

The BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

February 2017



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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” (2 Tim. 2:15), to *energize* the Christian life, and to *encourage* the local church.

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A Note From the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

Our spouses and children are blessings from the Lord. In Ephesians, we are taught to give thanks to God always for all things (Eph. 5:20). One blessing, foremost in my mind, for which I give thanks is my family.

I met my wife, Jessica, at the *Berean Bible Fellowship Conference* in June of 1996, and we were married in October of the following year. Jessica will always be a testimony to me that God hears and answers prayer, and that He does so according to His perfect timing. I prayed to God for a wife for many years. There is no doubt in my mind that she is God's provision in answer to those prayers. I give thanks for a wife that is right beside me, supporting and helping me in the ministry. Jessica is the daughter of Pastor Jim and Judy Harley. Pastor Harley is a grace pastor who leads *Community Bible Church* in Lena, Wisconsin. It is a blessing to have a wife who was raised in grace doctrine and is like-minded with me in the faith.

The Lord has blessed Jessica and me with four children, two boys and two girls. Cody is our oldest at seventeen, and he is a senior in high school. Cody is very sports-minded. He loves and excels at playing baseball most of all and has played every year from tee-ball all the way up through high school. Katelyn is our next child and, at sixteen, is a sophomore. Katie loves music and plays the flute proficiently. She has amazing artistic talent and has had her art pieces shown in local libraries, banks, and even in a museum. Carissa is next at fourteen, and she is in eighth grade. Carissa is our animal-lover. She'd fill our house with animals if she could. She teaches our dogs tricks and is very good at it. She has her sights set on being a veterinarian one day. Then we have Tyler. Ty is eleven and is a sixth grader. Tyler is a deep thinker who asks a lot of questions, so he can tell you a lot of facts about a lot of things. Tyler loves playing youth football every fall. They all are involved in ministry, and they are an immense help to us.



There is a saying that you can't take anything with you to heaven, but, in a sense, you can "take" your family. We're very thankful that each of our children has trusted Christ as their personal Savior. If you have family members that are outside of Christ, pray earnestly for them and keep praying that "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ...[will] shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4:4).

Grace to you,

Pastor Kevin Sadler, President

2017 BBS CONFERENCE SCHEDULE



Haven of Grace Conference, January 7-8, Winter Garden, FL
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: John Fredericksen (407) 952-0510

Florida Bible Conference, February 25-26, Nokomis, FL
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Ed Bedore (414) 313-0928

Kentucky Bible Conference, March 10-12, Alpha, KY
Pastor Ricky Kurth—Contact: Jeff Bertram (606) 348-3071

Arizona Bible Conference, March 24-26, Sun City West, AZ
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Mark Dilley (623) 377-3071

Northeast Ohio Bible Conference, April 22-23, Ashtabula, OH
Pastor Ricky Kurth—Contact: David Adams (440) 992-9008

NGYC Spring Youth Retreat, May 5-7, Gillett, WI
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Dave Green (888) 999-6492

49th Annual BBF Conference, June 18-22, Tipp City, OH
Pastors Kevin Sadler, Ricky Kurth, John Fredericksen,
Jeff Seekins, Ken Lawson, Mr. Dave Brown and others!
Contact: Tim Kenney (937) 325-9316

Midwest Grace Fellowship Conference, July 7-9, Wellsville, KS
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: David Tidd (620) 365-6004

Bitely Bible Conference, August 4-6, Bitely, MI
Pastor Kevin Sadler and others!—Contact: Ken Lyon (231) 689-1941

BBS Regional Conference, August 11-13, Denver, CO
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Bennett Boothe (303) 452-9148

Heritage of Grace Conference, October 7-8, Beloit, WI
Pastor Ricky Kurth—Contact: Jim Tollar (262) 581-6228

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

Arkansas/Oklahoma Conference, November 3-4, Siloam Springs, AR
Pastor Ricky Kurth—Contact: Orvel Baldridge (918) 458-0822

There may be changes and additions. The BBS website and the BBS app will be kept up to date on any new conferences and updates to the currently-listed conferences.

-TRUTH- or Consequences



By Pastor
Kevin Sadler

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:6,7).

In his letters to other churches, Paul normally begins with some expression of praise and thanksgiving for their faith and service to the Lord, but not here in the Epistle to the Galatians. This is especially striking when compared to the letter of 1 Corinthians. In spite of the Corinthians’ carnality and immorality, Paul still commended and offered thanksgiving for them. Here though, in the face of a theological, doctrinal departure, a defection from grace and Paul’s gospel, he does not offer any commendation or praise for the Galatians. Rather, Paul begins with disbelief that the Galatians were allowing themselves to be influenced to mix law and grace, both doctrinally and practically, and were willingly putting themselves under the law.

The Galatians were being told that Gentiles needed circumcision and had to come under the Law of Moses to be saved and to live a life pleasing to the Lord. But to Paul, what they were basically being taught to believe was that Christ was not enough—and the Galatians were buying into it. This direct contradiction of the primary thrust of Paul’s ministry outrages Paul and prompts him to write a strong, stinging letter to the Galatians, unequivocally reaffirming the sufficiency of Christ for salvation and for our practical sanctification. The Church today is faced with the same mixing of law and grace, the same departure from Paul and the gospel of pure grace, and the same lack of faith in the sufficiency of Christ for salvation and daily living. Thus, the teaching of Galatians is vitally important for all Christians, then and now.

I MARVEL

Paul writes “I marvel,” meaning that he was astounded, bewildered, astonished, or amazed.

He found it extraordinary. Paul was dumbfounded. He could not fathom why they were so soon removed from Him that called them into the grace of Christ unto a different gospel.



Pastor Charles Swindoll writes, “Why would a slave, once freed, go back to living in bondage? Why would he willingly place his healed ankles back in the shackles that had scraped them raw? Why would he, having breathed the sweet, pure air of the Gospel... return to the dark, dank dungeon of legalism?”¹ With these kind of questions in mind, Paul wrote to the Galatians. It was almost inconceivable to him that they would desert Christ and grace for the law and legalism.

Paul’s heart is stirred as he marveled that they were “so soon removed,” or so quickly turning away and becoming of another mind. The words “so soon” may refer to the time of their conversion, or to the time that the Judaizers, the legalists, had come among them, and the short period of time before their apostasy from Paul and his gospel of grace. The Galatians were apparently offering little resistance, were not taking a stand, and were easily influenced

by these teachers to grab onto “another gospel.”

