

# *The* BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

April 2019



Feature Article

Why Did God Create Man Knowing He Would Sin?, by Ricky Kurth .....5

Articles

Behold, I Come Quickly, by Kevin Sadler .....13

The Twofold Purpose of the Resurrection, by C. R. Stam .....15

Sanctified Wholly—Spirit, Soul, and Body, by Kevin Sadler .....19

Departments

The Picture of a Fool .....4

Question Box .....18

The Pillar and Ground of the Truth .....25

News and Announcements .....30

*This month’s front cover is Mukilteo lighthouse in Washington.*

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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**Editor:** Ricky L. Kurth/**Layout and Design:** Jessica Sadler (Book specials: Christine Mulholland)

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**You can reach us at:**  
BEREAN BIBLE SOCIETY  
N112 W17761 Mequon Road  
PO Box 756  
Germantown, WI 53022

Main Office: (262) 255-4750 — Monday-Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, CT  
Internet: [www.bereanbiblesociety.org](http://www.bereanbiblesociety.org)  
E-mail: [berean@bereanbiblesociety.org](mailto:berean@bereanbiblesociety.org)

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## *A Note From the President*

Dear Friends in Christ,

Our Apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonian church, “Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you” (2 Thes. 3:1). Paul regularly enlisted prayer support from the churches. In this verse, Paul asked them to pray particularly that the Word of God and the gospel of grace would spread rapidly far and wide. He also asked for prayer that it “be glorified,” or received with the honor it deserved, being trusted completely. When Paul says, “pray for us,” he has not only himself in mind, but also Silas and Timothy (2 Thes. 1:1). Paul did not overlook his co-workers. He was keenly aware of the importance of their labor of love in the Body of Christ.

As we follow Paul as he followed Christ (1 Cor. 11:1), we ask you, brothers and sisters, to please pray that the Word of the Lord and His revelation of the mystery would continue to be spread the world over through the ministries of BBS, and that the truth would be glorified, received, and trusted, “even as it is with you.” And please pray for these faithful laborers at BBS:

**Pastor Ricky Kurth** is the editor of the *Berean Searchlight* and our answer-man here at BBS, answering the bulk of the questions we receive in our correspondence.

**Pastor Jim Tollar** is our business manager. He pays the bills, makes sure the books are balanced, prepares receipts for donations, manages our Fellowship File, uploads videos to our Roku and AppleTV channel, and is in charge of the BBS building.

**Christine Mulholland** is our receptionist, administrative assistant, and director of our *Growing Up In Grace* Sunday School ministry. She answers the phone, processes our orders and donations, creates the book ads for the *Searchlight*, and manages our online bookstore.

**Jessica Sadler**, my wife, does the design, layout, and preparation for printing of the *Berean Searchlight* as well as our books, booklets, and tracts. In addition, she prepares the graphics for our *Transformed By Grace* television ministry and manages the BBS mobile app.

**Victoria Sadler**, my mother, does our CD and DVD duplication. She assembles the monthly letter and donation receipts for mailing. My mom also scans in older BBS works into the computer and proofreads the scan.

**Pastor Aaron Harris** is our mailroom department manager. He ships out our orders and mail, manages the *Searchlight* subscription list, and is in charge of our warehouse.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Kevin Sadler, President

# A Picture of a Fool



When atheists complain that Christians get too many holidays, we like to reply by pointing out that April 1 is National Atheist Day, for “the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God” (Psa. 14:1; 53:1). But it is no laughing matter when God’s people play the fool, as Pastor Fredericksen makes clear in this excerpt from his book, *Daily Transformation*.

For decades, our family has put together a large puzzle over the Christmas season. For us, it is an enjoyable project. It encourages us to take time out of busy schedules to simply spend time together and visit. But there is also a sense of satisfaction as, one by one, pieces of the puzzle are added, and we see a clear picture emerge. In the Book of Proverbs, God gives us a clear picture, though an unflattering one, of a fool.

A fool can easily be identified by at least ten characteristics described by King Solomon. A fool “refuseth instruction” to the detriment of his own soul (15:32). He just won’t listen when given wise counsel.

The “words of the pure are pleasant words” (15:26), but the words of “a fool’s lips enter into contention” (18:6-8), and it is to his own “destruction.” He tends to be looking for trouble, and is usually harsh in his words. “He that uttereth a slander is a fool” (10:18). Criticizing others has become a favorite sport.

“The way of the fool is right in his own eyes” (12:15), and “it is as sport to a fool to do mischief” (10:23). He seems to always think he is right and that wrong is right. A “fool layeth open his folly” (13:16), and perhaps he does so because “the fool rageth, and is [over] confident” (14:16). As someone once said: “It is better to be thought a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.”

Proverbs also conveys the concepts that a fool will not heed reproof (17:10), speaks when he should listen (17:28), will be continually “meddling” to stir up strife (20:3), and “uttereth all his mind” (29:11). This sounds like a busybody who delights to continually gossip about others, or insert himself into the affairs of others.

As we look more carefully at this picture of a fool, we should each ask ourselves if any of these qualities describe us. If so, we encourage you to do something about it. Take one or two of these practices you know you need to work on, ask the Lord to enable you to change your pattern, then ask a godly loved one to hold you accountable in this area. In so doing, allow God to transform you.

—Pastor John Fredericksen





# Why Did God Create Man Knowing He Would Sin?

(An excerpt from Pastor Kurth's upcoming book *More Rightly Divided Answers to Frequently Asked Questions*)

PASTOR RICKY KURTH  
BBS Editor

**W**hen Adam asked God why He made Eve so beautiful, He is said to have replied, "So you would love her." When Adam then asked God why He made her so *dumb*, He is said to have answered, "So she would love you!"

But why would God create man knowing he would sin and *ruin* God's creation by introducing sickness and death, and force Him to create a place called Hell where people would have to go to pay for their sins if they refused to believe on Him? Well, the only verse I know of that tells us why God created us is found in Revelation 4:11:

**"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."**

As you can see, the reason God created *us* is the same reason He created *all* things. He created us *for His pleasure*; in other words, because it pleased Him to do so. And I believe the *primary* reason it pleased Him to do so is that *He is just a creative God*. Speaking of some of the things God was

pleased to create, the psalmist wrote,

**"Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings for the rain; He bringeth the wind out of His treasures" (Psa. 135:6,7).**

The seas that God created in the earth reflect His creativity in that they are so useful to us in so many different ways. First of all, they provide us with a *good food supply* of tasty crab, lobster, salmon, tuna, and countless other yummy and nourishing creatures. I'm told that they also provide *over half the air that we breathe*, by means of tiny plants called phytoplankton that live near the surface of the waves. The oceans have also provided the world with a means of *transportation*, going all the way back to the sailing ships of ancient times.

In addition, they also moderate the world's *temperature*. I live by Lake Michigan, and when the television weathermen in Chicago give the temperature for the area

in the summer, they always say, “cooler by the lake.” In winter they give the projected temperature and add, “warmer by the lake.” That’s because water takes much longer to change temperature than air. It takes all summer for the sun to heat the seas. By the end of summer, they are nice and warm, and they help warm the air during the winter. By the end of winter, the oceans are cold, so they help cool the air during summer. In other words, God created air conditioning nearly 6,000 years before Willis Carrier got around to it!

