

The BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

May 2020



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This month’s cover features the Mediterranean lighthouse in Menorca, Spain.

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,

The pandemic has given rise to the idea that this is the fulfillment of prophecy and the beginning of the end times. After all, during the beginning of the Tribulation, there will be diseases and plagues that accompany that time. Matthew 24:7-8 tells us that “there shall be famines, and *pestilences* [*plagues*], and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows [birth pangs].”

Therefore, not only are many fearing the virus itself, but there is fear about the end of the world. This fear, however, can be allayed by rightly dividing the Word of truth. We live in an unprophesied dispensation of grace. Not one prophet knew of the revelation of the mystery or ever saw the dispensation of the grace of God that was revealed to Paul by Christ.

Israel’s prophets made known what was revealed to them by the Spirit. But this current administration, which brought forth the Church the Body of Christ, was “hid in God” (Eph. 3:9) until He revealed it first to the Apostle Paul. According to Paul, “God hath not appointed us [the Church] to wrath” (1 Thes. 5:9), and so we will be caught up in the Rapture (1 Thes. 4:16-17) prior to any of the prophesied events of the Tribulation. Therefore, it becomes relatively simple when you hear a Bible teacher or preacher attempt to equate something that is happening in the world today, such as the pandemic, to fulfillment of prophecy for the Tribulation. You can immediately dismiss it as error.

The prophets of Israel wrote for Israel concerning the Tribulation and the millennial kingdom. Signs are associated with those days. But as Pastor J. C. O’Hair wisely used to point out, “We should not be looking for the signs of the times, because these are not the times of the signs.” Paul did not teach us to look for signs, but to look for the Lord, and His return at the Rapture, every single day. Although the pandemic has nothing to do with prophecy, it should remind us to do what we should always be doing, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

This pandemic is simply the result of living in a sin-cursed world. It is a reminder to us of the painful, fearful consequences of sin. Our hearts should break at the loss of life and the fears of those around us. We have the message people need to hear the most: the gospel of the grace of God. Just trusting that Christ died for our sins and rose again, by faith alone, we have eternal life and the hope of glory.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler, President

Thanksgiving and Renewed Courage

ACTS 28:25

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what he said, but others disbelieved.²⁵ And disagreeing among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet:

²⁶ "Go to this people, and say, 'You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.'
²⁷ For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear,

and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them."

²⁸ Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will hear."

²⁹ He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, ³⁰ proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE

ROMANS

Greeting

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh; and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of the Gentiles to the glory of the Father among the nations, to them who are called to the glory of his Son, to whom we owe all things, for ever and ever. Amen.

God's Wrath on Unrighteousness

² For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ³ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ⁴ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

"And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and the three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage" (Acts 28:15).

We're often gripped with anxious moments as we face new or different situations. It seems it was no different with Paul. Though he was the great apostle of grace, he evidently had some anxiety or fear of what he faced in Rome. Rather than inventing or enhancing fears, our focus in this article is his response of thankfulness to God for His provision.

Years of trials, travel, and travail led up to this last leg of Paul's journey to Rome. His life literally hung in the balance of the whim of Caesar. Yet during his approach to Rome, God sent brethren, who longed to see him, out to meet him.


These were probably some of those mentioned in Paul's letter to the Romans. Though we don't know who or how many came to meet him, Paul was on a first name basis with twenty-four Roman brethren and was acquainted with many more he mentioned in general terms in the closing of that letter.

Two that stand out in the list would be Aquila and Priscilla. These two, of kindred spirit with Paul, had previously risked their lives for him (Rom. 16:4). What would hold them back from going out to receive him at a time like this?

Thus, we find Paul thanked God at the very sight of the brethren that met him on the road that day, and he received courage. The word courage in the New Testament is used as a noun only here; but as a verb, it is used eight other times. For instance, God gave Paul courage in Acts 23:11 when He assured Paul that he would be going to Rome. This meeting brought him courage.

Just as Paul thanked God for his meeting with brethren, others may be thankful for meeting with you. God can use what we may consider insignificant for His glory.

—Pastor Jeff Seekins



Your Career in Christian Modeling

PASTOR RICKY KURTH
Searchlight Editor

Back in 1993, professional basketball player Charles Barkley made headlines when he declared, “I’m not a role model. Just because I dunk a basketball doesn’t mean I should raise your kids.”

He was right about that last part, but he failed to realize that when you play in the NBA, being a role model to millions of aspiring young athletes just comes with the territory. The only question for such men is: are you a good role model or a bad one?

The same is true in the Christian life. You may not think you are setting an example for anyone, but no matter who you are, *someone* looks up to you. And if you name the name of Christ, the only question is: are you a good Christian role model, or a bad one?

This is true even for *young* Christians. That’s why Paul told a young man named Titus:

“In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works” (Titus 2:7).

The word “pattern” is just another word for *model*. So Paul’s

words to young Titus remind us that Christians of all ages should be role models for other believers by doing good works.

Now, if you find that you need some *incentive* to choose to be a pattern of good works, let’s compare how God used that word “pattern” to motivate His people to walk in good works under the law of Moses. He told Ezekiel to tell the people of Israel,

“...shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them *measure the pattern*...shew them the form of the house...and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof... and all the ordinances thereof... and all the laws thereof...” (Ezek. 43:10,11).

If the people of Israel in Ezekiel’s day weren’t ashamed of their sins, God told him to have them look at all the trouble to which He had gone to *forgive* their sins. He told him to show the “house” of Israel the magnificence of His other “house,” the temple that Solomon built to receive their sacrifices, and all

the “comings” and “goings” of the priests in the temple, and all the intricate “laws” and regulations of the priesthood. In other words, He wanted them to “measure the pattern” of *their religion* to remind them of the lengths to which He had gone to forgive their sins, and then ask themselves if they should *continue* in sin in light of all that He had done for them.

The Full Measure of Devotion

Of course, today we don’t look to *the temple* to measure the lengths to which God went to forgive our sins, nor do we look to Israel’s priesthood, or anything else in her religion. Today we look to *the cross*. In light of the “unspeakable” sacrifice Christ made there on our behalf (2 Cor. 9:15), it would be the height of ingratitude for “we, that are dead to sin” to “live any longer therein” (Rom. 6:2).