Paul reached for their hearts to show the gravity of what they were doing when he wrote, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed *from Him*.” The Galatians were not just defecting or turning away from a system of theology, they were turning away from God Himself. The gospel of grace is God’s truth for today, and to turn away from it is to turn away from God. The Galatians perhaps thought they were honoring God by putting themselves under His Law but, in actuality, they were dishonoring Him by doing so under grace.

Paul says that that they were turning away “from Him that called you into the grace of Christ.” The Galatian believers had responded in faith to God’s call for salvation which is made to all men by His grace (Rom. 10:13; 1 Tim. 2:4). It is God who calls and He calls all men to salvation today by Paul’s gospel. Paul’s point is that, seeing as how they were called by God to the saving gospel of the grace of God, why were they going back to another gospel, for a former dispensation and a former program?

Paul tells the Galatians, who had been called into the grace of Christ, that they were turning away “unto another gospel: Which is not another.” Now, what does Paul mean? It makes you want to ask, “Is it another, or isn’t it another?” In verses 6 and 7 there are two different Greek words used for “another.” The first, *heteros*, means *another of a different kind*.

The second “another” is the Greek word *allos* meaning *another of the same kind*. Paul is not saying that the Galatians were being led astray to a false gospel, but to “another gospel” of a different kind. In other words, they were trusting in a gospel which belonged to a former dispensation. They were forsaking the gospel of grace for the gospel of the circumcision, the gospel of the kingdom, a gospel of faith demonstrated by works under the law. And Paul says that this gospel “is not another [*allos*],” meaning that it is not another of the same kind *as his gospel*, the gospel purely of the grace of God, a gospel of faith plus nothing.



PERVERTING THE GOSPEL

The Galatian believers were saved by the gospel of grace under the dispensation of grace, but the Judaizers were trying to bring them back under the law, requiring and demanding that law be added to faith in Christ for salvation. In doing this, they “would pervert the gospel of Christ.” Trying to bring believers who are saved under grace back under bondage and law-keeping is to frustrate the grace of God and pervert the gospel of the grace of God. American dispensationalist

pioneer Pastor J. C. O’Hair once rightly said, “God is very jealous concerning His own redemptive work...It is a serious spiritual crime to offer to saint or sinner a message of grace and law, mixed.”

God wants His message of grace to be kept pure and the sufficiency of Christ for salvation to be proclaimed. The Greek word translated as “pervert” (Gr. *metastrepho*) means to reverse, to turn about, to change to the opposite. And so, in adding works and law to Paul’s gospel, the Judaizers had reversed it, turned it around, and changed its character completely (Rom. 11:6). It’s been rightly said that “The legalists were...substituting law for grace, circumcision for the cross, works for faith, bondage for liberty, and self for Christ.”²

The law doesn’t pollute grace, it reverses it. Grace can’t be modified or changed or altered. *Nothing* could be added to the grace of God to make it better. The grace of God shows us that Christ is our all. It shows us that Christ, not the law, is our righteousness. Christ, not the law, is our life. Christ, not the law, is our standard for holiness. Christ, not the law, gives strength for life, for living a life pleasing to God. As we read in Galatians 2:20,21,

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

LET HIM BE ACCURSED

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8,9).

Paul presents a hypothetical to convey how important it is to stand for his gospel. Paul states that if “we,” meaning he or any of his co-laborers, or even if “an angel from heaven” came preaching any other gospel, they should be *anathema* or “accursed.” Paul’s gospel was unchangeable. Neither he nor anyone else had any authority or right to alter it or add to it, because it was of divine origin. Paul’s gospel was given to him by Christ Himself (Gal. 1:11,12).

Later in the epistle (4:14), Paul wrote that the Galatians received him “as an angel of God,” and so “an angel from heaven” may refer to a messenger who came to them with false or with true authority from above (2 Cor. 11:13-15). In any case, Paul takes his illustration to an extreme to bring home his firm and earnest point that absolutely no messenger, no matter how seemingly godly, good, popular or authoritative, not even an angel from heaven, should be received, believed or followed if their teaching does not fall in line with Paul’s gospel of grace.

To those who would doubt that believers are complete in Christ by faith alone, or who would change or add to Paul’s gospel, or who would preach a gospel other

than his, Paul calls down a curse and says, “let him be accursed,” or *anathema*. The Greek word *anathema* is a strong word that means devoted to destruction.

“...a ministry that faithfully proclaims the gospel of pure grace according to Paul has the blessing of God today.”

As for those who are not saved and proclaim any other gospel than Paul’s, they will be *anathema* if they do not trust Christ and die in their sins, and will be devoted to destruction forever in hell. But what about those who are saved, and thus cannot lose their salvation, and yet, knowingly or ignorantly, preach a gospel other than Paul’s? First, such believers could reap a curse when they stand before the Lord at the Judgment Seat of Christ. As we read in 1 Corinthians 3:14,15, “If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” Second, to be accursed also carries the idea of being separated and cast out in life. In Joshua 6:18, Joshua says of Jericho, “...keep yourselves from the *accursed* thing, lest ye make yourselves *accursed*, when ye take of the *accursed* thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.”

Similarly, Paul's statement, "let him be accursed," speaks of the need for believers to recognize and separate from those who proclaim a mixed gospel today, lest they influence us to become accursed as we too begin to proclaim the gospel in error.

The opposite of a curse is a blessing, so a ministry that faithfully proclaims the gospel of pure grace according to Paul has the blessing of God today. This is the case even if the number and size of the church is small. Numbers and sizes of churches mean nothing when it comes to revealing the blessing of God (2 Cor. 5:7).



Paul's words are so serious, so solemn, that in verse 9 he reiterates the statement. But Paul turns from the hypothetical to the actual as he repeats his admonition. Paul is not referring to the previous verse when he writes, "As we said before." The repetition of his statement is actually a reminder of a warning he had given them earlier when he ministered among them. The word "now" is an adverb of time, implying a lapse of time and a contrast between the present and the past. So when Paul writes, "As we said before," he is referring to a previous visit

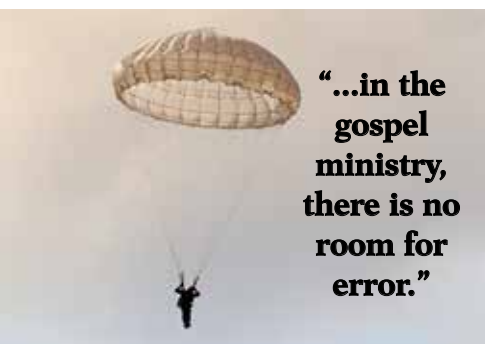
when he had warned them of this. This makes his point even stronger and the Galatians' defection from Paul even more inexcusable.

