cases, overthrow the plans and purposes of God. Arno Gaebelein was the first to call this hostility, “The conflict of the Ages.” In the days of Noah, he attempted to *corrupt* the human race (Gen. 6:1,2). When God turned from the nations and set His affection on Abraham, Satan targeted the children of Israel, causing one *calamity* after another.

Now that Israel has been set aside in unbelief and God has turned to the Gentiles, we are the objects of his wrath. The powers of darkness would like nothing better than to discourage, corrupt, and defeat every member of the Body of Christ. Thus the apostle challenges us to “be strong in the Lord.” Why? Because we are up against a formidable foe, one who knows us better than we know ourselves. We must never enter this conflict in our own strength, for if we do, we will face one sorrow after another.

The only way the believer will ever endure the malicious attacks of this enemy is to put on the *whole armor of God*, stand firm, and rely solely on the *power of His might*. We must defend our *position* in Christ, much like a goalie does on a hockey team. The goal tender has to be on his guard consistently—vigilance is his middle name! As the puck enters his end of the ice, the goalie must react quickly to the deceptive maneuvers of his opponent.

Although it may be tempting for him to skate down the ice with the puck, if he strays out of position, the opposition usually regains possession and scores the game-winning goal. The outcome is predictable, both he and his teammates suffer a humiliating loss.



We, too, must know everything there is to know about our position in Christ, defend it, and never forsake it. The victory is ours if we follow the marching orders of the Commander in Chief!

## THE POWER OF HIS MIGHT

**“...and in the power of His might” (Eph. 6:10).**

As we enter into the battle fray, we must do so “in the power of His might.” In the Old Testament when God chose to demonstrate His Almighty power, He did so by pointing to His miraculous parting of the Red Sea. With the breath of His nostrils He caused the waters of the Red Sea to stand up as a heap on the right and on the left, and the children of Israel crossed to the other side on dry ground (Ex. 14:22). Interestingly, today God points us to the *resurrection* of His dear Son as an exhibition of His omnipotence.

Paul’s reference then to the “power of His might” refers us back to Ephesians Chapter 1: “And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead” (Eph. 1:19,20). Of course, God is not permitting outward manifestations of this power today, such as raising the dead. We, however, have at our disposal an endless source of *spiritual* power from which to draw *strength* in times of temptation, discouragement, depression, and mourning. This will help us withstand the shock of the conflict. Remember that God delivered others from the hand of the enemy and the same promise applies to us today (II Tim. 3:11,12 cf. 4:17,18).

We should add that there is another dimension to this phrase “the power of His might.” Continuing with the apostle’s train of thought in Ephesians 1:20, not only did God the Father raise Christ from the dead, He also “set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under His feet” (Eph. 1:20-22).

Christ is indeed all that He claimed to be and more. Therefore, the Father has highly exalted Him. All things are *subject* to Him in both heaven and earth. He is seated far above all these various realms of angelic authority, and they humbly render servitude to Him, Who is above all

others. The Scriptures clearly record that God does everything decently and in order (I Cor. 14:40). Heaven is a place of *organization*. For example, the elect angels are ranked accordingly:

*Cherubim*: Defenders of God's holiness (stationed around the throne) (Gen. 3:23,24 cf. Rev. 4:6-8).

*Seraphims*: Champions of God's righteousness (stationed above the throne declaring His holiness) (Isa. 6:1-8).

*Seven Spirits of God*: Attendants of highest service (stationed before the throne) (Rev. 1:4 cf. Luke 1:19).

*Principalities*: Supreme rulers (similar to our Cabinet Members) (Eph. 3:10).

*Powers*: Delegated authority (similar to our Joint Chiefs of Staff) (Eph. 3:10).

*Mights*: Battalions (similar to our Armed Forces—Army, Navy, Air Force, etc.) (Eph. 1:21).

*Thrones*: Seats of authority over a territory (similar to our Governors) (Col. 1:16).

*Dominions*: Enforcement agencies (similar to our local authorities—FBI, Police, etc.) (Col. 1:16).

*Host*: Populace (similar to our various stations in life) (Psa. 148:1,2 cf. Neh. 9:6).

In the beginning when Lucifer sinned, one-third of the angelic host defected with him in rebellion against God (Rev. 12:3,4 cf. 12:9). As he assumed his fallen position as the *archenemy* of God, Satan stationed his workers of darkness in a similar pattern as the authority structure of heaven. But here, something is often overlooked. Satan and his unseemly cohorts are also

*subject* to Christ. He has power over these “forces of evil,” as seen in the gospel according to Luke. As our Lord ministered the good news of the kingdom on earth, there was a flurry of demonic activity. Like any attentive general, Satan knows when and where his attacks will prove to be most effective. Of course, since it was the Lord Himself ministering the Word, the battle was unbelievably intense.

Shortly after the Master miraculously calmed the raging storm on the Sea of Galilee, He came to the country of the Gad-arenas. As He prepared to preach, a man by the name of Legion, who was demon possessed, withstood Him.<sup>1</sup> Those under the control of a devil, in this case devils, as his name implies, usually tend to be lewd, violent, and have unusual strength. Legion was all this and more. He was *exceedingly fierce*, so much so that all men feared him. Naked, he threw himself down at the feet of the Master, and a demon within this poor prisoner of darkness said, mockingly, “What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God Most High?” Even the demons acknowledge the Deity of Christ! But the next two statements uttered by this devil are telling. “I beseech Thee, torment me not...And they besought Him that He would not command them to go out into the deep.” These workers of evil knew that the Son of God had *authority* over them. In fact, they trembled at the thought that He would chain them in the sides of the pit where they would live in torment until the future Judgment (Luke 8:26-39 cf. Jude 1:6).



Satan and the demonic host probably roll in laughter when a believer pridefully says in his own strength, “Get thee behind me, Satan!” However, “in Christ,” when we put on the gospel armor in the *power of His might*, they head for cover! Why? Because they know that they are already defeated. When dawn broke on the morning of our Lord’s crucifixion, Satan had successfully manipulated all of the powers that be to condemn Christ. As the sound of the hammer hitting the nails echoed off the surrounding hills around Calvary, the demonic host looked on intently. They had Him right where they wanted Him! Suddenly, an eerie hush fell over heaven as the skies darkened and the hour drew near. Then, the moment of triumph—He’s dead! We’ve won the conflict of the ages. Evil will now prevail! They probably bowed themselves before the great one who brought them to this glorious victory—Lucifer!



But three days later they were singing a different tune. Imagine their surprise when the seal of Christ’s tomb was broken, and they saw the Son of God had risen from the dead! It was their worst possible nightmare. The party

was over and they knew they were helpless.

