

# *The* **BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

December 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,

Christmas is the season of giving. At Christmastime, more than any other time, we often realize how true it is that "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35), and we find great joy and fulfillment in doing so. Christ's selfless love teaches us to put others before ourselves and to give of our time and resources.

BBS Founder, Pastor Cornelius R. Stam, was a very giving man. When my father, Paul M. Sadler, was the President of BBS and still working with Pastor Stam daily in the Chicago office, Pastor Stam would often call my dad in the evenings to talk over things from the day. I was the designated answer man for phone calls at home when I was a teenager. When Pastor Stam called, it only took me a second to know it was him because of his deep, booming voice. Sometimes he would ask for my dad right away, but other times we would chitchat for a minute or two about this and that: school, the Chicago Bears, ministry, etc. Then I'd go get Dad to tell him Pastor Stam was on the phone.

Over the course of these years, just because I'd answer the phone and go get my dad, Pastor Stam would give me little gifts: watches, one of his many cameras, and books. I kept one of the notes that he gave me with one of the gifts. It says, "Dear Kevin, You have been so kind to me so often and in so many ways that I felt led to send this little 'thank you.' God bless you and use you increasingly in His wonderful service." He signed it: Pastor Stam, II Cor. 9:8. Pastor Stam was a great example to me of the kind and thoughtful giving God wants out of our lives at all times.

To give gifts with a spiritual focus to family and friends is to give them what is needed most. This Christmas, please consider giving the gift of God's Word. We have a selection of Bibles to choose from at BBS. Also available is a new Christmas tract that I recently wrote called *Christmas Times* (see page 12). Consider including this gift of the gospel in your Christmas cards or taping it to your presents to loved ones who need Christ. Pastor Ricky Kurth's new book, *Rightly Divided Answers to Frequently Asked Questions* is another very fine gift choice and would be a great way to introduce a loved one to the message of grace for today.

All of us here at *Berean Bible Society* wish all of you a very merry Christmas.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Kevin Sadler, President

# The Birth that Gave Gentiles a Shot at *Redemption*



**“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that are under the law...” (Gal. 4:4,5).**

Paul says Christ entered the world, “...to *redeem them that were under the law*” (the Jews). We are born to live, but He was born to die. That fateful night long ago will echo this wonderful truth to the end of time. Namely, the wooden feeding trough that the lambs frequented cradled the Lamb of God, who would one day hang upon an old rugged Cross. Why? That He might redeem “...us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Gal. 3:13).

But what does all this have to do with us Gentiles? Much in every way! First and foremost, we learn from Paul’s gospel that God’s plan of redemption wasn’t to be limited to Israel. Hence, Paul received a *new* revelation that “God was in Christ reconciling the *world* unto Himself” (2 Cor. 5:19). Christ gave Himself a ransom for *all* (1 Tim. 2:6). Moreover, the law, which *condemned* Israel, also pointed its bony finger into the face of the Gentiles declaring that we, too, were under the *sentence of condemnation*. Consider these solemn words:

“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that *every mouth* may be stopped, and *all the world may become guilty before God*” (Rom. 3:19). If God’s chosen people were unable to keep His righteous standard, should we suppose that we would have fared any better had the Gentiles, been placed under the law? Christ has redeemed *both*, Jews and Gentiles, from the curse of the law. Today, then, we are saved by grace through faith *alone*! We walk by grace *alone*, and will one day be caught up together by grace *alone*!

So then, while God’s plan of redemption was gradually unfolded, Paul was given the secret of the gospel, which is Calvary. He is the first to reveal the *significance* of what God was doing in Christ. In other words, Paul *explains* why the *virgin birth* was essential, that a *provision* was made for all at Calvary, that *forgiveness* is through the blood of Christ, how that we were *redeemed* from the curse of the law, etc. Although dispensational distinctions are extremely important, may the Lord also give us an understanding as to the importance of the *connections* between the two programs of God. —Pastor Paul M. Sadler



# 'Tis Not the Season for Giving!

By Pastor Ricky Kurth

(An excerpt from Pastor Kurth's new book, *Rightly Divided Answers to Frequently Asked Questions*. Available now! See page 29 for a special introductory price.)

As all good Bible students know, the Lord Jesus Christ promised to give certain miraculous powers or *gifts* (Mark 16:15-20) to those who believed "the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 4:23) that He was sending the apostles out to preach. But Mid-Acts dispensationalists such as ourselves know that the season for giving such gifts is past, and God is not giving those supernatural powers to believers today in the dispensation of grace.

But if you know your Bible, you know that while God is not giving us these gifts *today*, God *did* give those gifts to members of the Body of Christ in the *early* days of the dispensation of grace. Grace believers frequently ask why He chose to do this, and so it is the next question we need to address.

Why did God give spiritual gifts to early members of the Body of Christ?

To answer this question, we have to give careful consideration to a chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, a chapter in

which he speaks to them about spiritual gifts in some detail. Beginning in verse 1, we read:

**"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (1 Cor. 12:1).**

Whenever Paul used phrases like "I would not have you ignorant," it was always because he was writing to people who *were* ignorant about whatever it was he was addressing. And that was certainly the case with the Corinthians and spiritual gifts. They *had* these gifts, but they didn't know *why* they had them. So after Paul spoke to them about their gifts in the next several verses, he added,

**"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (1 Cor. 12:7).**

As you can see, the reason God gave spiritual gifts to these early members of the Body of Christ was to "profit" them spiritually.

Of course, this only begs the question of why later in this same epistle Paul predicted that these gifts would soon "cease" and



“vanish away” (1 Cor. 13:8) once the Word of God was complete (v. 9,10). Don’t members of the Body of Christ today need spiritual profit just as much as those early members of the church needed it? Of course we do! Why then would God allow those gifts to be taken away from His people?

### Time to Turn a Profit

The answer is, now that the Bible is complete, God has a *different* means by which He profits His people, one that Paul described in his letter to Timothy:

**“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable...”**  
(2 Tim. 3:16).

Do you see the comparison between this verse and Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 12:7? God used spiritual gifts to profit *early* members of the Body of Christ, but He used *the Scriptures* to profit *later* members of the church. When Paul went on to tell Timothy that God had given the Scriptures to profit us, “that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (v. 17), we know that *with the Scriptures* we have everything we need for God to profit us spiritually. Now that His Word is complete, it provides us with all of the spiritual profit that was once supplied to the Body of Christ by spiritual gifts.

But when Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians, the Bible was not yet complete, and that’s the reason God gave the saints at Corinth those spiritual gifts—to do what the Bible *alone* would do for God’s people later.