Verse 8 is written from the standpoint of the apostle and his fellow laborers, referring to the gospel "which we have preached unto you." Verse 9 is from the standpoint of the converts, referring to the gospel "that ye have received." The gospel for which Paul was so jealous was the gospel that they had accepted, the gospel that had freed them from their sins and had given them life eternal. The verse also convicted the Galatians by reminding them that they had "received" Paul's gospel, so why hadn't they stood for it?

The element of a hypothetical situation is removed, from "though" or "if" by any chance anyone should preach in verse 8, to a more direct, matter-of-fact, or as-is-the-case "If any man preach any other gospel unto you..." in verse 9. The element of improbability is also lessened by removing "we or an angel from heaven," and replacing it with "any man" or anybody. But the *anathema* remains. The *anathema* remains upon any man who proclaims any other gospel than Paul's. People's eternal destinies are at stake as we consider the importance of what gospel is to be made known and believed. If the gospel for today is confused or mixed, people are in danger of being eternally lost.

The Texas Army National Guard has a group of special workers called parachute riggers. Their job is to fold and pack the parachutes soldiers use when jumping

from airplanes. These people are intensely dedicated to their task. The Rigger's Creed states, "I will be sure—always!" They know jumpers need assurance that everything regarding their chutes is perfect. In the time it takes to meticulously pack an MC1-1 military parachute, 30 folds are required. A jumper has nothing to do with the chute until they put it on before a jump. Trust in the error-free performance of the riggers is all a jumper has to rely on. The Rigger's Creed further states: "I will never let the idea that a piece of work is 'good enough' make me a potential murderer through a careless mistake or oversight, for I know there can be no compromise with perfection." Riggers know that the parachute business is a life-or-death enterprise. Mistakes cost lives. There is no room for complacency.³



There is no room for error in the packing of a parachute. Likewise in the gospel ministry, there is no room for error. It is a matter of eternal life and eternal death. Mistakes cost people their eternal destinies. It is vital that we have the gospel absolutely, 100 percent correct.

As those jumpers need full assurance that everything is perfect with their chute, so people need full assurance that the gospel they hear and believe is true for today. When we rightly divide God's Word, we can give people this assurance. Paul's gospel of grace is the only and true gospel by which men are saved today. The gospel of grace teaches that all are sinners and that "the wages of sin is death" and that sin is what separates us from God (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). The gospel for today is that there is absolutely nothing for you to do for salvation from your sins and hell: Christ did it all. He paid the full penalty for all our sins at the Cross. Paul's gospel tells us to trust that Christ died for your sins, was buried and rose again, and, in so believing, you are saved (1 Cor. 15:3,4). We are saved by God's grace alone, through faith alone, through Christ alone (Eph. 1:12,13; 2:8,9). At that moment of trusting Christ alone for salvation, by God's grace we are forgiven all our sins; we are redeemed, reconciled, justified, and have the gift of eternal life (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:21,22; Titus 3:7).

PLEASING MEN OR GOD?

"For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10).

In light of all Paul had written up to this point, and especially in light of the two *anathemas* he had pronounced on any who did not preach his gospel, Paul asks rhetorical questions: "Do I persuade

men? Or do I persuade God? Do I seek to please men?"

Paul sought only the favor of his God. Therefore, he didn't soft-peddle or compromise the truth so as not to offend men. In seeking only to please the Lord, Paul firmly stood for his gospel of pure grace. We too need to stand fast and uncompromising for the gospel of pure grace, knowing that this pleases God. We need to be alert and vigilant against subtle or blatant attacks against the gospel of grace.

In verse 10, a convicting point was driven home to the Galatians: Who were they trying to please? To the Church today we need to ask: Who are we trying to please? Many often try to please their denominations, or spiritual leaders, or friends and family. The Galatians were making concessions, trying to please men, and they were turning away, deserting Paul and perverting his gospel.

Paul says, "if I yet pleased men," or if I were still trying to be a people-pleaser like during my unsaved days as a Pharisee, "I should not be the servant of Christ." Upon his salvation, Paul truly lived for an audience of One. So should we. Paul's loyalty to Christ and his desire to gain only God's approval is seen in his sufferings for Christ for the sake of the gospel, and ultimately in giving his life for it.


The word "servant" is *bondservant* in the original Greek. As a bondservant, Paul sought only the will of his Master, only to speak His words which He had given Paul to speak. Paul's will

was lost in his Lord's. He sought only to please his Master, not men. If he sought to please men, Paul asserts, he should not be a bondservant of Christ.

In 1517, Martin Luther nailed his now famous 95 theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg. The act brought him attention that he had never sought. Luther challenged the theology of the religious leaders of his day in regards to justification by faith and the authority of Scripture. Four years later in April 1521, in Worms, Germany, at the Diet of Worms, Luther stood before King Charles V and papal representatives. At the Diet, Luther was asked whether he acknowledged authorship of a list of works which had been determined to be in error. He did. He was then asked whether he was willing to recant the errors contained in them. The following is his answer:

"Your Imperial Majesty and your Lordships demand a simple answer. Here it is, plain and unvarnished. Since I put no trust in the supported authority of pope or of councils, since it is plain that they have often erred and often contradicted themselves, unless I am convinced of error by the testimony of Scripture or by manifest reasoning, I stand convinced by the Scriptures to which I have appealed. My conscience is taken captive by God's Word, for to act against our conscience is neither safe for us, nor open to us. I cannot and I will not recant anything. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen."⁴

Like the Apostle Paul, Luther sought to please God only and to stand for Him and His truth. To stand for God's Word, rightly divided and Paul's gospel against the popular theology of our day, we must have the mindset of Paul to seek only to please God and not man. We will be rejected by men for it, but if we seek to please man, we will compromise the truth. Our consciences must be taken captive by the Word of God so that

we stand for the truth in God's strength and for His glory. 

Endnotes

1. Charles R. Swindoll, *God's Masterwork, Volume 4* (Anaheim, California: Insight for Living, 1997), pg. 87.
2. *King James Bible Commentary* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, Inc., 1999), pg. 1535.
3. Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson, "Mistakes Are Not an Option in Parachute Packing," accessed December 19, 2016, www.preachingtoday.com.
4. Source Unknown.

Question Box

"If the apostles picked a replacement for Judas when he died, why didn't they pick a replacement for James when he was killed?"

We know that the Lord told the Twelve that "in the regeneration" they would "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19:28). So when Judas betrayed the Lord and took his life, it was necessary that he be replaced, as Peter explained in Acts 1:15-26.

But had the apostles replaced James when he was killed (Acts 12:1,2), there would be *thirteen* apostles in the resurrection and only twelve thrones on which for them to sit. Remember, James will rise in "the first resurrection" (Rev. 20:5) to assume his throne with the rest of the Twelve, but Judas will not.

