

The BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

February 2020



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This month’s cover features the Castle Hill Lighthouse in Newport, Rhode Island.

The **Purpose** of the *Berean Bible Society* is to help you understand and enjoy the Bible. The **Mission** of BBS is to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ by proclaiming the whole counsel of God according to the revelation of the Mystery. Our **Goals** are to evangelize the lost, to educate the saved in “rightly dividing the Word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15), to energize the Christian life, and to encourage the local church.

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A Note From the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

One of the most influential classes from my time at Berean Bible Institute was “Biblical Worldview.” It was a class that taught me to look at people, the world system, world religions, and current events with a biblical mindset. How does God look at people and the world? What is important to Him? What is God’s purpose for our lives? These are the types of questions that were considered from a biblical worldview.

We live in a time when our country is engrossed in politics. Politics has always been a source of hot-button issues but, to say the least, it’s been kicked up a notch in recent times. Satan is the “god of this world,” and will do anything and everything to “[blind] 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). Perhaps we should take a step back to look at the current political climate of chaos and anger, that it is Satan’s way to distract and keep people blind to the gospel by keeping them focused on surface issues and problems rather than looking deeper at the spiritual core issues of sin, unbelief, and the eternal destiny of the soul.

When we look at the big picture of the Apostle Paul’s life and ministry, we see that his focus was on the gospel of the grace of God. When the Lord called Paul on the Damascus Road, He sent him out as His apostle for this purpose: “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me” (Acts 26:18). And Paul told King Agrippa that he “was not disobedient unto [this] heavenly vision” (v. 19).

We are called to follow Paul as he followed Christ (1 Cor. 11:1). We need to be careful not to be distracted from what we are called to be and do as ambassadors for Christ. Having a biblical worldview means to look at people with God’s eyes. God only sees believers or unbelievers, those alive in Christ or those dead in their sins. People need the Lord most of all. Our political leaders need our prayers (1 Tim. 2:1-4). God is in control. We’re living in the year 2020. May we have a clear, 20/20 vision of life, eternal issues, and what is most important to God our Savior.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler, President

2020

BBS CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

2020

MARCH

ARIZONA BIBLE CONFERENCE, March 20-22, Sun City West, AZ
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Pastor Mark Dilley (623) 377-3071

TUPELO BIBLE CONFERENCE, March 20-22, Tupelo, MS
Pastor Ricky Kurth—Contact: Pastor John Smith (662) 706-4086

APRIL

NORTHEAST OHIO BIBLE CONFERENCE, April 24-26, Ashtabula, OH
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Pastor David Adams (440) 992-9008

JUNE

BBF SUMMER CONFERENCE, June 21-25, Tipp City, OH
Pastors Kevin Sadler, Ricky Kurth, John Fredericksen, Jeff Seekins,
Ken Lawson, and others—Contact: *Community Bible Church* (937) 667-2710

JULY

NORTH ALABAMA BIBLE CONFERENCE, July 24-26, Tuscumbia, AL
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Pastor Greg Willis (256) 714-2881

BITELY BIBLE CONFERENCE, July 31-August 3, Bitely, MI
Pastor Ricky Kurth, and others—Contact: Pastor Ken Lyon (231) 689-1941

AUGUST

WEST VIRGINIA BIBLE CONFERENCE, August 14-15, Martinsburg, WV
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Mr. Bart Dobers (240) 587-8458

GRACE BIBLE FELLOWSHIP SPECIAL MEETINGS, August 16, Ridgeley, WV
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Pastor Brent Biller (304) 726-4063

SEPTEMBER

BEST OF GREECE TOUR, September 16-26, Pastor Kevin Sadler/
Pastor John Fredericksen—Contact: David Schaeffer (484) 772-3403

OCTOBER

BBF FALL CONFERENCE, October 3-4, Springfield, IL
To be determined—Contact: Pastor John Fredericksen (407) 952-0510

BBS REGIONAL CONFERENCE, October 16-17, Albany, NY
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Mr. Rich Menconi (518) 424-3293

ENGLAND SPECIAL MEETINGS, October 24-25, Alcester, UK
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Marcus Emerson +44 789 762982

NOVEMBER

PENNSYLVANIA SPECIAL MEETINGS, November 15, Duncansville, PA
Pastor Kevin Sadler—Contact: Pastor James Zaebst (814) 696-4366

The BBS website and the BBS app have more comprehensive information on these conferences and will be kept up-to-date.

The PROMISE of His Coming



PASTOR KEVIN J. **SADLER**
BBS President

“March 11, 1942, on Corregidor, a sixty-two-year-old Army officer, with his family, secretly slipped away from the Philippines and in a minor miracle made their way down to Australia. Before General MacArthur left the islands, he said, ‘I will return.’ Two-and-a-half years later, October 20, 1944, he stood again on the soil of the Philippines and said, ‘This is the voice of freedom. People of the Philippines, I have returned.’

“Now if you think a man can have that kind of credibility, and if you can appreciate that quality in a man, I’ll tell you that Jesus Christ, the God-man, has made the same promise far more credible than any human being will ever be. If you wrestle with the truth of Jesus’ return, wrestle no longer. If you accept the historic fact of His ascension, then you have no room to doubt His historic, yet future, return. It will occur.”¹

The Apostle Peter encourages his Jewish readers not to doubt the promise of Christ’s second

coming (2 Pet. 3:1-9). It is certain. It will occur. Likewise, we know through the Apostle Paul that one day Christ will return to catch up to heaven the Church, the Body of Christ, which is the Rapture.

As we rightly divide the Word of truth, we learn that only the Apostle Paul teaches about Christ’s return for the Body of Christ. This return of Christ in the air (1 Thes. 4:17) takes place prior to the seven-year Tribulation period. Any mention of a coming of Christ *outside* of the letters of Paul is a reference to either the first or second coming of Christ to Israel. Thus, when Peter wrote to dispersed Jewish believers in his second epistle and made mention of the promise of Christ’s coming (2 Pet. 3:4), he was referring to Christ’s second coming after the Tribulation. With this basis of understanding, we’ll take a look at the “one thing” (2 Pet. 3:8) about which Peter reminds Israel concerning Christ’s second coming.

Future Scoffers

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation” (2 Pet. 3:3-4).

By the authority and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Peter cautioned his readers. He wrote, “Knowing this *first*.” What Peter wrote about was something of foremost importance for Israel to know, that, in the future, “there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.”

There are two last days we must differentiate in Scripture: (1) the last days of the age of grace before Christ’s return in the air at the Rapture, which we learn about in Paul’s epistles, and (2) the last days for Israel before Christ’s return to the earth at His second coming, which we learn about in the prophetic Old Testament Scriptures, the Gospel records, and the Hebrew epistles.