To demonstrate this, let’s take a brief look at each of the gifts that Paul mentions to these saints:

**“For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit”** (1 Cor. 12:8).

Now when Paul wrote to these saints about the gift of spiritual “knowledge,” we have to ask what this gift gave them a knowledge of. I believe it gave them a knowledge of *the will of God*. I say that because *today* we get a knowledge of the will of God from the Bible *alone*. That’s why as the completion of the Word of God drew near Paul prayed,

**“...that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will...”** (Col. 1:9).



Before the Bible was complete, a complete knowledge of God’s will was impossible! So God gave the early members of the Body of Christ a supernatural *gift* of knowledge to tide them over until the Bible was finished. But once the last book of the New Testament had been penned, the members of the Body of Christ had all the knowledge of the will of God they needed for their spiritual profit. And when that day came,

there was no further need of the *gift* of knowledge, so God ceased giving this gift, and no one today has a supernatural gift of the knowledge of His will.

### **The Profit of Wisdom and Knowledge**

Now as you can see from 1 Corinthians 12:8, God also gave early members of the Body of Christ a supernatural gift of *wisdom*. Wisdom is the *application* of knowledge. It is good to know the will of God, but unless we *apply* this knowledge to the details of our lives, it's all academic! And God has *never* meant for the study of His Word to be purely an academic exercise. He has *always* desired for His people to *use* their knowledge of His will to serve Him, and in the process enrich their lives beyond all comprehension.

And so it was that in the early days of the dispensation of grace, God gave a supernatural gift of wisdom to aid His people in applying the knowledge of His will to their lives, and to the lives of those to whom they ministered. But now that the Bible is complete, *the Word of God* can give us all the wisdom we need to accomplish this lofty spiritual goal.

That's why in praying that the Colossians might be filled with a knowledge of God's will, Paul *added* that he desired for them to be "filled with the knowledge of His will *in all wisdom*" (Col. 1:9). When men were given a supernatural *gift* of wisdom, there was no need for Paul to *pray* that the saints might have wisdom. But as

the Bible began to be completed and the gift of wisdom began to "vanish away," along with the gift of knowledge of God's will and all the other spiritual gifts, the need arose for spiritual leaders to *pray* that the saints "may stand perfect and complete *in all the will of God*" (Col. 4:12). But *until* the Bible was finished, God gave a supernatural *gift* of wisdom to tide His people over.

“Why...would God  
allow those gifts to be  
taken away from His  
people?”

As we read on in our text, Paul talks about some *other* spiritual gifts that were given to profit the Body of Christ before the Bible was completed:

**“To another *faith* by the same Spirit; to another *the gifts of healing* by the same Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:9).**

### **The Gift of Faith**

Did you know there was a supernatural gift of *faith*? Perhaps you are thinking, “Of course I knew that! There are men on Christian television who claim to *have* this gift!” But you know that they *don't* have the gift of faith because of the *definition* Paul gives us of the gift of faith in the very next chapter of this epistle:

**“...though I have *all faith*, so that I could *remove mountains*, and have not charity, I am *nothing*” (1 Cor. 13:2).**

Someone who had “all faith” would have to have the *gift* of faith, wouldn’t you agree? And Paul says that a man with that kind of faith should be able to move mountains! Nor was he the only one who affirmed this. The Lord Himself said,

***“...if ye have faith, and doubt not...if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done” (Matt. 21:21).***

With this mountain-moving definition of perfect faith in mind, men today might *claim* they have the gift of faith, but by the strict *definition* of this gift we know that no one today is in possession of it.

But we know that now that the Bible is complete, it is possible to gain the profit of having “all faith” by *reading the Scriptures*, because “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). That means if we *don’t* have all the faith that the Word of God can give, it isn’t because God didn’t give us a *gift* of faith. It’s because we haven’t spent enough time *studying* the Word by which faith comes.

### **Affordable Health Care**

Paul also says that “gifts of healing” were given to the early church (I Cor. 12:9). Now here we have to ask why members of “the church, which is His body” would *need* the gift of healing. I say this because in our answer to the previous question, we saw that God gave this gift *to the Jews* to prepare them to be God’s priests

to the rest of the world in the kingdom of heaven on earth (Ex. 19:6). Priests could not be “blind” or “lame” or have any infirmity of that sort (Lev. 21:16-24), so when the New Testament dawned and the kingdom of heaven was “at hand” (Matt. 3:2; 4:17), the Lord healed the infirm so that all God’s people in Israel could qualify for the priesthood (Isa. 66:20,21).

But God is not preparing *us* to be “kings and priests” in the kingdom of heaven on earth (cf. Rev. 1:6; 5:10). He plans to rapture us to Heaven to “judge angels” (1 Cor. 6:3). And once God put the kingdom program “on hold” after the stoning of Stephen, there was no longer any need to prepare the people of Israel for the priesthood. This is why no member of the Body of Christ has the gift of healing today.



So why did God give the gift of healing to *early* members of Christ’s Body? Well, in our answer to the previous question, we saw that God gave *Moses* the gift of healing as a “sign” (Ex. 4:6-8). We also saw that the Lord predicted that the 12 apostles also would be given this sign (Mark 16:17-20). This is why at Pentecost, the apostles prayed,



**“...Lord...grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy Word, *By stretching forth Thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done...*” (Acts 4:29,30).**

So the Bible makes it very clear that the gift of healing was a sign, and equally clear that it is *the Jews* who “require a sign” (1 Cor. 1:22). Everyone knows that Moses ministered to the Jews, but it is sometimes overlooked that Peter was addressing the “men of Israel” at Pentecost as well (Acts 2:14,22,36). And from the birth of the nation Israel with Moses all the way down to the last days of God’s dealing with that nation with Peter at Pentecost, God gave the Jews plenty of signs to look at, as even a casual acquaintance with the Old Testament will attest.

But even after God cast the nation of Israel away (Rom. 11:15) at the stoning of Stephen, He *continued* to give Israel her signs *through the members of the Corinthian church*. Now why would He do that? This is the question we are addressing in this chapter—why God gave Israel’s sign gifts to the early members of the Body of Christ. And the answer is found in Paul’s words in Romans 10:21:

**“...to Israel He saith, All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.”**

### **A Show of Hands**

You see, God may have cast *the nation* of Israel away, but He was still reaching forth His hands to *individuals* in Israel. He may

have temporarily closed the door on the nation under the kingdom program, but He did *not* close the door on any individual Jews who wanted to be saved during the dispensation of grace. And one of the ways that God used to *provoke* individual Jews to be saved *was by giving their spiritual gifts to the Gentiles*.

**“...God has a different means by which He profits His people....”**



Beloved, those sign gifts *belonged* to the people of Israel. Speaking to them, the psalmist called them “our signs” (Psa. 74:9). But in the early days of the dispensation of grace, God gave their signs to the lowly and despised *Gentiles*. He didn’t do this to provoke Jews to *anger*, He did it to provoke them to *jealousy*. The apostle of the Gentiles said,

**“...I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:**

**“If by any means I may *provoke to emulation* them which are my flesh, *and might save some of them*” (Rom. 11:13,14).**

One of the reasons Paul was so eager to magnify his office as the apostle of the Gentiles was because he knew it would provoke his brethren in Israel to jealousy. And not just to jealousy, but also to *emulation*, to a desire to

follow the Gentiles in their faith in Christ and be saved. And God knew that one of the most effective ways to provoke the Jews to emulation was to give their sign gifts to the Gentiles to whom Paul ministered as their apostle.