The oceans also provide us with most of our *rain water*. The “vapours” of which the psalmist spoke are the waters that evaporate from the oceans and “ascend” into the air, as the psalm describes. Then the “wind” that the psalm mentions carries that evaporated water over the land, where “He maketh lightnings for the rain.” You couldn’t have invented a world-wide irrigation system like that if you’d have had a million years to think about it!

Then add to all of these values of the oceans the various ways of *recreation* that they provide us, in the form of surfing, sailing, fishing, and whale-watching just to name a few. While fishing with my son off the coast of Alaska after a Bible conference last year, we were delighted to see several whales breaching the waves in the waters around us.

I’ll tell you what, if I’d have invented something that could achieve all of those desirable effects, I’d be pretty pleased with myself too, wouldn’t you? It would give me a lot of pleasure to

consider what I had created. And that is what our text in Revelation 4:11 says is true of God. He created all things *for His pleasure*.

### Reflecting Well on God

Did you ever wonder why *you’re* so creative? It is because “God created man *in His own image*” (Gen. 1:27). We are creative because *God* is creative, and we are made after His likeness in that way, and in many other ways. And I believe *it glorifies God* when we reflect His creativity in our lives.



A dying Christian woman once told me that she liked to express *her* creativity in gardening before she became bedridden, and she asked me if there would be gardening in heaven. I replied by pointing out that the Bible speaks about “the corn of heaven” (Psa. 78:24), and that it takes dirt to grow corn. That’s one of many evidences we have in the Bible that heaven is not as different from earth as we might think.

We know that gardening must glorify God because He put Adam in the Garden of Eden and told him “to dress it and to keep it” (Gen. 2:15). With all that in mind, I can’t see any reason why God wouldn’t want to be glorified by gardeners in heaven as He is

on earth. And by the way, it will be heavenly *for me* if those of you who enjoy gardening would do *my* gardening in heaven, for I enjoy looking at flowers and I enjoy eating corn and other veggies, but I hate gardening!

There are countless other ways that the creative genius of man glorifies God. Every time I drive through Chicago and see the skyscrapers that grace the skyline, I think of how it glorifies God that the men He created could themselves create such colossal monuments to architecture. Great works of art, majestic scores of music, and many other astonishing creations of men all reflect well on their Creator. And I believe we are justified in taking pleasure in the creativity we express in our labors, just as God is.

But how could God have taken pleasure in creating man if He knew Adam would sin and *ruin* His creation (Rom. 8:20) and doom his race to a life of pain and suffering followed by death—and oftentimes an *eternity* of suffering in Hell after that?

### What Was God Thinking?

Well, when you plant a garden, you know that some of what you plant is going to *suffer and die*. It might suffer from things like rabbits and deer that eat the sprouts of your plants. (A non-gardener like me learned this by watching the movie “The Yearling” when I was young.) Then if your sprouts survive the threats posed by hungry animals, *insects* like aphids and beetles and spider mites often come along later and feast on the leaves of your plants. Should your hard work endure pests like

these and bear fruit, *worms* may dine on the fruits of your labor.

Gardeners also know that what they plant might have to suffer drought, flooding, or hail damage. A friend of mine says she watered her plants all through a summer drought but lost one of her bushes despite her best efforts. In other words, that plant suffered in life and then died. Does that sound familiar?

Now my friend knew all this might happen before she decided to create a garden, but she chose to create it anyway, simply because she takes pleasure in gardening. And in the same way, God knew that Adam would sin, and that we’d all have to suffer in life and then die because of it. But He chose to create us anyway, simply because He takes pleasure in creating things, as our text in Revelation 4:11 affirms.

The problem comes when we stop to consider how *painfully* we have to suffer many of the things that we must endure in life. Things like bone cancer, shingles, migraine headaches, appendicitis, kidney stones, herniated discs, and torn ACLs to name just a few. Then when we stop to consider the *eternal* suffering that men must endure if they reject Christ, many an atheist might be prompted to ask, “What kind of sick, sadistic God takes *pleasure* in creating people whom He knows are doomed to spend their lives in pain and suffering, and then have to suffer in Hell for all eternity, *just so He can find pleasure in being creative?*”

And the answer to that question is: the same kind of God who would be willing *to become a man*

*Himself* and go to the cross and suffer all of the pain that men would have to endure because of their sins. Did you notice that Revelation 4:11 says that it was the “Lord” who was worthy to receive glory and honor and power for creating all things? May I remind you that the “Lord” who created all things *was the Lord Jesus Christ*.

**“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made...And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...” (John 1:1,3,14).**

The Word who made all things is the Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us! So in other words, the Lord who created all things knowing that man would have to suffer is the One who created all things knowing that *He Himself* would have to suffer. Do you know what that does to all the charges that God was sadistic to create us knowing that we would have to suffer? It takes all of those charges and tosses them out the window!

### **The Suffering of the Creator**

Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ suffered *physically* on the cross, just like you have to suffer physically in life. They say crucifixion is *the* most excruciating way to die ever devised by man. In fact, the very word *excruciating* is said to be based on Latin words that mean *the torment of the cross*.

But the Lord didn’t just suffer the pain that we’d have to suffer *in life*. He also suffered

the fire of God’s wrath that we’d have to experience in Hell if He hadn’t experienced it for us on the cross. During the three hours of darkness in which He hung on Calvary’s cross, *the fire of God’s wrath* was poured out on Him, unseen to mortal men.

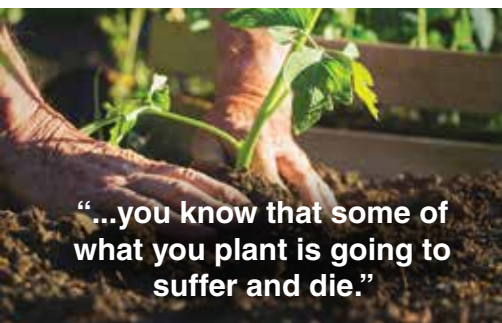
No verse of Scripture comes right out and says this, but throughout the Bible, the way God showed that He accepted a sacrifice *was by devouring it with fire* (Lev. 9:24; 1 Kings 18:38; 1 Chron. 21:26; 2 Chron. 7:1). Did you ever wonder how Abel knew that his sacrifice was accepted of God and Cain knew that his was not (Gen. 4:1-5)?

We see more evidence of this in the words of the psalmist David. His 22nd psalm is all about what Christ was thinking while hanging on the cross. The Lord *quoted* the first verse (Matt. 27:46) to tell us that He was thinking about the words of the psalm, though the agonies of crucifixion robbed Him of the breath He would need to quote the rest had He desired to do so. And when David quotes Him as thinking, “I am a worm, and no man” (Psa. 22:6), that’s a reference to Isaiah 66:24, where the prophet wrote that *in Hell* “the worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched” (cf. Mark 9:44-48). So Psalm 22 shows that the Lord was experiencing the fire of Hell on earth as He bore God’s wrath on our sins.

Of course, no one *saw* the fire of God’s wrath fall on the Lord, for God draped the earth in darkness for three hours (Matt. 27:45) while this transpired. We know that God knows how to make a flame that burns but gives no light to



darkness because *Hell itself* is described as a place of fire and darkness (Matt. 8:12; Luke 16:24). And we know from all this that on the cross the Lord experienced the fiery judgment of God that you would have had to suffer in Hell for all eternity if you had not trusted Christ as your Savior.



**“...you know that some of what you plant is going to suffer and die.”**

So God cannot be faulted for creating man knowing he would have to suffer. He took away our *eternal* suffering on the cross, and someday will take away our *physical* suffering in Heaven, where we are told there will be no more pain (Rev. 21:4).