In 2 Peter, the “last days” are the days before Christ’s return to the earth at His second coming, the latter days of God’s program with Israel according to prophecy. Peter explained that, during the Tribulation, “scoffers” would come along. A scoffer is one who mocks or ridicules. They are people who poke fun at the faith and are hostile to the revelation of God. It’s been well said that “A scoffer is someone who treats lightly that which ought to be taken seriously.”² And the Word of God should always be taken seriously.

These scoffers will come “walking after their own lusts,” or evil desires. They will have evil desires to deceive for greed and to gain a following. Jude also warns of these people in the Tribulation:

“These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage” (Jude 1:16).

There have always been cynics, scoffers, and mockers of the Word of God. Today, under grace, we find them as well. They come and they go, but the Word stands sure, faithful, and unchanging.



The scoffers of the future which Peter prophesied will have a specific thing in mind that they will ridicule: “saying, Where is the promise of His coming?” That is, “Where is the promise of His second coming to Israel?” Not only does the Word of God predict the second coming of Christ, but it also predicts the appearance of the scoffers who will deny that Word.

As the Lord ascended off the Mount of Olives to heaven (Acts 1:9-12), two angels appeared to the apostles and told them, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same

Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (v. 11). Likewise, Christ Himself promised His apostles that He would come again, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3).

In the last days of God's program with Israel, scoffers will mockingly question Christ's faithfulness to His promise and the fulfillment of God's Word of Jesus Christ returning in glory to the earth. This promise of Christ's coming entails judgment and wrath to be poured out on Christ's enemies (Isa. 63:1-6). Thus, in mocking the promise of His coming, these scoffers mock the judgment of God, believing it will never happen.

Their reasoning will be, "for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." They will ridicule God's Word, saying that "since the fathers fell asleep" (from the time when the promise of Christ's coming was originally made to Israel's fathers, who had put all their hopes on it), all things continue the same as they always have.

Their argument against Christ's second coming is based on three things: 1) the philosophy of naturalism, 2) the denial of supernaturalism, 3) the theory of uniformitarianism.

Naturalism is the belief that nothing exists beyond the natural, physical world. Naturalism excludes the possibility of any supernatural interventions or

spiritual explanations for phenomena, focusing solely on explanations that come from the laws of nature in every case.

Anti-supernaturalism assumes that no supernatural agencies or beings, especially God, have or will ever interrupt the course of human history to make changes, neither large nor small.

Uniformitarianism is the idea that all natural forces and phenomena have operated uniformly since the beginning of the earth, that existing processes in nature have always acted in the same manner and with essentially the same intensity as at present, and that these processes are sufficient to account for all changes that have taken place. In other words, today and forevermore, everything operates the same way it always has.

The future scoffer's beliefs will be that everything in the universe is stable, closed, fixed, and governed by patterns that never vary. Nothing uniquely catastrophic has happened in the past, and nothing uniquely catastrophic will happen in the future. There will be no supernatural intervention of Christ's coming and no judgment on mankind. This, of course, is erroneous and false and against the Word of God. But Peter knew that people will believe this in the future and will scoff at Christ's coming, so Peter made sure to discredit the scoffers well in advance.

The Creation and the Flood

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the

water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (2 Pet. 3:5-7).

Peter points out that these scoffers will purposely disregard information. They will be deliberately ignorant. Peter points out two events that show that God did intervene in the world in the past: the creation and the flood. After the Rapture, there will be scoffers who willfully refuse to believe in creation and the worldwide flood. We find unbelief in these two events under grace as well, and it’s not difficult to see how this will continue after the Rapture of the Church.

Peter pointed out that it will not be a matter of these future scoffers never having heard of God creating all things; it is that they will choose to believe theories that push the thought as far out of their minds as possible.

When God spoke, “by the Word of God,” the heavens came into existence. Psalm 33:9 records, “For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.” And “by the Word of God,” the earth stood out of the water and in the water, referring to the land appearing from, or out of, the water, and God dividing the water from the dry land on the third day of creation (Gen. 1:9-10). The mockers in the future will willfully shut their eyes to the biblical record of creation.

The “whereby” in 2 Peter 3:6 refers to two things in verse 5.

“Whereby,” or by water and by the Word of God, “the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.” The world came into existence by His “Word” and “by water.” Peter then pointed out that God used both means to judge the world and its inhabitants. That is, just as the waters separated from the dry land in the original creation, God reversed that separation in the time of Noah by means of the worldwide flood which covered all the dry land, even the highest hills and mountains (Gen. 7:19; Psa. 104:6).



It’s interesting how often it is the case that those who reject God’s creation of all things also reject the worldwide flood. So it will be in the future. They will be willingly ignorant of it.

Peter expositis that God exists beyond the natural world, that not everything can be explained from the laws of nature, and that everything has *not* remained the same or uniform since the beginning. There was a unique, catastrophic, worldwide event in the past. God did intervene supernaturally in this world, in a big way, by the creation and the flood.

And the purpose of His supernatural intervention at the global flood was to judge and punish the

wickedness of mankind. Peter uses this example to show that God supernaturally intervened and judged the wickedness of mankind in the past and therefore He can and He will do it again.

I believe this is why many reject the worldwide flood in the days of Noah and dismiss it as a fairy tale: if they acknowledge that God judged the world as a result of evil in time past, then they know that God will judge their wicked deeds in the future.

In the past, God's judgment of the world and its inhabitants was by two means: God's Word and water. But in 2 Peter 3:7, Peter teaches that, in the future, God will also judge the world and ungodly people by two means: His Word, but then not by water, but by *fire*. The present "heavens and the earth" and "ungodly men" are reserved and marked for judgment by fire.



The promise of the second coming of Christ and the judgment of the world has been around for centuries, but it still hasn't happened. Peter begins to explain why in verse 8.

God's Faithfulness and Longsuffering

"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day

is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:8-9).

Peter set forth that unbelieving scoffers would be willfully ignorant in Israel's last days. Then he tells his believing readers, "But, beloved, *be not ignorant of this one thing.*" Peter did not want this one thing, this one truth, to escape their notice.

The *one thing* that Peter wanted Israel to remember is "that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." God's relationship to time is different from ours. We see time against time. God sees time against eternity. As it is written in Psalm 90:2,4, "...from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God...For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."

As for God's faithfulness to His promises, it does not matter if He gave His promise yesterday or a thousand years ago. He will remain faithful and will fulfill every promise. The passage of a thousand years should never lead anyone to conclude that God will not fulfill what He has promised. The passing of time does not cause God to forget His promises. A thousand years are as one day to the Lord so, in His sight, there is no delayed fulfillment of His promises. A promise He gave 3000 years ago about the second coming of Christ is only like a few

days old to God. He cannot and will not forget it.