Paul says, “And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” This is a picture of the mighty ancient warrior who *surprises* his enemy, conquers, and parades his subjects through the streets of his homeland. Victory! Satan and his fallen host had absolutely no idea that when Christ died that day, He was dying for the sins of the world! He had purchased with His own blood the eternal salvation of all those who would hereafter believe on His death, burial, and resurrection. Satan and his entourage may attempt to intimidate us, but we are more than conquerors in Christ (Rom. 8:37).

### THE WILES OF THE DEVIL

**“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (Eph. 6:11).**

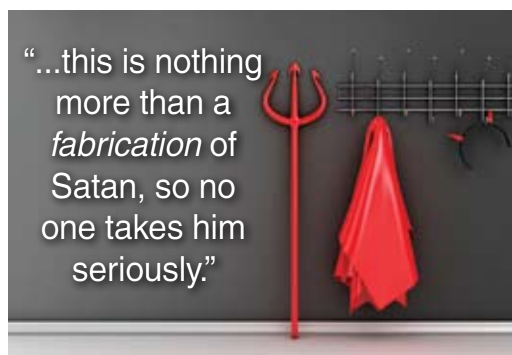
The definition of *illusion* is, “The state or fact of being intellectually deceived or misled.” Perhaps the most well-known illusionist of our day is David Copperfield. We’re sure it was headline news when he supposedly flew high above the stage before a live audience. As he was doing so, he waved a torch that was in his right hand over his head to demonstrate that he wasn’t being suspended on a wire. He then passed through two large crisscrossed rotating rings of fire to everyone’s amazement. Many walked away muttering to themselves, “How’d he do that?” The answer is, it was merely an illusion. Things are not always as they appear to be.

The same may be said of the world's perception of Satan, who is the *master* of illusion. Both film and caricatures of the evil one often portray him as a red, grotesque being with horns, pointed ears, hooves, forked tail, and a pitchfork in his left hand. According to mythology and popular opinion, the devil spends his time stoking the eternal fires of hell awaiting those who have been condemned. Of course, this is nothing more than a *fabrication* of Satan, so no one takes him seriously. In reality, Lucifer can appear as an angel of light, perfect in beauty and wisdom (Ezek. 28:17 cf. II Cor. 11:14).

If Satan were to transform himself into human form, which is well within his means, he would probably be handsome, intelligent, articulate, and have enough charisma to mesmerize the masses. Although he is light years away from God in knowledge, wisdom, and power, he does possess a supernatural ability far beyond any human capability. For example, he supernaturally flashed all the kingdoms of this world before Christ in a moment of time. In addition, he will empower the future Antichrist and false prophet to perform miracles in the coming Tribulation Period, in order to deceive the nations (Luke 4:5,6; II Thes. 2:8,9; Rev. 13:11-15).

While "hell" was originally created for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41), they have yet to be incarcerated there. Consequently, Satan is alive and well, actively hindering and tempting the members of the Body of Christ today. He is not confined to the earth or stoking the fires of hell,

as some suppose. His realm is in the heavens where he *presides* over the rulers of darkness who look for opportunities to destroy our testimony.



**"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12).**

The spiritual battle that we are engaged in is not with flesh and blood. Essentially, the apostle is saying that our brothers and sisters in Christ are not the enemy, although they are sometimes treated as such. The rulers of darkness are the real enemy *behind* the scenes. Satan has arrayed his host in the same fashion as God, adopting the same titles "principalities" and "powers." They are the ones behind the dissension, discord, and divisions among believers.

This is why it is so important to be rooted and grounded in the faith. We say this because these workers of evil always look for the weakest point to attack, like any well-trained army. They usually single out carnally-minded believers who don't take the things of

the Lord seriously, to wreak havoc in the local assembly.

The busybody is an example of this spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. Those who spread malicious rumors about the pastor among the congregation do so hoping to get him to step down. They often find his messages too convicting and prefer to have someone in the pulpit who will tell them what they want to hear, not what they need to hear from the Word of God.

Alan Redpath, a former president of Moody Bible Institute, states in his book *A Passion for Preaching*, how he once implemented the following acronym to address the problem of gossip:

“I once formed a mutual encouragement fellowship at a time of stress in one of my pastorates. The members subscribed to a simple

formula applied before speaking of any person or subject that was perhaps controversial.

**T**—Is it true?

**H**—Is it helpful?

**I**—Is it inspiring?

**N**—Is it necessary?

**K**—Is it kind?

“If what I am about to say does not pass those tests, I will keep my mouth shut! And it worked!”

The next time you find yourself in the middle of a crisis, remember what’s going on behind the scenes in the spiritual realm. Rather than trying to destroy a brother or sister in Christ to make a point, attack the real problem instead.

### Endnote

1. Since we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness and the rulers of darkness, demonic possession is uncommon today. In fact, it is extremely rare.

**Don’t Forget!**

## *75th Anniversary Conference* **OF THE BEREAN BIBLE SOCIETY**

**Date:** Saturday, April 25, 2015

**Location:** *Falls Bible Church*  
W156 N6531 Pilgrim Road, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

**Speakers:** Pastor Paul M. Sadler,  
Pastor Ricky Kurth, Pastor John Fredericksen

**Theme:** *To God Be the Glory, Great Things He Has Done*

For additional information, please contact:  
Christine Mulholland at *Berean Bible Society* (262) 255-4750  
or email: [christinem@bereanbiblesociety.org](mailto:christinem@bereanbiblesociety.org)



# Responding Properly to BACKBITING

**I**n October of 2013, twelve-year-old Rebecca of Lakeland, Florida, took her life after being bullied by several other teens. A series of events, including malicious cyber messages to and about Rebecca drove her to a tragic end. Even after her death, one of the girls callously admitted she had bullied Rebecca, bragged about it and stated, in crass terms, that she couldn't care less about what happened.

While the above might sound shocking, it has become commonplace in our society. In fact, in different degrees, it is common even in Christian circles. Believers of all ages allow themselves to participate in verbal bullying and many of us enable perpetrators by listening to things that should never be spoken. The Bible gives us an answer about how every godly Christian should respond to vicious words spoken against someone else.

God tells us in Proverbs 25:23: "The north wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue." The word *backbiting* means to attack the character or reputation of a person who is not present or, to speak slanderously of one who is absent. Oftentimes one who is backbiting is given an ear with the rationalization that the perpetrator is a friend, needs a sounding board because they are hurting, or needs counsel. But such concepts are contrary to the instruction of God's Word. Malicious talk about someone who is not present doesn't seek to solve the problem. It is an exercise to sin. Our response should be to let the guilty party know with certainty that it is wrong, and we want no part of such conduct. In II Corinthians 12:20-21, the Apostle Paul warned he would give an even stronger response to those who backbite or slander another. He would publicly "bewail many." What do you think? Would confronting the backbiter in God's way deter such sinful actions and perhaps aid in the health of the local church?