Now it is true that this is only the case for believers. But if you are an atheist, *that's not God's problem*. It's *your* problem—but it is a problem with an easy fix. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). *Believe* that Christ bore the wrath of God that you deserved to bear, and God will save you (1 Cor. 15:3,4).

### **Click Here If You Are Not a Robot**

But now, not everyone who asks why God created us knowing we'd sin is an atheist looking to find fault with God. Sometimes this question is asked by sincere

believers who want to know why God didn't create us to be *incapable* of sinning so we could have *avoided* all of this pain and suffering. And the answer is that God could have created us like robots, without the ability to choose to disobey Him. But this is yet another area where we are made in His image. He gave us *free will* instead, just like He has.

And aren't you glad He did? I mean, aren't you glad that when you are filling out a form online that you can click that box that says “I am not a robot?” God could have created you with no will of your own, someone who could only do what He programmed you to do, and it would have pleased Him to do so. I'm sure the robots that men create please *them*. I know if I could make a robot that would mow my lawn, clean my gutters, and fix the things that fall into disrepair around the house that I'd be pretty pleased with myself. I wouldn't mind having a personal robotic slave!

And God could have created a race of people and programed them to never disobey Him, and it would have pleased Him to have a race of slaves who were incapable of disobedience. But it pleased Him *more* to create a race of people who *can* disobey, but who *choose* to obey Him instead. I'm sure God was pleased with Adam at first, when he chose to obey Him. The problem came when he chose to *disobey*. That created a problem *for God*, because of what we read in Psalm 5:4:

**“For Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness...”**

God created all things for His pleasure, *but He can't take*

*pleasure in wickedness.* He takes pleasure in the opposite:

**“God...hast pleasure in uprightness” (1 Chron. 29:17).**

“Uprightness” refers to something that is straight up and down, perfectly perpendicular to the ground. When a kicker kicks the football through the goalposts found at either end of a football field, the color commentator will often say that he “split *the uprights*,” for those posts are perpendicular to the earth. Well, God demands *moral* uprightness when it comes to the men He created, so *that’s how He made us*:



**“...God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions” (Eccl. 7:29).**

After God made man upright Adam fell, and then he and his progeny invented many other ways to sin. This introduced *death* to the world, as Paul testified in Romans 5:12:

**“...by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”**

Because of their sins, men have to die physically, and then eternally in Hell. But despite what atheists accuse God of, *He doesn’t take any pleasure in that*. He solemnly swears,

**“Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? ...For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God...” (Ezek. 18:23,32).**

God created all things for His pleasure, *but He doesn’t take any pleasure in sending people to Hell*. You have His Word on that.

### **Taking Pleasure in Pain**

But let me tell you what God *did* take pleasure in. Speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, Isaiah prophesied,

**“...it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin...He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities” (Isa. 53:10,11).**

It doesn’t please God to send men to Hell to suffer His wrath on their sin, but it *did* please Him to make *His Son* suffer His wrath on our sin, to put *Him* to all the grief we deserved because of our sin, to make *His* soul an offering for sin, *not ours*. And God was “satisfied” with the payment He made for our sins, and “by His knowledge,” that is, by coming to know Him as Savior, He can “justify” the many who believe in Him, for He bore their iniquities.

Some ask, “Why then doesn’t God save everyone? I mean, He’s God, and can do as He pleases, right?” Well, yes, but “it pleased God...to save them that believe” instead (1 Cor. 1:21). God created all things for His pleasure, and when men who have a free choice choose to exercise that choice by

believing on Him, it pleases God to save them. Don't forget, after Adam sinned, God was under no obligation to save *anybody*, but He made a gracious provision for *everybody* to be saved. All He asks in return is that men *believe* that He made that provision in Christ.

### New Creature Comfort

When you believe on Christ, the Spirit of God baptizes you *into* Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). And "if any man be in Christ, *he is a new creature...*" (2 Cor. 5:17). A "creature" is a part of God's creation, but it is a *living* part. In describing the creation of the world, we read that "God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the *moving creature that hath life...*" (Gen. 1:20). Rocks and hills are part of God's creation, but they don't move. Rivers and streams are moving parts of God's creation, but they don't have life. Only *animals* are creatures: living, moving parts of His creation.

But we know that *men* are part of God's creatures, for the Lord told His apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to *every creature*" (Mark 16:15). The reason men need to hear the gospel and be made *new* creatures is that God's *old* creature (Adam) *sinned*, and all of us have sinned as a result of that. We've sinned so badly that *not even God Himself can fix us!* The only thing He can do with us is *execute us* and give us a new life in Christ. That's why Paul wrote of those who have trusted in Christ,


**"...our old man is crucified with Him..." (Rom. 6:6).**

When you believe the gospel, the Holy Spirit takes you back to

Calvary, and makes you one with the Savior in His death, in His burial, and in His resurrection (Rom. 6:3-10), making you a new creature and giving you "newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

And that gives us even *more* answer to the question of why God created man knowing we'd sin and have to experience pain and suffering and death. Yes, He knew that everything in His old creation in heaven and earth would suffer the consequence of Adam's sin (Rom. 8:20). But He *also* knew that He planned to "create *new* heavens and a *new* earth" (Isa. 65:17), and make "a new creature" (Gal. 6:15) out of any one of His fallen creatures who believe on Him, *freely by His grace*.

And you'll never find a better deal than that in all of God's creation. When you pick up your dry cleaning, does the owner ever say, "You know, I couldn't get the spot out of your tie, so *I bought you a new one?*" When you get your carpets cleaned at home, does the technician ever say, "I couldn't get the stains out of your carpet, so *let me buy you new carpeting?*" That never happens! Your mechanic never says, "I couldn't fix your old car, so *go out and buy a new one on me!*" Only God says, "I can't get the stain of sin out of your soul, so *let me make you a new creature in Christ.*" If that doesn't get God off the hook for creating us knowing that men would sin and have to suffer in life and after life in Hell, I don't know what does!

And there's *another* answer to the question of why God created us knowing we'd sin... 

(Continued in our upcoming book, *More Rightly Divided Answers to Frequently Asked Questions*).

# Letter Extra

## From Georgia:

"Thank you Pastor Kurth for the confirmation...I don't know where the clergy in my church came up with this idea, but I am going to question them on this one. I am expecting perhaps the 'left foot of fellowship' with them. At least a debate. Thank God for His Word! Let the truth be known. Perhaps I shouldn't be asking you all these questions about my church, but I pray that the truth of God's grace be known to the members and not the usual mixed up teaching and confusion that is presently being presented. I have questioned myself whether to just leave this church and 'let bygones be bygones,' or stay and share Paul's gospel of Grace. These precious people need to hear the Word rightly divided. Am I the one to bring it to them? Kinda scary to me as I am still learning myself. I guess I'll just share what I know. Stay tuned Pastor!" (Please pray for this dear brother as he stands for Paul's gospel. -Ed.).

## Northeast Ohio BIBLE CONFERENCE

May 3-5, 2019



**LOCATION:** *First Grace Gospel Church*  
5730 Adams Avenue, Ashtabula, Ohio

**SPEAKER:** Pastor Ricky Kurth, Editor of the Berean Searchlight

For directions and additional information, please contact:

Pastor David Adams at:  
440-992-9008 or 440-997-8191



# BEHOLD, *I Come Quickly*

(An excerpt from our newly released *Revelation, Volume 4*)

PASTOR KEVIN J. SADLER  
BBS President

**“Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book” (Rev. 22:7).**

“A new preacher had just begun his sermon. He was a little nervous, and about ten minutes into the talk his mind went blank. He remembered what they had taught him in seminary to do when a situation like this would arise: repeat your last point. Often this would help you remember what was coming next. So he thought he would give it a try.