That’s why, in learning to walk in *good works* and not bad works, we study *the cross* and not the temple, and let “the love of Christ” constrain us, “that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Cor. 5:14,15). As Isaac Watts wrote in that sacred hymn centuries ago:

When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of Glory died,

My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small:

Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

But if you need even *more* incentive to become a pattern of good works, consider how Hebrews 8:5 uses that word *pattern*:

“Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle...See...that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.”

God told Moses to make the tabernacle and “all things” that were within it according to a *pattern*. Later we learn that those things were “the patterns of things in the heavens” (Heb. 9:23). You see, the tabernacle that Moses built in the wilderness was patterned after a tabernacle in heaven, one that God calls “the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Heb. 8:2). That means when God’s people in Israel entered the tabernacle on earth, they were entering a *little bit of heaven on earth*, because they were surrounded by things that reflected what things look like in heaven.

In the same way, if you follow Paul’s advice and show yourself to be a pattern of good works in all things, you too can experience a little bit of heaven right here on earth. You too can surround yourself, and everyone around you, with things that reflect things in heaven. Heaven is *filled* with people doing good works, and you can experience that heavenly encouragement now, in this life. And if that doesn’t motivate you to be a pattern of good works in all things, you’re just not being selfish enough!

Creatures of Habit

Gandhi wrote: “Your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your actions become your habits, your habits become your values, your values become your destiny.” Since the word “habit” is a synonym for *pattern*, this quote reminds me of the even *higher* calling that Paul issues us when he calls on us to show ourselves “a pattern of good works” (Titus 2:7).

I say that we have a higher calling than that to which Gandhi called men because we are not called upon merely to achieve an admirable “destiny” *for ourselves* in life by bettering the thoughts and actions that fill our everyday lives. We are called upon to achieve an admirable destiny *for others* by showing ourselves a pattern of good works to which they can look in order to mold *their own* destinies in life for the Lord. That’s an *infinitely* higher calling than just aspiring to *better yourself!*



But you need to show yourself to be a pattern of good works in such a way that unsaved people know you’re not doing good works *to pay for your sins*, as they think they are doing, but instead to show your connection to *the Savior* who

paid for your sins. We see this illustrated in a striking way not long after the people of Israel entered the Promised Land.

Upon arriving in the land, God allowed the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh to take up residence on the wilderness side of the Jordan River because they were cattlemen, and the land there was more conducive to raising cattle than in Israel (Num. 32:1-33). But “when they came unto the borders of Jordan” they “built there *an altar* by Jordan” (Josh. 22:10). On the surface, this appeared to be a serious “trespass” (Josh. 22:16), for God had chosen a place *in Israel* for His “habitation” (Deut.12:5), and it was *there* that His people were to bring their sacrifices (vv. 5,10,11).

The Reason for the Treason

But when the other tribes in Israel took these cattlemen to task about their altar, they defended themselves by saying,

“Behold *the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us and you*” (Josh. 22:28).

These faithful tribes admitted that they had patterned their altar after the one God ordained in the tabernacle, but they protested that they never intended to offer sacrifices on it. That is, they didn’t raise that altar to try to pay for their sins. They raised it to show their connection *to the altar in Israel* that paid for their sins (vv. 21-27). So it was a *good work* that they had done in so doing, not a bad work.

In the same way, the reason you want to be a pattern of good works in all things isn't to pay for your sins, but to show your connection to *the Savior* who paid for your sins. People need to know that *that's* why you do good works, so they know that salvation is "not of works" (Eph. 2:9). And the only way that's going to happen is if you *tell* people that you do good works because you've been saved by grace!

The explanation proffered by the two and a half tribes not only satisfied their brethren in Israel and allayed their concerns, we are twice told that it "pleased" them (Josh. 22:30,33). And when you as a believer are "fruitful in every good work," you "walk worthy of the Lord *unto all pleasing*" (Col. 1:10), as you show the world your connection to Him and the sacrifice that He made for you.

It's your only real hope of happiness in life. You see, if you have trusted Christ's sacrifice as the payment for your sins, you are in Christ, and "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). And Paul says that we were "created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*" (Eph. 2:10). And no creature of God is ever happy unless he is doing what God created him to do. Birds were created to fly, horses were created to run, and fish were created to swim, and none of them are happy when they are caged. And you'll never know true happiness in life unless you're walking in the good works that God created you to walk in.

Before you were saved, you were "accustomed to do evil" (Jer. 13:23). You were a creature

of habit—*bad* habits. Why not determine right now to become a creature of *good* habits? It's a decision you'll never regret!

A Holding Pattern That Casts the Lord in a Good Light

There is also a *dispensational* aspect to being a pattern of good works that it is important to keep in mind.

Do you remember reading about the "seven lamps" that made up "the candlestick" in the tabernacle (Num. 8:1-4)? If so, you may remember that this candlestick was carefully made "*according unto the pattern which the Lord had showed Moses*" (Num. 8:4). It was a pattern that typified the Lord, who later declared,

"I am the light of the work; he that followeth Me...shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

When the Lord was here, He was the light of the world because—like the candlestick that typified Him—He was "made under the law" (Gal. 4:4), and He walked according to the pattern which the Lord had showed Moses in the law. And the law is what offered the light of eternal life to men back then. But later the Lord added,

"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9:5).

Now that He's gone, the world has a *different* source of spiritual light, one that Paul described when he wrote to us,

"...YE shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:15,16).

Now that the Lord is no longer here on earth, *it's our turn* to be the light of the world, as we offer the light of eternal life to the lost!



But we don't shine as lights in the world as our Lord did, by walking according to the pattern of the law, and offering *the law* to men for eternal life. "We are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:15). So we shine the light of *grace* by walking according to the pattern of good works we find in the epistles of Paul, the apostle of grace, and offering them salvation by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8,9). If you are still observing Israel's sabbath, or adhering to the restricted diet of Leviticus 11, etc., your works are telling people we're under the law! And that's not shining the right light of life to lost sinners. It's hard to get people saved by grace if they think we're under the law!

Don't Shine and Whine!

We know that walking in good works is an important part of shining as lights in the world, for in telling the Philippians that *they* were the light of the world, Paul prefaced his words by saying,

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings: *That ye may be blameless and harmless,*

the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:14,15).


That's Paul's way of saying that you shouldn't be trying to shine the light of life to men if you yourself are walking in crooked and perverse darkness, or even in murmuring or disputing!

