

# *The* **BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

December 2019



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*This month’s cover features the Urk Lighthouse located in the Netherlands.*

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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# From the Editor to You

Dear Friends in Christ,

Five years ago, my new friend Marcus Emerson of Alcester, England, was injured at work and laid up for 18 months. Most people would be greatly discouraged by a setback like that, even most Christians. But not Marcus. He'd been raised in the Plymouth Brethren movement, and was *serious* about the study of God's Word. And for some time he'd suspected that the four gospels were Jewish. And now that he had lots of time on his hands, he determined to sit in his favorite chair with his Bible and get to the bottom of this issue. (I snapped this picture of him in his favorite chair as we talked!)

His wife Joyce remembers that for the next several months, he would call out to her several times a day to say, "Listen to this!" He'd then point out something else he'd discovered that proved the four gospels *were* written to the people of Israel. This prompted him to search online to see if there might be others who shared his new understanding, and start a local assembly in which to teach the grace message.



A year ago July, he asked one of the grace believers he'd met online if any of the grace pastors here in the United States would be willing to go to the UK for a Bible conference. His friend Sharon McEntee then asked me that question, and I in turn asked the boss, whose heart to promote the truth around the world prompted him to say yes. Thus it was that my son Jesse and I journeyed back to the country where the grace message began to be recovered over a century ago by men like E. W. Bullinger, Sir Robert Anderson, and John Darby, the founder of the Plymouth Brethren.

Our first speaker was Jaap Weeda from the Netherlands, a man who learned the grace message years ago from a pamphlet he'd found on the floor of a phone booth, and now heralds Paul's gospel in Amsterdam. He was followed by *Things To Come* missionary Barry Pumphrey, who has labored tirelessly to promote Pauline truth in England for decades. My three messages the next day were received by hungry-hearted saints whose questions during our Q&A sessions reflected the solid grasp of the truth that Marcus's ministry had instilled in them.

No one likes to be sidelined by illness or injury, but if that's where life finds you at any given time, I hope you'll follow Marcus's example and give yourself wholly to the study of God's Word. Nothing but good can come of it. And keep giving out pamphlets sharing Paul's gospel too. As Jaap can tell you, nothing but good can come of that as well!

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Ricky Kurth



# Saved by GRACE

“For *by grace* are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: *Not of works*, lest any man should boast.” Many who blindly seek to find favor with God are engaged in a constant search for ways in which they can pay their way into heaven by *doing*. They try one approach after another, looking for some kind of work to perform which will earn their salvation, inquiring hither and yon, asking of this one and that one: “What can I *do* to win eternal life?”

The Philippian jailor asked of Paul and Silas, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” and they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:30,31). Plainly, there was no instruction as to any work to be performed, no law to be obeyed or ritual to be observed. Simply believe—human nature finds this to be incongruous. Surely, one must *work* for any bestowal of benefit or blessing.

God’s Word makes it clear that one cannot obtain salvation by works. What, then, are we to do *after* having believed and become a member of the Church which is the Body of Christ? Do we sit on our hands and wallow in the security of our spiritual blessings? By no means! Should we not work? Not only *should* we work if we are truly saved, but we will be untrue to the faith if we do *not* work. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

“Who [Christ] gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

—Pastor Robert Hanna

(This article first appeared in *Amazing Grace*, and we share it with you by permission from our friends at *Grace Gospel Publishers*, Denver, Colorado.)

# GOD WITH US

PASTOR KEVIN J. SADLER

BBS President

“Author Mary Ann Bird shared this very personal story in *The Whisper Test*. She wrote, ‘I grew up knowing I was different, and I hated it. I was born with a cleft palate, and when I started school, my classmates made it clear to me how I looked to others: a little girl with a misshapen lip, crooked nose, lopsided teeth, and garbled speech.

“When classmates asked, ‘What happened to your lip?’ I’d tell them I’d fallen and cut it on a piece of glass. Somehow it seemed more acceptable to have suffered an accident than to have been born different. I was convinced that no one outside my family could love me.

“There was, however, a teacher in the second grade that we all adored—Mrs. Leonard [was her] name. She was short, round, happy—a sparkling lady.

“Annually we had a hearing test...

“Mrs. Leonard gave the test to everyone in the class, and finally it was my turn. I knew from past

years that as we stood against the door and covered one ear, the teacher sitting at her desk would whisper something, and we would have to repeat it back—things like “The sky is blue” or “Do you have new shoes?” I waited there for those words that God must have put into her mouth. [They were] seven words that changed my life. Mrs. Leonard said in her whisper, “I wish you were my little girl.””<sup>1</sup>

Do you hear the words of Christ this Christmas? His coming to this world to save sinners tells every single person, “I wish you were Mine. I wish you were My child. I wish you were in My family.”

Christ has done everything to make that possible through His finished work. But you must respond and make the personal decision to trust that Christ paid for all your sins at the Cross, that He died for you and rose again. In that moment of solely placing faith in Christ and what He did for us, we become Christ’s and we belong to Him forever.

## John's Christmas Story

**"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (John 1:1-2).**

John 1:1-18 is the Apostle John's account of the Christmas story. In it you find no Joseph, Mary, Bethlehem, manger, stable, shepherds, star, angels, or baby. However, this is not any less the story, because Christmas is not only about the Savior's birth; it is about His deity. "The Word was made flesh" (John 1:14) is the most profound truth of all truth.

We do not celebrate Christmas because of the physical features of a stable and a manger and a star and a young couple and shepherds and angels. They all are a part of the historical circumstances surrounding the birth of Christ, but the real story is that the Word became flesh, that God was born into the world, that the infinite, eternal God became a human being.

This time of year we sing about "Emmanuel," which means "God with us" (Matt. 1:23). We rejoice in this truth because only God could satisfy God's justice against mankind's sins, which Christ as God and Christ as man did for us at the Cross.

Why is Christ called the Word? Why did John not write, "In the beginning was the Lord Jesus Christ?" The reason is that God wants to teach us something about His Son. The "Word of the Lord" is a familiar phrase in Scripture. It appears 258 times in 255 verses. In the Old Testament,

you often read, "The Word of the LORD came...." The Word of the Lord came, and when it did, it was God revealing Himself, revealing His Person, nature, will, wisdom, and truth. The Word of the Lord was the manifest revelation of the personal, true, and living God.