“‘Behold, I come quickly,’ he said. Still his mind was blank. He thought he would try it again, ‘Behold, I come quickly.’ Still nothing. He tried it one more time with such force that he fell forward, knocking the pulpit to one side, tripping over a flowerpot, and falling into the lap of a little old lady in the front row. The young preacher apologized and tried to explain what happened.

“‘That’s alright, young man,’ said the little old lady. ‘It was my fault. I should have gotten out of the way. You told me *three times* that you were coming.’”<sup>1</sup>

In the final verses of the Apocalypse, three times the Lord says that He is coming to the nation Israel (vv. 7,12,20). Terminology meant for the Second Coming of Christ to Israel, such as “Behold, I come quickly” or “thief in the night” is often mistakenly used for the Rapture of the Church, the Body of Christ. This confuses many people regarding these two future comings of Christ. When Christ says, “Behold, I come quickly,” He is not speaking of coming before the Tribulation to catch the Church away to heaven. He is speaking of His coming to Israel at the end of the Tribulation at the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-21).




All mentions of the coming of Christ outside the letters of the Apostle Paul refer either to the first or second coming of Christ to Israel. As a result of not rightly dividing the Word of truth, words, phrases, and verses are often misused and misapplied to the Rapture of the Church.

When a preacher or teacher uses the words, “Behold, I come quickly,” and without qualification applies it to the Rapture, that is error. When a preacher or teacher says that the Rapture and Second Coming are the same thing, that is unsound doctrine. When a preacher or teacher says that the Church, the Body of Christ, will go through any part of the coming Tribulation period, that is not the truth of the Word, rightly divided.

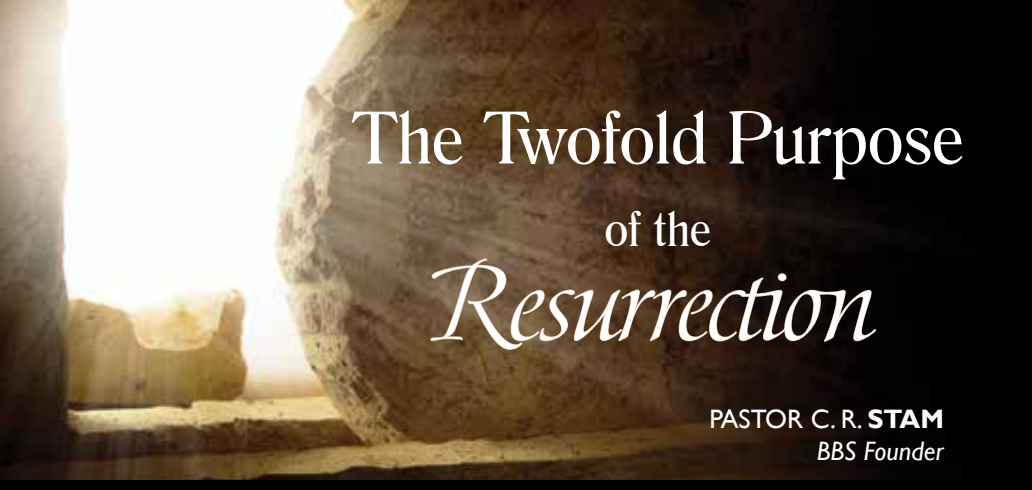
When the events of the Book of Revelation begin to unfold, the Lord’s words, “Behold, I come quickly,” will be a comfort and source of strength to believers during the Tribulation. By faith and knowledge of the Word, they will know that they have a deliverance coming. They will long for Him to come quickly, and these words of reassurance will help them overcome and endure to the end of the worst seven years ever.

As for the Body of Christ, we are taught to be “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). Every day is a day that the Lord might come to catch us, His Church, away to heaven. We are taught to be “looking” for our Savior at all times. Knowing that we might stand before Him today or any day is to move the Church to “live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:12).

Is Christ coming quickly? Perhaps, and perhaps today! However, to use, “Behold, I come quickly,” for the hope of the Rapture is incorrect. That is confusing the two future comings of Christ and what that phrase really means to whom it was written. “Behold, I come quickly” is said by the Lord and was recorded by John for the saints who will be alive *during the Tribulation*. That is most definitely not us. We, the Body of Christ, will have been “delivered...from the wrath to come” (1 Thes. 1:10). Praise the Lord!

After Christ catches the Body of Christ up in the Rapture, the prophetic program will resume. God will pick up right where He left off in the timeline of prophecy. The next thing on that timeline is the 70th week of Daniel, the seven-year Tribulation period. It is at this point that all the events of the Book of Revelation will unfold exactly as they have been written. The people alive in that day will be able to use Revelation as a guidebook to help them navigate those horrendous days when God’s wrath is poured out on this world. The hope for believers in that day is what Christ has told them in this Book: “Behold, I come quickly!” 

1. Bob Phillips and Jonny Hawkins, *The Hilarious Book of Heavenly Humor* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2011), p. 172.



# The Twofold Purpose of the *Resurrection*

PASTOR C. R. **STAM**  
BBS Founder

(An excerpt from Pastor Stam's classic work *The Twofold Purpose of God*, now back in print. See page 28 to take advantage of this month's special price).

## THE RESURRECTION AND PROPHECY

Jesus Christ, the Son of David, is the central Character in God's prophetic purpose.

Had our Lord not been the Son of David, His claims to Messiahship would have been hollow and empty.

It is with David that God had made the great covenant of the glorious kingdom to come. It was of David's seed that the great King should rise (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Psa. 89:35-37).

The prophets with one accord had joined in such prophecies as Jeremiah 23:5:

**"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord. That I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."**

It was as the Son of David that the New Testament introduced Him (Matt. 1:1), that angels and men announced Him (Luke 1:32,68,69), that His followers addressed Him (Matt. 15:22; 21:9,15.)

It was as the Son of David that He pressed His claims to Messiahship (Matt. 22:42-45) and it was as the Son of David that He was recognized as Messiah by His own (Matt. 12:23).

True, in spite of all this He had been crucified and Pilate had hung over His head His "accusation," "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS" (Matt. 27:37), but this was no breakdown in the prophetic program for the prophets had clearly predicted "*the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should FOLLOW*" (1 Pet. 1:11). Indeed, that it was the *resurrected* Christ who should reign over Israel and the nations was a fact which the prophets, including David himself, had woven into many of their writings.

Thus it is that Peter, at Pentecost, quotes from the 16th Psalm, pointing out that David did not refer to himself, but spoke as a prophet when he said,

**“For thou wilt not leave My soul in hell [sheol]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”**

And it is with this argument that He presses home the claims of the risen Christ to Israel’s throne.

**Acts 2:29-31, “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.**

**“Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, *He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne.*”**

**“He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither did His flesh see corruption.”**

This was God’s great prophetic purpose in the resurrection of Christ as Peter preached it. *He had been raised from the dead to sit on the throne of His father David.* And it was on this basis that Peter called upon the nation to repent, saying:

**“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, that so the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;**

**“And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you” (Acts 3:19,20).**

As we know, Israel did not repent and the times of refreshing did not—have not yet, come from the presence of the Lord and God did not—has not yet, sent Jesus back.