If you have been guilty of backbiting another, this is your opportunity to glorify your Savior. We suggest you stop this action immediately and, whether past or present, apologize, without excuse, to the one you victimized. When you hear backbiting, choose to respond as instructed above. We can either be the problem or the solution. From this point on, which will you be?

—Pastor John Fredericksen





# THE OLIVE TREE BOAST

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

Our Concluding Study of “The Olive Tree Graft”

## **The Fatness**

Now that we’ve talked about how the Gentiles partake of the “root” of the olive tree, we must consider how we partake of its “fatness” (Rom. 11:17).

Fatness in the Bible speaks of *blessing* (Gen. 27:28), and so the fatness of the olive tree must be a representation of all the spiritual blessings that flowed from “the covenants of promise” that God made with Abraham, the root of the olive tree, the source of the fatness. The most basic of these promises was eternal life (Rom. 4:13-16), with “the adoption” and “the glory” and “the service of God” being other spiritual blessings that once pertained only to Israel (Rom. 9:4,5).

As we’ve seen, the olive tree symbolized the *nearness* that Israel had to these blessings, including saved and unsaved Jews alike. The unbelievers in Israel were broken off from being nigh

to these blessings (11:17), but the Gentiles, saved and unsaved alike, have been grafted in “among” the believing Jewish branches that were left, and “with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree.” All Gentiles are now nigh to these blessings, and men who seek them must now find them among the Gentiles.

Now, it’s easy to understand how *saved* Gentiles partake of the fatness of the olive tree by being grafted in “among” the believing branches in Israel. The Lord used that word “among” the day He saved Saul and sent him to the Gentiles, “that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance *among* them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me” (Acts 26:17,18). The only ones who were already sanctified by faith in Christ at the time that the Lord spoke those words to Saul were the believing branches in Israel’s olive tree, and the Lord told



Saul that we have an inheritance “among” these believing branches. That word “among” helps us to understand that the “them” that we were “grafted in *among*” in Romans 11:17 are the sanctified believing branches in the olive tree of Israel, who had an inheritance “in Christ” before us (Rom. 16:7). We don’t have *the same* inheritance in Christ as Israel has, but we have an inheritance in Him among them.

But how can we say that *unsaved* Gentiles partake of the fatness of the olive tree? The answer is that unsaved Gentiles partake of this fatness in the same way that unsaved Jews partook of it in time past, in the holiness that they enjoyed just by being “nigh” to it. As we saw in our first study of the olive tree, in time past all Jews were “holy” just by being nigh to the fatness of these blessings, but *believing* Jews were saved by them. In the same way, all Gentiles today are holy (in the I Corinthians 7:14 sense) just by being nigh to the fatness of these blessings, but *believing* Gentiles are saved by them.

### The Boast

Now, Paul knew that this rag-to-riches story among the Gentiles was pretty heady stuff! That’s why the apostle, knowing the propensity of men to boast, goes on to caution us about this:

**“Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee” (Rom. 11:18).**

The “branches” here can’t be the *believing* branches among whom we Gentiles were grafted in, for there would be no temptation

for us to boast against the people with whom we now share an inheritance. We are rather being warned not to boast against the *unbelieving* branches that were broken off. If you are curious about what kind of boasting Paul is warning us about, he gives us a clue when he says that this boasting can be prevented by remembering that the “root” of Abraham<sup>1</sup> bears the Gentiles, we don’t bear him. What kind of boasting do Gentiles do that involves Abraham?

You know the answer to that question if you are familiar with what is called *replacement theology*. This doctrine teaches that after Israel crucified her Messiah God washed His hands of the seed of Abraham and will never again have anything to do with her, giving all her blessings to the Gentiles. This belief system boasts that we Gentiles are the *real* Jews, the *true* seed of Abraham.

This kind of boasting against the unbelieving branches that God had to break off of the olive tree of Israel goes on all the time among Gentiles, saved and unsaved alike. But if we Gentiles are the first true Jews, *then we must be the root of Abraham*. Paul’s point in giving the olive tree analogy is to nip this kind of boasting in the bud by reminding Gentiles that we are *not* the root of Abraham, we have been grafted *into* the root of Abraham, and so have nothing to boast about. The root of the olive tree bears us, we don’t bear him.

Here it is important to notice that Paul says it is *the root* of the olive tree that bears us Gentiles, not *the firstfruits*. That is, it is *Abraham* who bears us, not the

patriarchs of Israel.<sup>2</sup> That means that the connection that believing Gentiles have with the believing branches of the olive tree is not based on Jacob (Israel), it is based on *Abraham*. We are part of the seed of Abraham, but we are not part of “the stock of Israel” (Phil. 3:5). That is, if we return our attention back up to Romans 11:16, we see that Gentiles cannot be made to be a part of the aggregate “lump” of saved and unsaved Jews that stem from the firstfruit of Isaac and Jacob, for we can’t trace our family tree back to those patriarchs. But saved and unsaved Gentiles *can* be made to be a part of the olive tree that stems from the root of Abraham.

### The Brag

After silencing the boast in which most Gentiles engage, that we are the root of Abraham, Paul knew that the pride of men does not go down easily. He knew that after hearing how the Gentiles were grafted into the olive tree when the unbelieving branches were broken off that pride would prompt the Gentiles to figure out a way to boast about that too! He even knew what form this new boast would take:

**“Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in” (Rom. 11:19).**

Paul knew that once the Gentiles were forced to admit that they don’t bear Abraham, that he bears them, that to save face they will switch to boasting that *the reason* God broke the Jewish branches off was so that they might be grafted in! Paul cannot deny that this is true, for he knew

it was God’s eternal purpose in the mystery to graft us into the olive tree. But just because Paul can’t *deny* this boast doesn’t mean he can’t *address* and *deflate* it:

### The Squelch

**“Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear” (Rom. 11:20).**

With this word “well,” Paul acknowledges that unbelieving Jews were broken off of the olive tree to graft the Gentiles in during the dispensation of grace. However, as he goes on to point out, this is nothing to brag about! The unbelieving branches were broken off because of unbelief, and this could just as easily happen to the Gentiles. Here we have to pause and review what happened to Israel in order to understand what Paul is saying might happen to the Gentiles.



The Jews as a whole, saved and unsaved alike, used to stand by faith. Faith comes by hearing God’s Word (Rom. 10:17), and “unto them were committed the oracles of God” (Rom. 3:2). Saved and unsaved Jews alike had the

Word of God, what we call the Old Testament. It was one of the things that made them near to God. That didn't mean every Jew *believed* the Scriptures, it just meant that they *stood by faith* before God because of them. When a Jew *believed* the Word given to them he became "obedient to the faith" found in his nation (Acts 6:7). But because of the unbelief of "some" (most)<sup>2</sup> in Israel, the nation as a whole was broken off from the position of nearness to God that their Scriptures afforded them, and they are no longer the source of God's blessing on earth.