This is similar to how Job lost "seven sons and three daughters" (Job 1:2 cf. 1:18,19) and lots of livestock (1:3 cf. 1:14-17). Later, when "the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before" (42:10), He doubled Job's original number of animals (42:12) but only gave him an additional "seven sons and three daughters" (42:13). You see, he hadn't lost his family *eternally*. They will rise with him in the resurrection, where he will have twice as much family as he had while here on earth. And the Twelve hadn't lost James eternally either, so there was no need to replace him. With the kingdom program in abeyance, a twelfth apostle would not be needed before the resurrection.

—Pastor Kurth

God's Untouchables

(An excerpt from *Revelation Volume 3* written by Paul M. Sadler)



PROHIBITION

Prohibition was a dark period of American history. Gangsters ruled cities across the country, most notably Chicago, where the infamous Al Capone had set up operations. On January 16, 1919, the *18th Amendment* was ratified, making it illegal to produce, import, export, transport, or sell alcoholic beverages. Federal, state and local authorities were charged with enforcing this new law, with very little success, as underground “speakeasies” sprang up across the city. They were supplied by a network of illegal stills and breweries controlled by Capone. He also set up an elaborate system to smuggle large quantities of alcohol into the United States from Canada. Despite its being illegal to sell and transport alcohol, liquor flowed freely in Chicago during the nearly 14 years that Prohibition was in effect.

To protect his enterprise, Al Capone masterfully used corruption schemes to prevent any major losses or stoppages to his clandestine operations. He did so by generously bribing federal agents, police officers, judges, politicians and city leaders, who simply looked the other way! Those who refused to comply with Capone’s demands often found themselves looking down the barrel of a Thompson sub-machine gun. He used fear and threats to coerce cooperation from those who were in positions of authority.

The federal government, being fully aware of Capone’s racketeering, devised a complex plan to bring the gangster to justice. The Bureau of Investigation (precursor of the FBI) appointed Eliot Ness as the chief agent of a taskforce to arrest and convict Al Capone.

With so many federal and local law enforcement agents on Capone’s payroll, Ness set out to put together a list of agents who were upright and could be trusted—agents who could not be corrupted by organized crime. Of the 300 federal agents, Eliot Ness selected 9 of them—plus himself—to accomplish the assignment he had from the U.S. Treasury

Department's Bureau of Prohibition. These men were above being corrupted by Capone, which earned them the title of "The Untouchables." By 1932, they had put Al Capone behind bars and cleaned up the streets of Chicago. In the end, good triumphed over evil!

The Apostle John's opening statement here in Revelation Chapter 14 introduces us, once again, to the 144,000 who were divinely chosen at the beginning of the Tribulation. It can be correctly said that they are God's "untouchables."

144,000 UNTOUCHABLES

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads" (Rev. 14:1).

Those standing with the Messiah on Mount Zion are no strangers to us; they are the same group that was handpicked by God to carry out a very special mission. They are the 144,000, twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, who we believe will be the firstfruits of the two witnesses at the very beginning of the Tribulation. Essentially, they are 144,000 evangelists, sealed with the Father's name written in their foreheads (Rev. 7:4-8; 14:1). The seal—which speaks of divine ownership—will be counterfeited by Satan. He will require his followers to have the mark of the beast, thus sealing those who belong to him (Rev. 13:16).

As a testament to God's sovereignty and His providential care, these 144,000 are seen standing unscathed with the Lamb *after* the close of the Great Tribulation. Throughout the Tribulation, as in Egypt of old (Ex. 8:22), these ministers of the Kingdom gospel

will be kept from harm's way every time that God pours out His wrath on this wicked world's system. The forces of evil that will ascend out of the bottomless pit to torment men with a scorpion-like sting will not be permitted to touch them (Rev. 9:4). These 144,000 faithfully withstand every attempt of the Antichrist to destroy them. Like Al Capone, he will undoubtedly use nefarious tactics such as bribery, threats, extortion, and even immorality. But as Capone was unable to corrupt Eliot Ness's "Ten G-Men," so the Antichrist will be unable to corrupt the 144,000. They will remain true to themselves, and more importantly, true to the One who calls them. They will be God's untouchables!

"The forces of evil that will ascend out of the bottomless pit to torment men with a scorpion-like sting will not be permitted to touch them...."





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About Salvation

(An excerpt from our upcoming book on frequently asked questions by Ricky Kurth)

SHOULD WE ASK PEOPLE TO PRAY “THE SINNER’S PRAYER” TO BE SAVED?

If you’re not familiar with what is called “the sinner’s prayer,” it is a prayer that basically repeats the facts of the simple message of salvation. There are many variations of the prayer, but it usually sounds something like, “God, I know I’m a sinner and deserve to die for my sins; but I know that Christ died for my sins, and rose again. I believe this, and I ask You to save me.”

Now, that certainly sounds innocent enough, doesn’t it? I mean, it’s just praying the specifics of the gospel out loud (1 Cor. 15:3,4). What could be wrong with that?

The thing that makes praying the sinner’s prayer not a good idea is that God never asks us to *pray* the gospel, He only asks us to *believe* the gospel. So asking someone to pray the gospel is *adding* to God’s simple requirement for salvation. And, if you think it through, it is adding *a work* to the receiving of something God says is a *gift* (Rom. 6:23).

Perhaps you are thinking, “Prayer is a work?” Well, in writing to the Colossians, the Apostle Paul spoke well of a man named Epaphras, whom he described to them as “always *laboring* fervently for you *in prayers*” (Col. 4:12). If you can *labor* in prayer, then prayer must be *a work*. It may not be a very *big* work, but salvation today is by grace through faith *alone* (Eph. 2:8,9; Titus 3:5), and the moment you add even the *slightest* work to grace, *it ceases to be grace* (Rom. 11:6).

Another problem with asking a sinner to pray the sinner’s prayer is that years later he may wonder if he prayed it *right*, if he said the right words in the right way. And since the sinner’s prayer is not in the Bible, *he can’t check to see if he prayed it right*, which may cause him to question if he is really saved.

Now if *you* prayed the sinner's prayer when you were saved, you needn't wonder if praying this prayer somehow negated the gospel you believed to be saved. I prayed this prayer too, but *praying* the gospel isn't what saved us. *Believing* the gospel is what gave us eternal life. The moment you believed the gospel, you trusted Christ with your eternal destiny, a process Paul describes in Ephesians 1:13 with no mention of praying the sinner's prayer. Speaking of Christ, he says,

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

Paul says that after you believed the facts of the gospel, you were sealed with the Spirit. God didn't wait until you *repeated* the facts of the gospel in prayer and asked Him to save you before sealing you for time and eternity.