Did it work? It worked in Corinth! Soon after Paul established a grace church among the Gentiles in Corinth, we read that “Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed” (Acts 18:8). Bereft of their leader, the synagogue soon appointed another man to the position of chief ruler, a man named Sosthenes. We know this because a few verses later we read of “Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue” (v. 17). And what do we know about Sosthenes? We know that he too eventually believed the gospel, for his name is mentioned along with Paul’s name in the opening salutation of the apostle’s first epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:1). God’s plan to provoke the Jews to emulation worked like a charm in Corinth!

### **Location, Location, Location**

Of course, there’s a reason why God’s plan worked so well in Corinth, a reason that explains why the sign gifts are mentioned so prominently—indeed, almost *exclusively*—in 1 Corinthians. The reason has to do with the unique geographic positioning of the Corinthian church. After the Jews in the synagogue at Corinth rejected Paul’s gospel (Acts 18:1-6),

**“...he departed thence, and entered into a certain man’s house,**

**named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue” (v. 7).**



When Paul’s words fell on deaf ears in the synagogue, he established a grace church *right next door*. What better way for God to continue to stretch forth His hands to individuals in the disobedient and gainsaying nation of Israel than to situate His hands right next door to a synagogue! It is for *this* reason that the sign gifts feature more prominently in this letter Paul wrote to the Corinthians than in any of his other epistles.

This provocation ministry of the Apostle Paul and the Gentiles to whom he ministered went on throughout the time period covered by the transitional book of Acts. As God moved forward with His ministry to the Gentiles through Paul, He continued to bend over backward, as it were, to reach out to individuals in Israel.

The purpose of the book of Acts is to chronicle the transition from God's prophetic program in Israel, a program that was replete with spiritual gifts, to His new program among the Gentiles, a program that is bereft of Israel's gifts.

But while God went to great lengths to provoke the Jews to jealousy by giving the Gentiles their gifts, He did not intend to use their gifts to provoke them to jealousy forever. When it comes to the gift of healing that we are considering at this point in our discussion, we can actually chart how this gift faded away once the completion of the Bible drew near. Not long after this transition period described in the book of Acts came to an end, Paul advised Timothy to

**“Drink no longer water, but use a little wine *for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities*” (1 Tim. 5:23).**

### **A Generic Prescription**

If Paul still had the ability to send out aprons and handkerchiefs to heal people, a “special” gift he possessed earlier in his ministry (Acts 19:11,12), he surely would have dispatched one of these in a hurry to aid the infirmity of a coworker as beloved as Timothy. If Paul could still heal people in this manner at that time, imagine how disappointed Timothy would have been when he received medical advice from Paul rather than something that would have brought him immediate relief. There is even evidence that he was *with* Paul in Ephesus

when the apostle was forwarding those objects to the sick. Thus if he thought Paul still had the power to heal that he’d seen him use to benefit others, and was choosing not to use it to help him, he would have felt like the proverbial chopped liver!

But Timothy understood what so many today fail to understand, and that is that the gift of healing began to “fail,” and “cease,” and “vanish away,” along with all the other spiritual gifts with the completion of the Word of God (1 Cor. 13:8-10). This means that Timothy was probably not at all surprised to read Paul’s words in the second epistle the apostle wrote to him, where he said of a beloved coworker,

**“...Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick” (2 Tim. 4:20).**



Trophimus was a fellowlaborer in the work of the ministry who had been with Paul through thick and thin (Acts 20:4; 21:29). There is simply no way that the apostle would have left this dear brother behind if he could have healed him and brought him with him. And if even an apostle as great as Paul eventually lost his ability to heal the sick, we have to conclude that no one since him has been given the gift of healing either.





**Our new Christmas tract** by Pastor Kevin Sadler, is now ready, just in time to include in all of your holiday greeting cards. Inspired by the Charles Dickens tale, this tract discusses Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas yet to Come in a way that makes it clear that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15). Call to order your *Christmas Times* tracts today, or visit our Bookstore online.

Package of 25 for \$3.00 or 100 for \$10.00

## Question Box

*“Why does Genesis 6:6 say ‘it repented the LORD that He had made man’ if He knew in advance how sinful man would get?”*

You may be thinking that the word “repent” there means God *regretted* He made man, and my dictionary says “regret” can mean “a looking back with dissatisfaction.” This cannot be the meaning here, however, for it is not possible that God would be dissatisfied with anything He has done.

Like all words, *repent* can have different meanings. My dictionary defines it as “to feel pain, sorrow, or regret for something one has done.” The word “or” here suggests that God didn’t *regret* making man, He rather felt pain and sorrow for having done so. The way the verse is worded makes this clear. It doesn’t say *the Lord repented* making man, as it would if He regretted it. It says *it repented the Lord*, it pained Him, for their sin caused Him sorrow. The rest of the verse verifies this interpretation when it explains, “and it grieved Him at His heart.”

Sin *still* grieves the Lord, even after we are saved, so “grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30).  
—Pastor Ricky Kurth



# More Than Meets the Eye

By Dave Stewart

*Faith Bible Church, Steger, IL*

**A**s grace believers we often speak of our complete identification with the Lord Jesus. In the eyes of God we are no longer in Adam, but in Christ. We love to ponder the truth that “when God looks at me, He sees His Son.”

## The Seeing

**“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27).**

The picture our apostle paints here is one of us having put on a garment, a covering, and that covering is Christ. So when God sees you, He does, in truth, see His Son. But is that the extent of our identification with Christ, or is there more than meets the eye?

## The Hearing

**“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Rom. 8:26).**

Here Paul tells us that even though we don’t always know what to pray for, the Holy Spirit prays in us, and for us, as we pray. Of course that Spirit is the Spirit of Christ Himself dwelling within us. So it turns out that, to God the Father, we don’t just look like Christ, we sound like Him too. When God hears us, He hears His Son.

## The Smelling

**“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour” (Eph. 5:2).**

The ultimate obedience and service of our Lord is described here as “a sweetsmelling savour.” To God the Father, the aroma of Christ’s sacrifice was sweet and fully satisfying. But consider also this statement:

**“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish” (2 Cor. 2:14,15).**



Here Paul says that, unto God, our service carries the sweet aroma of Christ. To God the Father, you don't just look like Christ, and you don't just sound like Christ, you actually smell like Him.

### **The Tasting**

**“That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God” (Phil. 1:10,11).**

The obedience of God's people throughout the Bible is often described as fruit-bearing. And what does one do with fruit, but taste it. This writer finds it interesting that we have come to describe the most aromatic and best tasting foods with words like “heavenly” and “divine.” The fruit born by our Lord was certainly received and enjoyed as such by God the Father.



But notice in the verse above that it is you and I who are being “filled with the fruits of righteousness,” and that the fruit which we bear is “by Jesus Christ.” We bear His fruit!

So, to God, you don't just look like Christ, you don't just sound like Christ, and you don't just smell like Jesus Christ, but when the Father tastes the fruit of your service, He is tasting the fruit of His Son.