In the same way, the Gentiles, saved and unsaved alike, now "stand by faith," as Paul says here. Faith still comes by the Word of God, and saved and unsaved Gentiles alike now have the Word of God that the Jews did not have and do not accept, what we call the New Testament, especially Paul's epistles, the books written by the apostle of the Gentiles. That doesn't mean that every Gentile *believes* the Word of God, but like with the Jews, the Word was given to the Gentiles "for *obedience to the faith*" (Rom. 1:5; 16:26). When a Gentile believes, he becomes obedient to the faith (Rom. 6:17). But if some (most) Gentiles refuse to believe, then the Gentiles will be broken off from the position of nearness to God that Paul's epistles afford us, and we will no longer be the source of God's blessing on earth.

So as Gentiles we "stand by faith," but our apostle has warned us that "in the latter times" of the dispensation of grace "*some* [most] shall depart from the faith" (I Tim. 4:1). Faith comes by hearing the

Word of God, and when most of the Gentiles move away from the Word of God that they hear in Paul's epistles, they will fall from their standing with God. It is this which we Gentiles must fear, instead of boasting and being "highminded" about what God is doing in and through us in this dispensation.

When Paul warns the Gentiles not to be *highminded*, this word means "proud" and "arrogant," and in this context the word speaks of the *specific* arrogance that the apostle addressed in verses 18,19, that which boasts that we are the true Jews, and that God broke off relations with Israel in order to graft in the Gentiles. It is no coincidence that Paul says "that in the last days" before God cuts the Gentiles off at the Rapture that "men shall be...*highminded*" (II Tim. 3:1-4). As Paul says here, the Gentiles as a whole should rather "fear,"

**"For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee" (Rom. 11:21).**

### **Stand, Or Else!**

Far from a threat to take salvation away from redeemed members of the Body of Christ, the warning of v. 21 must be considered in the context of all that we have come to understand in this passage. The "natural branches" in Israel that God "spared not" were broken off of the olive tree "because of unbelief" (v. 20). That is, the "natural" descendants of the patriarchs were broken off from their position of being nigh to God when they did not believe. That means that the Gentiles as a whole are being threatened with a

similar warning, but with an even greater sense of urgency. If God didn't spare the *natural* branches of the olive tree of Israel, how much less will He spare the *wild* olive tree of the Gentiles?



But what does that mean? Well, when “God spared not the natural branches,” they were cut off from being the people who had God in their midst, the people who could offer salvation to the world. This agrees with the symbolic meaning of the olive tree, which speaks of *testimony* and *witness*. Zechariah saw “two olive trees” in a vision and was later told that these two olive trees were “the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth” (Zech. 4:11-14). We see these two anointed ones again in John’s vision of the Revelation, where God calls them “My two witnesses...the two olive trees...standing before the God of the earth” (Rev. 11:3,4).

Since these two witnesses are said to give a “testimony” (v. 7), God wants us to understand that the olive tree of Romans 11 is all about which group of people will be His witnesses in the world. Israel *used to be* the ones giving His testimony. God told the entire nation of Israel, “Ye are

My witnesses” (Isa. 43:10), in contrast to “all the nations” that were witnesses of the false gods (v. 9). But now God’s witnesses are found among the Gentiles, and it is from this position of being the source of God’s witness to the world that Paul is saying we will not be spared if we depart from the faith. It is our agency in the world that is in danger of being *severed* by something Paul goes on to call “the *severity*” of God:

**“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off” (Rom. 11:22).**

In the context, “the goodness” of God must be defined as His goodness in grafting the wild olive tree of the Gentiles into the root of Abraham, making us His source of blessing to the world, with God in our midst, just as Israel was once His channel of blessing to the world, with God in their midst. Likewise, in context, the “severity” of God must refer to the *severing* of the people of Israel as a whole from being His source of blessing to the world. The warning here is given to encourage the Gentiles to continue to be the source of God’s testimony to the world.

### Or Else What?

What will happen if we don’t? What’s all this about being “cut off”? To answer this question, all we have to do is remember what it means to be cut off in the context of this passage. Earlier, Paul talked about how the unbelieving Jews had been “broken off” from the olive tree of God’s witness to the world when the nation as a

whole fell into apostasy, prompting the people of Israel as a whole to be dismissed as the source of God's testimony to the world. This means that the cutting off that Paul warns the Gentiles about must be the similar risk of being dismissed as the source of God's testimony to the world if we similarly fall into overall apostasy.

What are the odds of that happening? Whatever they are, it is beyond a safe bet, for the Apostle Paul predicts that our dispensation, as all others, will end in failure. His descriptions of the last days of the dispensation of grace are replete with predictions of departure from the faith (I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 3:1-5). There is no question that the time will come for the Gentiles to be cut off as the source of salvation in the earth, when the Rapture brings an end to the present divine interregnum.

### Then What?

What will happen when God cuts the Gentiles off? Will He be left without an olive tree of witness in the earth, with no source of testimony to the lost? Far from it! Speaking of the people of Israel, Paul goes on to say:

**“And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again” (Rom. 11:23).**

It won't be difficult for God to graft Israel back into the olive tree of His testimony, for the root of His testimony that He lay in the historic life of Abraham will still be here in the earth after the Body of Christ is gone.

We see an illustration of this in the “tree” of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:20-23), the “head of gold”

who God made to be the head over all the earth (Dan. 2:37,38) when He took the world's headship away from Israel and made them the tail (Deut. 28:43,44). God tried to warn Nebuchadnezzar that He would “cut off his branches” (Dan. 4:14) if he didn't “break off” his sins (4:27). When he persisted in his iniquity, God cut *his whole tree* down, laying the axe to his roots (4:28-33), and allowed another to reign in his stead until he was ready to be used of God again (vv. 34-37). If you know the story, you know that to facilitate his return, God vowed that He would “leave the stump of his roots in the earth” (Dan. 4:15), and sure enough, his kingdom was still there upon his return (4:26).



In the same way, God laid the axe to the root of the tree of Israel (Matt. 3:10), and the entire tree was cut down (Luke 13:6-9), and the Gentiles have taken over as God's agents on earth in their absence. But the stump of her roots in the earth are still here in the ancient root that He planted in Abraham, and after the Rapture it will be an easy thing for God to rejoin the people of Israel to the



root of Abraham, return them to the headship of the world, and reinstate them to their position of being His conduit to the earth.

Here it should be pointed out that God didn't break *branches* off of the Gentiles and graft them in to the olive tree of Israel, for that would make us part of Israel. No, when God cut Israel off because of the unbelief of some, the axe was laid to the root of the tree of Israel (Matt. 3:10), and the entire wild olive "tree" of the Gentiles was graft in to the root of Abraham (Rom. 11:17). But the Gentiles will be cut off at the Rapture, after which God will restore the olive tree of Israel to her roots, just as He did with the tree of Nebuchadnezzar.