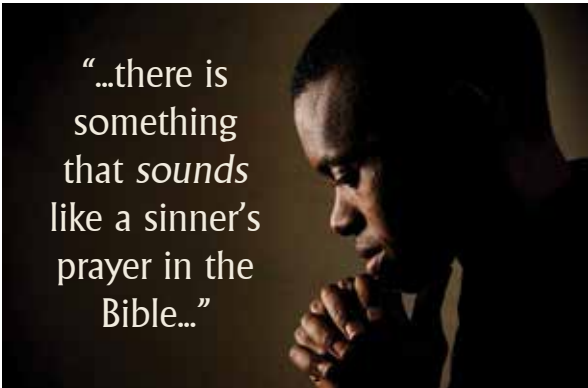
Before moving on to the next question, we should add that there is something that *sounds* like a sinner's prayer in the Bible, but God gave it *to the people of Israel*. Speaking through the prophet Hosea, God said to them:

"O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.

"Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips" (Hosea 14:1,2).

Here the prophet gives his people *the very words* they should say to God in that future day when their Messiah returns to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth (vv. 4-9). But this is a prayer that will be prayed by Jews who are already saved. All the unsaved of the world will die "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven...*in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God*" (2 Thes. 2:7,8).

The saved in Israel who are left will then turn to the Lord and ask Him to "take away all iniquity." They were saved from the *penalty* of their sins when they believed, but the Lord will then "take away their sins" (Rom. 11:27) by changing their mortal bodies *and rendering them incapable of sinning* before entering the kingdom. The inability to sin is part of what will make the kingdom to be heaven on earth! His people in Israel will then *respond* to this grace by offering the calves of their lips, an offering the Bible later defines as "the *sacrifice of praise to God...the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name*" (Heb. 13:15).



"...there is something that sounds like a sinner's prayer in the Bible..."

But this prayer was given to *Israel* (Hos. 14:1), not to us, and it is not a prayer that people will pray to be saved. There just isn't a sinner's prayer anywhere to be found in the Bible.

A variation of the sinner's prayer leads us to our next question:

SHOULD A SINNER ASK JESUS INTO HIS HEART TO BE SAVED?

As with most error, the sinner's prayer has compounded into *additional* error. As we saw in our previous answer, the sinner's prayer is a prayer that involves praying the facts of the gospel out loud. But some have taken this error a step further and *added* things to the prayer *that aren't in the gospel*. Things like asking Jesus into your heart to be saved.

Now, once you are saved, it is true of you that "Jesus Christ *is in you*" (2 Cor. 13:5), and Paul gives away *the location* of Christ's home within you when he prayed "that Christ may dwell *in your hearts* by faith" (Eph. 3:17). The problem with *asking* Christ to come into your heart is that the Bible never *tells* sinners to ask Him into their hearts. And the *reason* it never tells them to do so is that when a sinner believes the gospel, the Lord enters his heart *whether he asks Him to or not*. So asking Jesus into your heart to be saved confuses the *means* of salvation with the *result* of salvation.

The entrance of Christ into your heart when you believe is one of many results of salvation you obtain the moment you believe *without having to ask for them*. These include things like the forgiveness of sins, redemption, justification and positional sanctification. You don't have to ask for *any* of these things; you receive them the moment you trust Christ as your Savior. It's a package deal! You've heard of bundling? This is *the ultimate* in bundling! And the blessing of having Christ enter your heart without having to ask Him is part of that blessed bundle.

This leads us to another question that is frequently asked, something *else* that is often added to the gospel in the sinner's prayer:

DOES A SINNER HAVE TO MAKE CHRIST THE LORD OF HIS LIFE TO BE SAVED?

As the error of the sinner's prayer continues to compound, sinners are sometimes encouraged to pray, "Jesus, I now make you the Lord of my life" to be saved. The problem with telling the Lord you'll make Him the Lord of your life *in a prayer you are praying to get saved* is, when you make someone your Lord, *you're promising to obey him*. The Lord once asked His apostles,

"Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).

Now, if a sinner genuinely believes the gospel, but is coaxed into promising to do what the Lord says by promising to make Him his Lord,

he is saved. But what happens when later he *doesn't* do the things the Lord says? If he promised to make Christ his Lord to be saved, and then disappoints Him, he is likely to wonder if he is truly saved.

Beloved, don't confuse a sinner into promising to make Christ his *Lord* when all you want him to do is receive Christ as his *Savior*. If you do, you confuse letting Christ save him from his sins with what he is supposed to do *in response* to Christ saving him from his sins. After telling the Ephesians that they were saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8,9), Paul added,

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *unto* good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (v. 10).

When a sinner gets saved, God makes him “a new creature” in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), and he is “created in Christ Jesus *unto* good works.” That is God's purpose in making him a new creature.

But notice Paul doesn't say that a new creature *must* walk in good works, he says that he *should*. To say that he *must* is something we hear from those who believe in what is called Lordship Salvation, yet another error that is linked to the sinner's prayer when sinners promise to make Christ the Lord of their lives to get saved. Lordship Salvation is so common these days that its main tenet is the subject of our next frequently asked question. Watch for the release of our book for the answer to this popular error!



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February 25-26, 2017

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Fear of GOD and Faith in CHRIST

By Cornelius R. Stam

Few people realize how very much the Bible has to say about the fear of God, and fewer still understand the meaning of the term. It is important that we do understand it, however, for in the list of sins for which the wicked stand condemned we find the words: *“There is no fear of God before their eyes”* (Rom. 3:18).

WHAT IS THE FEAR OF GOD?

Many of us have been taught from childhood that the fear of God is “reverential trust,” but this writer has long felt that this definition is most inadequate.

The Hebrew word *yirah*, most often used for “fear” in the term “fear of God,” does indeed often involve the idea of reverence, *if* we recognize that true reverence is a deep and profound regard, mingled with awe and fear. But as to the fear of God being “reverential *trust*,” this waters down the meaning altogether too much, as is evident from the following passages in which the word *yirah* occurs:

“This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble...” (Deut. 2:25).

“Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling” (Psa. 2:11).

The Hebrew *pachad*, also used in the term “fear of God,” or “fear of the Lord,” is an even stronger word, meaning *dread*, or *terror*, and is frequently used quite apart from any thought of reverence, as in the following examples:

“Their houses are safe from fear...” (Job 21:9).

“Preserve my life from fear of the enemy” (Psa. 64:1).

“I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh” (Prov. 1:26).