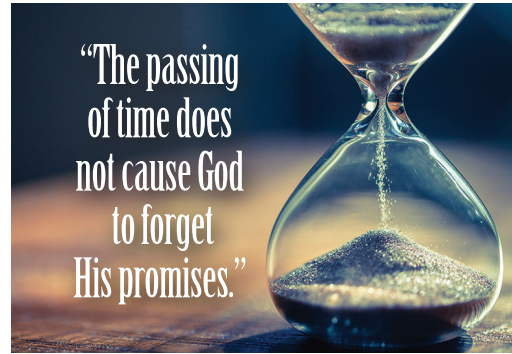
Notice though, that Peter did not say that, to God, “one day IS a thousand years, and a thousand years ARE one day,” but rather, “one day is with the Lord AS a thousand years, and a thousand years AS one day.” Peter was using a simile. What may seem like a long time to people is to the Lord very short.

New Testament professor Edmond Hiebert wrote, “The point is not that time has no meaning for God but rather that His use of time is such that we cannot confine Him to our time schedules. His use of time is extensive, so that He may use a thousand years to do what we might feel should be done in a day, as well as intensive, doing in a day what we might feel could only be done in a thousand years.”³ God often waits to work, but once He begins to work, He gets things done just as He promised in His Word.

The future scoffers will not understand the eternality and faithfulness of God. “Where is the promise of His coming?” they will ask, suggesting that the long delay in Christ’s second coming implies that God doesn’t keep His promises. But God is sovereign. God is eternal. God is faithful. Everything will take place just as He has promised in HIS time.

This “one thing” touches our lives too, because we wait for the coming of Christ at the Rapture. When we realize that a thousand years is as one day to God, we know that God has not forgotten this promise to the Body of Christ either. This dispensation of grace has been going on for nearly 2000

years now. It’s only like a couple of days to God. God is faithful. He is working His plan. Christ will return one day. Thus, we should remember to be “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).



Peter further points out that “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness.” The Greek word for *to be slack* means to delay, to be slow, tardy, or late. Regarding God’s promise of Christ’s second coming, Peter, by the Spirit, assures us that God is not tardy or late or off schedule as some people might consider what is late or tardy. No person has the right to decide when God must act or has the authority to decide when God is late. Mankind might be late or forgetful with promises, but not God. Everything is perfectly on time according to God’s will and His purposes. He is faithful to His promise of Christ’s coming.

God has delayed the second coming of Christ and the day of judgment because of His longsuffering. In His longsuffering, God is not willing that any should perish. He desires that all should come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9b).

The “us-ward” in verse 9 is Israel, the Jews. That is who Peter wrote to in his epistles, dispersed Jews who were “strangers scattered throughout” the nations (1 Pet. 1:1). The Apostle Paul wrote, “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved” (Rom. 10:1). This is God’s heart and desire as well. God desires Israel, the Jews, to be saved. God is longsuffering toward Israel, not willing that any of them should perish, and that all should come to repentance.

This letter of 2 Peter applied to Peter’s readers in his day. It also will apply to the dispersed Jews among the nations after the Rapture of the Church, as God will continue to be longsuffering to Israel in the Tribulation. This is substantiated by the great number of souls that will be saved during this period according to Revelation 7, which describes “a great multitude, which no man could number” (Rev. 7:9) from the Tribulation, who are before the throne of God in heaven.

The Wisdom Given to Paul

“And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles...” (2 Pet. 3:15-16a).

Peter gives an additional reason why the promise of Christ’s second coming to Israel had not occurred: the longsuffering of the Lord toward *the Gentiles*. At the stoning of Stephen, God temporarily set Israel aside in unbelief and suspended His program with her. He

then raised up the Apostle Paul and called him to be the apostle of the Gentiles. Christ revealed to Paul the dispensation of the grace of God.

In this dispensation, the Lord is revealing His longsuffering toward all. He has turned to the world, to both Jew and Gentile, with the gospel of the grace of God, giving all an opportunity to be saved. Today, God the Father and God the Son are offering grace and peace to all. The continued delay in Christ’s second coming to Israel is due to the dispensation of grace, “Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men” (Eph. 3:5), a dispensation in which God is showing longsuffering to all and saving people entirely by His grace.

“The longsuffering of our Lord is salvation” is how Peter puts it. The longsuffering of our Lord is salvation, that is, for the Gentiles. This dispensation is all about the longsuffering of our Lord and the salvation that is available to all nations by faith alone in Christ.

Paul’s salvation is the pattern for all in this dispensation of grace. As Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:16, “that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all *longsuffering*, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.” Paul was the chief of sinners (v. 15). His salvation was by the longsuffering of Christ. All who are saved in this dispensation follow Paul’s pattern—we are saved by the longsuffering and grace of God, just believing on Christ to life everlasting.

Peter tells his readers that this longsuffering and salvation is

“as our beloved brother Paul also according to the *wisdom* given unto him.” That “wisdom” is the revelation of the mystery “given unto him” directly by the risen, glorified Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:2-4). This wisdom is found “in all his epistles.” Paul stated, “But we speak the *wisdom* of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory” (1 Cor. 2:7).




“The revelation of the mystery” (Rom. 16:25) is the truth for this current dispensation of grace. This truth reveals how we become members of the Church, the Body of Christ (Eph. 2:8-9), how we have a heavenly hope, how we are to live under grace, and how this dispensation will close with the Rapture.

Peter wanted his Jewish readers to read Paul’s writings so that they might have a more full understanding as to why the promises to Israel were temporarily being left unfulfilled. If they read Paul’s epistles, they would see and learn about the wonderful work that God was doing among the Gentiles according to His eternal purposes.

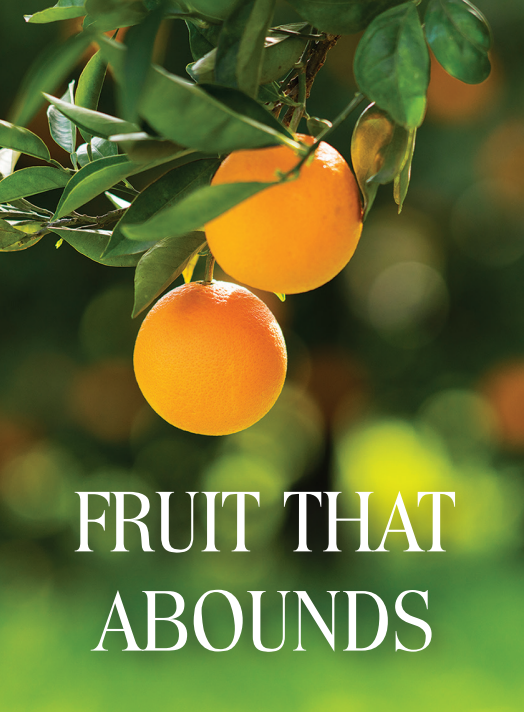
Today, God is fulfilling His plans and program with the Gentiles. It is this current dispensation of grace, the long suffering of

God saving souls during it, and the Body of Christ that are now delaying the promised second coming of Christ to Israel. The Lord is not slack concerning that promise however. He will fulfill it. Christ will come again to Israel and judge her enemies. But now that awaits the close of the dispensation of grace, and we do not know when it will end.