But as you shine the light of grace, adorned by the testimony of your pattern of good works, it is important to let people know that you're not walking in good works because you're a good person. You need to let them know that you're doing it because you're a child of God. That's what the Lord had in mind when He said,

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

Now, you know why He had to say that. When men see you do good works, they tend to glorify *you* instead of God, saying things like, "Isn't he a good man for doing that!" The Lord said not to let them think that way, to let your light shine in such a way that they will glorify *God* instead.

And there's only one way to do that, and that's to *let people know that you belong to the Lord*. That way God gets the glory when men see your good works, not you. It's the only way to cast the Lord in a good light!

Why not determine to embark upon your career in Christian modeling *right now*, by "shewing thyself a pattern of good works" in *all* things. You'll be eternally glad you did. 



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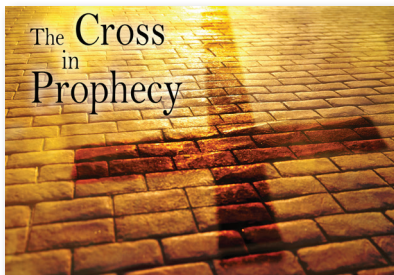
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Abounding in Hope

PASTOR KEVIN J. SADLER
BBS President

A magazine once printed a story of a Christian man who made a trip to Russia in 1993: “If there is anything that must define us as Christians, it is that we are people of hope. I realized this truth on my first trip to Russia in 1993. I felt conspicuous walking down the streets of Moscow and could not figure out why. I wanted to blend in but it was obvious people knew I was not Russian.

“I asked the group of educators with whom I was working whether I was noticeable because of my clothes: jeans and a Chicago Bulls shirt. ‘No, it’s not your clothes,’ they replied. ‘What is it, then?’ I asked. The dozen or so teachers huddled together and talked for several minutes. One of them, speaking for the group, answered politely, ‘It is your face.’ ‘My face!’ I laughed. ‘How does my face look different?’ They talked again and then one of the teachers stood and quietly said, ‘You have hope.’”¹

This believer unknowingly showed his hope in a country that desperately needs hope. We live in a hope-starved world. We too can be used by the Lord to show our abounding hope in Christ to others around us who need hope.

The God of Hope

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing...” (Rom. 15:13a).

Romans 15:13 begins with God. He is “the God of hope.” If there is true hope, it will be hope that is founded in God. Any other hope will fail. God is a God of hope. God is the Author and Object of our hope.

All eternal hope of which He is not the author, which has been created in the heart and imaginations of men, is false. The world’s religions may have what they call hope, but it is false hope. Only the hope of which God is the Author is true hope.

Had God not revealed Himself, we would only be guessing at hope. But the Scriptures are windows of hope to each of us so that we can see, find, and know true hope. A few verses earlier, Paul wrote, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures *might have hope*” (Rom. 15:4). The God of hope is revealed in Scripture, and there He reveals our hope to us. If we are to be abounding in hope, it

must be by learning and trusting the hope made known in the Word of God.

The hope that God reveals in His Word is centered in His Son. 1 Timothy 1:1 tells us that the “Lord Jesus Christ...is our hope.” And as the song lyric rightly states, “In Christ alone, my hope is found.”² It is because of Christ’s all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins and rising again the third day that we have true, eternal hope.

The eternal hope made known to us in Scripture is not a tentative wish which may or may not come true; it is a confident expectation based on the promise of God. What He has said in His Word *will* happen. Titus 1:2 makes it plain: “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” God cannot lie. He is faithful. Thus, we *know* that we have eternal life in Christ. Our hope is so certain—we can call it a destiny. And as our hope is based on God’s faithful Word and in Christ, we can and should be continually “rejoicing in hope” (Rom. 12:12).

An Anchor of the Soul

“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil” (Heb. 6:19).

Our hope in Christ is an anchor for our soul. The knowledge that our hope is certain keeps us from drifting on the strong waves of doubt and worry. It keeps our souls steady, even during life’s storms. We feel our hope’s worth and strength during the difficult times.

Our hope in Christ accomplishes for the soul the same thing

that an anchor does for a ship: it makes it fast and secure. Our anchor is “sure,” and cannot break or bend; it is “stedfast,” and cannot slip because it bites the rock of God’s Word and holds eternally. No earthly anchor can give that kind of security. Many trust in false hopes and false anchors to give them security in life, but the anchor of our hope in Christ gives true security.



The spiritual anchor of our hope is similar yet different from physical anchors on ships. It is different because we are anchored, not downward, but *upward* to heaven, for heaven is our hope (Col. 1:5). We are anchored, not to stand still, but to *move ahead*. Our hope motivates us to live for eternal realities. The direction of hope is forward (Phil. 3:13). And our hope drives us forward in our service to Christ (v. 14).

Hebrews 6:19 goes on to teach that God’s hope, the anchor of the soul, “entereth into that within the veil.” The “veil” here refers to the veil in the temple which divided the holy place from the Holy of Holies. It hung across the inner sanctuary of the temple and concealed the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. That is where God dwelt in the

temple. It is where His presence and glory resided.

This is a picture of the hope that believers have in Christ. Our hope, the anchor for the soul, is lodged within the veil in the glorious presence of God. It takes hold there. It is made fast in His presence and it will never slip. And by His almighty strength, as the old hymn, “In Times Like These,” affirms, “Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!”

The anchor of hope being lodged within the veil unites the believer to the *unseen*. Being fastened in the presence of God, our anchor of hope guarantees that we will enter His glory and His very presence in heaven one day.

Hope in the God of all our tomorrows makes us look forward, filled with “joy and peace in believing” (Rom. 15:13), to the glorious things of eternity and gives strength for the trials of today. This signals to us that our hope is not natural, but supernatural. Because in hard times, we *naturally* feel hopeless, but the God of hope strengthens us in our trials by His *supernatural* hope of our certain future in Christ.



John Stam was the brother of Cornelius R. Stam, the founder of the *Berean Bible Society*. “In

1934, when twenty-eight-year-old John Stam, missionary to China, was being led away to execution by the communists with his wife Betty, someone on the road asked, ‘Where are you going?’ John laid hold on the hope set before him and said, ‘We are going to heaven.’”³

Super-Abound in Hope

“...that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 15:13b).