But there can be no misunderstanding as to the common Greek word used in our Bibles for *fear*. This is the word *phobos*, from which our English word *phobia* is derived, and it is consistently rendered *fear*, *terror*, *to be afraid*, etc., in our King James Version.

When the angel appeared to the shepherds at Christ's birth, *"they were sore afraid"* (Luke 2:9). When the Lord was seen walking on the sea at night, the disciples *"cried out for fear,"* until the Lord called, *"It is I, be not afraid"* (Matt. 14:26,27). When the angel appeared and rolled away the stone from our Lord's sepulchre, we read that *"for fear of him the keepers did shake"* (Matt. 28:4). Paul ministered among the Corinthians, we are told, *"in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling"* (1 Cor. 2:3). Later he warned them of *"the terror of the Lord"* (2 Cor. 5:11). And in his letter to the Hebrews we read of those who *"through fear of death"* are all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. 2:15). In all these passages the word *phobos* is used, and they leave little room for doubt as to the meaning of this word in the phrase "fear of God."

We do not mean to imply that the fear of God may not *produce* a reverential trust, but actually it is in itself exactly what the term *"fear of God"* implies. It is the natural result of an appreciation of our own nothingness and of the infinite greatness and majesty of God. It stands opposed to pride and self-confidence. It is accompanied by a wholesome fear to disobey or displease Him. Thus it was that when one dying malefactor at Calvary ridiculed Christ, the other rebuked him, saying:

"Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?"

"And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke 23:40,41).

THE FEAR OF GOD AND NATIONAL BLESSING

With all that has been said, however, it must be remembered that fear and faith do not necessarily go together. When some leading figure in politics, business or entertainment says something complimentary about God or the Bible, or asks for prayer, many Christians immediately conclude that he must know Christ as his Savior. Actually, it may be, merely, that he fears God. This in itself is an advantage, but it must not be confused with personal salvation by faith in Christ.

"Paul...has more to say about the fear of God than any other New Testament writer...."



To the nation Israel, God said, *"Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God...."* (Deut. 6 :13). King David declared in his last words: *"He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God"* (2 Sam. 23:3). Solomon, in his proverbs said, *"By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil"* (Prov. 16:6). In the Psalms we read, *"Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land"* (Psa. 85:9).

Generally speaking, the phrase “fear of God” in the Old Testament Scriptures is associated with God’s covenant people, Israel, and the faithful among these were often called those who feared God, but this is not always the case. In 2 Kings 17:41, for example, we read about the Gentiles with whom the king of Assyria re-peopled Samaria: *“So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images...”* These pagans had come to fear Israel’s God, but had not given up their idolatry. This had brought them a step nearer to *knowing* God, but it does not mean that they were regenerate believers.

With these facts in mind let us consider why it is that God appears to be withdrawing His blessing from our beloved nation.

AMERICA AND THE FEAR OF GOD

It appears evident that *some* of our founding fathers were truly saved men who knew the Lord Jesus Christ in a personal way. But even apart from this, these men were, on the whole, God fearing men. They knew the Bible and revered its Author, often kneeling together in prayer for divine guidance.

This was a great advantage to the nation and to all of us who have since enjoyed the prosperity and freedom of the Republic which, under God, they formed. But a dark cloud has gathered on the horizon and is now overshadowing almost every aspect of American life.

What is it that is casting this dark shadow upon us? Is it that our form of government has

proven itself inadequate for the 20th century? Is it that the influence of communism is irresistible? Is it simple misfortune? No, it is because America, its rulers and its people, have so largely lost a sense of the fear of God.



If you ask why the general rebellion against authority, why the races battle each other in the streets, why the widening generation gap, why all seem to be *demanding* their “rights,” the answer is that the fear of God has largely disappeared and is considered by many to be *passé*. The Bible is no longer revered as God’s Word, and the general ignorance of its contents is appalling.

If you ask why the corruption and dishonesty in government, business and society, why the fearful rise in crime, why the “new morality” with its perversion of everything sacred, why so many people, especially young people, are so completely *lost*, one answer covers it all: the fear of God is so largely missing, and increasing millions of Americans no longer have an authoritative Voice to guide and direct them. We must remember that when even unregenerate people try to live by the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, even though these

are not God's particular message for us today, this still makes for a more peaceful society. This does not save them, but it indicates a wholesome fear of God.

If you ask why so many of our rulers and intellectual leaders keep coming up with the *wrong* answers to our problems, why so many of their plans seem to work out wrong, the answer is plain: too many of them have forgotten that "*the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*" (Prov. 9:10). This is why they are failing in their attempts to diagnose and solve the social and moral problems that are engulfing us.

"*God is not mocked.*" He does not take lightly this departure from His Word and will by a nation so greatly blessed. Not only does His Word declare that "*the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*" (1 Cor. 3:19), it also declares that He frustrates ungodly men and thwarts their attempts to run their affairs without Him.

"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. 1:19,20).

How we see the truth of this passage enacted all about us today!

THE FEAR OF GOD AND THE BELIEVER

There are those who feel that the fear of God is inconsistent with grace and that believers today, members of the Body of Christ, should not experience this fear.

They quote 1 John 4:18 to prove that perfect love will banish the fear of God, but this passage says nothing of the kind. Read it and you will see that it actually says that an appreciation of God's love will cast out the fear of *man* and of *persecution*. The very fact that Paul, the apostle of grace, has more to say about the fear of God than any other New Testament writer should make it evident that the fear of God is *not* inconsistent with grace.



To think that a holy God who, offended by sin, will judge without respect of persons, pouring out His wrath and casting into hell, has *saved me*—paying for *my* sins at the sacrifice of *His own beloved Son!* To think what I have escaped, and how! To think that I may address the One who will judge sinners in His wrath, as *Father!* What emotions this should awaken in my heart. Mingled motions of gratitude and love and joy on the one hand and of fear and trembling on the other, as one who has been rescued from fearful destruction by God Himself at infinite cost.

Believers whose attitude toward God goes no deeper than reverential trust, understand little of the cross and little of God's grace.

The fear to which the Scriptures—yes, and the Pauline

Scriptures—exhort us, is not the fear of an ill-treated slave or of a guilty criminal; it is just what the term indicates: “fear of *God*.” *God*, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe; *God*, the Judge of all; *God*, infinite in power, love, wisdom, righteousness and holiness. If men of past ages have trembled in the presence of angels, how much more should we fear God, even though He, in His grace, has taken us to His heart!