Once “the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” (Rom. 11:25) and the Rapture takes place, then God will turn again to His plan for His chosen nation Israel. And He will pick up where He left off on her prophetic timetable. The next thing on that timetable is the time of Jacob’s Trouble, the seven-year Tribulation. At the close of that Tribulation, the promise of Christ’s coming will take place, and the Lord will return to the earth to establish His kingdom.

It’s encouraging to know that God is faithful to His promises and that a thousand years is with the Lord as one day. This “one thing” can transform our lives. God’s faithfulness to us and to His Word challenges us to “walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10). 

1. Charles R. Swindoll (ed.), *Tale of the Tardy Oxcart* (Nashville, Tennessee: W Publishing Group, 1998), p. 508.
2. Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary, New Testament, Volume 2* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor, 2001), p. 463.
3. D. Edmond Hiebert, *Second Peter and Jude: An Expository Commentary* (Greenville, South Carolina: Unusual Publications, 1989), p. 153.



FRUIT THAT ABOUNDS

“Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account” (Phil. 4:17).

How the Apostle Paul rejoiced on behalf of the Church at Philippi in their labors of love! This faithful church in their love for Paul and the message of Grace more than once had come to the Apostle’s aid. They participated in his sufferings and necessities in sending him financial relief. At Macedonia, their giving advanced the work of the Lord in the furtherance of the Gospel of the Grace of God (v. 15). At Thessalonica, their sending of a timely offering enabled Paul to flee Thessalonica and seek refuge at Berea (v. 16 cf. Acts 17:1-10).

This is what prompted Paul to say, “Not because I desire a gift.” Paul was not greedy or seeking personal gain, but he desired fruit that might abound to their account. The word *fruit* is used in the Scriptures to denote results or that which is produced. To quote one author by way of example, “We speak of ‘Punishment as the fruit of sin,’ ‘Poverty as the fruit of idleness,’ and ‘Happiness as the fruit of a virtuous life.’” Here we see sin produces punishment; idleness produces poverty; and a virtuous life produces happiness, so in the case of the Philippian believers, faithfulness produces reward.

The Apostle Paul rejoiced for them in their acts of kindness and faithfulness in service for Christ. The Apostle desired that their acts of kindness in providing for his needs might be put to their account, that at the Judgment Seat of Christ, they might be richly rewarded and reap the benefits of their fruitfulness. Would the great Apostle be able to commend our Grace Churches of the present as he did the Church at Philippi? Are we standing in the defense and confirmation of the Gospel as they did?

—Pastor Paul M. Sadler



Transformed By Grace Response:

“Pastor Kevin Sadler’s video messages are of the highest caliber and quality because Christ is the center where only He belongs. We would love to have the *Searchlight* mailed to us if possible.”

Transformed By Grace is a weekly television program produced by the Berean Bible Society. Check the station list to see where you can watch in your area at www.bereanbiblesociety.org.



Arizona Bible Conference

March 20-22, 2020

Speaker: Pastor Kevin Sadler, BBS President

Location: *West Valley Grace Fellowship*
14465 R H Johnson Boulevard
Sun City West, Arizona

For questions or additional information, please contact:
Pastor Mark Dilley at jjdster@gmail.com, 623-377-3071 or
Jim Humphrey at jhumph783@gmail.com, 623-466-7636



Mississippi Bible Conference

March 20-22, 2020

Speakers: Pastor Ricky Kurth, *Berean Bible Society*
Pastor John Smith, *Grace Bible Ministry Church*

Location: *Holiday Inn Express*
1612 McClure Cove
Tupelo, Mississippi

For directions and additional information, please contact:
Pastor John Smith at gracebibleministry@att.net or 662-706-4086

What is a Dispensation?

(An excerpt from Dr. Bedore's book
Unlocking the Scriptures.)

DR. W. EDWARD BEDORE
Guest Writer

THE DEFINITION

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you ward” (Eph. 3:1-2).

The word that is translated dispensation in the King James Version has the meaning of “stewardship” or “administration.” A steward is one who manages or oversees the affairs of another. Dispensation means to deal out or dispense, to distribute or administrate.

A dispensation then is the dispensing, or administering, of a particular program within God’s overall program and dealings with mankind. It is God’s management program by which man is tested and through which access to God’s mercy is offered.

MORE THAN ONE DISPENSATION

God does not change because His character and essence are eternal. The principles or precepts by which He acts in relation to mankind are as unchangeable as He is. As He is righteous, holy, just, merciful, gracious, and loving, He always deals with man in love, grace, mercy, justice, holiness, and righteousness. This is the very essence of the attributes (character) of God. He cannot act otherwise.

However, even a casual reading through the Bible will reveal that God has not always dealt with man in the same specific way. As an example, Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden were given one requirement of obedience. They were not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Man fell into sin when they disobeyed and ate of the forbidden tree. No longer innocent, Adam and Eve were banned from the Garden as God changed dispensations (see Genesis chapter 3). Some 2500 years later, God gave His written Law to the nation of Israel through Moses. This was a new dispensation, and it was “dispensed” to Moses to give, or dispense, to the people. A new administration had taken effect. Man’s responsibility to God was intensified through the Law, for the Law makes sin “exceedingly sinful” (see Rom. 7:7-13).

These two examples are given to illustrate that, while God does not change, the particulars of His dealings with man have changed at different times throughout the history of mankind. However, a dispensation should not be thought of as a period of time, but what God is doing during a certain period of time. Each dispensation has to do with God's unfolding plan of the redemption of fallen man. Each dispensation has a specific purpose and is vitally important to God's overall plan.

Adam and Eve's stay in the Garden of Eden was evidently very short. They were the foremost example of physical human perfection as they were directly created by God. They were told to multiply and fill the earth with people, but they were put out of the Garden before they produced any children (Gen. 2:1-4:1). Their expulsion from the Garden of Eden was the ushering in of the first dispensation, which we might call the Dispensation of the Patriarchs.

This dispensation extended from Adam to Moses and the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt and the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai. It covered close to 2500 years. The following Dispensation of Law was in force for about 1500 years.