But here is where the revelation of the mystery comes in, for when man’s sin had risen to its height, God was ready to save the chief of sinners and send him forth with the most glorious news concerning the resurrection of Christ.

## **THE RESURRECTION AND THE MYSTERY**

Was Paul’s preaching of the resurrection indeed different from that of the twelve? Tradition may deny that it was, but even a casual review of the record should prove to the honest inquirer that there was a vast difference.

### **Justification**

First of all, with the gradual unfolding of the mystery through Paul, we learn for the first time that:

**“[Jesus our Lord] was delivered for our offences, and was *raised again for our justification*” (Rom. 4:25).**

Had Peter at Pentecost or anyone before Paul proclaimed this glorious truth? Those who will search the Scriptures will find they had not. This was part of “the secret of the good news” committed by revelation to Paul.

Justification itself was, of course, no secret, but *the secret of the sinner’s justification* is to be found in the resurrection of Christ and this was first proclaimed by Paul.

So important is this fact, that belief in the resurrection of Christ is now an integral part of saving faith. We read in Romans 4:24 that righteousness will be imputed to us “*if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.*”

In Romans 10:9 it is outlined as “*the word of faith which we preach,*”

**“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”**

### Identification

Then there is the great truth of *identification* with the Lord in His resurrection.

When, before Paul, did anyone ever proclaim a baptism wherein believers are “*risen with [Christ] through the faith of the operation of God?*” Yet this is exactly what the apostle teaches in Colossians 2:12.

In Ephesians 2:5,6 he goes into greater detail:

**“Even when we were dead in sins, [God] hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)**

**“And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”**

And in Ephesians 1:3 the apostle breaks out into a doxology:

**“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”**

Again in Colossians 3:1 he says:

**“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”**

How much higher and greater are our blessings than anything that was ever promised or offered to Israel! And thus God has demonstrated the “*exceeding riches of His grace,*” for it was upon the *rejection* of the Son of David that God raised up Paul to proclaim these glorious truths, offering a heavenly position and heavenly blessings to those who place their trust in the Royal Exile in “this present evil age.” Surely, “*where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.*”



## Question Box

*“Pastor Stam wrote that ‘the earth will never be destroyed,’ that it will be made new instead (Rev. 21:1). What do you say about 2 Peter 3:10,11?”*

**“...the earth...shall be burned up...all these things shall be dissolved...” (2 Pet. 3:10,11).**

Paul uses that same word “dissolved” to describe the dissolution of our physical bodies when we die, saying, “if our earthly house of this tabernacle were *dissolved*, we have a building of God...eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. 5:1). When our bodies die, they dissolve. Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, “then shall the dust return to the earth.”

Yet in speaking about the day of his resurrection (Job 19:25), Job wrote, “in my flesh shall I see God: *whom I shall see for myself*, and *mine* eyes shall behold, *and not another*” (Job 19:26,27). That means that the physical bodies we have now are the same ones we’ll have for all eternity, even though the Bible says they are “dissolved” at death. Our bodies will be made *new*, but Job says they will be the same flesh.

We know that our experience as members of the Body of Christ will be the same as Job’s, for our apostle tells us that at the Rapture the Lord will “change our vile body, *that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body*” (Phil. 3:21). And in speaking of His glorious resurrection body, the Lord echoed Job’s words when He said, “Behold My hands and My feet, *that it is I myself*” (Luke 24:39). He told them to handle His hands and feet because His new body still bore the wounds His old flesh incurred (John 20:27).

Of course, the glory of our new resurrection bodies will *greatly exceed* the glory of the body we plant in the ground. It will exceed it in glory as much as a six foot stalk of corn exceeds the kernel of corn that farmers plant in the ground (1 Cor. 15:35-38). But it will still be the body that is dissolved in the ground, just as the corn stalk is still that same kernel of corn. That’s the point of Paul’s comparison.

So when Peter uses that same word to say that *the world* will be “dissolved,” I have to think that the same thing applies to the earth. It will be a *new* earth, a much more *glorious* earth, but it will still be the *same* earth.

Someone else responded to Pastor Stam’s article to point out that John saw a vision in which the first earth was “*passed away*” (Rev. 21:1). But in that same *Two Minutes* devotional, Pastor Stam went on to cite verse 5, saying, “He didn’t say ‘I make all new things,’ but ‘I make all things new.’ There is a difference.” —Pastor Kurth





# Sanctified Wholly

## Spirit, Soul, and Body

PASTOR KEVIN J. **SADLER**  
BBS President

**“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes. 5:23).**

In the last two chapters of 1 Thessalonians, Paul exhorted the Thessalonian church regarding their sanctification. In 1 Thessalonians 4:3, he wrote, “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification.” From that point forward, Paul gave the Thessalonian believers instruction about abstaining from immorality (4:3), increasing in love (4:9-10), minding their own business and working with their own hands (4:11), and, with the Rapture and the Tribulation in view, living sober, alert, and as a light before those outside of Christ (5:5-9). Then, in rapid-fire succession, Paul lists some top-priority commands vital to sanctification:

**“Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks...Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is**

**good. Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thes. 5:16-22).**

All of this instruction leads Paul back to God’s will for our lives to be sanctified. Sanctify means to set apart, and in the context of Scripture, it means to be set apart to God. The Bible teaches about both positional and practical sanctification.

### Positional and Practical Sanctification

**“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10).**

When we trusted Christ as our Savior, that He died for our sins and rose again, at that moment of salvation we were sanctified. By the cross of Christ, we were set apart to God, and we now belong to Him forever. This is *positional sanctification*. We were set apart from Satan unto God. We were set apart from Adam unto Christ. We were set apart from darkness unto light. We were set apart from sin unto righteousness. We were set apart from eternal death

unto eternal life. We were set apart from hell unto heaven. This is why Paul could write to the Corinthians, who were *far* from perfect in their practice, that “ye are sanctified” (1 Cor. 6:11). That is our position in Christ. We are positionally set apart unto God forever based on the redemptive work of Christ, and nothing can change that fact.

The Scriptures also teach about our *practical sanctification*. This refers to our spiritual growth in Christ and being set apart to God more and more in our practice. This is something that can and should change. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Paul was writing about practical sanctification. The word “sanctify” in this verse is an action verb. Practical sanctification is an activity. It is a process and it’s about making progress, going from what one is to what God wants one to be in Christ, through a process of growth, molding, shaping, change, and transformation by the work of the Holy Spirit.



Yakov Smirnoff, the Russian comedian, tells of how, when he first came to the United States, he was not prepared for the wide variety of instant products available in our grocery stores. He said,

“I’ll never forget walking down one of the aisles (of the grocery store) and seeing powdered milk; just add water and you get milk. Right next to it was powdered orange juice; just add water and you get orange juice. Then I saw baby powder, and I thought to myself, What a country!”<sup>1</sup>

We live in an instant society and culture. We like for things to take place quickly, if not immediately. Practical sanctification, however, doesn’t happen overnight. It’s a process. And it is a process that should not be sped up. Just like it takes time for a child to mature into adulthood, time is necessary for us to mature in the Lord. Sanctification is a process in which we never arrive at the goal. But we press toward that goal of being like Christ (Phil. 3:12-14). Practical sanctification takes place all our lives and is complete only when we go home to be with the Lord.