The Apostle John, by the Holy Spirit, is teaching that the Word, the revelation of God, is now manifested incarnate. The Word has taken on flesh. The FULL expression of God's Person, nature, will, wisdom, and truth is embodied. This is what the writer of Hebrews said in Hebrews 1:1-2,

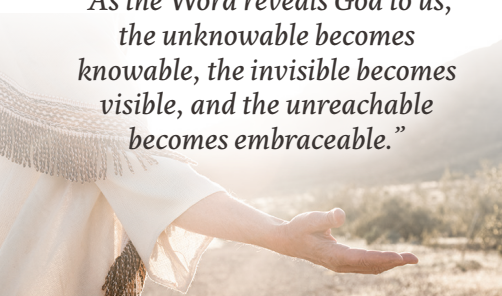
**"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son...."**

Just as our words reveal to others our hearts and minds, the Lord Jesus Christ is God's "Word" to reveal God and His heart and mind to all mankind. God has fully expressed and revealed Himself to all in the Person of Jesus Christ. As the Word reveals God to us, the unknowable becomes knowable, the invisible becomes visible, and the unreachable becomes embraceable.

John wrote, "In the beginning was the Word," referring to the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth in Genesis 1:1. In the original beginning when, other than God, everything that exists came into existence, the Word was. Christ was already in existence when everything that exists in creation came into existence. The Word was not created.

Seeing as how time began with creation, whoever exists before time, exists eternally. There never was a point when the Word came into existence. When time began, the Word was. The Word existed in the beginning. He preexisted time and creation. He did not have a beginning. He did not begin to be. He has always been. He existed before Bethlehem. He existed before the creation. The Word is eternal. And being eternal, Jesus Christ is 100% *God*.

*"As the Word reveals God to us,  
the unknowable becomes  
knowable, the invisible becomes  
visible, and the unreachable  
becomes embraceable."*



Pastor and author A. W. Tozer (1897-1963) wrote the following: "The mind looks backward in time till the dim past vanishes, then turns and looks into the future till thought and imagination collapse from exhaustion; and God is at both points, unaffected by either. Time marks the beginning of created existence, and because God never began to exist it can have no application to Him. 'Began' is a time-word, and cannot have personal meaning for the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity."<sup>2</sup>

Not only does John speak of the *preexistence* of Christ, but He speaks of His *coexistence*. Verse 1 says that "the Word was with God." In verse 2, he reiterates it:

"The same was in the beginning with God."

When the beginning began, the Word already was existing with God. The Word is not a lesser God. He is not God's competitor. "The Word was with God" shows us that the Word is a *distinct* member of the Godhead. He is distinct from God as God, and He is "with God." Being "with God" teaches He is equal "with God," He is one "with God," and that He is preexistent and coexistent "with God." He is with God as a separate Person and is fully God Himself.

The Word was in perfect *fellowship* with God from eternity past. In John 17:5, Christ prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." In eternity past, Christ existed in perfect, personal communion "with God."

The Word is on the level of equality with God. He is not under God, not looking up to Him, not above and looking down on Him, not behind or before Him, but equally existing with the living God as the living God Himself. In John 10:30, our Lord said, "I and My Father are one." They are one and equal from eternity.

Then, not only "In the beginning *was* the Word and the Word *was with God*," John adds, "and the Word *was God*." He is both with God and He *is* God. The Word is fully God as God the Father is fully God. He is as much God as God is God. It reads He "WAS God," because this statement is in reference to the past,

“In the beginning.” Before time, from eternity past, He was God. He exists eternally as God. He was God, He is God, and He will always be God.

If you think about it, this is what is at the heart of the Christmas story: that the One Who preexisted, Who was eternally with God as God before anything existed, the One Who took on flesh and came into the world, is God Himself.



“During a college history exam before the Christmas vacation, one of the students did not know the answer to a question, ‘What were the causes of the depression of the 1930s? (Discuss each cause.)’

“One of the students did not know the answer, so he wrote... ‘God knows. I don’t. Merry Christmas.’

“In January after Christmas vacation, the [exam] came back with the professor’s notation, ‘God gets 100! You get zero! Happy New Year!’”<sup>3</sup>

Christmas is that way for many people. God gets 100. They get zero. The simple question is, “*Who is Christ?*” So many cannot answer it clearly, definitively, or with conviction. During Christ’s earthly ministry (Matt. 16:13-16; John 7:40-43; 9:16), and for the

nearly 2,000 years since, debate has been raging about who Jesus of Nazareth really is. The common thread of all false beliefs about Christ is that they all make Him less than God. God knows the answer to the question about who Christ is, and He has clearly revealed the answer in His Word.

*Who is Christ?* Easy question. Christ is 100% God, 100% man. He is Lord, God, and the only Savior.

Lots of people believe in the shepherds, the wise men, the star, the angels, the manger, and in the sweet sentiment of a baby being born. But the real question is, “Do you believe in Christ?” Do you believe in the reason He came into the world, “to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15)? Do you believe in Him as your personal Redeemer, your only hope of salvation—believe that He died for your sins and rose again? That’s the real question at Christmas.

### God Was Made Flesh

**“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).**

When Christ was born as a Baby in the manger at Bethlehem, He had always existed as God the Son with God the Father in heaven. But then, out of infinite love and grace, He “took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Phil. 2:7).

God became man. When you look at the manger by faith, you see something staggering: the infinite, eternal, all-knowing,

all-powerful, all-glorious God born as a small, dependent, human baby. The Incarnation was the event when God's Son took on the fullness of humanity while remaining fully God.

Notice how John 1:14 is worded: "The Word was made [or became] flesh." The way it is written assumes preexistence. He did not come into being; He came from heaven and was made flesh. And when He was made flesh, the Word did not cease to be what He was: God. The Lord Jesus Christ is God and man in indivisible oneness.