The present Dispensation of Grace has now been in effect for almost 2000 years. This reveals God as long-suffering as He extends His offer of salvation to any and all who will simply trust His Son, Jesus Christ, as their Savior. Adam, by his disobedience, brought the curse of sin to the entire human race (Rom. 5:12). But through Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, forgiveness of sins and eternal life are possible because "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). No greater demonstration of love has ever, or will ever, take place.

HOW MANY DISPENSATIONS?

There are four primary dispensations found in the Bible. These dispensations, or programs of God, cover the entire span of human history: past, present, and future.

It should be noted at this point that some see more than four dispensations between eternity past and eternity future. It is common practice to place Innocence, Conscience, Human Government, and Promise among the dispensations. However, while these play an important role in God's overall program of redemption and were "dispensed" by God, they were not in the true sense dispensations...(Note that the authority of Human Government continues throughout the Dispensations of Law, Grace, and Righteousness. In like manner, the Promise given to Abraham has not yet been fulfilled and so continues in effect during the different dispensations.)

Each of these primary dispensations has a definite beginning and ending. However, there is an overlapping of some of them as one dispensation is phased out and the next one begins. These overlaps can be called transition periods.

Each dispensation can be viewed as a volume of revelation in which God is revealing part of His overall program of redemption. The Bible is progressive in the way it reveals the eternal plan and purpose of God. To fully understand the purpose of a particular dispensation, we first must understand the purpose and plan of the previous dispensation.

The following chart gives the basics of God's dispensational program:

E T E R N I T Y P A S T	<i>Dispensation of THE PATRIARCHS</i> <i>(Rom. 5:14)</i> Death Reigned	<i>Dispensation of THE LAW</i> <i>(Rom. 5:20a)</i> Sin Reigned	<i>Dispensation of GRACE</i> <i>(Rom. 5:20b)</i> Grace Reigns	<i>Dispensation of THE KINGDOM</i> <i>(Isa. 11:1-5)</i> Righteousness Reigns	E T E R N I T Y F U T U R E
	Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc.	Israel—(God's Chosen People) Nation of 12 Tribes	Jews and Gentiles Placed Into One Body (Body of Christ)	Israel—the Head Nation with the World under Christ's Righteous Rule	
	Patriarchal Priesthood An Altar No Temple The Promise of a Redeemer	Aaronic Priesthood Tabernacle-Temple Written Law Ark of the Covenant Prophets of the Kingdom	Christ the Only Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5) A Mystery or Secret Program Not Revealed Beforehand Ambassadors of Christ	Christ the King Israel—A National Priesthood A Temple The Subject of Prophecy	

2 TIMOTHY 2:15

We are admonished by the Apostle Paul to “*rightly divide the Word of Truth*” as we diligently study the Bible. The Greek word that is translated “rightly dividing” (*orthotomeo*) has a literal meaning of “to cut straight.” In other words, we must correctly separate the divisions, or dispensations, found in the Scriptures for proper Bible study in order to be found to be “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.”

This does not mean that we are to discount or ignore any part of the Bible or its importance, but we are to understand it in light of who it was addressed to, what the subject was, why it was said, when it was given, where it was given from, and how it was delivered.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT

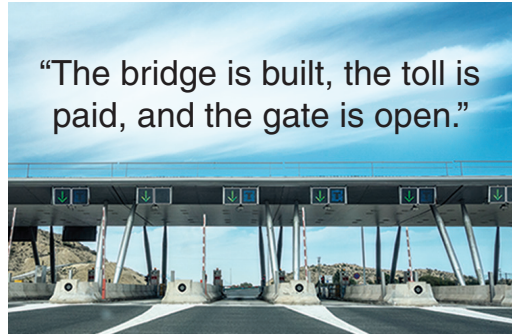
The context of a passage of Scripture are those parts that go before and after it and serve to clarify its meaning. These passages help us to better understand the subject matter that is being dealt with in a particular passage. Many times the meaning is established or “fixed” by the context. Paying close attention to the context will never cause confusion in understanding Scripture, but disregard for the context and the dispensational nature of the Bible many times hinders proper understanding of what God is trying to say to us. The immediate context that any word, verse, or passage of Scripture is found in is very important to understanding its meaning.

PURPOSE

As an illustration, each dispensation may be viewed as a separate act of a four-part drama that has a different cast for each act. The cast of each act does not know the cast of the next act or the script. Some cast members believe the following act will be the last, and so assume that the next act must bring the end with a dramatic climax. Others assume that the act that they are in must surely be the last, and so try to change the script themselves to bring about the end as they think it should be.

And so it has been, as God has directed the drama of redemption throughout human history, that only a small portion of the script has been given at a time. However, for the most part, the actors refused to follow it. Israel longed to go back to Egypt rather than follow God through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Later, in the Promised Land, they demanded a king.

Under the kings they fell into idolatry. During these periods, they broke God's covenant over and over. Then, after over 500 years of foreign domination without their own king, in preparation for the next act, the Messiah came. Because He did not fit their assumptions and self-conceived expectations, they rejected Him. They put Him off the stage in a vain attempt to remain center stage as the "would be stars" of the play. There was simply more to the play than they ever imagined or would believe. Of course, the director forced them off the stage so that the next act could be played out.



MISCUES

Israel missed their cues simply because they did not completely trust and obey the Living God. As a result, they brought calamity upon themselves. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:11). Let us take heed to this warning lest we not give adequate attention to the script and so miscue as Israel did.

THE COMPLETE SCRIPT

Today we have the entire or completed Word of God. God is not giving new revelation to man today. We find all that we need to know in what God has given us in His Word. His plan and purpose for all ages is revealed in the Bible. We have a decided advantage over those of previous dispensations as we have the entire script in our hands.

However, if we do not "rightly divide the Word of Truth," we will confuse the dispensations and will not properly understand our part

in God's program for today, the Dispensation of Grace. While the idea of a play with a director, a script, and actors may help to illustrate the concept of dispensations for our understanding, we must always remember that what we are actually involved in is not make-believe but very real. The salvation and spiritual well-being of the souls of men and women are at stake.

RESPONSIBILITY

In every dispensation man has been given a responsibility for which he will be held accountable. Man has been put to the test, not to prove to God whether or not man could please Him—but to prove to man that, because of his sin, he could in no way please God. As God has worked out His great plan of redemption, He has also gone to great lengths to help man understand his desperate need for redemption. While there have been those in each dispensation that have put their faith in God and believed what He revealed to them, for the most part mankind has refused to acknowledge their sin or their accountability to God, their Creator.

HOW ABOUT TODAY?