### **The Feeling**

**“My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen” (1 Cor. 16:24).**

Here we see the Apostle Paul expressing, as he so often does, his love for the saints. But notice where his love for them abides. It's “in Christ Jesus” that Paul finds the source of his own affection for the people of God.

While we know that love itself is not a feeling, for Paul, the love of Christ that was in him engendered some of the deepest of feelings.

**“For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:8).**

Here Paul describes his love for the believers at Philippi as a great longing for them. This is a desire for the saints that he could actually feel deep down inside of him. But Paul doesn't say, “deep down inside of me,” rather he says, “in the bowels of Jesus Christ.” Just as his love for the Corinthians was “in Christ Jesus,” so his great longing for the Philippians came from deep inside of Christ Himself. And Paul was able to say all this because he knew that this is exactly how God the Father reckons it. When we love, to God, we feel like His Son.

## The Fullness

God created man with five senses; sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, in order that we might fully experience all that He has created in the physical world and in the universe around us. But it is also true that God created man in His own image, and while God is a Spirit (John 4:24) and His senses are not physical, still there is a completeness and a fullness being described when the Word speaks of how He sees, hears, smells, tastes and feels, that is, how God experiences, you and me. To God, for us to live is Christ (Gal. 2:20).

Only as you and I grow in the knowledge and understanding of our identification with Him, can we begin to know ourselves as God knows us. And as we do, we can begin to say with the apostle Paul that, now, not only to God, but also “TO ME, to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21). Then it happens, that the whole world will begin to see Christ in us; to hear Christ in us; to smell, taste and feel Christ in us. When you know who you are in Christ, the world will have known Christ, because it knew you.

When God sees me He sees His Son, I never would deny, but hidden in this blessed truth is more than meets the eye. 



## Christ Is God

Two times in a span of three months here at BBS, I received a seemingly innocent phone call from a man who said he had a Bible question. He didn't have a question though; he had an agenda to try to convince me that Christ is not God. He was a Jehovah's Witness. I showed him

Scripture after Scripture (Titus 2:13; Col. 2:9; Isa. 9:6, etc.), but he remained unconvinced. When I took him to John 1:1, he said I had a bad translation and that it should read, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was *a* God.” When I refused to agree with his belief, both times he turned very angry and ended the phone call by hanging up on me. After each call, I prayed for him that he would see the truth.

One of the passages I took this gentleman to was Hebrews 1:8,9:

**“But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”**

In this passage, you find God the Father quoted as speaking to the Son, and He very plainly addresses the Son as “God.” As J. Vernon McGee said about this passage, “If God the Father calls His Son God, I don't know about you, but I am also going to call Him God.”

—Pastor Kevin Sadler



# A Saying That Shouldn't Go Without Saying

**“This is a faithful saying...that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...” (1 Tim. 1:15).**

You’ve probably heard the old saying, “Don’t criticize a man until you’ve walked a mile in his shoes.” I once heard a comedian add, “That way when you *do* criticize him, you’re a mile away, *and you’ve got his shoes!*”

While this addition makes that a *humorous* saying, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” is a *faithful* saying. That means if you’re a sinner needing a Savior, you can depend on the fact that Christ came to save *you*, no matter who you are or what you’ve done.

Don’t you wish all old sayings were that dependable? They say, “You get what you pay for,” but I don’t have to tell you that sometimes you don’t! But we know that it has always been true that Christ came to save sinners, for even under God’s kingdom program for Israel, the Lord declared,

**“They that be whole need not a physician, but *they that are sick*...I am not come to call the righteous, but *sinners to repentance*” (Matt. 9:12,13).**

When I was a boy, doctors still made house calls, and our family physician came to our home to treat my asthma. But he wouldn’t have come if I hadn’t needed medical attention. Similarly, Christ wouldn’t have come into the world to save sinners if men didn’t need salvation!

Of course, if you’re not saved, and are unwilling to *admit* you’re a sinner, you’re in trouble, for that would mean that Christ didn’t come to save you! If you’re willing to acknowledge you’re a sinner, but think yourself to be pretty godly overall, you’re *still* in trouble, for “Christ died *for the ungodly*” (Rom. 5:6). If that forces you to concede you are an ungodly sinner, but you think you and God are on fairly good terms, *you are still in trouble*, for you must admit to being His *enemy* to be saved. Paul reminded the believers in Rome, “*when we were enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son...” (Rom. 5:10).

But don’t be discouraged, all of this is actually good news! What if Paul had said, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save *tall people*,” and you are “vertically challenged.” You can’t admit to being tall, but you can admit to being a sinner! Why not admit it *right now* and believe Christ died to *pay* for your sins, and rose again (1 Cor. 15:3,4). If you’re saved, why not repeat this faithful saying to someone *today!* “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” is not a saying that should go without saying!

—By Pastor Ricky Kurth



# The Strongest Man Who Ever Lived

By Pastor Ken Lawson  
*Grace Bible Fellowship,*  
Inverness, FL

When I was a small lad of about five years of age, I was fascinated with the strong men of the Bible. I loved hearing of Goliath, who stood over nine feet tall and was able to scare the whole army of Israel. Then I heard of Samson, who was able to tear apart a lion with his bare hands. That prompted the question: “Mom, who was the strongest person who ever lived, Goliath or Samson?” Her answer shocked me. “Neither one,” she said. “The strongest man who ever lived was Jesus Christ.”

At that young age, it didn’t make sense. I had seen pictures of Jesus Christ on the cross, and that skinny, bloody form sure didn’t seem like a good candidate for the strongest man.

“Mom was Jesus stronger than Goliath or Samson,” I asked.

Laughing she said, “I meant that He was the strongest spiritually. Goliath and Samson were strong physically but were weak toward God.”

Then she told me of their faults. That was the first time I had heard of someone who was strong spiritually, and it stuck with me for many years until I was able to read the Bible for myself. Then I learned of the mighty works of Christ – creation, resurrection, His sinless life, and His many miracles. Surely this was the strongest man who ever lived.

Then I thought, “Wouldn’t it be wonderful to be as strong as Samson in body and still be as strong as Christ in Spirit?” Years later, after I was saved by the grace of God, I learned that God did, in fact, make such a provision of power by giving to all believers His Spirit.

**“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9).**

“This is great,” I thought. “What a marvelous way to be as strong as Christ. As long as I am walking in Him, the power of His Spirit is released in me by faith, so giving me the strength to live above sin and

the ability to serve God acceptably.” Paul must have had confidence in this power when he wrote, “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” (Gal. 2:20).

And also: “But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (1 Cor. 15:10).

I was a little bit disappointed about the physical thing. I tried pumping iron for awhile, but the results were not what I had hoped for. Fortunately, I did learn of at least one verse from Paul which gave me hope.