Paul’s prayer for the Body of Christ is that “ye may abound in hope.” The Greek word translated as “abound” means to super-abound, overflow, exceed, to be in abundance considerably more than what would ever be expected. The same Greek word (*perisseuo*) was used to describe what “remained” (Matt. 14:20), what was left over of the loaves and fishes after Christ fed the 5000. God’s supply greatly exceeded the need.


When the God of hope supplies hope, it is more than enough. He gives us so much hope, it overflows. His hope overflows in abundance so that there is hope even left over, so to speak!

For us to obey the instruction to “abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost,” we must abound in growing in God’s Word, rightly divided, which reveals our hope to us. And to abound in hope, we also need to abound in our *faith* in the Word, trusting it with conviction. Then, by His grace through our faith, the God of hope fills us “with all joy and peace in believing,” and causes us to “abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

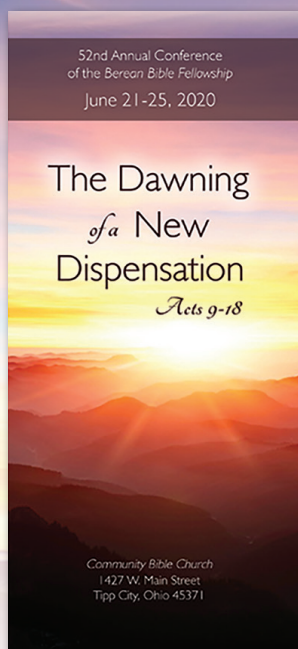
It was shared with me once, so simply and poignantly, how evangelism, the sharing of our faith, is



like walking with a bucket that's filled to the brim with water; when you walk with a bucket filled with water, you can't help but spill some. That's what our hope is to do. As we abound in hope, it overflows and spills out

as we walk through life, and others can't help but see our hope and hear about it. This happens because we have joy and peace in believing, for we know our hope is true and certain in Christ. 

1. "Hope doesn't float," Soul Food column, *World Magazine*, March 6, 1999, https://world.wng.org/1999/03/hope_doesnt_float.
2. Keith Getty and Stuart Townend, "In Christ Alone," Copyright© Kingsway Thank You Music, 2001.
3. "Hebrews 6:18, Laying Hold of the Hope," Hebrews 5-8 Sermon Illustrations, Precept Austin, updated December 11, 2018, https://www.preceptaustin.org/hebrews_5-8_sermon_illustrations.



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visit the BBF website at:
bereanbiblefellowship.weebly.com

52nd Annual BBF Conference

Community Bible Church
1427 W. Main St., Tipp City, Ohio

Dates: June 21-25, 2020

**Guest speakers from around the
country will be present to proclaim
the riches of God's grace!**

Bible Hour Teacher:
Pastor Ken Lawson

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Teens: Every morning
9:00 a.m. to 10 a.m.

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9:00 a.m. to Noon

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6:45 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

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Singles Get-Together:
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Noon Fellowship Meals:
Please pre-pay by June 1st
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An Unprecedented Time of Uncertainty

PASTOR RICKY KURTH
Searchlight Editor

By the time the April issue of the *Searchlight* arrived at my home, I was struck by how it made no mention of the coronavirus, as perhaps you were as well. This health concern became such a big part of our lives in such a short amount of time that it all went down after we had already sent that issue to the printer.


When believers began staying home from church for fear of dying from this virulent virus, I thought of how Hebrews 10:25's command to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together was written with *Tribulation* Hebrews in mind, saints who will be strongly tempted to stay home when the Beast begins to persecute them to the death. So my first thought was that we should follow their example and continue to assemble. After all, we often speak well of believers who go to church in persecuted lands despite the fear of death. In light of their sterling spiritual example, somehow it just didn't seem right to blanch the moment we had the opportunity to follow their admirable example.

Then the governors of our states began issuing stay-at-home directives, and many churches closed their doors. But the statement issued by my governor reminded me of what Paul wrote about the uncertainty that arises when the trumpet gives "an uncertain sound" (1 Cor. 14:8), for his directive made no mention of churches. So at the church that I pastor, we elected to stay open. We were bolstered in that decision when we heard that the governor of another state had issued a similar directive, but assured people in a follow-up tweet that they could still go to church, as long as they maintained social distancing.

But eventually we all began to hear of pastors being arrested for keeping the church doors open, and it became clear how the directives of our governors were going to be interpreted. My first thought after that was that it wouldn't be right to hearken unto men and not unto God (Acts 4:19) by closing our doors as well. But then I remembered that our apostle Paul gives us no *command* to meet together in church on a weekly basis, so we *wouldn't* be disobeying God if we chose to obey the commands of our rulers to stay home from church.

There were also other considerations that arose that had to be weighed in the balance. When the media began to point out certain outbreaks of the virus that originated in churches, I wasn't surprised that they chose to focus on churches to the exclusion of the origin points of other outbreaks. The world will always seek to villainize God's people and His work. But I began to wonder if continuing to meet was worth the resentment that such media attention was garnering, especially in the absence of any Pauline command to continue to assemble weekly. At that point, my church chose to suspend our gatherings for the time being as well.

When the time of this crisis passes, however, we intend to resume meeting in church, and we hope that you'll return to your local assembly as well. While Paul never commands us to meet weekly, he assumes that God's people will *want* to "come together in the church" (1 Cor. 11:18 cf. v. 20; 14:23,26), usually "upon the first day of the week" (1 Cor. 16:2). We live in a wonderful time in human history, a time when we can hear the Word taught on television, on the radio, and on the internet, in venues as handy as our cell phones. But the emphasis we see on *the local church* in the Book of Acts and in Paul's epistles reminds us that this blessing affords us all the benefit of learning about the Head of the church but none of the fellowship afforded to us by His Body.

Hopefully by the time you read this, the situation will be much eased rather than much worsened. In the meantime, let's meet each other often at the throne of God's grace in prayer, asking that our church doors will soon be able to reopen to welcome the many who have been reminded of their own mortality by all of this, and who desperately need the Savior that only we can share with them. 



Excerpt Extra!

"Pastor Kevin, I received the March issue of the *Berean Searchlight* and enjoyed the articles

on Pastor Stam.

"I am 90 years old now and living in Florida, but as a child I attended Pastor Stam's church, which was held in a school building at that time. Later they built *Preakness Bible Church* where I attended with my family.