The Dispensation of the Law is past, *"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: for there is no difference; For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God"* (Rom. 3:21-25). The invitation to the lost sinner is to, by faith, trust in Jesus Christ as Savior from the power and penalty of sin. Jesus Christ is the only avenue by which men or women can come to God. There is simply no other way.

CONCLUSION

Every believer should be diligent in their study of God's Word to distinguish between that portion of Scripture that relates to the Dispensation of Grace from the Scriptures written specifically for other dispensations. But we also must remember that while the particulars of God's dealings with man have changed, God Himself does not change, and the principles applied to all dispensations are based upon His attributes of righteousness, holiness, justice, mercy, grace, and love. We are to live accordingly.

It has been God's purpose in every dispensation to call a people unto Himself. Sin, however, separates man from a righteous and holy God. The chasm caused by sin is far too great for man to bridge over. During previous dispensations, blood sacrifices were offered on a continuing

basis as a temporary covering for sin. But *“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”* (1 Tim. 1:15). The Lord of Glory came as a servant to mankind and did for man what was impossible for man to do for himself. Jesus Christ, by becoming a once for all sacrifice for sin, bridged that great unbridgeable gulf that separated men and women from God. The bridge is built, the toll is paid, and the gate is open. Only unbelief can prevent the lost sinner from crossing over by faith. All that can possibly be done for man’s salvation has been done!!!

In this present Dispensation of Grace there are to be no more blood sacrifices offered for sin, not by clan, tribe, or family heads (patriarchs), nor by the priests of the family of Aaron. Neither are religious rites or rituals of any kind required. Jesus Christ is more than sufficient for salvation and the believer is made “complete in Him” (Col. 2:10). Jesus Christ is enough! 



Not Too Narrow

A high-rise apartment building caught fire one night, and a man living on one of the upper floors was trapped in his bedroom with no way out. Fire was all around him and certain doom appeared to be his fate. However, one courageous firefighter willingly climbed a ladder to rescue him. No one would say the firefighter was wrong or too narrow to have provided only one way for the man to be rescued, because there was no way out beforehand. What’s more, the firefighter put his life on the line to make sure there was at least one way out of the fire.

Comparing this to our spiritual plight, there is no way out from our sins, but *“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”* (1 Tim. 1:15). The Savior gave His life willingly in order to provide us the only way out from the eternal fires of hell. It’s not too narrow to say there is only one way to God. There is only one way that we could be saved from our sins: by Christ’s all-sufficient payment for sin at the Cross and His resurrection. By faith alone, trusting that Christ died for our sins and rose again, we are saved (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Eph. 2:8-9).

—Pastor Kevin Sadler

Who Died and Left You in Charge?

PASTOR RICKY KURTH
Berean Searchlight Editor

Have you ever heard that expression? It's a figure of speech that is often used to challenge someone who appears to be taking over the affairs of a group of people without warrant. It's a question that might have been asked of Peter at Pentecost, after the Lord's disciples gathered together for a meeting and we read:

"In those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said..." (Acts 1:15).

Peter then went on to deliver a keynote address on behalf of the other apostles that continued for the next 24 verses. But in the wake of Peter's recent denial of the Lord in those days (Luke 22:57-60), some of the brethren may have been wondering where Peter got off taking the reins of the "little flock" of the Lord's followers (Luke 12:32) now that He had ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9).

But in Peter's case, *we know* who died and left him in charge. It was the Lord Jesus Christ! Once the Lord knew that His people would kill Him rather than receive Him (Matt. 16:21), He said to Peter,

"...thou art Peter...and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and

whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven..." (Matt. 16:18,19).

Since the word "thee" is singular, the Lord was telling Peter that he would be the apostle in charge of binding things here on earth—things like the confirmation of a new apostle to replace Judas, which was the first order of business after the Lord ascended into heaven (Acts 1:16-26). But later, the Lord told the *other* apostles,

"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven..." (Matt. 18:18).

Since the word "ye" is *plural*, we know that the Lord was *expanding* the authority He had given to Peter, and that now *all* of the apostles were to be involved in binding things on earth, like when they recognized the apostleship of Matthias (Acts 1:24-26) and Paul (Gal. 2:9).

But that being said, I have to add that there is no question that the Lord died and left *Peter* in charge of His flock, and of the kingdom program in general. We know this to be so, for Paul said that "the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, *as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter*" (Gal. 2:7).

God's Man of the Hour

Notice it doesn't say that the gospel of the circumcision was committed *to the 12 apostles*. They all *preached* the gospel of the circumcision, but it was officially *committed* to Peter, as Paul said. This is similar to how there were other apostles who preached the gospel of the *uncircumcision* (1 Cor. 12:28,29), but there is no question that Paul was *the* apostle of the uncircumcision, as he said. But Peter was unquestionably the man whom the Lord chose to take over the direction of the kingdom program after He ascended into heaven.



“...the Lord
had to call
Peter into
the ministry
three times.”

But after they arrested the Lord, did Peter man up and *act* like the leader the Lord had appointed him to be? No, he *denied* Him *three times*. And when that happened, you'd think the Lord would have given Peter his pink slip, dismissing him as the leader of the apostles, and handed him his walking papers. Instead, the Lord called him *back* into His service in a unique way:

“...Jesus saith to Simon Peter...lovest thou Me...lovest thou Me...lovest thou Me? Peter was *grieved* because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me?... Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep” (John 21:15-17).

I believe part of what was grieving Peter here is that he

thought that in asking if he loved the Lord three times that the Lord was rubbing it in that Peter had just *denied* Him three times. But what the Lord was *actually* doing was telling him, “Yeah, I remember that you denied Me three times. But I still want you to be the one in charge of feeding My sheep.” That's why the Lord *also* told him to feed His flock three times (vv. 15,16,17).

It Came As No Surprise

It's important to remember that Peter's denials didn't catch the Lord off guard. We know that He knew in advance that Peter would deny Him, for He not only predicted it (Luke 22:34), He also told him what to do when it happened, saying,

“...Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have *you*, that he may sift *you* as wheat: But I have prayed for *thee*, that *thy* faith fail not: and when *thou* art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:31,32).

Since the word “you” is plural, and the words “thee” and “thy” are singular, the Lord was saying, “Satan wants all 12 of *you*, but I'm going to pray for *thee*, Peter, that *thy* faith fail not.”

And it didn't! I mean, not really. Sure, Peter *denied* the Lord, but a *failure* of faith was more like what Judas did in betraying Him. What Peter did was nothing more than a momentary lapse of faith.

But we know the Lord *knew* that Peter would deny Him, for He went on to tell His apostle what to do after he was “converted” from denying Him. Conversion just means *to change*, and Peter had

to change from being a *denier* of the Lord to being a *witness* for the Lord. And the way the Lord made that happen was by re-commissioning him when He called on him to feed His sheep.