Charles Wesley's great hymn and carol "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" puts it so beautifully: "Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, / Hail the incarnate Deity! / Pleased as man with men to dwell, / Jesus, our Emmanuel."



Our Apostle Paul wrote of Christ, "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). He is the fullness of the Godhead *bodily*. This is part of His eternal sacrifice for us. He did not dwell in heaven "bodily," or in a human body, before Bethlehem or before creation, for that matter. He was "in the form of God" (Phil. 2:6). When He came to this world, He willingly took

on flesh forever to be the sinner's Savior. Now, *for eternity*, He dwells in a glorified body, as the "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). We should be thankful for this sacrifice of love by our Savior as well.

In John 1:14, John gave his personal testimony that, when the Word dwelt among Israel, "we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." They saw the glory of God in the Word made flesh. Divine majesty and glory filled the Lord Jesus, while veiled in flesh, but His glory showed through in His ministry. John, the other disciples, and the people of Israel saw His glory in His deeds and miracles. They beheld the glory of a perfect, sinless life. And they saw God's glory in Christ's death and His glorious resurrection from the dead.

As Christ dwelt among the people of Israel, John wrote that the Word was "full of grace and truth." The Word didn't reveal some truth or partial grace. He was *full* of grace and truth. As the Word, the revelation of God, He revealed only truth. When He spoke and taught in His earthly ministry, He revealed truth for God's prophesied program and hope for the nation of Israel. He also revealed grace in fullness by His compassionate ministry to Israel and, most of all, by humbly taking on flesh. As the Apostle Paul wrote to the Body of Christ,

**"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9).**

## If He Had Not Come

**“If I had not come and spoken unto them...” (John 15:22a).**

In this verse, we are invited to consider a possibility: *What if Christ had not come?* What if He had not been born in Bethlehem? What if He had not come to die on the cross and rise again? Where would we be?

If Christ had not come, there would be no way to God.

If Christ had not come, there would be no gospel and no grace.

If Christ had not come, there would be no resurrection.

If Christ had not come, there would be no Savior for sin.

If Christ had not come, there would be no church.

If Christ had not come, there would be no Christmas.

If Christ had not come, there would be no hope.

The thought of this possibility reminds us of how thankful we should be that He did come and brought us bright hope. Christ said, “If I had not come,” but He did come; “...when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. 4:4).

From all of us here at *Berean Bible Society*, we wish you and yours a joyous and merry Christmas in the Lord!

### ENDNOTES

1. “Author Mary Ann Bird Shared...,” contributed by Tony Miano, Sermon Central, May 21, 2001, <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon-illustrations/2782/author-mary-ann-bird-shared-this-very-personal-by-tony-miano>.
2. Tozer Devotional, “Absolute Everlastingness,” The Alliance, October 26, 2018, <https://www.cmalliance.org/devotions/tozer.jsp?id=1341>.
3. *Teacher’s Joke and Story Book: Collected by Stanley B. Graham* (Bloomington, Indiana: AuthorHouse, 2016), #264, eBook.

## The Season of Giving

Did you know that the Statue of Liberty was given to the United States by the people of France in 1886? Weighing in at 225 tons, it is one of the largest gifts ever given.

Of course, the GREATEST gift ever given was the Lord Jesus Christ, “Who gave Himself for our sins” (Gal. 1:4). If you’ve received “the gift of God,” which is “eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23), then “stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. 5:1).





# The HOUR of POWER

PASTOR RICKY KURTH  
*Berean Searchlight Editor*

**A**fter the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and just before He ascended into heaven, He made a promise to His apostles, saying, **“...ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...”** (Acts 1:8).

The power of which the Lord spoke was the power they received when they were filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4). At Pentecost, the disciples like Peter and Stephen were filled with the Spirit and given the “power” to do “great wonders and miracles” (Acts 2:43; 6:5,8). Earlier the Lord had told them to “tarry” in Jerusalem until they were endued with that “power from on high” (Luke 24:49).

Of course, the reason the Lord gave them the power to do mighty *works* was to confirm the *words* they were preaching. After receiving that power, we read,

**“And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following”** (Mark 16:20).

Now here we have a dispensational difference. God hasn’t promised *you* that kind of power. You can tarry in Jerusalem all you want, and you will not be endued with power like that from on high. I know that churches often hold what they call “tarrying meetings,” where they get together to wait for the Spirit to come upon them in that miraculous manner. But no one today receives that kind of power from the Spirit, simply because the Father didn’t promise it to us members of the Body of Christ, living in the dispensation of grace.

If you want to confirm the power of God’s Word *today*, you have to do it by demonstrating God’s power *in your personal life*. When you display God’s *patience* in the midst of your difficult circumstances, you

exhibit the power of God in a mighty way! And when difficult *people* tax your patience, you can display the power of God mightily by exhibiting His *longsuffering*. You can also show the power of God's *holiness* when you are tempted to sin and you resist the temptation steadfastly. If you want to talk about demonstrating the power of God, *that's how it's done in this dispensation*. We still live in the hour of power, but the *nature* of God's power is different than it was at Pentecost.

But the filling of the Spirit didn't just give the disciples the power to work miracles. It gave them *another* kind of power, the kind the Spirit gave the prophet Micah in ancient Israel:


***“But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin” (Micah 3:8).***

Do you have any idea how much power it took to stand in front of a bunch of unsaved Jews, who thought they were the favored people of God just because they were born of the seed of Abraham, and tell them how sinful they are? Micah knew!

And so did men like Stephen, who bravely charged the Jews with the death of the prophets (Acts 7:51,52), and the twelve apostles, who charged the people of Israel with the death of Christ, and threatened them with His resurrection. Their message at Pentecost said, as it were, “You killed Him, but He rose from the dead, and now He’s angry with you, so you’d better repent!” (Acts 2:22-36).

But here we have yet *another* dispensational difference. It’s not up to us to show the nation of Israel her sins, or any other nation for that matter—including the nation in which we live! Though you wouldn’t know it from the way most of Christianity conducts itself, by going around pointing out how sinful our nation is in legalizing things like abortion and gay marriage. All that does is make unsaved people *hate* Christianity, and turn a deaf ear to the gospel we proclaim.