"I was 10 years old when Pastor Stam started writing the *Berean Searchlight*. In 1948, I was married at *Preakness* by Pastor Stam. My parents were active in the church, and my dad wrote the choruses that we sang in Sunday school and church.

"I also remember going to street meetings with Pastor Stam, and the old portable organ.

"I wonder if there are others who are still living that attended in those days. Your articles brought back so many wonderful memories!"



No Excuses

PASTOR KEVIN J. SADLER
BBS President

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Cor. 10:12-13).

1 Corinthians 10:13 takes away all our excuses regarding temptation. A pastor once jokingly told me that this is his least favorite verse in the Bible. It’s a convicting verse, because it shows that we have no one to blame but ourselves when we succumb to temptation and sin. You hear people make the facetious excuse when they fall into sin that “The devil made me do it!” But the devil never makes us do anything. He does tempt and deceive, but the responsibility for falling into sin is our own.

Verse 13 is relatively well-known, but verse 12 needs to be remembered with it. In order for verse 13 to work in our lives, verse 12 must first take place. Verse 12 shows that to be able to turn from temptation there needs to be humility and a distrust of self. If we proudly believe that we are strong and can stand up to any temptation, we’re going to fall.

J. Vernon McGee told the following: “I think of the little boy who was playing around one evening in the pantry. He had gotten down the cookie jar. His mother called to him and said, ‘Willie, what are you doing in the pantry?’ He said, ‘I’m fighting temptation!’”¹ Standing there with the cookie jar in our hands is not the place to fight temptation! We’re going to fall when we think *we* can fight temptation.

By first having a realistic view of ourselves and our weakness, then can we live by and apply verse 13, which points us to the faithful

God. Not trusting ourselves and turning to the Lord is where we find strength against temptation.


There are those who feel that nobody has ever been tempted like they are tempted. But no matter what tempts you, there have been and there are others who are tempted the same way. It's comforting to know that "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man." You're never alone in whatever temptation you are facing. There are always others who have the exact same struggle you do.

To overcome temptation, we need to look to God, Who is always faithful. This is how and where we find the strength and wisdom to turn from any temptation or endure it: we look to the Lord, seek His aid, and obey His Word. God is faithful to be with us always and to help us. He is faithful to His Word and faithful to the promises of verse 13.


God promises the Body of Christ that He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to deal with. He does *not* promise that He will take all temptation away. When temptation comes, He *does* promise "a way to escape" it so that we are strong enough to bear it. The way out is always there right along with the temptation. God promises the appropriate way of escape from each particular temptation. Thus, we are given the choice whether or not we'll look for or take the way out that He provides.

Regarding the temptation of idolatry, Paul wrote in the next verse, "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, **FLEE** from idolatry" (v. 14). Regarding the temptation of fornication, earlier in 1 Corinthians, Paul wrote the church to "**FLEE** fornication" (6:18). We need to let the devil see the backs of our shoes when it comes to temptation. Many times, the solution is just to run as fast as we can to get away from the sin that is tempting us. As Warren Wiersbe once said, "The believer who thinks he can stand may fall; but the believer who flees will be able to stand."



However, sometimes it's not possible to remove yourself completely from a temptation. When it is not possible to avoid the circumstance, God is faithful, and we need to keep our eyes on Him and He will give the strength to bear it. Because often the solution and God's escape is a closer walk with Him. 

1. J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible*, Vol. V (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983), p. 635.



The Sacred Duties of a Pastor

PASTOR JOHN FREDERICKSEN
BBS Board Member

Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ray Smith could have retreated, but doing so would have allowed Iraqi troops to overrun an American aid station at Baghdad International Airport. Instead, Sgt. Smith grabbed a rifle, and an antitank weapon, and continued fighting, holding off about 100 enemy soldiers. When a fellow soldier shouted at Smith to take cover, Smith refused. He was not leaving! Smith received a severe head wound and died at his post. Yet his efforts stopped the April 4th, 2003 assault.

Two years later, President Bush presented the Medal of Honor to Smith's 11-year-old son David. Drawing from this soldier's example, the Army drew up a new creed as it tightened training procedures: "I will always place the mission first...." Smith's widow commented, "Paul is showing the soldiers what it means to be a soldier."¹

We learn from the Apostle Paul that all believers are chosen to be soldiers of the cross (2 Tim. 2:3,4), and pastors are on the front line of the battle. God does not actually choose men, placing them into the

ministry, nor does He give them a magical or mystical call. Instead, according to 1 Timothy 3:1, men choose the ministry when they have a strong "desire" to serve the Lord and attempt to do so as He enables.

All of us who know Christ as Savior are called to be His servants, yet those in pastoral ministry have a unique servanthood and responsibility therein. It is important that soldiers of the cross demonstrate how to be a good soldier for their Savior. Paul makes this point in a number of passages:

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim. 1:12).

"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1).

"But watch thou in all things... make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:5).

While the qualifications of an elder are very important and covered extensively in Paul's pastoral epistles, our immediate focus here

is the very important duties of the pastor as he functions in his local assembly. It is a given that the pastor must be saved, committed to right division, and preach the Word. However, the Scriptures are abundantly clear that there are many other requirements for every pastor. As a foundation for understanding these duties, we do well to look carefully at all of the words the Lord uses in Scripture to identify a pastor. In *The King James Study Bible*, within the notes in 1 Timothy chapter 3, the editors state the following:

“The pastor, who shepherds today’s church, also fulfills the New Testament role of elder and bishop (overseer) and is responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church (Acts 20:28). When Christ returns, He will judge and reward these pastors (elders) according to their faithfulness in leading the church to accomplish God’s will (1 Pet. 5:4). There are at least seven different titles for the New Testament pastor. The term ‘elder’ is used over 20 times, emphasizing the pastor’s wisdom and maturity. The title ‘bishop’ emphasizes the administrative function of the office. The word ‘pastor’ emphasizes the responsibility of caring for the church as the shepherd cares for the sheep. The word ‘preacher’ emphasizes the ministry of publicly proclaiming God’s Word. The title ‘teacher’ emphasizes that the pastor should be ‘apt to teach.’ The pastor is also called a ‘servant,’ reminding him that he is to minister to others; and he is a ‘steward,’ managing the property of others (the church of Christ)....”