The reason the Lord called on him to feed His sheep *three times* was to remind the apostle of how He had to call Peter three times when he *first* became an apostle, and of how patient the Lord had been with him at that time. If you never noticed that the Lord had to call Peter into the ministry three times, let's consider the different gospel accounts of his call and see if you don't come to the same conclusion.

Easy As One, Two, Three

After John the Baptist declared the Lord to be the Lamb of God (John 1:29), we read that

“One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, *Simon Peter's brother*.

“He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah...

“And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone” (vv. 40-42).

As we read on in this passage, there is no indication that Peter began following the Lord after this initial call. There is, however, evidence that he *didn't*. When the next verse tells us that “the day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee” (v. 43), we pick up the story in Galilee in Matthew's gospel, where we read,

“...Jesus...departed into Galilee; And leaving Nazareth, he

came and dwelt in Capernaum... And Jesus...saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him” (Matt. 4:12-20).

Here in Galilee we see Peter has returned to his fishing business after evidently ignoring the Lord's initial call. So the Lord called Peter again, and this time he responds by following Him.

“...there's no need
to be embarrassed
if you've been
avoiding the
Lord's call.”



But as we turn to Luke's account of Peter's call to the ministry, we see that Peter was *still* not ready to leave his ships and nets behind to wholly follow the Lord. Luke records the Lord's arrival in Capernaum (Luke 4:31), where we just saw Peter receive his second call (Matt. 4:12-20), but Luke doesn't *record* his second call. We know that it took place here, however, for a few verses later we read that the Lord “entered into Simon's house” (v. 38), and it is doubtful that the Lord would have gone strolling into Peter's house if he hadn't yet begun following Him.

The Third Time's the Charm

But we know that Peter went back to fishing and had to be called to follow the Lord a *third* time when we find him washing his nets in the very next chapter (Luke 5:1,2). They hadn't caught any fish that day, so the Lord began His third call by telling Peter to let down his "nets" (v. 4). Peter only lowered *one* "net" however (v. 5), and paid the price for his incomplete obedience when his single net *broke* under the load of fish that *more* nets would have been able to contain (v. 6).

When Peter then pronounced himself "a sinful man" (v. 8), it was partly because he hadn't fully obeyed the Lord's command to lower his nets of course. But it was also because he hadn't fully obeyed the Lord after His initial calls to the ministry. So after the Lord called him *yet again* (Luke 5:10), we read that he and his partners James and John "*forsook all, and followed Him*" (v. 11).


And this is why, when the Lord *recommissioned* Peter, He did so by telling him to feed His sheep *three times*. He was reminding His apostle of how patient He had been with him when he had to call him into the ministry three times in the first place, and how patient He was willing to be with him now, even after he had denied His master. It was his way of telling Peter that all was forgiven, and that He and His main man were starting all over again from scratch. He was assuring him that as far as He was concerned, the slate had been wiped clean, and He was eager for Peter to return to being a fisher of men and a feeder of His sheep.

But what's that tell you about how the Lord feels when *you* let Him down? Do you really think He *disowns* you and no longer wants you in His service? Listen, if the Bible proves anything, it proves that your God is a God of second chances! If you don't believe that, just ask men like Jonah, and David, and John Mark, or Peter. God doesn't care about your past, He cares about your future! So the next time the devil *reminds* you of your past in some way, remind him of his future in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10)!

Time to Answer the Call of Duty

Finally, if the Lord has been calling *you* to the ministry through His Word, what are you waiting for? If even a man as great as Peter had to be called more than once, there's no need to be embarrassed if you've been avoiding the Lord's call.

Even if you've been living in such a way that denied the Lord, He wants you to know that the slate is *always* wiped clean for believers in the dispensation of grace. No matter how you may let the Lord down, Colossians 2:13 still uses the past tense to say, "having forgiven you all trespasses." The words on the page didn't change while you were off doing your own thing, denying the Lord and resisting His call to serve Him.

I'm sure Peter's only regret is that he didn't follow the Lord's call into the ministry *sooner*. If that's your regret as well, don't let it be a regret that you carry with you into eternity. Make the decision to answer the Lord's call and train for the ministry *right now*. You'll be eternally glad you did. 

Question Box

“What did Paul mean when he said he was the chief of sinners?”

“...Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Tim. 1:15).

When we think of sinners, we generally think of those who commit carnal, fleshly sins such as fornication and murder. But the Bible speaks of *another* kind of sin, that of religious pride and hypocritical self-righteousness. You’d think God would hate fleshly sins more, but when the Lord was here, He was kind and patient to sinners of that genre. By contrast, He delivered *blistering* denunciations of the scribes and Pharisees for their religious pride and self-righteousness, and for their persecution of their Messiah.

But it doesn’t really matter which sort of sin is worse in the context of this question, for before he was saved, Paul was guilty of *both* varieties. Murder is the worst sort of fleshly sins, and he was guilty of murdering God’s people. But he persecuted them in religious self-righteousness, for “touching the righteousness which is in the law” he was “blameless” (Phil. 3:6). This sinful combination certainly made him the *chief* of sinners.

In addition, the Bible word “chief” can mean *most prominent*, as it does when it speaks of “the chief singer” (Hab. 3:19) and “chief priests” (Ezra 10:5). The word can also have the idea of *leadership*. “The chief man” on the island where Paul was shipwrecked (Acts 28:7) was probably the leader of those native people, and “Beelzebub the chief of the devils” (Luke 11:15) was a reference to Satan, who is certainly the leader of all devils.

So in calling himself the chief of sinners, Paul was *also* saying that he was the most prominent leader of the world’s sinful rebellion against God (Acts 8:3; 9:1). That’s why God saved him, to prominently show His grace in him (1 Tim. 1:16), just as He *judged* Pharaoh, the world’s most prominent and powerful leader, to show His *power* in *him* (Exod. 9:16).

This might be why Paul used the present tense to say he was *still* the chief of sinners, even now that he was saved. He was still the world’s most prominent example of the worst kinds of sinner saved by grace.

—Pastor Kurth



BBS Letter Excerpts

From Alabama:

"I have gained so much in my understanding of the Bible listening and studying with *Transformed by Grace* on Monday nights. I also enjoy your daily post on Facebook. I don't have a Grace Church that I can attend, and I thank God daily and pray for your ministry!"

From our Inbox:

"I watch Pastor Sadler each Sunday morning, and he has the know how on delivering the awesome 'Gospel of the Grace of God.' Give him my best on a job well done."

From Wisconsin:

"I really enjoy learning and growing in my faith from your program on my Hulu-TV."