### **It's Only Natural**

Of course, all this is news to those who teach that God washed His hands of Israel after the Cross and will never have anything to do with her ever again. It's true, after what Israel did, it seems impossible that God could ever restore her. But as Paul goes on to say, it is not only possible that God can graft Israel back in to the root of her tree, it will be easy and *natural*.

**"For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Rom. 11:24).**

In time past, if anyone asked who God's witnesses to the world were, people would *naturally* have answered "Israel." They were the people to whom God had given


birth as a nation, nurtured when they were young, and carefully cultivated and groomed to be His servants. It would have been *unnatural* to think that the Gentiles, who had received none of this attention, could be grafted into the olive tree of God's testimony to the world, and yet this is what God did, acting "contrary to nature" in doing so. From this Paul argues that if God could do what was too unnatural to even consider, how much easier will it be for Him to return the people who were more naturally associated with God to the olive tree of His testimony.

### **Lessons to Be Learned**

"Lest ye should be wise in your own conceits" (Rom. 11:25), that is, lest you be found among those that boast against the branches of Israel by teaching replacement theology, God would have you to know that Israel's blindness is only temporary (v. 25), and that the day will come when God will return Israel to her roots (vv. 26,27). He is not through with Israel yet! Those who claim that God took all of her promises and gave them to us need to remember that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Rom. 11:29), and that Israel will one day get all that God promised her.

In the meantime, we trust that the understanding of the olive tree analogy we have presented will be used of God to keep many from denying that it is *the Gentiles* that have been grafted into the olive tree of God's testimony. Denying this is a dangerous view that takes a step in the direction of the erroneous Acts 28 position that teaches that we have no

connection with the people of Israel. It is also our sincere hope that this study will equip you to answer those that would use Paul's analogy to support replacement theology, or the idea that the believer can lose his salvation. Members of the Body of Christ need to know that while branches can be cut off of an olive tree, all the cutting that will ever be done on the body of Christ was done as He died for

our sins, and we can never be cut out of Him. We hope you'll share this article with any who use this passage to shake the faith of others in Paul's clear assertion that *nothing can separate us from the love of Christ* (Rom. 8:35-39). 

---

### Endnotes

1. See our comments in the previous issue.
2. Ibid

## Question Box

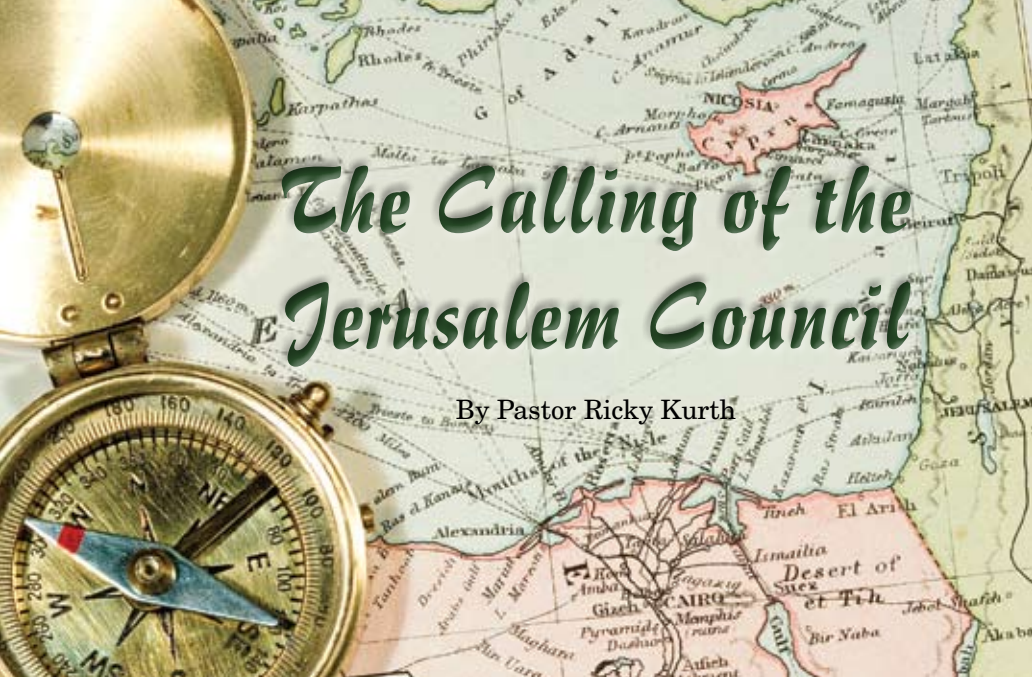
*“Matthew says the chief priests took the money Judas cast down in the temple and bought the ‘field of blood.’ Peter, in Acts, says that Judas bought the field with the ‘reward of iniquity.’ On the surface, this appears to be a contradiction.”*

First and foremost, the Word of God never contradicts itself. When there is an apparent contradiction, the problem is not with the Scriptures, but with our understanding of them. Most times the conundrum is easily resolved, which is the case here. However, when we are confronted with no suitable explanation; we simply have to wait on further light before we attempt to interpret a passage.

When the chief priests and elders *refused* to receive the thirty pieces of silver, as noted, Judas cast them to the floor and went out and hanged himself. After his departure, these religious leaders counseled together as to what to do with the money. Since these ill-gotten funds were used to betray innocent blood, they determined that it would be unlawful to put it into the temple treasury. An honorable thing, indeed, for men who only a few hours earlier were guilty of conspiracy.

So these unscrupulous leaders took Judas' thirty pieces of silver, “and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in” (Matt. 27:3-10). Since it was Judas's money that was used to buy the field, he is credited with the purchase. Peter confirms this when he said, “Now this man [Judas] purchased a field with the reward of iniquity” (Acts 1:18).

—Pastor Paul M. Sadler



# The Calling of the Jerusalem Council

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

Have you ever wondered why people always speak about going “up north” and “down south”? Back in the second century AD, Egyptian astronomer Ptolemy was the first to position a world map with north up at the top, and south down at the bottom, and all mapmakers after him followed suit. That continued until the Middle Ages when, for some reason, maps began to appear with *east* on top, giving rise to the expression, “get yourself oriented.” Eventually, north made its way back to the top of our maps, however, where you always find it to this very day—except, of course, on some Australian gag maps that show their continent on top of the world!

## Why “Up” to Jerusalem?

I say all that to introduce a puzzle. The Bible speaks about going “up to Jerusalem” twenty-five times, and it doesn’t seem to matter if the one traveling there was beginning his journey from the north, south, east, or west. This puzzle is easily solved, however, when we remember that Jerusalem is “a city that is set on a hill” (Matt. 5:14). The city’s 2,533-foot elevation is symbolic of how God always intended for her to be “the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14). This explains why Bible characters always traveled “up” to Jerusalem, regardless of their directional orientation, including the Apostle Paul in our text:

**“Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also” (Gal. 2:1).**

Fourteen years after Paul’s first visit to Jerusalem, he “went up again” to attend what has been called “The Jerusalem Council.”