Our job is rather to remind *individuals* of their own *personal* sins. All *that* does is help people see their need of a Savior! Once they get saved and learn to accept the Bible as God’s Word, *then* they are willing to accept what God says in His Word about things like abortion and homosexuality.

Remember, God has called us to be fishers of men, not clean up the pond! That means if you want to fix what’s wrong with our nation, don’t become a political activist. Become *an evangelist* and change the nation by changing the hearts of men, one precious soul at a time. 





# MAN- FOLLOWING

PASTOR KEVIN J. **SADLER**  
BBS President

**T**here is a tendency in our human nature to go to extremes, and some give *extreme* devotion to a spiritual leader. There can be a belief in the inerrancy of the one they choose to follow. If there is any unsound doctrine in their teaching and beliefs, it is often swept under the rug because of loyalty to a man rather than the Word.

**“For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?” (1 Cor. 3:4).**

As the Corinthians did, we still find members of the Body of Christ championing one spiritual leader over another. This produces division and contention in the Church (1 Cor. 1:10-12). It’s important for us to remember that no matter how effective or eloquent a Bible teacher is, he is only human; he makes mistakes, and he has shortcomings and weaknesses. We need always to be Berean in what is taught from God’s Word (Acts 17:11), including what is taught by those we trust.

**“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?” (1 Cor. 3:5).**

Preachers and teachers of the Word are “ministers” or servants to bring people to Christ and establish them in the faith. It’s unwise to raise servants to the rank of master. While we should “esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake” (1 Thes. 5:13), our devotion belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. If we follow a mortal man, we are headed for disappointment. But we will never be disappointed when we keep our eyes on the Lord.

On the other side of the coin, sin, selfishness, and pride can lead some pastors and teachers to desire a following, accept adoration, and set themselves up as *the* authority on the Scriptures. We should watch for this kind of attitude among spiritual leaders. The true shepherd is someone who points people, not to himself, but to the Lord, “that in all things He might have the preeminence” (Col. 1:18). Godly leaders desire God’s people to follow Christ, His Word, and sound doctrine.

**“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase” (1 Cor. 3:6-7).**

Paul shows why we should never glory in a man in the ministry. He teaches that the servant who plants the seeds of the gospel is nothing. Likewise, the servant who waters the seeds of the gospel is nothing. Man does not have the power to bring forth spiritual life or fruit. “But God,” the God Who gives the increase, the life, and the fruit in the ministry, He is everything. Thus, our focus should not be on following this leader or that man. In the Church, we should be one in our desire to follow the Lord and to give the God of the increase the honor and glory He rightly deserves.

**“Therefore let no man glory in men” (1 Cor. 3:21a).**



## Question Box

*“How would you differentiate between God’s instruction to Israel to purge Canaan of the various people groups located there and radical Islam’s jihad to purge the world of infidels?”*

Many a Christian has wondered about God’s instructions to Israel to *exterminate* whole peoples in Canaan (Deut. 20:16,17), but there were reasons for this genocide, reasons that do not exist today.

When fallen angels took wives from among the daughters of men, they produced a race of giants in the early earth (Gen. 6:1-4). The purpose of the Flood was to exterminate that demonic race, Noah’s family being spared because he was “perfect *in his generations*” (6:9), i.e., not infected with this cursed seed.

Genesis 6:4 then describes *another* outbreak of giants that appeared “after” the days of the Flood, as Satan tried again to pollute the seed of the woman, frustrate the promise of Genesis 3:15, and prevent the birth of the Messiah. But since God had promised He would never again destroy the world with a flood (Gen. 9:11), it was left to the sword of Israel to wipe out this second eruption of giants, including Goliath, Og (Deut. 3:11) and many others (Num. 13:32,33; 2 Sam. 21:16-22).

This explains the seemingly heartless instruction to Joshua to exterminate the squatter nations that were sent there by Satan to contest the claim of Abraham’s seed to the land including, “all that breathed” (Josh. 10:40), “young and old” (Josh. 6:21), even their “little ones” (Deut. 2:34). But no such conditions exist on earth today, so any program that calls for the deaths of “unbelievers” is foreign to the Word of God rightly divided.

The story is told of a king who vowed to destroy his enemies, then proceeded to invite them all to a lavish feast. After the banquet, the king’s aides asked him what had become of his oath. “I did destroy my enemies,” he replied. “I destroyed my enemies by making them my friends!” Likewise, God’s only authorized method of destroying unbelievers today is by making them believers!

—Pastor Kurth



# Exuberant Rejoicing

PASTOR JOHN **FREDRICKSEN**  
*BBS Board Member*

**I**n November of 2013, my son-in-law, Travis, and I attended a football game to watch our favorite team. With three seconds left in the fourth quarter, our team was behind by 3 points, but they had the ball near the 50-yard line. As time expired, our back-up quarterback threw a desperation pass into the end zone and into the arms of one of our receivers. **WE WON!**

Jubilantly, players, and fans poured out onto the field to celebrate and rejoice together. Travis and I screamed with delight and hugged each other. In fact, I had at least four other people right around me, people I'd never met before, also give me celebratory hugs of joy. Then, thousands of us lingered in the stadium to happily soak in the experience.

Shouldn't we believers have just as much joy in our walk with and worship of the Lord? Shouldn't we also be known for our joy in Christ? What does God's Word say about having exuberant joy as a believer?

## **God's Standard for His Children Has Always Been to Constantly Rejoice**

Israel was repeatedly instructed to overflow with joy. David wrote: "But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them **EXCEEDINGLY REJOICE**. Sing unto God...extol Him...rejoice before Him" (Psa. 68:3-4). Believers, then as now, were to find the "fullness of joy" in their relationship with God. In Psalm 16:11, David wrote, "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fullness of joy." More than in any other person, place, thing, or experience, the children of Israel were to find their greatest exceeding joy in the Lord.

David believed their joy in the Lord was to be a consistent way of life. In Psalm 90:14 he wrote: "Oh satisfy us early with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." No half-hearted subdued rejoicing and love for the Lord would be acceptable either. The Lord Jesus Christ repeated the instruction from the Ten Commandments when He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37).