**“But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Rom. 8:11).**

We know through God’s Word that our vile bodies will be changed and transformed to be like unto Christ’s own body of glory (Phil. 3:20,21), but this verse is not addressing the resurrection body per se, but rather our present bodies of flesh. That is, our “mortal bodies” that are subject to death in this world can also receive the benefits of God’s power. God is not supernaturally adding muscle to our frame, but giving power by His grace to resist sin in the flesh and to live our lives to His honor and glory. We praise God that while His provision is primarily for the inner person of the believer, it also extends to the outer man as well as He quickens (gives life to) our mortal bodies by His Spirit.



We who have trusted Christ as Lord and Savior have quite a bright prospect—glorified bodies stronger than Samson and a form that would make Arnold Swartzenegger jealous. Best of all, we shall be like Christ when our fallen nature is forever banished. Then we will see our Creator–Redeemer face to face and enjoy Him forever. Until then, we have a blessed opportunity and responsibility. In the midst of our busy lives we can still exercise our faith as we put our bodies on the altar of dedication to God (Rom. 12:1-2). This remains true even when we find ourselves facing injury, sickness, and death. God’s grace is sufficient for all things because we have become partakers of the strength of the strongest man who ever lived. Perhaps that is why Paul wrote, “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day” (2 Cor. 4:16).





# Christmas *Reactions*

By Pastor Kevin Sadler

“Giving presents is always a problem. If you love someone, you want to make sure you give them something they really want. Ideally, you want to see that look of joyous surprise when they open the gift and even before they say a word, you know it was perfect... You work so hard to find just the right gift, and then it doesn’t fit... or it isn’t the right color...or it was broken in the box...or they already had one...or the design doesn’t match what they already have...worst of all, it wasn’t what they really wanted...They unwrap the gift and then there is a short pause—just a micro-second—but in that moment you already know the truth. ‘Why, it’s beautiful,’ they say. But you can see the look in their eyes. You put on a brave front and try again. ‘Do you really like it?’ ‘Like it? I love it.’ But you aren’t fooled. It’s not what they wanted.”<sup>1</sup>

It’s like a husband who can tell by his wife’s reaction that she had not been dreaming of getting an auto emergency kit, even though it was the deluxe model with booster cables and an

air compressor! Yes, stores will open early the day after Christmas, and return lines will be long, filled with people bringing back gifts that weren’t quite perfect.

But there was a perfect Gift given 2,000 years ago. No gift can surpass the Gift God gave to the world of His Son and our Savior. The Gift of God’s Son is, as the Apostle Paul says, an “unspeakable Gift” (2 Cor. 9:15). He is a Gift too wonderful for words. And our reaction to that Gift is one of awe, wonder, gratitude, and praise. You see these kinds of reactions to Christ’s coming into the world in Luke 2.

## **The Shepherds’ Reaction**

**“And suddenly there was...a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came**

**with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger” (Luke 2:13-16).**

Just as suddenly as the heavenly host had filled the skies to announce the Savior’s birth and praise God for it, the angelic celebrants retreated to the invisible realm of heaven, leaving the shepherds to the dark of night again. After witnessing this spectacular, supernatural revelation about the birth of the Christ, the shepherds knew they could not just file this information away; they had to act.

They spontaneously, unanimously, collectively “said one to another, Let *us* now go even unto Bethlehem.” There was the same response from everybody. They were in full agreement. That can be difficult to do, to get a group of men to agree unanimously on something!

This group of shepherds also knew they needed to journey to Bethlehem *immediately*. They weren’t about to wait until it was daybreak. “Let us *now* go,” they all said. They had received the greatest news humanity had ever heard, and responded immediately to it by faith. They didn’t even worry about the sheep! They just left their flocks in the care of God and set out to find the Savior and Messiah of Israel.

They wanted to see with their own eyes “this thing which is come to pass”—the Christ being born, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger (v. 12). And it says of the shepherds that “they came with haste.” “Haste” means speed. As a result of their enthusiasm and excitement, they were

moving! This has been appropriately called “the first Christmas rush.” We see in the shepherds a Christmas reaction of faith, enthusiasm, and joy, which resulted in an irresistible urge to hurry up and search Him out to see for themselves. So God would have the truth of Christmas result in excitement, joy, and a desire for you to see it for yourself from God’s Word and believe it: Christ, the eternal Son of God, was born as a human Baby in order to be our Savior.



The shepherds rushed from the fields to Bethlehem, and verse 16 says that they “found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.” The Greek word translated as “found” in verse 16 means to find by searching. They searched for Him high and low, running and looking all over and around Bethlehem, perhaps knocking on doors, waking people up, probably finding some newborns, but they were looking for one particular Newborn who was lying in a feed trough. So they kept running around looking at every manger they could find until, eventually, after their thorough search, they found Him. And they found that everything

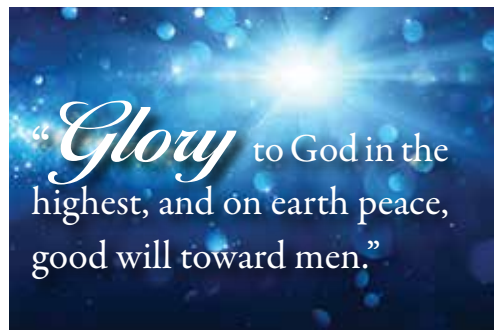
was just as the angel said it would be: “the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger” (Luke 2:12).

**“And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this Child” (Luke 2:17).**

What’s striking is that the shepherds didn’t pull up a bale of hay, kick back, make themselves comfortable, and hang around the manger for a while. It does not seem like they stayed long at all! They saw, perceived, and understood what they were looking at—and then they knew that they were messengers with the single greatest message of all to share. They came to see Him, they saw Him, and they knew it was true, that the Messiah really had come and was born. So they headed out to spread the good news “abroad,” or widely, all around Bethlehem and beyond. Nobody got much sleep that night with these shepherds around! They couldn’t keep quiet in their excitement. The shepherds were so excited about what they had seen and heard that they just had to tell everybody what they’d seen and heard.

Notice that the message they shared was not about seeing angels or Mary, it was about “this Child” (v. 17). After they had seen Him, they spread the word abroad concerning what had been told them about “this Child.” They shared with everyone they could about what the angel had told them about Him, that His coming was good tidings of great joy for all people, and that “For unto you is born this day in

the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11). They told of His being wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. They told of how the sky exploded with angels, praising God, and how this Child’s coming was cause for them to say, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”



Good news is for sharing. That’s what the shepherds did. That’s what we’re called to do as ambassadors for Christ. Another Christmas reaction is that, in realizing the significance of the One born in Bethlehem’s manger, we tell others about Him, about Who He is and what He came to do. Christmas creates opportunities for sharing the gospel and telling others about the Savior. Like the shepherds, our faith and joy in Christ can motivate us to tell others about Him, and the message we share is “that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15).

God didn’t deliver the good news of His Son’s birth to prophets, priests, or kings. He sent His angels to a group of humble, nameless shepherds, common men, everyday workers, and He

used their joy to spread the good news. All they did was tell what they had seen and heard. It shows that we don't need formal training to tell others about Christ. We just share, out of an overflow of joy, what we know to be true from God's Word.