These titles help us to understand the proper function of a pastor. However, as we look further into God’s Word, it becomes clear that the following biblical imperatives further define the duties of the local pastor. He must:

Preach the Word

“Preach the gospel” (Acts 16:10; Rom. 1:15; 10:15).

“Preach Christ crucified” (1 Cor. 1:23).

“Preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord” (2 Cor. 4:5).

“Preach the Word...reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2).

Preach the whole “counsel of God” (Acts 20:27).

The public proclamation of God’s Word must have Christ as the central focus, yet teach and always preach rightly dividing the Word of Truth. Moreover, with this emphasis, the entirety of Scripture must be taught while emphasizing Paul’s letters.



The pastor must have biblical balance in his preaching. In the context of one day being judged at the Bema Seat, in 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul tells us that the preacher must “preach the Word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and

doctrine.” We need to carefully note several things from this text. God does not intend for preaching to only be broadcasting information. Meaningful application is ALWAYS to be included in all preaching and teaching. Notice too that God does not intend preaching to always be positive.

It is the pastor’s duty in preaching to specify what application is needed in each message and to specifically ask the listener to make that application in their lives. If information is the only thing being presented, the pastor and listener are often worse off than before listening to the message.

Why? It is because “knowledge puffeth up” (1 Cor. 8:1). Preaching only information produces proud believers with condescending attitudes, and seldom results in a change toward godliness. God’s intention, from the preaching of the Word, is always to *transform* (Rom. 12:2) the life into a more Christ-like condition, For us to become “*conformed* to the image of His Son” (Rom. 8:29), and to be “*changed* into the same image... even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. 3:18).

“For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was” (James 1:23-24). In other words, he goes away unchanged when he is supposed to be a doer of the Word, and a hearer only (James 1:22). To achieve transformation in lives, it will be more effective if a

healthy dose of topical messages addressing specific needs, in a thorough way, are the norm from the local pastor.

Note that in 2 Timothy 4:2 when Paul leaves his “charge” about how to “preach the Word” that it includes “reprove, rebuke, and exhort.” Two out of the three of these would be considered to be negative. However, God views dealing with the negative of wrong conduct or a wrong spiritual condition as being a positive. If a preacher is primarily preaching positive things, then his preaching is not meeting this biblical imperative, seeking to achieve transformation in lives, nor is it truly pleasing to the Lord. All three are needed and in the proportion God displays in this important charge. Pastor, is your preaching truly balanced and biblical from God’s perspective?

Do the Work of an Evangelist

“...do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry” (2 Tim. 4:5).

“All things are of God, Who hath...given to us the ministry of reconciliation...” (2 Cor. 5:18).

The pastor is to be consistently sharing the gospel with the lost one on one while urging others to likewise regularly give out the gospel to lost souls. This goes beyond giving the gospel in sermons, though this too should be done continually. The pastor should be leading the way in personally giving out the gospel, in church-wide efforts, in outreach to the lost, in always seeking new ways to reach the unsaved, and in

organizing congregational efforts to give the gospel to lost souls. Doing so will also promote the local church and the cause of Christ.

Be an Example of the Believer

“...be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity...” (1 Tim. 4:12).

“If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use” (2 Tim. 2:21).

“A bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry...” (Titus 1:7).

Pastors are to lead by example! This includes: love, attitude, frame of mind, confidence in everything God says as it applies to life rightly divided, and in moral purity. These areas are specified in 1 Timothy 4:12, but a pastor needs to be an example in every way.

Give Attendance to Reading, Exhortation, to Doctrine

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed...” (2 Tim. 2:15).

“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine...give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all...for in doing this thou shalt both save [or deliver] thyself, and them that hear thee” (1 Tim. 4:13-16).

The pastor must be a good, consistent student of God’s Word while urging others to be students of the Scriptures. This will manifest itself in sermons that have

consistently good content, organization, doctrine, application, and balance in preaching. Being a good student of God’s Word not only enables the pastor to properly feed the congregation with solid spiritual meat, it also equips him with a thorough knowledge of biblical issues, and a growing conviction for truth. Good students of Scripture have an ability to recognize and refute unsound doctrine (Titus 1:7-11), an ability to convince others of sound doctrine (2 Tim. 2:22-26), and have a heightened ability in discernment in all areas (Heb. 5:14). Therefore, it should not be uncommon for a pastor, even with years in the ministry, to invest 20 hours or more each week in preparing his primary weekly messages so that the content convinces, convicts, changes, and converts the listener.



Mentor Men to Preach the Word

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2).

One of the key aspects of pastoral leadership is to challenge, recruit, train, and encourage men to preach the Word, then give these men ample opportunities to preach and teach. Doing so will strengthen individuals,

families, and the church. Failing to do so will tend to leave men in a withering spiritual condition, less committed to the Lord and the church, inconsistent in the Word, undiscerning in doctrine, and will ultimately weaken the family in their spiritual walk with the Lord. Mentoring men to preach and teach is probably in the top five of pastoral duties.

Be an Overseer of the Church of God

“Take heed therefore unto...all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers... For I know...that...grievous wolves [shall] enter in...not sparing the flock...” (Acts 20:28-29).

Pastors are to oversee the doctrinal integrity within their assembly and all areas of the local church. This, of course, means they should be a voting member of the board of elders. They should oversee the ministry of the local church in harmony with other biblically qualified men who likewise preach the Word and oversee the overall direction of their assembly. It is the duty of the elders to lead and not to turn leadership over to committees or others who do not meet the qualifications of elders in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

Follow Up on Visitors and Visit Those in the Congregation

“...Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren...and see how they do” (Acts 15:36).

Paul sent Timothy to “comfort you concerning your faith...” (1 Thes. 3:2).

We can clearly see the pattern of the Apostle Paul’s ministry was that he constantly followed up on those he ministered to throughout his apostleship. The Book of Acts records him repeatedly returning to the various churches where he had been. He also wrote letters to these churches at large, such as the Corinthians, to check on their spiritual welfare. Likewise, he wrote to and visited individuals, such as Philemon, with encouragement.