Israel was to express their exceeding rejoicing (Psa. 68:3) by making “a joyful noise unto the Lord...Serve the Lord with gladness; [and] come before His presence with singing” (Psa. 100:1-2). David urged Israel to demonstrate their joy in the Lord by saying, “Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms” (Psa. 95:2). Similarly, in Psalm 5:11, he said, “But let ALL those that put their trust in thee REJOICE: **let them ever shout for joy**<sup>1</sup>...let them also that love Thy name be joyful in Thee.”

Perhaps we should pause to really think about this. *Does God expect us to have any less joy in the Lord today?* Surely God would have us experience, express, and demonstrate the same kind of joy as we bask in His amazing grace.

### God Would Have Us Experience and Express Our Joy

To be joyful, enthusiastic, and exuberantly glad was to be a normal and frequent response for Israel. David told Israel: “Let them shout for joy, and be glad...let them say continually, let the LORD be magnified” (Psa. 35:27). David also implies in Psalm 32:11 that when their hearts were spiritually healthy, they would “be glad in the LORD and rejoice, ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.”

*Are we too subdued in our walk with the Lord? Should we purpose to demonstrate greater exuberant Christian joy?* Some argue exuberant rejoicing in the Lord was only a cultural thing for Jews of old; however, the Apostle Paul gives us similar instruction.

We learn from Galatians 5:22 that the fruit of the Spirit is love and joy. The concept here is not a subdued inner joy, but a joy that permeates the life, is demonstrated in our countenance, and is expressed in our words. This is exactly why Paul told grace believers: “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 15:13). If we are not FULL of joy, and ABOUNDING in joy, we are not fully abiding in the will of God for our lives.



We had a Christian friend who used to continually say, “This food...or these clothes...are to die for.” Surely she did not mean this literally, but oftentimes we believers allow the things of this world to fully occupy us. Paul’s perspective was, “For the [overall] kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and JOY in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17). Clearly, believers today are to “rejoice

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1. (emphasis that of the author). This is exuberant rejoicing!

in the Lord always” (Phil. 4:4), and to “rejoice [in Him] evermore” (1 Thes. 5:16) instead of allowing ourselves to indulge in excessive joy in worldly things.

When Peter tried to express finding proper joy in the Lord, he exhorted kingdom saints about the Savior by saying: “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable” (1 Pet. 1:8). Surely we too should be living in “joy unspeakable” in Christ.

When our daughters were born we were beyond happy. We made calls, sent out announcements, took many pictures, talked to everyone about them, and absolutely delighted to spend time with them. Quite frankly, we were euphoric over our abundant blessing of each girl when they were born. In trying to explain this to expectant parents, we’ve often said: “We can’t even verbalize to you the joy when your child is born. You just have to experience it.” We believe God wants us to experience this kind of exuberant joy unspeakable in our daily walk and worship of the Lord.

### **God Would Have Us Experience Exuberant Rejoicing Regardless of Our Circumstances**


Throughout the Scriptures we see that believers were able to experience utter joy in the Lord, even when dealing with absolutely heart-rending circumstances. When Hannah kept her vow by giving her son Samuel to Eli, 1 Samuel 2:1 says that she “prayed, and said: My heart rejoiceth in the LORD...my mouth is enlarged...because I rejoice in Thy salvation. There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none besides Thee: neither is there any rock like our God.” It may be hard to wrap our heads around giving up our child in any circumstance, but she was able to do so with great joy in the Lord.

No matter what happens, believers are to respond with rejoicing. The Apostle Paul wrote back to the believers at Thessalonica saying, “And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: so that ye became ensamples to all that believe...” (1 Thes. 1:6-7). Even in the face of intense persecution they chose to respond in spiritual joy. How thankful we should be that the Lord has recorded this kind of example for us to follow. Since they could rejoice in these severely difficult circumstances, we can rejoice in any circumstance we find ourselves in too.

We have other examples to further encourage us to live every day in exuberant rejoicing. When the Apostle Paul was facing imminent martyrdom, he continued to greatly rejoice. He told the believers at Philippi, “Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith [through martyrdom], I joy, and rejoice with you all” (Phil. 2:17). Kingdom saints were also expected to respond to great suffering with “exceeding joy.” Peter told them: “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you...but rejoice, inasmuch

as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pet. 4:12-13). Regardless of our circumstances, we are to have an exuberant rejoicing in the Lord that sustains us.

David urged the saints to exceedingly rejoice (Psa. 68:3), and to do so with a joyful noise, gladness, and singing (Psa. 100:1-2), even shouting (Psa. 5:11). The Apostle Paul tells us that when the Holy Spirit produces His fruit of joy within us, He fills us with a joy and peace that abounds in such a way that everyone can see it (Rom. 14:17). Ours is to be a "joy unspeakable" (1 Pet. 1:8) in the sense that we can't adequately find words to express our gladness, but our consistent joy is to be one that triumphs over all circumstances.

May we allow God to lift our heart to the standard given us in the Word of God: "But **let the righteous be glad**; let them rejoice before God: yea, **let them EXCEEDINGLY REJOICE**. Sing unto God... extol Him..." (Psa. 68:3-4). If you realize that your joy is lacking, we urge you to do several things. Make having a greater joy a matter of prayer, purpose to put God's praises on your lips in song and conversational words, and regularly go to God's Word so that the Holy Spirit can refresh your inner spirit with exuberant rejoicing. 



**"Christ died for our sins... and...rose again...and...He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once..." (1 Cor. 15:3-6).**

This mass-sighting of our risen Savior reminds me of a story I heard recently regarding the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln.

There were over 500 people in Ford's Theater the night in which the president was slain, and one of them later talked about what he saw that day *on television*. Samuel J. Seymour was 5 years old that night in 1865, and in 1956 he appeared on the television game show "What's My Line?" That means he testified to what he witnessed that fateful night *for 91 years*.

And that means that some of the 500 witnesses who saw the risen Christ told *their* story to the members of their generation for the better part of the next *century*. Imagine the impact they had in the lives of countless others during those many years.