### **The People's Reaction**

**"And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds" (Luke 2:18).**

You see another Christmas reaction in verse 18. The people "wondered" at the shepherds' story. The shepherds created a stir by sharing the good news. "Wondered" speaks of a sense of astonishment and awe. People marveled and were amazed by what they heard from the excited shepherds.

Christmas is cause for wonder. God became a man for me to be my Savior? The Son of God was born as a baby and laid in a feed trough? The Lord, the Creator of all things, came to this speck of a planet to humbly take on flesh and die the death of the cross for my sins? The love of Christ indeed causes wonder.

But notice the contrast to the shepherds. The shepherds received the revelation, believed it, and ran to see the Christ child. It would have been good if verse 18 said something like, "And all they that heard it wondered... *and went immediately with haste to the manger.*" But it doesn't say that. They just "wondered" and went on with their lives.

In December of 2007, MSNBC reported, "A major British hotel

chain [Travelodge] is getting into the Christmas spirit with a promotion that gives a free night's stay to couples named Mary and Joseph....It [Travelodge's British corporate office] said that the 'gift' of a free night's accommodation was to make up for the fact that the hotel industry had no accommodations for Mary and Joseph over 2,000 years ago when they had to stay in a stable....The marketing ploy also includes a free parking spot for the 'donkey.'"<sup>2</sup>



Like the inn that had no room for the Savior 2,000 years ago, many make no room for the Savior at Christmas today. Those who heard the message from the shepherds reacted with wonder, but they had no commitment and no desire to see Him for themselves. Many react to Christmas like this, with wonder at it all, but not fully understanding its meaning, doing nothing about it, and going on with their lives. Many will sing the carols, watch the children's Christmas programs at church, put up a nativity set, but they will keep its meaning at arm's length, not wanting to see the Christ child for themselves by faith or accept the reason for His coming to this world. You see the Christmas

reaction of joy with faith by the shepherds, but the Christmas reaction from those who heard their testimony was one of wonder without belief or action. It's still the same way today.

### **Mary's Reaction**

**“But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:19).**

In verse 19, it says that Mary “kept all these things,” or treasured them with the idea of protecting or preserving them in her mind—counting things up, like making a mental list so that nothing is forgotten.

Mary also “pondered them in her heart.” “Pondered” means Mary went much deeper than the people who “wondered” in verse 18. “Pondered” means to take all the recollected events as laid out in the mind and think over them again and again to try to understand what it all means and why it happened the way it did. It means to gather all the facts and fit them together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.

No doubt she thought about Gabriel's appearance and what he told her about this Child: “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David” (Luke 1:32). She might have recalled John the Baptist leaping for joy in Elisabeth's womb when Mary came to visit her and how Elisabeth told her, “Blessed is the Fruit of thy womb” and called her “the mother of my Lord” (Luke 1:42,43). She might have thought about God's providence in the

terms and timing of the taxation that brought them to Bethlehem for His birth (Micah 5:2 cf. Luke 2:1-6). She surely thought about the surprise visit of the shepherds that night and their joy and excitement at His birth.

She looks into a feed trough and she sees there a Baby Who is the Son of the Most High. This Baby is the King of Israel, the rightful Heir to the throne of David. This Baby is the Savior. This Baby is Israel's Messiah. This Baby is God and Lord over all.

Mary had plenty to think about. And she had to put all these facts and events together in her mind. They were all pieces of a giant, complex puzzle which went 'round and 'round in her mind as she hoped to arrange them into some kind of understandable order. And you can't blame her! Two thousand years later, we're still marveling at the miracle of God's Son coming to this world.



Pondering is a good reaction to Christmas. We should think deeply about Christmas and what we are remembering. We need to take the time to ponder and study the accounts about Christ's birth, and also consider the significance of the eternal, infinite God becoming a man forever to be the one



Mediator between us and God (1 Tim. 2:5). We benefit from thinking deeply about the reason the Son of God came to this world, how He came for the Cross to die for our sins so that “we should live together with Him” (1 Thes. 5:10). We are blessed to ponder it all and fit it together in our minds.



### Post-Christmas Reaction

**“And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them” (Luke 2:20).**

After some time, “the shepherds returned” with hearts filled with gratitude, “glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen,” which were all exactly as the angel told them.

You glorify something when you express its value and worth. To say that the shepherds returned “glorifying” God meant that, having seen Christ in the manger, they recognized and expressed the true value of the Child as Lord and Messiah. They saw God’s infinite love, good will, and mercy in the Person of His Son. Thus their reaction was to thank and praise God for “all the

things that they had heard and seen.”

The shepherds went back to where they were when the angels appeared to them in the first place. It was time to go back to work. By all outward appearances, everything was the same as before. But for the shepherds, life would never be the same. They went back with new zeal, new joy, and new praise for God in their hearts.

Life goes on, doesn’t it? After Christmas is over, we’ll go back to the office, back to the classroom, back to the field or the factory, back to your family duties, back to the ordinary daily routine. But we can go back changed like the shepherds did. The first Christmas didn’t change the shepherd’s circumstances, but it changed *them* profoundly. Christmas can cause us to react like the shepherds: glorifying and praising God for all the things we’ve seen and heard about His Son and His coming to this world.

May our reaction to Christmas be just as we find here: joy with faith, a desire to share the good news, wonder and amazement, pondering the events and their significance, and glorifying and praising God for the greatest Gift of all: the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Ray Pritchard, “What God Wants For Christmas,” sermon of December 15, 1996, Keep Believing Ministries, [www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/what-god-wants-for-christmas/](http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/what-god-wants-for-christmas/).
2. Brian Tracey, “Hokey holiday inn stunt,” What Were They Thinking/ NBCNews.com, updated December 14, 2007, [www.nbcnews.com/id/22244511/#.Wf-tme4TRki](http://www.nbcnews.com/id/22244511/#.Wf-tme4TRki).

A top-down photograph of a wooden desk. On the left, a tablet with a black screen is propped up. In the center, an open Bible lies flat, showing text in two columns. To the right, a small cup of dark coffee sits on a saucer. A white cable is visible in the upper left corner. A semi-transparent dark banner with white text is overlaid across the middle of the image.

# Read Your Bible Through in 2018

When Paul exhorted Timothy to “give attendance to reading” (1 Tim. 4:13), we believe he had *the reading of the Word of God* uppermost in his mind. If you’ve never read the Scriptures through from cover to cover, you don’t know what you’re missing!

There are many *Read Your Bible Through in a Year* guides available on the internet, and even some apps for your phone if you prefer to read on the run. If you are concerned that you might get bogged down in the Old Testament, some of these guides let you read a little of the Old Testament in the morning and a portion of the New Testament in the evening. Once you get started, you’ll be surprised at how little time it will take out of your day.

Here are a few tips to help make sure you accomplish your goal. Rule Number 1: *Don’t fall behind.* It’s too hard to catch up! Rules Number 2,3,4 and 5: See Rule #1! After that, just be sure to read prayerfully, and try not to get sidetracked by focusing in too deeply on any particular point of study. Underlining words, highlighting verses, and making occasional marginal notes is okay, but the purpose of *reading* God’s Word is simply to familiarize yourself with what He has to say.