There is both a negative and positive aspect of practical sanctification. Negatively, we need to rid ourselves of the poisons of sins, selfishness, and worldliness that plague us so that God may free us to become whom He created us to be in Christ. And there is a positive aspect of sanctification in renewing our minds by the Word (Rom. 12:2), growing closer in our relationship with Christ, living out His righteousness, and being conformed to the image of our Savior (Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18). As Puritan writer Thomas Watson (c. 1620-1686) wrote of sanctification, “It is a principle of grace savingly wrought whereby the heart becomes holy, and is made after God’s own heart. A

sanctified person bears not only God's name, but His image.”<sup>2</sup>

### The God of Peace

**“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly...” (1 Thes. 5:23a).**

Paul points us to the One Who cultivates our sanctification and to live out the instructions He has given: the God of peace. Paul prays that “the very God of peace” would sanctify us wholly. We can’t sanctify ourselves. We need to rely on God’s strength and provision by faith. We are weak and we will fail if we try to live set apart to God in our own strength: “My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my Portion for ever” (Psa. 73:26). We need the God of peace to sanctify us wholly, and He does so through our faith in Him.

God is the God of *peace* (1 Cor. 14:33), not disorder, confusion, anxiety, impatience, restlessness, impulsiveness, or hurry. As God works in our lives to sanctify us wholly, it won’t be by these things. Sanctification is something the God of peace does in us calmly, silently, with His inexplicable peace and strength working in us over time to change us. As we live for the Lord, we often don’t even know it’s taking place, and we look back and we wonder, “How and when did this happen?” And we observe how, over time, God gently led us, transformed us little by little, caused us to grow quietly, and changed our lives from what we were to what we are now.

God does not delegate the sanctifying process. He does not command us to do it on our own.

It does not happen by decree. God does it Himself. “The very God of peace” sanctifies us. Sanctification happens by His action and working in our lives by grace as we live by faith in Him. God is involved in our lives to sanctify us wholly.

There are things we have a responsibility to do in the process of God sanctifying us. In John 17:17, Christ prayed, “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth.” As the God of peace sanctifies us and sets us apart unto Himself, He does so by His Word. As we renew our minds by the Word, we move closer to the Lord. The closer we are to the Lord, the more strength we gain, and we find ourselves further from ungodliness and worldliness. The Word changes our thinking and our priorities. It leads us to be set apart from the thinking and priorities of this world.

We are sanctified as we live by faith in the truth of the Word, rightly divided. For example, as we trust and obey Romans 6 and our identification with Christ and dying to sin and having new life in Him, the God of peace sanctifies us:

**“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. 6:11-13).**

The extent to which the God of peace wants to sanctify us is “wholly.” Greek/New Testament scholar A. T. Robertson (1863-1934) defines “wholly” as “the whole of each of you, every part of each of you.”<sup>3</sup> God’s will for us is to be *wholly* holy! God intends for His sanctification to extend to every part of our being. There is no part of us that God doesn’t know or care about. He does not want just part of us for Himself. He wants every part of all of us. All of us belong to God in our positional sanctification in Christ, but He wants all of us to belong to Him in our practical sanctification as well. In the process of our sanctification, God wants our practice to grow closer and closer to our righteous position in Christ.

### Spirit, Soul, and Body

**“...and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes. 5:23b).**

Paul makes it more specific regarding being *wholly* sanctified when he writes, “your whole spirit and soul and body.” In this, we learn the make-up of every human being. We are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). Like our Creator, man is a triune being. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and He is one. Similarly, we are spirit, soul, and body, but we are one.

Our “spirit” is that part which enables us to have communion with God. It is about our worship and spiritual understanding. It affords us “God-consciousness.”

Our “soul” has to do with our intellect, emotions, and will. It gives us our “self-consciousness.”

Our “body” is our flesh, blood, and bones, and, with our five senses of sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell, we have “world-consciousness.” The body acts on the input we receive from the world, yes, but also from our spirit and soul.



“The Junior Sunday School Teacher asked her eight eager 10-year-olds if they would give \$1,000,000 to the missionaries. ‘YES!’ they all screamed!! ‘Would you give \$1,000?’ Again they shouted ‘YES!’ ‘How about \$100?’ ‘Oh, YES we would!’ they all agreed!! ‘Would you give just a dollar to the missionaries?’ she asked. The boys exclaimed ‘YES!’ just as before except for Johnnie. ‘Johnnie,’ the teacher said as she noticed the boy clutching his pocket, ‘why didn’t you say “YES” this time?’ ‘Well,’ he stammered, ‘I HAVE a dollar.’”<sup>4</sup>

In this little story, we see the “spirit,” the spiritual understanding of the need to give to missionaries and the spiritual conviction to give to the Lord when the money is there to give. We see the “soul” in the emotion and reaction of being excited, and troubled, and the stubborn desire

to keep the money. And we see the “body” reacting in shouting and Johnnie clutching his pocket to hold onto that money.

God’s sanctification is to apply to all three parts of the person. When we list the three parts of our being, we typically say “body, soul, and spirit.” Most times we think of the body first! But God puts the order here as “spirit and soul and body.” From God’s viewpoint, the spirit is of primary importance, and the body last.

The order in which they are listed in the Bible—spirit, soul, and body—teaches us what our priorities should be. When we put our relationship with God first and sanctify the spirit, then our soul and body follow. Putting the spiritual first affects how we think, feel, and react, what we do and where we go. We will be sanctified wholly as we live by faith and put Christ first.

### Preserved Blameless

Paul prayed that the Thessalonians’ “whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Preserve” means to watch over, guard, or keep. Paul prayed that the God of peace would watch over and keep the Thessalonian believers moving on the path of sanctification until Christ comes.

Paul’s prayer is that they would be “preserved *blameless*.” Paul does not say perfect, flawless, nor faultless, but “blameless.” We will never be perfect in our practice on this side of heaven. Thus, Paul’s prayer is realistic for the believer. The term *blameless* speaks of a life lived for Christ that is undeniable

and genuine. Paul prayed that their sanctification and living a blameless life would be carried out with God’s help until the Rapture.

“Wilhelm was a mountaineer’s guide in Switzerland. Whenever people wanted to climb the Swiss Alps, they would ask Wilhelm to guide them because he was sure of foot and hand and eye, and because he knew the safest paths to the top. Wilhelm had spent his whole life guiding climbing parties to the tops of the mountains and then guiding them along the more difficult downward trail.



“Word came to Wilhelm one day that a party of climbers had begun the ascent without a guide and were lost in a blizzard which had come up without warning. Without losing a moment, Wilhelm went out to search for them. That was the last time poor Wilhelm was seen. When the storm was over they found him. On the slippery, treacherous mountain slope in the blinding blizzard he had slipped and fallen into a cleft in the rocks. They buried him there on the mountainside that he had loved so much.

“The people of the village at the foot of the mountain were so proud of Wilhelm that they wanted to put a tombstone over his head.



There was a long discussion about what words they would carve into the stone. After much argument they decided on these words, ‘He died as he had lived—climbing.’”<sup>5</sup>

That is what God desires for each of our lives, that in our practical sanctification we live and die climbing to greater heights of maturity in Christ.

### The Faithful God


**“Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it” (1 Thes. 5:24).**

The faithful One who calls us is the God of peace. 1 Thessalonians 4:7 teaches us what God calls us to: “For God hath not *called* us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.” God calls each of us “unto holiness,” unto living set-apart lives unto Him for His glory. And He will do it, because He is faithful. We can trust Him because He is trustworthy. We can fully rely on Him to sanctify us wholly because He is faithful to His Word. God is committed to our sanctification and spiritual growth.