Now how 'bout you? Do *you* testify to the Lord's resurrection? The testimony of those 500 brethren now lies silent in the grave. If you don't witness that "Jesus our Lord...was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:24,25), then the story of His saving grace will go unheard among the members of *your* generation. Imagine how many people you can reach in your life *if you just start now*.

—Pastor Kurth

# EASY BELIEVISM?

TRACY LESAN

Guest Writer

## FAITH Alone

### The Stumbling Stone

All who associate themselves with Christianity unanimously affirm that faith is crucial in our relationship with God. In any gathering of worshipers, exhortations to “believe in God” and “trust Jesus” are always welcome. Everybody even affirms without reservation that “salvation is by faith.” As long as we limit our vocabulary to such general phrases, we can keep everyone happy. We can all sing together and pray together and fight moral evils together and attend ecumenical conferences together and sign broad doctrinal statements together and pretend that everything’s great together. But just try appending to the phrase, “salvation is by faith,” the little word, “alone,” and you’ll immediately see sparks begin to fly!

Many are repulsed by the Bible’s teaching on salvation by faith alone because they consider it to be too simple. They often tell us that we’re promoting “easy-believism,” and this is supposed to be bad. In order to properly

respond to such a charge, we need to take a closer look at the word *faith* and what it means to *believe* the gospel.

### Seeing Is Not Believing

Whether we realize it or not, we all live by faith every day. We’re convinced that when we turn the ignition switch of our car, the motor will start. We’ll take an umbrella to work even on a sunny morning if our local weather forecaster predicts rain. Classical atheists who claim to have no faith stake their lives on the entirely improvable and ostensibly absurd theory that our breathtakingly vast, complex, and orderly universe is simply the unplanned offspring of the ongoing affair between time and chance. Their explanation: “In the beginning Nothing exploded, and over billions of years Everything happened.” And they call that “science”?!

As for me, I used to believe that in the early morning hours of December 25th a fat man with a long white beard and red suit

would land a sleigh pulled by flying reindeer onto our roof and slide down the chimney to leave presents in stockings for me to open the next morning. To this day I can still click on a video file in my brain and watch my untamed 6-year-old fingers eagerly pecking out a wish-list to send to this generous fellow at the North Pole. Though I'd never seen him, I sincerely believed in him and anxiously anticipated the new treasures that he would bring.

All the dictionaries that I've checked, including some for the Greek New Testament, uniformly explain that to *believe* something means to be persuaded that it's real or true, to be confident about it, to trust in it. Hebrews 11:1 provides this clear description: *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* This verse in its context reveals that Christian faith is the inner assurance and conviction that God is trustworthy and that He always fulfills His promises. It also tells us that faith doesn't depend upon sight. We don't have to see God or catch a glimpse of the blessings that await us in heaven before we accept them as true.

Paul affirms the invisible nature of faith with these encouraging words to the Corinthians:

**“We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;**

**“Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.**

**“For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.**

**“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.**

**“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;**

**“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Cor. 4:13-18).**

During our earthly journey we have to continually step out of the realm of what is *seen*, out of the limited perceptions of reality which our natural five senses provide, and walk in the realm of the *unseen* through the supernatural sense of faith. God wants us to focus our attention on the invisible yet glorious future which awaits us when He'll *raise up us also by Jesus* to be with Him forever. Even when our physical sensors detect nothing but a dark tunnel of trouble and decay, our spiritual sensor of faith enables us to keep moving toward heaven's light at the end. Maintaining an eager expectation of being with our Lord will help keep us from *fainting* or losing heart and give our *inward man* the strength to persevere. Hence, Paul's conclusion a few verses later: *for we walk by faith, not by sight* (2 Cor. 5:7).

### **The Difficulty of the Gospel**

Now I'll be the first to admit that believing something isn't

always easy. It was quite a challenge for me during my first year in Slovakia when I first heard that it's bad to be *holý* (at least in public) and good to be *smelý*. I had to trust the Slovak dictionary that this was true even though those same-sounding words in my native language had totally different connotations!<sup>1</sup> This aspect of difficulty in believing exists with the gospel, as well, and to an almost infinitely greater degree.

For one thing, we can't experience or in any way confirm the things which we must accept as true. We can't smell Christ's blood and sweat like Simon does when he picks up the burden of Christ's cross on the way to Golgotha. We can't hear the nails brutally pounding into Jesus' flesh or His agonizing cry—*Eli, Eli, Lama sabachthani?*—as do the weeping women of Jerusalem.



We can't run with Peter and John to behold with wonder the empty tomb. We can't stretch out our hand with Thomas to put our finger into the Lord's wounded side. We can't taste the fish which His nail-scarred hands prepared for

that seaside breakfast with the eleven. Our sensory perceptions which so powerfully influence us, and upon which we rely so much every day, are useless to us in making this most important decision of our lifetime. But we still must believe. Remember: *faith... is the evidence of things not seen.*

Perhaps even harder yet is the seeming craziness of it all, which Paul unabashedly points out:

**“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.**

**“...hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?**

**“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.**

**“For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:**

**“But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;**

**“But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.**

**“Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Cor. 1:18-25).**

Paul's evangelistic outreaches doubtless weren't featured on the front page of the *Corinthian Weekly*. His letters didn't make the *Roman Times* best-seller list. His years of faithful ministry didn't get him inducted into

1. In the Slovak language, the word *holý* means bare or naked, while *smelý* means brave.

Athens University's Hall of Fame or gain him the Ephesian Temple Prize for Progress in Religion. On the contrary, in almost every city he was screamed at, mocked, beaten, imprisoned, and sometimes even stoned. The shadow of death was his constant travel companion. Why? The problem was not the people's lack of religious devotion, for religion was a dominant force among both Jews and Gentiles. The problem wasn't even Paul's personality, though a few did question his sanity. The root problem was that they despised his message, *the preaching of the cross*. To the Jews it was an offensive *stumbling block*, to the Gentiles, pure *foolishness*, and to all who considered themselves strong, an abhorrent *weakness*.