Paul repeatedly visited those he ministered to for the purpose of checking on their spiritual needs, to strengthen personal relationships, to exhort them in the Lord, to correct conduct, and to comfort them in trials. As a spiritual shepherd, pastors should likewise visit in the homes of those to whom they minister three or four times per year. Whenever a trial hits anyone in the church, the pastor should be there immediately, at any hour of the day or night, to comfort with the Word and sometimes with the silent support of his presence. He should pray with them and for them and deal with them in tenderness. Pastoral visitation will also include counseling, hospital visitation, checking on those who are absent from services, and even with those in the assembly who are grounded and faithful. They need encouragement too.

In the local church ministry, it is extremely important for the pastor to lead by example in following up on all who visit the local church. This should be done via personal letter, or phone calls, but especially by seeking to have a

sit-down meeting with everyone who visits the church. Consistently seizing this opportunity will see many saved and a vastly higher percentage of people who visit the church will return to become a part of the fellowship. Failing to do so would be like a salesman having viable leads but never following up on them. The result for the salesman, or the pastor, to neglect the important aspect of follow-up would be neglecting a key responsibility, and would make it far less likely to see numerical growth.

Pastoral visitation encourages each individual, demonstrates that they are important to the local church, and enables him to know how to best pray for them. It also affords conversations that give vital insight into the spiritual needs in the assembly, therein giving him important insight into what areas to preach and teach on. The pastor should regularly visit every church member and promptly follow up on every visitor seeking a one-on-one meeting.

Be Not Entangled With the Affairs of Life

“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Tim. 2:4).

For many grace pastors, the pay from the church is so meager it is an absolute necessity to work outside the ministry. However, this is never best because it limits ministry, distracts, can become his priority while important needs in ministry go unmet, and hinders the spiritual condition

of the pastor. Therefore, the local church should always do everything it can to pay the pastor a livable wage remembering that “the laborer is worthy of his hire” (Luke 10:7) and that when one has “sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things” (1 Cor. 9:11).

The pastor also needs to carefully guard against the danger of being entangled in “the affairs of this life,” such as a preoccupation with financial gain, because it can quickly become a “...temptation and a snare...[which can pull him] into many foolish and hurtful lusts...pierced...through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things...” (1 Tim. 6:9-11).

The pastor needs to strive to be single-minded in ministry instead of pursuing income outside the ministry, unless it is absolutely necessary. Yet, even when necessary, secular work for hire must be limited in scope so that the ministry is not neglected or ill-affected.

Endure Hardness as a Good Soldier of Christ

“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (2 Tim. 2:3).

The reality is that the ministry is hard and often discouraging. Much of what the pastor does is unappreciated and unknown to others. He can be the target of constant criticism, and betrayals are common. People are often unresponsive, and he often labors largely alone in keeping the local ministry going. An old saying

is that a pastor must have the hide of a rhinoceros, but the soft-heartedness of a child. Through it all, the pastor must keep his eye on the prize of honoring the Lord, being faithful to his God-given ministry, and being desirous of eternal reward. Therefore, he must “keep on keeping on” even when it is difficult in ministry or with those to whom he ministers.

Officiate at Weddings and Funerals

“Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season...”
(2 Tim. 4:2).

“So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel...”
(Rom. 1:15).

“...prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim. 2:21).

“...ready to every good work”
(Titus 3:1).



Both weddings and funerals are specifically referred to in Scripture with the implication that we should not squander this opportunity in ministry. Paul told the saints to “comfort one another” (1 Thes. 4:18) regarding the death of loved ones, and to “rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep” (Rom. 12:15). Both imply that ministry in funerals is appropriate. Our

Lord Himself attended a wedding where He performed His first miracle. So, our Savior did not neglect or avoid participation in weddings. Officiating at weddings and funerals provides an opportunity for souls to be saved, and long-term ministry to be established. Therefore, pastors should be willing and capable in officiating at both weddings and funerals, ever ready to “preach the Word, in season, and out of season....”

Not Caught Up In Striving... But Patiently Instructing the Errant

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves...”
(2 Tim. 2:24,25).

Paul’s example and admonition was for the servant of the Lord to be gentle in his approach to others, patient, and longsuffering, even when some resist the truth and seek conflict. At times this will be difficult when some are looking for an argument and are simply unteachable. The pastor must know how to biblically answer difficult issues whenever they arise but simply walk away if he cannot diffuse a heated discussion. Doing so preserves his testimony of godliness and further opportunity to minister on other occasions.

Must Be a Lover of Hospitality

“A bishop then must be...given to hospitality...” (1 Tim. 3:2).

“...a lover of hospitality” (Titus 1:8).

“Mentoring men to preach and teach is probably in the top five of pastoral duties.”

A pastor must be an example in using his home for ministry. To do so, he and his wife must view their home as belonging to the Lord. Opening one's home for Bible study, meals, and church gatherings, demonstrates a care for others and dedication to ministry. If the pastor won't use his home for ministry, it is doubtful that those under his ministry will open their homes for the purpose of hosting Bible studies, witnessing, or church needs.

Constantly Urging Others to Maintain Good Works


“Charge them that are rich in this world...that they be rich in good works...” (1 Tim. 6:17-18).

“I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works” (Titus 3:8).

Someone once said, “It is the job of the preacher to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable.” It is the natural human tendency to be lazy. This is especially so when it comes to spiritual things and engaging in the work of the ministry. This is one important reason why an important emphasis in the ministry of the pastor should be to consistently remind the saints that every single believer needs to

seek to have an ongoing ministry, just as every part of the human body contributes to its welfare (Eph. 4:15-16). Doing so will bring those who participate in ministry greater joy, purpose, commitment, and eternal reward.

The patience of Alexander Kuzmin, mayor of Megion in western Russia, had worn thin. In September 2007, Kuzmin published a list of 27 excuses he would no longer tolerate. Civil servants who used such excuses as “I don't know,” “It's lunchtime,” or “I was on sick leave at the time,” would lose their jobs. Other banned excuses included “I can't,” “It's impossible,” or “It's not my job.” The reason for Kuzmin's decision is simple. City officials, the mayor says, should solve problems, not make excuses.²

No pastor is perfect, nor does he always live up to all of these pastoral duties all of the time. He's simply human. However, these duties are clearly given to us in Scripture because God intends His ministers of the Word and ministers to the people to be doing His work, in His church, in His way. Pastors need to be continually striving to live up to these descriptions and have their ministry unmistakably characterized by these requirements. Every pastor should evaluate his ministry by these standards, and those seeking a pastor should specify, to any candidate, that these are their expectations for his ministry in their local church. 