This council was called to examine the message that Paul had been preaching among the Gentiles, that of salvation by grace apart from circumcision and the works of the law (Acts 15:1,2). This was a radical departure from the kingdom program, where Gentiles were required to be circumcised and keep the law to be saved, as “the Pharisees which believed” reminded the saints as the council convened (Acts 15:5).

### Why Bring Barnabas?

Paul’s decision to attend the council “with Barnabas” was not made at random. Barnabas was one of the men who obeyed the Lord’s command to sell all of his possessions (Luke 18:22; Acts 4:36). The fact that Luke singles him out for special mention after telling us that *all* the believers sold their possessions (Acts 4:32) suggests that he was the wealthiest man to obey this difficult commandment, and so had the most to lose. If so, then Paul brought Barnabas to the Jerusalem Council because the leaders could not question his sincerity or his commitment to the Lord when he testified on Paul’s behalf.

But there was another reason Paul brought Barnabas. He was “a Levite” (Acts 4:36), and it was the duty of the Levites to *preserve* and *protect* the Law. Whenever the Jews set up camp in the wilderness, God instructed that “the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony” (Num. 1:53). That meant that if any of Israel’s enemies tried to steal the ark containing “the two tables of testimony” (Ex. 31:18), they would have to go *through the Levites*.

With that in mind, imagine the impact it would have on the Jerusalem Council if one of these historic guardians of the Law were to testify that the Gentiles could be saved apart from the Law! If you can’t imagine that, imagine the impact it would have if the leader of the Church of Christ announced that you didn’t have to be baptized with water to be saved, or if the head of the Seventh Day Adventist Church declared that you didn’t have to keep the Sabbath to be saved. Paul brought Barnabas to the Jerusalem Council because he knew that that’s the kind of impact Barnabas would have at the meeting.

### Why Bring Titus?

Paul decided to bring Titus to the council meeting because he needed a Gentile that would not succumb to the tremendous pressure that some at the council were sure to put on him to be circumcised, and Titus was *one tough hombre*. His toughness can be seen when we compare what Paul wrote to the Corinthians about him to what Paul wrote them about Timothy. Timothy was such a tenderhearted man (II Tim. 1:4) that Paul begged the Corinthians to let him minister to them “without fear” (I Cor. 16:10), but of *Titus* he wrote them, “with fear and trembling *ye* received *him*” (II Cor. 7:14,15). Titus was so tough that he probably had a bearskin rug on his floor that wasn’t dead, it was just afraid to move.

Then there is the matter of his name. Do you remember Johnny Cash's song, "A Boy Named Sue?" His father knew he wouldn't be there to help his son become a man, so he named him Sue, knowing he'd have to get tough or die. Well, the name Titus means "nurse," and while there are a lot of very tough nurses in today's world, in Paul's day the word "nurse" referred only to the tender, intimate way in which a mother nourished her infant (Ex. 2:7). With a name like that, Titus had to get tough or die. Titus is probably the reason Waldo is still hiding after all these years.

Now that we've met some of the principle characters in the story, let's continue on with Paul's description of what happened:

**"And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain" (Gal. 2:2).**



**"The fact that Paul had to communicate his gospel to the twelve proves they did not know his gospel."**

### Why a Special Revelation?

The word "revelation" just means God *revealed* to Paul that he should go up to the Jerusalem council. If you are curious as to why the Lord had to give Paul a special revelation to get him to go to Jerusalem, it is because fourteen years earlier He had given him a special revelation telling him to get out of Jerusalem (Acts 22:18). After that, Paul *avoided* Jerusalem (Gal. 1:17-19) lest anyone get the idea that he got his message from the twelve apostles.

If that's so, however, why did God send Paul *back* to Jerusalem after all those years? Well, by that time, Paul had already received his message, and God wanted it "communicated unto them" that dwelt in Jerusalem, especially the leaders of the kingdom church.

We are well aware that our opponents believe that Paul preached the same message as the twelve. If that be the case, however, why did Paul have to *communicate* his message to them? You never read of Joshua communicating the message he preached to Moses, for he preached the same message of the Law! The fact that Paul had to communicate his gospel to the twelve proves they did not know his gospel.

And make no mistake, the twelve were the ones "of reputation" that Paul mentions here. The twelve had the very *highest* reputation in the kingdom church, and deservedly so. They were the leaders of what God had been doing on earth. God was now doing something *new* through Paul, however, and He wanted the twelve to know about it.



## Why a Private Communication?

But it wasn't going to be easy to convince the twelve that Gentile converts didn't need to be circumcised and keep the law to be saved, so Paul approached them "privately." I mean, if you go to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention to try to convince them to give up on water baptism, you would be wise to speak to the leaders privately, rather than bringing the matter up during a meeting on the convention floor. In the same way, if Paul didn't approach the twelve about circumcision privately, he says he would have run in vain during the past years of his ministry.

What does that mean? It means if Paul were unable to convince the twelve that God was now saving Gentiles apart from circumcision, then all the Gentiles he had led to the Lord would question their salvation, wondering if they were really saved without circumcision and the law. Plus, notice that Paul *also* says that if he failed that day that he "*should* run" in vain. That is, if the apostle lost the battle over circumcision, all of his *future* converts would likewise question *their* salvation—and that would include *you*, for at the time you were one of Paul's future converts. All members of the Body of Christ are Pauline converts, for Paul is the only one in the Bible that preached the message of salvation by grace through faith alone that saves people in the dispensation of grace.

How we should thank God for the tact and discretion with which Paul communicated his message to the twelve that day! Perhaps you've seen the bumper sticker that says, "If you can read this, thank a teacher," and the follow-up stickers that added, "If you can read this *in English* and not German or Japanese, thank a veteran." Beloved, if you are sure that you're saved without circumcision, or baptism, or by keeping the law, *thank the Apostle Paul*.