**"No matter which microscope we put the gospel under, no matter how we peel it, squeeze it, slice it, or dice it...no trace of works can be found."**

I don't think that the situation is much different in our world today where religion still holds sway to a large degree over human hearts. If we told people that they could work their way to heaven by repeating the same prayer every day or by joining a commune or by embarking on a spiritual pilgrimage or by enduring a long fast or by crawling on hands and knees toward a holy

statue or by lashing their bodies with a chain or by giving us money in exchange for our prayers, I'm convinced that many would willingly obey. Entire libraries could be filled with the stories of unfortunate souls who've undertaken such things in the past, and multitudes around the globe are still engaging in them at this very hour with all the sincerity and devotion that they can muster.

But we don't tell people to do such worthless and repugnant things. Instead, using the Bible, we strive to persuade them that they're spiritually dead in wickedness and at enmity with the Almighty and Holy Creator of the universe, that they're headed for a place of everlasting torment from which they can do nothing to save themselves, that 2000 years ago a Jewish Man who was also divine died on a wooden beam for their wickedness and came back to life three days later, and that they must trust in Him alone in order to be forgiven and live with the Almighty forever. I know that this doesn't make for an eloquent or flattering sermon. It doesn't tickle any ears. It doesn't draw large crowds. It doesn't lead the majority to like us or treat us with courtesy, fairness, and respect. If you're looking for these measures of success, you should avoid Paul's *preaching of the cross* like the plague. By human standards it's simply too offensive, too weak, too foolish. But if you long to be an *approved workman* of God (2 Tim. 2:15) and lead people to the only truth which can save them for all eternity, you won't dare to preach anything else.

## The Error of “Hard Believism”

Paul’s gospel demands that we reject our deluded perception of our own strength, wisdom, and goodness and depend entirely upon Christ for deliverance. That’s far from easy. In fact, it would be impossible for us in our blinded condition if God didn’t open the eyes of our heart: *“the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them”* (2 Cor. 4:4). Unfortunately, those who accuse us of preaching “easy-believism” have something else in mind when they say that it’s “hard” to become a Christian. What they shun as too “easy” is not our explanation of the tough truths of the gospel but the fact that we insist upon faith alone, without works, as the means of accepting it.

Most who reject our view declare quite openly that salvation is not by faith alone. They argue that faith in Christ and His work, though necessary, is not sufficient. We, too, must do good works (the number and kind of which vary depending on who makes the rules) and faithfully cooperate with God until the end in order to attain eternal life. The ability to do these necessary works, they explain, comes as a gift of God’s grace. Thus, God gives people “grace” so that they can obey Him and, ultimately, be saved.

Even some of our dear brothers in Christ mess it up. They start well by boldly affirming just like we that justification is “by faith alone.” Unfortunately, they then take great care to “clarify” what this faith must look like. They say that the faith by which we’re justified must be “active” or “fruitful” or “obedient” or “committed” or “sacrificial” or “loving” or “persevering” or even “working.”<sup>2</sup> Supposedly, only this right “kind” of faith is acceptable to God. What that really means, of course, when you boil off the jargon, is that we must stay active, bear fruit, obey, commit, sacrifice, love, persevere, and work hard our whole lives—as well as believe in Christ—in order to be justified. This is as far from “by faith alone” as those who flat out assert that it’s not by faith alone. Though the words are different, the result is still the same: works are necessary at some time and in some way along with faith for gaining everlasting life.



To help us see how wrong these various perspectives are,

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2. I was shocked years ago to see the words “Faith Works” used as the title of a book by a popular evangelical protestant pastor who argues that only a “working” faith – a faith that includes and produces good works – truly saves.

let's read once again several of Paul's voluminous comments on the subject:

**"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight..."**

**"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;**

**"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe" (Rom. 3:20-22).**

**"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:28).**

**"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.**

**"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:4-5).**

**"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4).**

**"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16).**

**"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21).**

**"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it**

**is evident: for, The just shall live by faith" (Gal. 3:11).<sup>3</sup>**

**"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).**

**"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,**

**"And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. 3:8-9).**

**"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;**

**"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace" (2 Tim. 1:8-9).**

**"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus 3:4-5).**

No matter which microscope we put the gospel under, no matter how we peel it, squeeze it, slice it, or dice it, and no matter how craftily some brilliant theologian may try to explain it, no trace of works can be found. We simply

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3. The word order which Paul used in his quotation from Habakkuk in Galatians 3:11 and Romans 1:17 is as follows: *the just by faith shall live*. He doesn't mean by this that righteous people (i.e. Christians) should continually trust in God throughout their earthly lives (though he does teach that elsewhere, as in 2 Cor. 5:7; Col. 2:6-7). Rather, Paul is proving his assertion that unsaved people who receive God's righteousness by faith without works will live eternally in heaven.

can't define *not by works* in a way that requires works. Nor can we define *faith* so as to include works. Faith is not a work. Working is not believing. The two are entirely distinct, and only one is necessary for receiving eternal life. Paul does not tolerate any alternate explanation.

### **The Simplicity of Salvation**

So, is it hard to become a Christian? Is it hard to believe? It depends on how you look at it. It's hard in the sense that we have to believe truths which may seem foolish and offensive. But it's easy in the sense that we only have to believe. Doing good deeds, as important as it is in living for Christ once we're saved (which we'll look at in a later chapter), is not necessary to receive or keep or prove salvation, itself. The issue in the gospel is not the right kind of faith but the right object

of faith: "*Jesus Christ and him crucified*" (1 Cor. 2:2).

Justifying faith, then, is not the activity of our hands but the assent of our hearts: "*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*" (Rom. 10:10). It's the inner conviction that what God says in His Word is true: we're dead in sin and can't do anything to save ourselves, but His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, died for our sins, was buried, and rose from the dead on our behalf. We don't have to pay for God's gift because Jesus paid it all. All that we must do is humbly confess: "Nothing in my hand I bring, only to Thy cross I cling." According to Paul, the moment that we do that, we're forever saved. If it's a crime to promote this kind of "easy-believism," then I gladly plead guilty. 

(An excerpt from a book the guest author is preparing for publication.)