1. Julian E. Barnes, “A Hero Honored,” U.S. News & World Report (4-18-05), p. 16; submitted by Ted De Hass, Bedford, Iowa.

2. Ted DeHass, Bedford, Iowa; source: “Russian mayor bans excuse making,” BBC News (09-01-07).

Question Box

“When Israel was in the wilderness for forty years, where did they get the animals for their sacrifices to God?”

When Moses initially asked Pharaoh to let Israel go into the wilderness for just three days to sacrifice to God, Pharaoh asked, “who are they that shall go?” (Ex. 10:8). Moses replied, “We will go...*with our flocks and with our herds*” (v. 9).

The answer to your follow-up question, “Did they grow crops to *feed* those animals?” is that they were all *grazing* animals (Ex. 34:3) that fed on the grass found wherever they went.

When you also ask why they needed quails to eat flesh if they had those animals, we know that they didn’t *eat* their animals, for when they tired of manna and eggs from their flocks, “the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us *flesh* to eat?” (Num. 11:4). God replied in anger,

“The LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat...a whole month” (v. 18,20).

Moses wondered how God was going to make good on that promise, and asked God, “Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?” (v. 22). That shows that their animals wouldn’t have lasted a month if they started eating them. They milked their cattle, they didn’t eat them.

—Pastor Kurth

**“The preaching of
the Word must be the
centerpiece of our worship
of Almighty God.”**

Pastor Paul Sadler

*“Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season;
reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”
(2 Tim. 4:2).*



BBS Letter Excerpts

From our Inbox:

“Thank you for that explanation of ‘rightly dividing.’ That is a terrific read. I believe that I will be using it often to share with others.”

From Indiana:

“I have the November *Searchlight*... ‘Quench Not the Spirit’...I really enjoyed reading, so much that I just had to go back through it and reread it!”

From Wisconsin:

“My wife and I just finished reading together Paul Sadler’s book on Philipians. That blessed our socks off!!!” (I guess the days of “sock it to me” are past! –Ed.).

From our Inbox:

“This makes perfect sense...It’s the first time I EVER heard of such teaching on water baptism. I thank God for using you to open my eyes and knowledge on this topic. I foresee a lot of resistance from my fellow brethren though when I start sharing it with them, so your Word document will greatly assist me.”

From Facebook:

“A very good read. I so sorely needed this [*More Minutes With the Bible*: The Judgment Seat of Christ, Part 1, by Paul M. Sadler.]”

From our Inbox:

“Thank you for an outstanding message in this *More Minutes With the Bible* (‘The Judgment Seat of Christ’).”

From Illinois:

“My echo is that I watch Pastor Kevin each Sunday morning. He has the know-how on delivering the gospel of the grace of God. Awesome. Give him my best on a job well done.”

From Nova Scotia:

“My wife and I just had to contact you to thank you for the absolutely beautiful sermons you have posted on the *Transformed by Grace* channel. Your...sensitive and incredibly knowledgeable presentations open up our understanding so much more, it is just wonderful for us and others we have showed the channel to... Your videos...calm and fill us with joy and peace. Lord bless you Pastor along with all your fellow workers at this incredible ministry!”

From our Inbox:

“I want to purchase the material on ‘What Must I Do to Be Saved,’ and ‘Rightly Dividing’ from today’s television message by Kevin Sadler.”

From Illinois:

“I enjoy your TV program *Transformed by Grace*. Tonight was about John the Baptist—very good!”

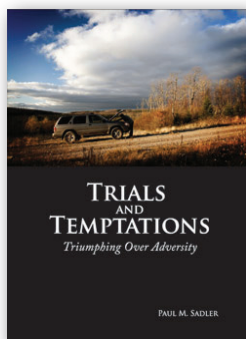
From Maryland:

“We met this woman at a BBS conference two years ago at Solomons Island, MD. This is a success story from the conferences. She lives on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and we live on the Western Shore and never would’ve met if not for BBS!”

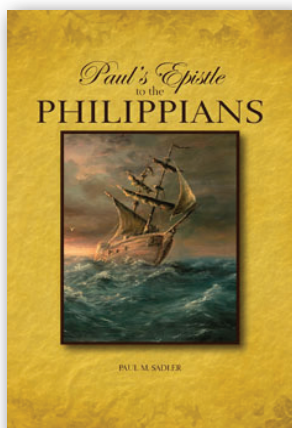


Peace for Every Storm

“Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7).



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News *and* Announcements

Our Bible Conferences: Due to the concerns associated with the Covid-19 coronavirus, some of our conferences have been canceled or postponed. For a complete list of the scheduled gatherings that remain, please visit our website and click on the “Bible Study” tab, followed by the “Bible Conferences” link. Then if you have any questions, just get in touch with the contact person that is listed for each conference, or you can reach out to us here at *Berean Bible Society*.

Our Day to Day Operations: To comply with the directives made by the State of Wisconsin, our offices are temporarily closed until further notice. However, we are adapting our operations to continue to process orders and gifts, receive phone calls, and correspond by email. We trust the resources available on our website and on television will be a great encouragement to you at this time, as well as our daily *Two Minutes* devotionals, our weekly *More Minutes* emails, and our monthly *Searchlight*. We are still only an email or phone call away if you have a Bible question or are in need of spiritual support.

Are you a grace pastor looking for a church? If so, *Grace Church* of Indianapolis just might be looking for you! To learn more about this historic Mid-Acts dispensational church, visit their website at www.indygracechurch.org. Then if you think this assembly might be the place where God could use you best, email them at grace@indygracechurch.org, ring them up at (317) 590-2681, or drop them a line at: Grace Church, PO Box 39086, Indianapolis, IN 46239.

Defective Detectives! When a recent *Searchlight* arrived at my home, I noticed that one of the pages was falling out, and another was missing! If you too receive a defective copy, please let us know. We can't do anything about copies that get marred in the mail, but we can alert our printer to problems with cuts and binding. We try to hire the printer who offers the best price (in order to be good stewards of the Lord's money) but we also want the mailman to deliver a copy that won't fall apart in your hands. Thanks in advance for helping us *detect defects*!



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

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*In times like these you need a Savior,
In times like these you need an anchor;
Be very sure, be very sure,
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!*

*This Rock is Jesus, Yes He's the One,
This Rock is Jesus, the only One;
Be very sure, be very sure,
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!*



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