God has called us unto holiness. God will do it. These words are simple, direct, with no qualification or doubt of any kind. God, in His faithfulness, pledges

to sanctify us. As Paul wrote the Philippians,

**“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6).**

Christ started the process of our practical sanctification at the moment of our salvation. We are confident that He Who began this good work of setting us apart to Himself will continue it for each member of His Church until death or the Rapture brings that member into His presence, at which time our sanctification will be brought to perfection. 

1. “Yakov Smirnoff Quotes,” Goodreads, accessed March 4, 2019, [https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/754003.Yakov\\_Smirnoff](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/754003.Yakov_Smirnoff).

2. Thomas Watson, “Sanctification,” The Highway, accessed March 4, 2019, [https://www.the-highway.com/sanctification\\_Watson.html](https://www.the-highway.com/sanctification_Watson.html).

3. A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament, Volume IV, The Epistles of Paul* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1931), p. 38.

4. Sermon Index, accessed March 4, 2019, <http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?view=article&aid=14470>.

5. “Wilhelm the Mountain Climber,” Crusaders for Christ, January 13, 2013, <https://www.crusaders-for-christ.com/sermons-for-children/-wilhelm-the-mountain-climber-1st-sun-after-epiphany>.

**What is your attitude toward the Mystery?** When the final chapter of your life is written and the book is closed, will you be able to say with the Apostle Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith?” May you have no regrets in that Day!

—Pastor Paul M. Sadler





# The Pillar and Ground of the TRUTH

**“...the house of God...is the church of the living God, *the pillar and ground of the truth*” (1 Tim. 3:15).**

The word “pillar” should remind you of the pillar that God gave Israel to guide them through the wilderness to the promised land (Neh. 9:12). After the people of Israel crossed the Red Sea, they *needed* a guide. They had been slaves for 400 years, and didn’t have a clue as to where they were going! It’s not like Pharaoh let his slaves take exploratory vacations. God had to lead them every *step of the way* with the pillar.

Once Moses had written the Book of the Law, however, *the pillar disappeared*. Of course! Now they had a *Book* to guide them every step of the way. No matter where they went in life, they had a reliable Guide to teach them how to walk and please God.

And now that Book has been completed and resides *in the local church*! No wonder God calls the church *the pillar of the truth*! God’s people should follow that Book as closely as the Jews followed *their* pillar.

How closely was that?

**“...when the cloud tarried...then the children of Israel...journeyed not...when the cloud...was taken up...they journeyed...” (Num. 9:19-22).**

When the pillar moved, they moved. When it rested, they rested. In other words, *they didn’t make a move without the benefit of its guidance*. Does that sound like a good way to follow the Book today? Beloved, God has graciously given us a Guide that can help us navigate the most treacherous paths of life. The One who steers the stars (Job 38:32) has deigned to guide the lives of His people. May we never forsake His direction!

This great Guide has further equipped us with *a place to meet to hear His Book taught*. If there is no church near you where God’s Word is rightly divided, continue to share the gospel with the lost, and Pauline truth with the saved. The people with whom you share God’s guidance just might want to start meeting at your house to discuss it. And God has a word for such meetings in homes—He calls them *churches* (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philemon 1:2).

These references to home churches are especially significant when we remember how small the homes were in those days. This shows that the smallest of gatherings is *a church* in God’s eyes, one that He will be pleased to call His house, the pillar and ground of the truth *in your community*.

—Pastor Ricky Kurth



# BBS Letter Excerpts

## From Pennsylvania:

"BBS has been my source for answers over the years. I have so many questions and keep finding more...Thank you for being part of my spiritual life."

## From Texas:

"Thank you so much for your time. I'm so grateful to God for you guys. ... it wasn't until about two years into my faith I met a gentleman who... explained this message of grace...I thought how did I miss this...The Bible makes so much more sense when rightly divided. Thank you guys for being faithful stewards of the Word."

## From our Inbox:

"I'm studying to be a Supply and Lay Pastor in the Methodist Church. But in my heart I know that dividing the Word is correct." (In that case, follow your heart! –Ed.).

## From Ohio:

"Please use this for your Video Fund. Such a blessing in this new year that so many can hear the Word rightly divided on *Transformed by Grace*!"

## From Arizona:

"I have begun, under the guidance of our Lord, a grace fellowship Bible study here...You have sent me some great tools over the past year and its greatly appreciated. I consider you and Pastor Sadler and Pastor Stam my pastor mentors."

## From Minnesota:

"Thank you for the monthly Bible study...rightly dividing the Word as laid out by Paul makes applying the Word to our lives a way of daily life."

## From Michigan:

"Thank you all for your *Searchlight* magazine. Love it! Plus I really enjoy your *Transformed By Grace* with Pastor Kevin. It is truly a great program. Straight forward. Love the way grace is presented!"

## From Indiana:

"We are grateful for Pastor Kevin Sadler's broadcast *Transformed By Grace*. It is a joy to my family, and I am sure an excellent opportunity to reach those who do not understand God's Word rightly divided."

## From Guam:

"I work for the *Guam Daily Post* newspaper. I met and spoke to Dennis Lamotte who requested to place ads in our paper on your behalf. Please know that we agreed to run your *Two Minutes* articles every Friday of the month starting March 1." (Attaboy, Dennis! –Ed.).

## From West Virginia:

"...thank you Pastor Kevin Sadler for 'Everybody's a Somebody in the Body of Christ.' I am encouraged by the message. One of my favorite segments is the 'Question Box.' People ask questions that have troubled some of us for years. It is a great teaching tool."

### From our Inbox:

"Just wanted to take a moment to say how thankful I am to be receiving these daily *Two Minutes* messages and how much they mean, and how much they inspire me to delve further into the Scriptures to rightly divide the truth!"

### From Indiana:

"Just read your articles in this month's *Searchlight*. Funny how the one from 40 years ago is still as true as the one from this month. Great job on both. I kept grabbing my pen and opening my Bible to jot down the connections you were making."

### From Pennsylvania:

"Thank you so much for the many, many fascinating *Searchlight* articles in this year's issues! Each month I find several 'wow! I never knew, saw, or thought of that before!'...Believe me, you do have me searching the Scriptures! That's a good thing! Each of my *Searchlights* is well marked for future reference. I also loved all of the Tour of Israel issues. Very, very interesting!"

### From Brazil:

"I have just received from the hands of the mailman the *Berean Searchlight* magazine...thank you for this wonderful material that helps me to study the Word of God and that has nourished my soul with doctrines that come from the use of 2 Timothy 2:15." (Please pray for this Brazilian pastor's ministry. —Ed.).

### From India:

"We received the *Berean Searchlights*...We use this as part of our Assembly preaching messages. Bless you all."

### From West Virginia:

"*Rightly Divided Answers to Frequently Asked Questions* is really excellent, well thought out."

### From Iowa:

"I am blessed to be the leader of two Bible study groups. Both groups have requested the study of the Book of Revelation. I just can't tell you in eloquent enough terms how much I appreciate your four volumes of Revelation. I have two sets of four which give me unparalleled insight and guidance next to Scripture itself."

### From our Inbox:

"Thank you, thank you...This sermon was just what I needed to dispel my growing confusion! The reminder that references to the Rapture are found only in Paul's writings, as he unravels the mysteries of God, will be key in my continued study of the dispensation of the grace of God... Heading over to the Berean website to search out more of your work..."