# Community Bible Conference

**Date:** Saturday, March 28, 2015

**Location:** *The Gasthof Amish Village*  
6659 Gasthof Village Rd., Montgomery, Indiana

**Guest Speaker:**

Pastor Paul M. Sadler, *Berean Bible Society*

For additional information, please contact:

Pastor Dave Wilson at (812) 583-3052 or  
*Grace Community Church* at (812) 277-0520





# TEXAS TWO STEP CONFERENCE

## Step One

**Date:**

Friday, March 6, 2015

**Location:**

*Dallas/Plano Marriott  
at Legacy Town Center  
7121 Bishop Road,  
Plano, Texas*

**Guest Speaker:**

*Pastor Ricky Kurth,  
Berean Bible Society*

For questions or more  
information, please contact:

Jason Summers at  
(972) 569-7184  
or [js2941@cableone.net](mailto:js2941@cableone.net)

## Step Two

**Dates:**

Saturday and Sunday,  
March 7-8, 2015

**Location:**

*Grace Bible Church  
109 1/2 W. Montgomery Street,  
Willis, Texas*

**Guest Speaker:**

*Pastor Ricky Kurth,  
Berean Bible Society*

For questions or more  
information, please contact:

Pastor Gerald Wheaton at  
(936) 524-6625  
or [gwheaton6625@gmail.com](mailto:gwheaton6625@gmail.com)

***That's two small steps for man,  
one giant leap for the spiritual mind!***



## BBS Letter Excerpts

### From Florida:

"I first contacted your ministry in my bonds almost twenty years ago, and the literature you sent to me started me on my journey toward learning the gospel of grace."

### From North Carolina:

"Thank you kindly for expanding my understanding of God's Word. If there's one thing I want to know in life, it's the truth."

### From Florida:

"I've been reading *Things That Differ*; what an awesome read! It makes me want to ask my pastor, What is the mystery that Paul speaks of?" (Ask, ask!—Ed).

### From Oregon:

"The *Searchlight* has so helped us get into the Scriptures and has made them come alive and helped us to grow. Our goal is to be like those Bereans and search the Scriptures, and when we see the difference between Jesus' earthly ministry and then when the risen Christ met Saul and gave him the gospel for us today in the age of grace—wow! Confused before—now excited Bible study!"

### From Minnesota:

"Enclosed please find my check for 2014. I realize it is a nominal amount for all that I learn from the *Searchlight*...it's especially nice to have short articles to read and get me back on track when things aren't going in the right direction."

### From our Inbox:

"Love the *Two Minutes* lessons! Look forward to receiving them first thing in the morning before going to work!"

### From our Inbox:

"*Two Minutes with the Bible*—'Self-Esteem.' Good one Pastor Sadler...You nailed it!"

### From Iowa:

"Twenty years ago at a garage sale I ran across a box of books. Scanned through them, liked what I read, bought them. Took them home and for the next fifteen years they collected dust. In 2008 I opened the box of books and began to read through them...My heart was immediately changed because of these writings...I now believe that I know the truth of the Scriptures that have been haunting me in the past. As a Baptist Christian you are supposed to believe what they teach. Somehow, I never could quite grasp their doctrine on water baptism and the 'Great' commission as I read God's Word, but didn't know why. Now through these books I know. The author of these wonderful books is a man of God named Cornelius R. Stam."

### From our Inbox:

"As usual you have a way to explain the gospel of grace and its requirements (or lack thereof) in a clear, concise and simple away." (Thank God for the lack thereof!—Ed).



### From Facebook:

“Stam’s articles always make things easy to understand.”

### From Illinois:

“Thank you, Pastor Sadler, for writing your commentaries on *Revelation*. Keep up the good work!”

### From Nevada:

“While reading ‘The Gainsaying of Grace’...a thought came to mind, how it would make good material to arrange a show from it and present it on YouTube. I’d like to get your ‘okay’ to use it...I really found that subject interesting and helpful... these are the sort of topics that help bring God’s Word into life’s playing field, substantive, with meaning that edifies our learning in sound foundational thinking and perception.” (Permission granted!—Ed).

### From Wisconsin:

“I started reading the March issue and stopped right before reading ‘How to Live in the Last Days.’ I...intended to ask you what you thought would be a good defense and teaching-the-truth tool, then I read your article and you answered me before I asked! Imagine that—like that’s never happened before!”

### From Australia:

“Thank you so very much for this response—excellent. I will be keeping this study on file, that’s for sure.”

### From Massachusetts:

“Thanks for faithfully proclaiming and expositing God’s Word, rightly divided, and not wavering in the face of persecution from even the Church. Please know that you are not alone. Lifting you up in prayer...”

### From Illinois:

“I enjoyed reading the ‘Bible Contrasts’ in the September issue. I found them real helpful. I know what I believe but can’t always remember the book, chapter, and verse to find it. This article will be good in trying to show other people what’s going on.”

### From Colorado:

“We enjoyed meeting Pastor Sadler and Pastor Fredericksen when they came out for a conference here in Loveland. If you ever have the opportunity to do that again, we would surely appreciate it.” (In the meantime, we’d love it if *you* could come visit *us*. See Page 3 for your invitation!—Ed).

### From Michigan:

“I feel a great urgency to rekindle the flame and educate as many people as possible concerning the dispensation of the mystery. Since I have come to believe that the *Berean Bible Society* is maintaining its grace focus, I do my best to promote your literature, commentaries, etc., and make people aware of your ministry.”

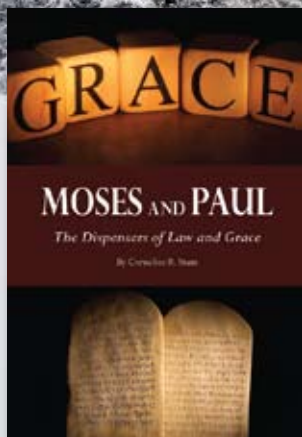
### From Georgia:

“...your messages...have helped me to rest in the grace of God...My wife and I are happy and both learning together. I’ve been ordering books to help me study and they have helped so much. I’m going to try to plan some vacation time around some of the Bible conferences you have listed...I ordered another copy of *Things That Differ* and gave it to my parents to read. I also loaned them my copy of the Romans commentary by Pastor Stam...keep up the good work...it has and does make a difference in my life, and the life of others.”



“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

# February Specials



## Moses and Paul

By Cornelius R. Stam

In this 86-page paperback, Pastor Stam contrasts Law and Grace and the two revelators, Moses and Paul, who were used of God to dispense these truths.

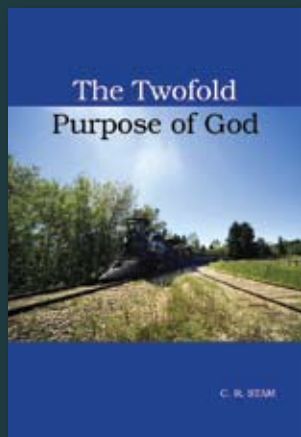
***Special Price: \$5.00***

## The Twofold Purpose of God

By Cornelius R. Stam

We highly recommend this 88-page paperback volume for those who are new to the message of Grace. Pastor Stam effectively contrasts the two programs of God in relation to the incarnation, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

***Special Price: \$5.00***



**THESE OFFERS END FEBRUARY 28, 2015**

*(Extended 21 days for all foreign orders)*

Orders up to \$30.00, please add **\$4.00** for postage and handling.

Orders over \$30.00, please add **15%** for postage and handling.