This past year Brother James Sirmons convinced me to try reading my Bible through while listening to the reading of the *King James Version of the Bible* recorded by American film and voice actor Alexander Scourby. I was familiar with this work but had never used it to augment my daily Bible reading, and I’m thankful that I did! There’s just something about hearing every word of God read aloud with articulation and inflection that makes the Scriptures come alive, and so I am happy to pass this valuable tip on to you.

The benefits of reading the Bible through every year are too numerous to mention. But if you believe in interpreting God’s Word by comparing Scripture with Scripture as I do, this is the best way to give the Spirit a reservoir of Scripture from which to draw in your mind as you study His blessed Book. Add to this the fact that you are spending some very intimate time with the God of all creation, and you should have all the incentive you need to get started this January 1. Just think, a year from now you will be able to say that you have read “every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). It doesn’t get any better than that!

—Pastor Kurth



# BBS Letter Excerpts

## From Wisconsin:

"Pastor Sadler, we all thank you for coming to our church. You made a huge impact on quite a few of the members. Your approach was a little different and made us look at the passages in a new light. You have a wonderful family. They are all so supportive of your ministry.... Thank you again for taking the time to help us with your teaching and fine work with the *Berean Bible Society*."

## From our Inbox:

"I am thoroughly enjoying the lessons and Scripture readings I receive from BBS. Especially the *Two Minutes* daily readings. I believe that my spirit has been lifted to a new level and my understanding of the gospel of Paul is much clearer than I ever received before."

## From Virginia:

"Thank you so much Pastor. Your explanation is so deep and real because you give the Scriptures. You have blessed me so much, and I appreciate it."

## From our Inbox:

"How can we tell what promises and what commandments are for the ventricles [sic] and switch [sic] are for the Jews? After reading some of your articles on this site, I now realize I've misinterpreted some of the Scriptures thinking they were talking to the church, but were actually talking to the Jews." (Don't you just love voice recognition dictation phones! -Ed).

## From Minnesota:

"I adore these pamphlets. The wisdom within is *invaluable*. My father has followed and learned from you all for as long as I can remember too. I feel very blessed for all I've learned from him and from you."

## From Ontario:

"I didn't renew the snail mail version of the *Searchlight* as I haven't financially supported the cost of it. I intended to read it online as that would keep your costs down. Problem is I never seemed to remember to do so. It is so nice to have an actual hard copy here at the house. I see it and pick it up and read it, as it sits beside my chair...BBS is still such a blessing in my life, and I know my wife feels the same way." (If any of our readers feel the same, just let us know and we'll put you back on the mailing list. -Ed).

## From Oklahoma:

"I loved your article 'Berea and Athens.' It was well written. Thank you so much for God's Word in it. Thanks for the pictures in it too! Thanks be to God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ for using you to write it. What a blessing!"

## From New Jersey:

"I've grown so much in the Lord from listening to the audio sermons, reading the articles in the *Searchlight*, *Two Minutes with the Bible*, and I've purchased and read many of your books."

### From Facebook:

"Reading the October *Searchlight*. 'Break with Tradition' is an excellent article...Keep up the excellent job of spreading God's Word!"

### From our Inbox:

"I ran away from God years ago and I fear in the process of it, I may have blasphemed the Holy Spirit..I fear I am eternally condemned, but I want so badly to bless and honor and obey the Lord. A voice claiming to be God tells me how wicked and evil and anti-Christ I am and a liar, lying to myself that I want this.. It hurts deeply. I do want Him! But I fear it's too late...I am so scared...." (Please keep this dear lady in prayer as we minister to her—Ed).

### From Maryland:

"I recently have been ordained as an elder and God is steadily moving me forward and I along with Him... The *Searchlights*...are so inspirational and full of information that helps with all that I would like to know as I move and grow in Christ."

### From our Inbox:

"Thanks so much...I really needed this reminder about being so hard on myself and judgmental ["Are You A Man After God's Own Heart?"]. God Bless you Pastor Ricky...."

### From Maine:

"The items I have ordered and received from the ministry have been a true blessing to me and many in our Bible group."

### From our Inbox:

"Thank you for the blessings I receive daily from BBS! God is with you!"

### From Quatar:

"I live in the Philippines and currently in Qatar. Thank you very much for your prompt response, Pastor. By the way, the YouTube and podcasts are very useful since there aren't any Grace churches here. It is a great blessing for me to have BBS... as my compass in my journey."

### From our Inbox:

"I just read Dennis Kizonas' article on whether tongues/healing have passed. As a young person growing up in the Pentecostal Church, attending a Pentecostal Bible college, and holding positions of ministry, it was *always* disconcerting to me when my fellow Christians would speak in tongues, usually in a euphoric manner. It frustrated me that I felt nothing inside and even felt 'rejected by God' because I wasn't like them. I must say however, that there was always a small voice inside me that said, 'it's not for you.' Your article is the best solid Scriptural basis I've ever come across to understand that chain of events."

### From Colorado:

"I love the new fall pumpkin tract! It is so well done. It was a blessing to see you in Denver and meet your delightful family."

### From Georgia:

"An echo month echo from Georgia! My wife and I are in an area where there are no Grace churches, but we hear the grace message most every day through the recorded messages provided by *Berean Bible Society* that I listen to on my way to work...We are also hoping to watch *Transformed by Grace* so we may have to look into an HD antenna very soon."



"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



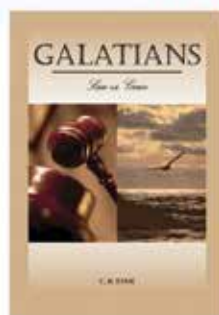
# Bundle Up!

Bundling is all the rage these days, so we decided to bundle a set of our commentaries on Paul's epistles for this month's special offer. This bundle from Heaven is sure to warm your heart as you bundle up for winter!

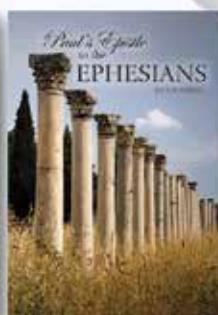
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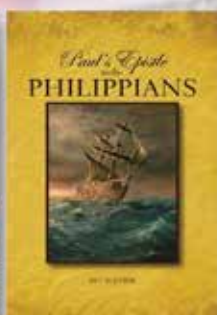
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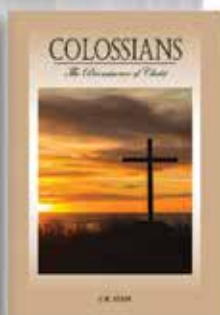
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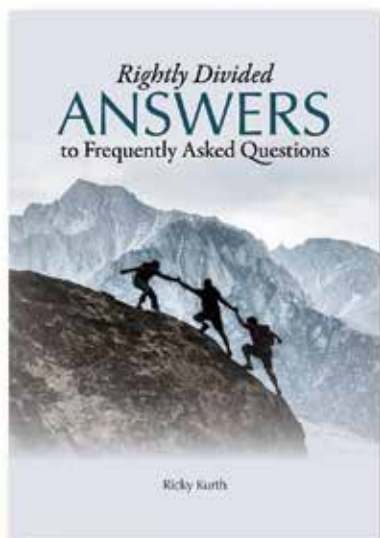
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# News and Announcements

**Tampa Viewers** of our new television broadcast should be advised that the cable and satellite stations for ION will no longer be able to show *Transformed By Grace* in your area. This was due to a change in ION's new regulations that no longer allows us to broadcast in just one local area. They now require TV programs to be broadcast nationally only, and we are unable to broadcast nationally on satellite and cable at this time. But you can catch up with Pastor Sadler's messages when we post them on YouTube sometime next year, or by way of the DVDs that we also plan to make available to our viewers.