### From New Jersey:

"I am sending a couple of dollars to help send out the grace doctrine. I became a Berean in 1994. In the process of Bible study, everything just fell into place. Now with BBS booklets, I can give the proper doctrine to others." (Thanks for partnering with us in getting Paul's gospel out to others! —Ed.).

### From Kansas:

"I'm so thankful for the wonderful literature that you bring in the books and *Searchlight*, but I really like the outreach of *Two Minutes With the Bible*, and now *Transformed By Grace*. We will pray for this outreach."

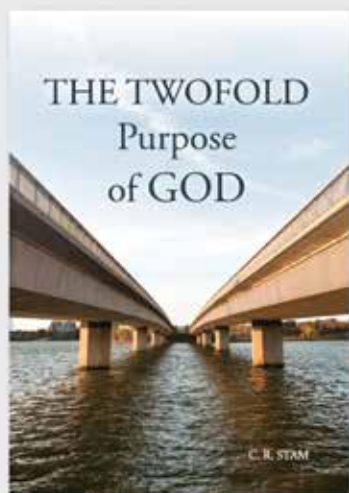


"These [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."  
—Acts 17:11

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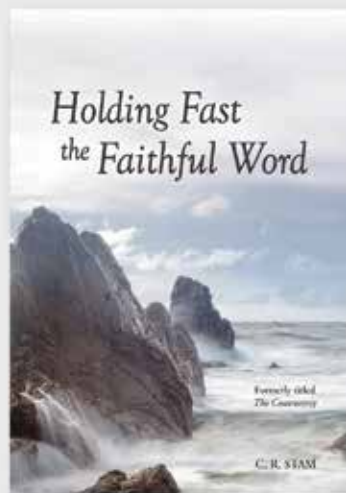


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- |    |  |    |                                  |
|----|--|----|----------------------------------|
| 1  | Unity in Christ                        | 34 | All About the Bible (Part 4)     |
| 2  | One Body in Christ                     | 35 | God's Perfect Book               |
| 3  | The Apostle of Grace                   | 36 | A Survey of the Bible (Part 1)   |
| 4  | The Gifts of Christ                    | 37 | A Survey of the Bible (Part 2)   |
| 5  | Differing Gifts                        | 38 | Understanding Your Bible         |
| 6  | Everybody's a Somebody in the Body     | 39 | Our Heavenly Inheritance         |
| 7  | The Fullness of Christ                 | 40 | Blessed in Christ                |
| 8  | You Have Not So Learned Christ         | 41 | Secure in Christ                 |
| 9  | The Rapture vs. The 2nd Coming         | 42 | Power in Christ                  |
| 10 | The Rapture vs. The 2nd Coming (Pt 2)  | 43 | Alive in Christ                  |
| 11 | Put on the New Man                     | 44 | Grace in Christ                  |
| 12 | Eternal Security in Christ             | 45 | What Must I Do to Be Saved?      |
| 13 | Walk in the Love of Christ             | 46 | Peace in Christ                  |
| 14 | Walk as Light in Christ                | 47 | The Mystery of Christ            |
| 15 | Walk Carefully in Christ               | 48 | The Dispensation of Grace        |
| 16 | Spirit-Filled in Christ                | 49 | Ministry in Christ               |
| 17 | Transformed by the Resurrection        | 50 | The Love of Christ               |
| 18 | God's Original Design for Marriage     | 51 | Basic Distinctions (Part 1)      |
| 19 | God's Plan for the Wife                | 52 | Basic Distinctions (Part 2)      |
| 20 | God's Plan for the Husband             | 53 | An In-Tents Reminder             |
| 21 | God's Will for Children                | 54 | Absent from the Body...          |
| 22 | God's Will for Fathers                 | 55 | For We Must All Appear           |
| 23 | God's Will for Employees and Employers | 56 | The Judgments to Come            |
| 24 | The Power of His Might                 | 57 | The Great White Throne           |
| 25 | Our Spiritual Protection               | 58 | Saved from What?                 |
| 26 | Knowing the Enemy                      | 59 | Call Me Crazy                    |
| 27 | Our Spiritual Protection (Part 2)      | 60 | God's House of Representatives   |
| 28 | Our Spiritual Protection               | 61 | A Life-Changing Life             |
| 29 | Boldness in Christ                     | 62 | Now Is the Day of Salvation      |
| 30 | Faithful Ministers in Christ           | 63 | The Commission for Israel        |
| 31 | All About the Bible (Part 1)           | 64 | The Comm. for the Body of Christ |
| 32 | All About the Bible (Part 2)           | 65 | Our Light Affliction             |
| 33 | All About the Bible (Part 3)           | 66 | The Paradox of the Gospel        |
|    |  | 67 | Truth or Consequences            |
|    |  | 68 | Paul's Pattern                   |
|    |  | 69 | Paul's Conversion                |
|    |  | 70 | The Church Under Grace           |
|    |  | 71 | Grace in Gray Areas              |
|    |  | 72 | Living the Transformed Life      |



# News and Announcements

**Signing Bonus:** If you've been thinking about downloading our BBS Network channel on Roku or AppleTV, there's no time like the present! For a limited time, we are offering a copy of *Revelation 4* at half price to all new signees. Just provide us with the promo code you'll receive after you download the BBS Network channel, and soon you'll be watching *Transformed By Grace* messages featuring BBS president Kevin Sadler, as well as messages by your editor and members of the BBS board.

**The 51st Annual Bible Conference of the Berean Bible Fellowship** will be held June 16-20 at the *Community Bible Church* in Tipp City, Ohio. Speakers will include BBS president Kevin Sadler, *Berean Searchlight* editor Ricky Kurth, BBS board members John Fredericksen, Jeff Seekins, and Ken Lawson, and BBS Business Manager Jim Tollar. These speakers and many others will address the theme of *Israel's Fleeting Opportunity* as they expound Acts 1-8. The daily Bible Hour will be taught by Dave Stewart, a contributing writer for the *Searchlight*, who plans to bring a series on *Comprehensive Bible Types*. For further information about this historic annual event, visit BBF's website at [www.bereanbiblefellowship.weebly.com](http://www.bereanbiblefellowship.weebly.com) or contact BBF President Dave Brown at [pineridge@tds.net](mailto:pineridge@tds.net).

**Bring the kids!** Young children are welcome at the BBF conference of course, but if you'll register them in advance, it will help the staff purchase enough supplies for crafts and other things. Just email Terry Wilkinson at [joyous\\_praise@yahoo.com](mailto:joyous_praise@yahoo.com).

**New Grace Work:** Our new friend Tim Steinmeyer learned the grace message from Pastor Jim Devney while attending *Gracepoint Church* in New Whiteland, Indiana, and now he is itching to start a new grace work in Warsaw, Indiana. This means the truth of God's rightly divided Word will now be proclaimed in the backyard of the historic Winona Lake Bible Conference district, the old stomping grounds of men like C. I. Scofield, Billy Sunday and Billy Graham. If you live in the area and you'd like to grow in grace, contact Tim at (574) 527-0485, or at [testeinmeyer@yahoo.com](mailto:testeinmeyer@yahoo.com).



## UPCOMING CONFERENCES TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR!

**Northeast Ohio Bible Conference**, May 3-5, Ashtabula, OH

**BBF Summer Conference**, June 16-20, Tipp City, OH

**Bitely Bible Conference**, August 2-4, Bitely, MI

**BBS Regional Conference**, August 23-24, Solomons MD

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