*Wisconsin residents please add 5.6% for sales tax*



[www.bereanbiblesociety.org](http://www.bereanbiblesociety.org)

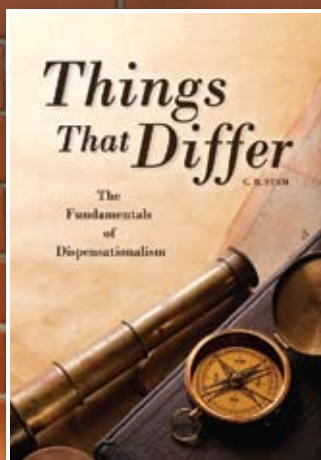






For BBS' 75th Anniversary  
we are offering Pastor Stam's  
classic work:

## *Things That Differ*



***Hardcover: \$10.00 — Paperback: \$5.00***

**SPECIAL PRICES**

This 290-page volume demonstrates how the dispensational method of Bible study is the method God approves, and the only one by which the Bible makes sense. It shows the perfect harmony between the changeless principles of God and His changing dispensations.

***Both volumes have the 75th insignia on the cover***

**THIS OFFER ENDS FEBRUARY 28, 2015**

(Extended 21 days for all foreign orders)

Orders up to **\$30.00**, please add **\$4.00** for postage and handling.

Orders over **\$30.00**, please add **15%** for postage and handling.

*Wisconsin residents please add 5.6% for sales tax*

**To order:** Call 262-255-4750 or visit [www.bereanbiblesociety.org](http://www.bereanbiblesociety.org)



# News and Announcements

**New MP3 Messages:** Your editor's verse-by-verse exposition of *1 Thessalonians* is the newest title to join the lineup of audio messages that we offer to help guide your study of "the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery." If you'd like to learn from the likes of J. C. O'Hair, C. R. Stam, Paul M. Sadler, Ken Lawson, and your editor, just enter our website and click on "Bible Study" and "Audio Sermons" to see all the topics and book studies that we have to offer.

**The First Burst of Spring!** *Grace Bible Fellowship* of Nokomis, Florida, would like to welcome you to their February 28-March 1 Bible conference, as they welcome BBS President Pastor Paul M. Sadler to their pulpit for a west coast weekend of warm fellowship and the sound exposition of God's Word. Pastor Ed Bedore is the one to ask about your first opportunity of spring to say goodbye to old man winter and hello to a better understanding of the Scriptures: eandlbedore@gmail.com, (414) 313-0928.

**Time to Gather at Goodlettsville!** Central Tennessee is the place to be come April 10-12, when BBS President Paul M. Sadler opens the Word to Spirit-opened hearts at the *Country Inn and Suites*. Those who have never attended this annual spring treat don't know what they're missing, but they can find out by calling Pastor Vitis Bailey at (270) 634-1881, or Bobby Davenport at (615) 972-7846. Come and let the saints in Goodlettsville put some zing in your spring!

**A Move in the Ministry:** After eight years at the helm of *Grace Bible Church* of Beloit, Wisconsin, Pastor Matt Ritchey will say a reluctant goodbye to the saints there to join the ministry of *Bible Doctrines To Live By*, and assume the pastorate of *Croton Community Church* in Croton, Michigan. Since the hole in the hearts of the brethren in Beloit can only be filled by a man who is as committed to Paul's gospel as Brother Ritchey, all such men are urged to contact Art LeFeber by email at artlefeber@att.net; or they can send responses to *Grace Bible Church*, 1928 Colony Court, Beloit, WI 53511.



Our cover photo was taken by Darla Smith. The *Old Point Loma Lighthouse* is located in San Diego, CA. While in operation, its location on top of a 400-foot cliff meant that fog often obscured the light from the view of ships. So on foggy nights the keeper would discharge a shotgun to warn ships away.

# PRICE LIST

## BIBLE STUDY BOOKS BY C. R. STAM—FOUNDER

### (Hardcover—Gold Stamped)

Acts, Dispensationally Considered, Volume 1 .....	\$21.50
Acts, Dispensationally Considered, Volume 2 .....	21.50
Colossians (Commentary) <i>Out of print</i> .....	14.50
I Corinthians (Commentary) .....	12.50
II Corinthians (Commentary) .....	12.50
Divine Election and Human Responsibility .....	10.50
Galatians (Commentary) .....	14.50
Hebrews, Who Wrote It and Why? .....	10.50
Holding Fast the Faithful Word <i>Out of print</i> .....	14.50
Man, His Nature and Destiny .....	12.50
Memoirs of Pastor Cornelius R. Stam, The .....	13.50
Pastoral Epistles (Commentary) .....	12.50
Paul, His Apostleship and Message .....	11.50
Romans (Commentary) .....	16.50
Sermon on the Mount, The .....	10.50
Suggestions for Young Pastors .....	10.50
Thessalonians (Commentary) .....	12.50
Things That Differ .....	13.50
True Spirituality .....	11.50

### Paperbacks

Baptism and the Bible .....	\$9.00
Lord's Supper and the Bible, The .....	7.00
Moses and Paul .....	7.00
No Other Doctrine .....	9.00
Our Great Commission .....	9.00
Things That Differ, English or Spanish .....	10.00
Two Minutes with the Bible .....	11.00
Twofold Purpose of God, The .....	7.00

## WRITINGS BY PAUL M. SADLER—PRESIDENT

Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ (Hardcover) .....	\$12.50
Life and Letters of the Apostle Peter, The (Hardcover) .....	13.50
Oneness of Marriage, The (Paperback) .....	8.00
Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Hardcover) <i>Out of print</i> .....	16.50
Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (Hardcover) .....	12.00
Revelation, Volume 1 (Hardcover) .....	12.50
Revelation, Volume 2 (Hardcover) .....	14.00
Studies in James (Paperback) .....	10.00
Triumph of His Grace, The (Hardcover) .....	13.50
According to the Scriptures (Booklet) .....	2.00
Are You Secure? (Booklet) .....	2.00
Historical Beginning of the Church, The (Booklet) .....	3.00
Key to Understanding the Scriptures, The (Chart) .....	0.50
Supernatural Sign Gifts of the Acts Period, The (Booklet) .....	4.00
Trials and Temptations (Booklet) .....	2.00
Uncertain Trumpet of Water Baptism, The (Booklet) .....	2.00

Orders up to \$30.00, please add **\$4.00** for Postage and Handling

Orders over \$30.00, please add **15%** for Postage and Handling

*Foreign orders must be remitted in U. S. currency*

THE BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT  
N112 W17761 MEQUON ROAD  
PO Box 756  
GERMANTOWN, WI 53022-0756

PERIODICALS  
PAID AT GERMANTOWN, WI  
AND ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES

## *Our 75th Anniversary Issue*

Next month, *Berean Bible Society* will bring you a special 75th anniversary issue of the *Berean Searchlight*, first published back in March of 1940. Don't miss it!