**DVR Option:** If *Transformed By Grace* does not air at a convenient time in your neck of the woods, DVR recorders that work with a broadcast television antenna are available. That means you can watch our new television program when it is most convenient for you. One brother in Phoenix records the program because *Transformed By Grace* airs there at 5:00 am, and he finds grace more transforming later in the day!

**Holiday Schedule:** If you call us here at *Berean Bible Society* between December 23 and January 2 and no one answers, don't worry, you won't have missed the Rapture! Our office will close at 4:30 pm central time on Friday, December 22, and reopen at 8:30 am central time on Tuesday, January 2—unless the Lord does come, in which case we'll see you in the air and speak with you in person!

**South Central Alaska Bible Conference:** Our good friends Josh and Marcia Dennis are working to plant a grace church in Kenai, and they plan to jumpstart things with a spring Bible conference. With that in mind, they are inviting everyone they know to come hear the grace message set forth by guest speakers Don Webb, Ken Lyon, and your editor, Ricky Kurth. Josh says you can come too, but it will help him and Marcia plan if they hear from you as soon as possible. So if you are thinking you might want to attend this May 26,27 event, contact them at 907-252-8836 or at [jdennis1201@gmail.com](mailto:jdennis1201@gmail.com) to talk it over.



On the cover this month, located in the Village of Wind Point, in Racine County, the *Wind Point Lighthouse* stands 108 feet tall and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was lit for the first time on November 15, 1880, and continues to be lit to this day.

# BBS Bookstore & Other Authors

(This is only a partial price list, for a full price list please see our website or contact BBS.)

## REFERENCE BOOKS

Baker's Bible Atlas (HC) .....	\$24.99
Cruden's Complete Concordance (HC) ..	16.95
Englishman's Greek Concordance (HC) ..	34.95
Halley's New Bible Handbook (HC) .....	27.99
Nave's Topical Bible (HC) .....	17.97
Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts (PB) .....	19.99
New Unger's Bible Dictionary OT/NT (HC) .....	39.99
Strong's Concise Concordance (PB) .....	19.99
Strong's Exhaustive Concordance OT/NT (HC) .....	15.97
Strong's Exhaustive Concordance—LARGE Print (HC) .....	24.97
Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, The (HC) .....	19.99
Vine's Expository Dict. OT/NT (HC) .....	21.99

## GRACE DOCTRINE STUDIES

The State and Place of the Dead (PB) <i>by W. E. Bedore</i> .....	\$10.00
Teachings of the Grace of God (PB) <i>by Robert Brock</i> .....	6.00
Puzzle with Three Pieces (workbook) <i>by Janet N. Davis</i> .....	12.00
Daily Transformation <i>by John Fredericksen</i> .....	12.00
Growing in God's Grace (PB) <i>by John Fredericksen</i> .....	8.00
So Run That You May Win (PB) <i>by Rollin Wilson</i> .....	9.00
Thematic Preaching (PB) <i>by Rollin Wilson</i> .....	9.00

Unsearchable Riches of Christ, The (PB) <i>by J.C. O'Hair</i> .....	11.99
Basic Bible Doctrines (PB) <i>by Webb</i> .....	9.99

## TOPICAL STUDIES

Lord From Heaven, The (PB) <i>by Sir Robert Anderson</i> .....	\$9.99
Redemption Truths (PB) <i>by Sir Robert Anderson</i> .....	11.99
Spirit Manifestations and the Gift of Tongues (PB) <i>by Sir R. Anderson</i> .....	4.99
Bible and Baptism (PB) <i>by Bultema</i> .....	12.99
Miracle of Inspiration (PB) <i>by Bultema</i> .....	5.99
Names of Our Lord (PB) <i>by Bultema</i> .....	2.95
Understanding the Bible & End Times (PB) <i>by Fred Lewis</i> .....	10.95

## COMMENTARIES

Daniel (PB) <i>by Harry Bultema</i> .....	\$15.99
Isaiah (PB) <i>by Harry Bultema</i> .....	19.99
Corinthians (PB) <i>by Harry Bultema</i> .....	9.99
God's Meaning in Matthew (PB) <i>by John Fredericksen</i> .....	25.00
The Complete Bible Commentary (PB) <i>by George Williams</i> .....	35.99

## CHILDRENS

First Things First (PB) .....	\$8.50
Sound Words (PB) .....	4.00

## POETRY

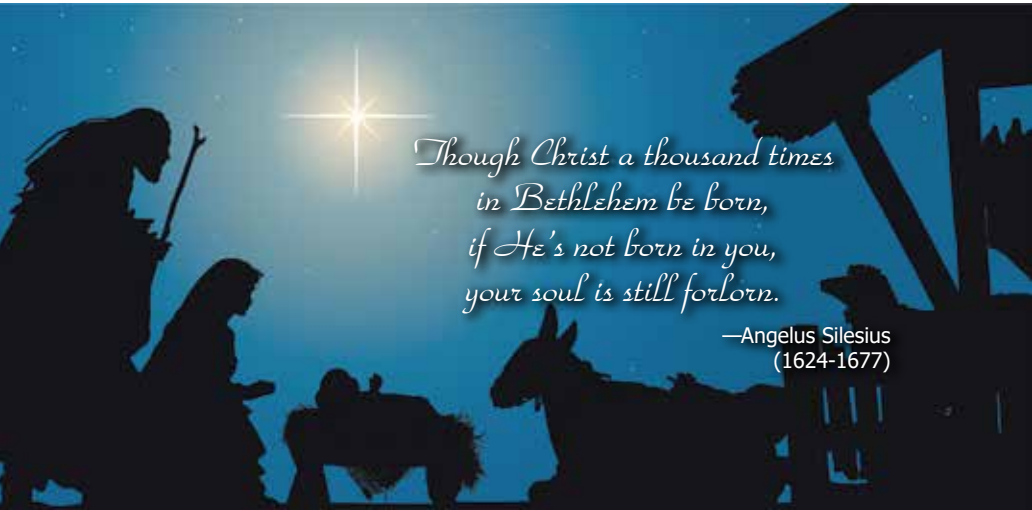
Hope of Glory in Poetic Verse (PB) <i>by Robert Hanna</i> .....	\$6.00
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—Angelus Silesius  
(1624-1677)