If the president of the United States should invite you to dine with him at the White House, you would undoubtedly prepare for the visit with fear and trembling! And this is a democracy! Your fear would not spring from any concern over what the president might *do* to you. It would spring rather from an appropriate realization of the importance of the presidency, if not of the president himself. Nor would it be fitting if, thus invited, you were to become too familiar with the president and treat him as a pal. The fact that the president had invited you to dinner would be no excuse for forgetting the dignity of his office.

“...more sacred love and adoration are the fruits of this godly fear....”



In this dispensation of grace God has, indeed, given believers an exalted position at His own right hand, there to be blessed with “all spiritual blessings” in Christ. But it does not follow from

this that we should forget our own unworthiness, or forget *who* it is that has bestowed these undeserved blessings upon us. Our relationship to God will prove all the more sacred when these facts are borne in mind, but once let us forget them and we will have nothing more than theological dogma left, with all the sacredness and blessedness gone. Forget them and grace itself will have lost its significance.

Thus it is that Paul, God’s appointed apostle of grace, exhorts us in Romans 11:20: “*Be not high-minded, but fear.*” Thus he bids us, in Philippians 2:12: “*Work out [not “for”] your own salvation with fear and trembling,*” and beseeches us, in Ephesians 5:21: “*Submit yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*” Thus he exhorts servants, in Colossians 3:22, to serve their masters “*in singleness of heart, fearing God.*” Thus he exhorts us all, in 2 Corinthians 7:1, to cleanse ourselves, “*perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*” And thus, in looking forward to the *bema*, the “judgment seat of Christ,” where believers will receive rewards or suffer loss, the apostle says in 2 Corinthians 5:11: “*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*” In that day, while the least faithful believer will still be saved by the grace of God (1 Cor. 3:14,15), it will be a shameful and bitter experience to have to “suffer loss” of rewards; to have to stand disgraced and empty-handed before the One who gave His life’s blood to save us; to be told that we have done no *real* service for Christ or our fellowmen.

The fear of God incompatible with grace? How can this be when

Paul, the Apostle of grace, has so much to say about it? A deeper appreciation of God's grace, a deeper gratitude and joy, a more sacred love and adoration are the fruits of this Godly fear in the believer.

THE FEAR OF GOD AND FAITH IN CHRIST

But while the fear of God produces such salutary effects in the life of the believer, it must not be supposed that the fear of God saves the unbeliever. It only makes him better to live with and *may* make him more open to receive Christ as his Lord and Savior. It is not how we *feel* toward God, but what we do about His revealed will that saves us.

God has clearly stated in His Word that *"the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord"* (Rom. 6 :23). It is through Christ's death for our sins at Calvary that God can now justly offer eternal life to us as a free gift. It is because Christ took upon Himself all the shame and blame and

punishment for our sins that God can now bestow upon sinners complete justification and redemption as a gift of grace:

"Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).

"In whom we have redemption, through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7).

"That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7).

Should these lines be read by some who are not certain of eternal life, who still do not know the Lord Jesus Christ in a personal way, we urge you to trust Christ as your Lord and Savior now, accepting by faith *"the gift of God,"* which is *"eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. 3:18).



Letter Excerpt Extra

"John Fredericksen's new work on *God's Meaning in Matthew* is one of the best commentaries I've ever read. It is a very 'readable' book that draws you on, in anticipation of what's next. Every page opens new vistas of Biblical understanding of God's working with mankind. Difficult passages, hard to understand, are made crystal clear. With definitions, cultural backgrounds, explanations of concepts, comparisons with similar Bible passages, drawing out Old Testament truths alongside Christ's teaching, we expand our comprehension of what God wants us to know through Matthew's gospel. If you are seeking to learn the difference between God's former, present and future programs (rightly dividing the Word of truth), this is THE book!"





CHANGING OUR “Want-To”

By Pastor Kevin Sadler

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Rom. 6:1,2).

Some people think, “You can’t tell someone they are under grace, because they’ll live however they want to!” But Paul shows here that grace is to change our “want-to”! Grace makes us “want to” live a life pleasing to the One Who saved us by His grace. God’s grace changes hearts and lives. It transforms how we think, act, and speak. It changes our motivation and desires, from living for only self and temporal pleasures to living for the glory of Christ and for the eternal. The grace of God through the Cross should forever change us.

Pastor Bill White wrote this: “Recently I witnessed an unusual accountability partnership at my church. In an effort to break his habit of using profanity, Paul started meeting with another guy from church, and they set up an aggressive plan for holiness. Each Sunday, Paul would report to William how many times he cussed during the week, and he’d put \$5 in the offering plate for each incident. The first week cost Paul \$100. Although following weeks improved somewhat, he wasn’t having the success he wanted and was losing a lot of hard-earned cash.

“After the fourth week, William told Paul he had totally changed the deal for the coming week, but he wouldn’t tell Paul how. Paul wanted to know, but all William would say was, ‘Trust me. It will cost you both less and more.’ The following Sunday before worship, Paul was looking a bit down, obviously having failed again. William put a hand on his shoulder and said, ‘Paul, this will cost you both less and more. It’s called grace.’ With that he took out a check made out to the church, dated and signed by *William*. Only the amount was blank. ‘Your sin still costs, but for you it’s free. Just fill in the numbers. And next week there will be more grace.’ That first week of grace cost William \$55, but the second only cost him \$20. The third week cost him nothing. It cost Paul too much to fill in those checks, so he quit swearing.”¹

God’s Word shows us that grace does not give us license to sin, but instead, as we think of our Savior and His sacrificial payment for our sins at the Cross, that grace should discipline, motivate, and soften our hearts to obey Him and turn from sin. Grace gives liberty to practice grace and power to live a life free from the bondage of sin. It’s the grace of God and the love of Christ that are to motivate us to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4) and live a life pleasing to Him.

1. Friends Grace Motivates Change, www.preachingtoday.com



BBS Letter Excerpts

From Kentucky:

"You helped me to Rightly Divide the Word and, in turn, influenced my preacher to become aware of the truth. He is now firmly a Berean. A friend found your site years ago, and shared it with me to my eternal joy."

From Minnesota:

"We appreciate your faithful service. Pastor Kevin Sadler's articles in the *Searchlight* are very helpful and inspiring!"

From Indiana:

"The tract you wrote, 'Gambling With Eternity,' is absolutely the best salvation tract I have ever read! You obviously put a lot of personal thought into it during its composition. When will you have them back in stock to sell?" (They're back! Keep giving them out. We'll print more.—Ed).

From Ohio:

"My wife and I have been grace believers for almost 20 years now. The first several years were spent trying to figure things out while coming out of the faith movement or prosperity teachings. So we saw the lie before we saw the truth. Your *Searchlight* booklet and great teachers like Brother Les Feldick have contributed in showing us spiritual truth."