From Arizona:

"I am working with a dear sister in Christ to further her understanding of the mystery....I do have some *Transformed By Grace* DVD's...but she won't watch them alone, so I am going to make time to go over there at least a couple of times a week so that we can watch together." (What a great idea! -Ed.).

From Illinois:

"I received one of your magazines... I was really happy to read as I went along. It was one of those moments that the Lord shines a light on a person and you see a whole new insight or understanding...The article on gifts, tongues, healing, etc., was so good."

From New York:

"I am a new person tuning in the Bible study half hour show. This is a gift to help toward the success of the program."

From California:

"I accidentally came upon your website a couple of years ago. What a treasure! Thank you for all your Holy Spirit-led teaching and Scriptural insight. You have helped me answer so many questions. May the Lord bless you."

From Alabama:

"Yesterday I received a random phone call, and the lady who spoke on the other end of the line told me that she had just received her copy of the December *Searchlight*. She saw the 'Spotlight on Grace Churches' and became excited. She lives about 30 minutes away, and was encouraged to know a grace church existed that she could attend....Because of the *Searchlight*, she found us! Thank you so much for the spotlight!"

From Florida:

"My brother introduced me to the *Berean Searchlight* and books after rescuing me from my Catholic indoctrination. Words cannot adequately express my gratitude for the effort of my brother and support of the *Berean Bible Society*. I give thanks often!... You were so kind to me by answering the many questions I had. I printed many of your responses that I kept for reference."

From our Inbox:

"Can you please help me? I have been struggling with the unpardonable sin for a very long time. I'm 22 and I'm not ready to lose my Christianity....I'm scared now." (Paul's gospel has the answer! -Ed.).

From Kansas:

"So very thankful for all the study that goes into making so much available...the articles, books, Bible answers, messages by YouTube, television, computer and *Berean Searchlights*."

From our Inbox:

"Thank you so much. I took a lot of time reading your article over and over again comparing with the Scriptures you gave me, and I have really found it helpful in the area of my enquiry."

From Kentucky:

"I live in eastern Kentucky. Most all the churches in this area teach a mixture of works and grace....We seem to be looked at as heretics somewhat....It is very helpful to speak to brothers like you."

From Washington:

"I have given away almost 250 copies of Don Webb's book, *Basic Bible Doctrines*." (Great! By the way, BBS owns the rights to Brother Don's book now that he is with the Lord. -Ed.).

From New Jersey:

"This is my first time emailing you, and I want to say thank you for taking the time to put these daily *Two Minutes* articles together. I love starting my morning with some spiritual thought and Scriptural consideration."

From Facebook:

"This one [Two Minutes: 'Heaven—And Who Will Go There'] was perfectly timed. Sunday night my mom went home to be with Lord. I have the faith in God's Word that she is in glory and reunited with Pop. I know that both knew Christ as their Savior, and I look forward to one day being reunited."

From Texas:

"The more I read your books and articles the more I become a pure Grace believer. Keep up the work you do. My church says it is a Grace church but still tries to tie the Old Testament Scriptures and gospels to Gentiles and it is very confusing to many. I have read the book, *Things That Differ*, and other books you all publish and now am able to rightly divide the Scriptures. Thanks for opening my eyes to the truth."

From Facebook:

"Thank you, Pastor Sadler, for sharing and making your voice heard in a dark and dying world. Our hearts are troubled by these awful events. The ONLY remedy for these acts of violence is believing and trusting in the finished Cross-work of Christ." (A response to Pastor Kevin's August 2019 letter concerning the tragic mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio).

From Pennsylvania:

"We have been blessed financially and want you to use this where it is most needed to further the gospel in making all men see the mystery. Your ministry has been very helpful to us in our spiritual growth throughout the years....You are a joy to our hearts."

Be a Berean

"These 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



Take a Quantum Leap

If you'd like your faith to grow by leaps and bounds this year, you'll need to be firmly established in the truths of God's rightly divided Word. Leap Day will bring an end to these special offers though, so order today!

Basic Bible Doctrines

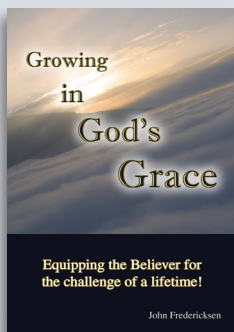
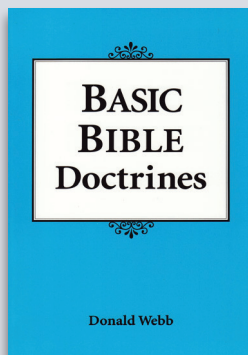
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News *and* Announcements

New Conference Schedule: Did you notice? Our speaking engagements for 2020 are all posted on Page 4! Why not check to see if we'll be visiting your neck of the woods, or some part of the country where you'll be vacationing this year? For that matter, you may see a conference scheduled in an area where you've been *wanting* to vacation, but needed a spiritual excuse to justify the expense in your mind! Literally all of the vacations your editor has taken in the past 19 years have been in conjunction with BBS speaking engagements, so I heartily recommend this kind of spiritual motivation. Hope to see you soon!

New Spanish Section: Our website is now sporting a Spanish-language page where grace believers can access some PDF files of our Spanish literature with just the click of a mouse. This new page will also feature a Spanish translation of the Scriptures, as well as links to our online bookstore, where hard copies of our Spanish literature can be ordered individually, or in quantities for distribution. Thanks to our good friend Francisco Maldonado, who helped translate Pastor Stam's classic work *Things That Differ*, you can now use this new page to help your Hispanic friends "be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). Why not send a link to our new page to them right now, before you forget?

New Website Feature: If you're like me, you often use the *Berean Searchlight Scripture Index* located under the "Bible Study" link on our web site to find all of the past issues of the *Searchlight* that talk about a specific verse of Scripture. I used to get so frustrated, however, after I'd click on a number of links and suddenly find that I'd lost my place in the list and didn't know which link to click next. But recently I noticed that my web browser addressed this problem by underlining the last link clicked, and BBS webmaster Richard Church added a splash of color to it, so you always know which *Searchlight* issues you've yet to explore. Now it's a whole lot easier to study a Bible verse, and locate articles that you remember reading on specific verses as well. Try it and see!



UPCOMING CONFERENCES TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR!

Arizona Bible Conference, March 20-22, Sun City West, AZ

Mississippi Bible Conference, March 20-22, Tupelo, MS

Northeast Ohio Bible Conference, April 24-26, Ashtabula, OH

Footsteps of Paul Greece Tour, September 16-26, 2020

Bible Study Books

Written by BBS Presidents

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

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Acts, Dispensationally Considered, Volume 1 (Hardcover).....	\$21.50
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riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7).***

—C. R. Stam



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