# **SPOTLIGHT** on Grace Churches

## **LIBERTY BIBLE CHURCH**

**Pastor Greg Willis**

*Meets Sunday mornings from 10 am until noon at*

**THE COLDWATER INN**  
712 Highway 72  
Tuscumbia, Alabama 35674

**Contact: (256) 714-2881 or**  
**libertybiblechurchtuscumbia@gmail.com**

**After his Baptist church gave him the left foot of fellowship, Pastor Greg Willis established this NEW grace church! They will be hosting a conference with Pastor Kevin Sadler next July.**





# BBS Letter Excerpts

## From our Inbox:

"I am 73 years old and have been attending churches from Maine to Georgia and have never heard what you wrote in your *Two Minutes* piece ["What's the Word?"]. It is sad that the Gospel rightly divided is ignored."

## From Nova Scotia:

"Eleven years ago...a rightly dividing Christian man...blew me away because...I couldn't figure out why James...teaches faith without works is dead, whereas in Paul's writings it's the opposite. WELL GUESS WHAT?!? After having the best Christian conversation in my life (since being saved) this incredible man (who was a coal miner most of his life) handed me THINGS THAT DIFFER and said this will answer most of your questions...Stunning piece of work!"

## From our Inbox:

"Thank you so much for this *Two Minutes*. Truly today I need His strength."

## From Indiana:

"At first I had difficulty with rightly dividing. I searched Google thinking it was a cult, LOL. Praise God it was eye-opening to me, as being a Christian over 40 years. It was like I was a newborn babe, saved all over again." (We get that a lot! -Ed.).

## From our Inbox:

"This *Two Minutes* message just received...was an answer to prayer."

## From our Inbox:

"Thank you, *Berean Bible Society*, for today's *Two Minutes* Bible reading [Are You Sure, by C. R. Stam]. I just added it to my Facebook wall." (Thanks for helping us get the message out. -Ed.).

## From South Africa:

"Recently, I came across *Berean Bible Society*, and since then I have been rereading my Bible like never before. Ricky, I have downloaded dispensational charts, and for over two weeks now, day and night, I have read my Scofield Bible dispensationally and what a flood of light and illumination! I have listened to most of your topical preachings, and I'm just overwhelmed...Why didn't anyone tell me about dispensational teaching all these years?...There's a fire and pathos, zest and zeal burning in my heart like never before."

## From Oregon:

"I attended BBI for a short while back in 2002-2003...I think of my time spent there frequently....The *Two Minutes* I receive from you are a great blessing to me. Like fruit straight from God, I devour these articles. One way to try to bring glory to God is that I share many of these messages on Facebook. I want to do my part to help in the good fight!"

## From Ohio:

"Caught you on TV. Loved it! Please subscribe me to the *Berean Searchlight*."

### **From Wisconsin:**

"I was given a copy of your *Berean Searchlight* this week. It amazed me how Scriptural your teachings were! Too often I receive material that, once I compare it to what the Bible says, is purely opinion. I was wondering if you could sign me up for a subscription?"

### **From Georgia:**

"Wow, what revelation you have given me in just a few weeks. I am so grateful for your faithful answers to my questions. Being a pastor, I can only imagine how busy your day must be with your own members as well as spending time with someone like me who is a stranger."

### **From our Inbox:**

"It is apparent that you are solely led by the Written Word, and I am led by the Holy Spirit, not Pentecostals or any man, and moreover I try to keep in step with the Holy Spirit as the inspired Scripture tells me to. Please take me off your mailing list."

### **From Germany:**

"Thank you for sending me regularly the *Berean Searchlight* to Germany! Where I live there is no church or community who rightly divide the Word of truth, therefore I'm really thankful and truly appreciate it!" (Germany is not the only country with that problem. —Ed.).

### **From Florida:**

"I would like to receive your *Berean Searchlight* magazine. I've been able to view your TV program once a week on WCLF, Channel 22-3 CTN for several months. I am hoping it will continue, as there are so few programs of this content."

### **From Pennsylvania:**

"I really enjoy and look forward to each issue of the *Searchlight*. The dispensation of grace and the letters of Paul have revealed to me a new way of looking at salvation and all the many gifts I have received from our Lord....Many thanks for all the inspiration and increases in faith I get when I read the *Searchlight*."

### **From Missouri:**

"I am 'echoing' in, and also sending a small donation....Thank you so much for presenting the gospel rightly divided for so many years. It has truly been a blessing....Kevin Sadler's article 'The Value of the Four Gospels' in the September issue was just outstanding."

### **From Facebook:**

"I love your publication!"

### **From Illinois:**

"I watch your program every Monday on the IonPlus TV station...I like your program very much....You only use God's Word...and teach from the Scripture. Many do not!"

### **From Florida:**

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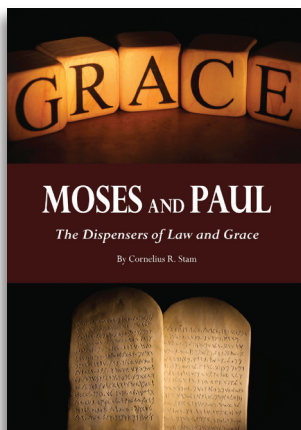
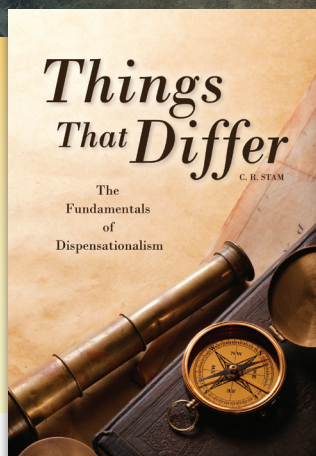
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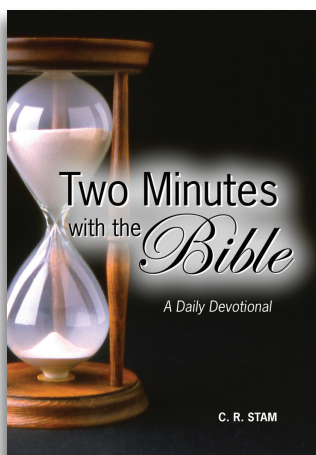
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