From our Inbox:

"This *Two Minutes* [Time Is a Precious Commodity, by Paul M. Sadler] is very timely! Two of our friends went home to be with the Lord this week."

From Wisconsin:

"I really liked the *More Minutes With the Bible* article by Pastor Ricky Kurth: 'Running to Win.' I would like to share it with my great niece who almost made it to the Olympic Trials this year. I especially liked the distinction made between castaway and approved." (Our weekly *More Minutes* email is up and running. Sign up today!—Ed).

From Texas:

"I've been a grace pastor and teacher for the past 11 years or so, and didn't know it until I started reading and studying the Word through you'all's material...I have had a lot of 'Aha' moments...I made sure this was God's Word for His church in this dispensation by searching the Scriptures."

From Wisconsin:

"Every once in a while I find one of your periodicals lying on the religious book shelf, and when I do, I grab it up to read...I hear you teach two gospels. I've heard this teaching before and... If this teaching is true, it may clear up some confusion...you teach the church age didn't begin at Pentecost but with Paul's preaching to the Gentiles. I find this very interesting also and would like to study that further in more detail."

From Ohio:

"Your December article 'Praying for the Rascals' sure hit home with me. Now I am back on the right track."

From Oklahoma:

"I am interested in finding out the possibility of having 18 copies of the *Searchlight* sent each month to be used specifically for Bible study, especially for Sunday School...We are looking for good Sunday School material that keeps with dispensational teaching and the *Searchlight* does a wonderful job of doing that."

From our Inbox:

"If it wasn't the most serious matter on earth I would reply with LOL or ROFL, but two dispensations from Heaven with different laws for each one with absolutely no Scriptural support is not even funny. I was baptized into Christ in 1967 and have studied God's Word with many people who had erroneous beliefs, but this one just might take the cake. I will pray for you."

From Missouri:

"The 'Men of Faith, Men of Worship' article by Patrick Kilgo could not have made things more clear. It was wonderful! We had just (the week before) in our small group-studied the Christmas story. We were trying to figure it all out as to the timeline surrounding our Savior's birth. Mr. Kilgo did a wonderful job, and when I took his article back to my group, they all shared the same enthusiasm. The *Searchlight* continues to reach and influence in so many ways."

From Iowa:

"Just want to let you know I appreciate the Two Minutes messages I read daily. I often forward them to family members and friends." (That's a great way to get the message of grace out to others!—Ed).

From Texas:

"The *Berean Bible Society's* materials and books have kept me on the right track in my Bible study for 30 years. I first heard this message from my brother. I realized that this was an answer to my frustration in Bible study. Unanswered prayer was my stumblingblock...Pastor Kevin's writings are truly a blessing. There is so much depth that I have to read it over and over."

From our Inbox:

"Thanks you so very much for the email regarding *Assurance of Salvation*. I have printed this so I can read it over and over and really understand salvation."

From Virginia:

"Thank you! This answer makes so much sense...I read it to my wife as well."

From our Inbox:

"Thank you for this excellent *More Minutes With the Bible* study [The Profit of Spiritual Gifts]. I wish I would have had this comprehensive approach when I had my pulpit ministry. Still I will put it to good use."

From Arkansas:

"I just wanted to say thank you so much for the *Searchlight* Scripture Index; it is very helpful when I study the Bible." (This handy index covers all the *Searchlights* in our website's archives.—Ed).

From South Carolina:

"Excellent answer...I needed this answer. I knew you would be my best source for our dispensation of grace. Thank you the *Searchlight* and for all you do for our Lord."



"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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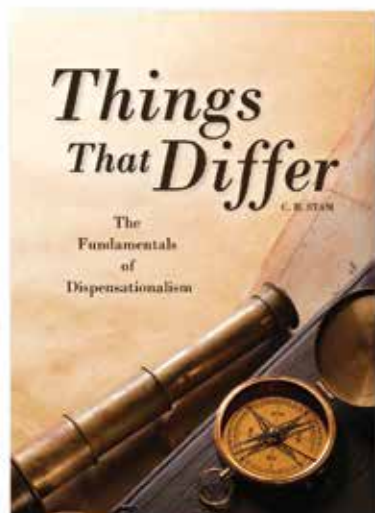
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News and Announcements

Don't panic! When you saw Page 29's ad for *Things That Differ*, did the words "last chance" give you heart palpitations and cause you to wonder if we were going to discontinue publishing Pastor Stam's invaluable work? If so, and if the brief wording of the ad didn't put your mind at ease, we thought we would assure you that we are only discontinuing the *hardcover* version of this volume. We are making this change because sales of the paperback format positively *dwarf* sales of the hardcover. It is perhaps a sign of our economic times that our readers like to give the cheaper paperback copy to others to help enlighten the eyes of their understanding. All we know for sure is that the addition of the new titles we are publishing is a sign we need to make room in our warehouse for Paul Sadler's *Revelation Volume 3*; and the release later this year of *Revelation Volume 4*; John Fredericksen's *Daily Transformation*; and your editor's book on frequently asked questions. So order your final hardback copy of *Things That Differ* today, and pray that God will continue to use this book to the glory of His grace.

Kentucky Bible Conference: Our good friends at the *Old Bethel Bible Church* in Alpha have invited Pastor Ricky Kurth to hold forth God's Word of life at their special meetings the weekend of March 10th through the 12th. Here's your chance to meet host pastor Jeff Bertram, and hear a preview of your editor's upcoming book on frequently asked questions. For more information about this springtime event, Pastor Bertram can be reached at 606-348-3071 or 606-307-4396.

New Video Series: "What Does The Bible Say?" is the title of a new series of studies presented by Pastor Ken Lawson, a member of our BBS board of directors, and pastor of the *Grace Bible Fellowship Church* of Inverness, Florida. These video messages join a verse-by-verse study of *Ephesians* taught by fellow BBS board member Pastor Jeff Seekins, who shepherds *Community Bible Church* in Tipp City, Ohio. Finally, your editor's examination of *I Timothy*, given at his home church of *Faith Bible Church* in Steger, Illinois, is also being added to the growing library of video messages found under the "Bible Study" heading at Berean@bereanbiblesociety.org



Fort Gratiot Lighthouse is located in Port Huron, MI, and is the oldest operating lighthouse in the Great Lakes. Established in 1814, it was built to guard the juncture of Lake Huron and the St. Clair River. Today, a Coast Guard station and the lighthouse watch over ships as they enter the rapids at the St. Clair River.

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“Feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving;
My warrant is the Word of God
Naught else is worth believing.”

-Martin Luther
1483-1546

