

The BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

November 2021



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This month’s cover features Capbreton Lighthouse, Les Landes, France.

The **Purpose** of the *Berean Bible Society* is to help you understand, enjoy, and apply 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 transformation of the Christian life, and to *encourage* the local church.

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From the Editor to You

Dear Friends in Christ,

Back in 2001, I'd already been the pastor of a grace church for 22 years. But as the pastor of a less-than-affluent church, I'd been supplementing my income by working as a painting contractor. When I turned 40, I experienced what the world calls a "midlife crisis." Only as a grace pastor, my midlife crisis didn't find me hankering for a Corvette or a Harley. I found myself longing to be in the ministry full-time instead.

So I reached out to a few larger grace churches that were looking for a full-time pastor, to see if they might be interested in the likes of me. But it wasn't until I actually received offers from two of them that I realized something about myself. I wanted to be in the ministry full-time, but I didn't want to leave the church that I'd pastored for over two decades. I loved those faithful saints so much that leaving them would have been like leaving family.

So I explained to the churches that had expressed an interest in me that I didn't mean to lead them on, that I just didn't *know* that I didn't want to leave my home church until I was given the opportunity to do so. I wasn't sure what I should do next, but I continued to pray about it.

That's when I noticed an editorial in the *Berean Searchlight*, written by *Berean Bible Society* president Pastor Paul Sadler, expressing his need for an assistant to help him in the ministry at BBS. This was a position that I could assume *in addition* to my local church ministry rather than in place of it. Pastor Sadler was familiar with my ministry through my speaking engagements at *Berean Bible Fellowship* conferences, so we arranged to meet. A short time later, I hung up my paint brush and joined the staff here at BBS.

That was 20 years ago *this month*, so I'm sharing this with you as a way of celebrating my 20th anniversary. But I'm also sharing it to encourage you in your own walk with the Lord, and your own efforts to serve Him. God is always willing to let you share in more of His work if you're willing to let Him. Just don't do what I did and wait for your midlife crisis to start praying about it. It's still true that in the Lord's work the greatest ability is *availability*. If you make yourself available to Him, He will find additional areas in which He can use you in His work, and you'll be eternally glad you did.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Ricky Kurth

THANKFUL FOR ONE ANOTHER

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you" (Phil. 1:3).

Two relationships are referenced in this verse of Scripture. First, there is Paul's personal relationship with God, and second, there is Paul's relationship with fellow-believers, the Philippians.

That Paul thanked "*my* God" teaches about the union and communion Paul enjoyed with Him. Every believer in Christ is God's, and God is also ours in a personal way so that we, like Paul, can "thank my God."

The Philippians' relationship to Paul in Christ caused the apostle to overflow with gratitude. Paul's heart was filled with thanks to God for *every* memory of them. Blessings received from God should lead to thanksgiving to God. The Philippians were a blessing from God to Paul; so he thanked God for them.

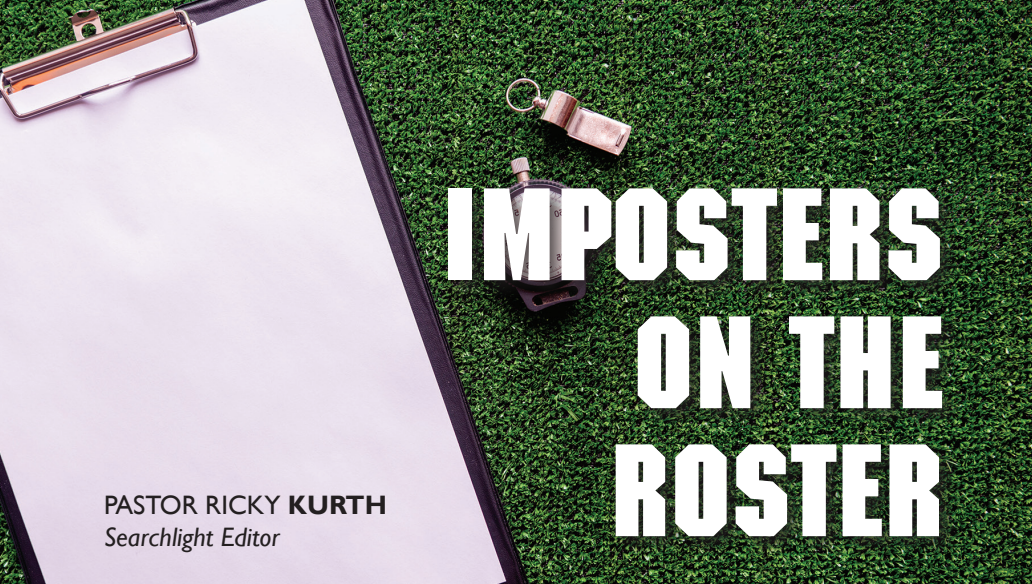
Throughout his epistles, we read of Paul thanking God for churches and individual believers (Rom. 1:8; Eph. 1:15-16; Col. 1:3-4; 1 Thes. 1:2-3; 2 Tim. 1:3; Phil. 1:4). Paul was continually thankful for the people God had put in his life and with whom he labored in the ministry. He was grateful for their faith toward God and their love for one another.

Thomas Hardy once said, "Some people can find the manure pile in any meadow." The Philippians were not a perfect church, and Paul could have focused on the negative when he remembered them. There was disunity in the Philippian assembly, which is why Paul exhorted them to "be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 2:2). Later in the letter, Paul addressed the discord between two women in the Church (Phil. 4:2-3). Yet, in remembering the Philippians, we find Paul, by the Spirit, focusing on the overall joyful, good memories that he had of them and of their "fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now" (1:5). This moved Paul to react with thanksgiving to God for them.

Paul was thankful for his relationships in the Church; they were a source for gratitude to God. To follow Paul both in doctrine and practice (Phil. 4:9), we must likewise be grateful to God for one another in the Body of Christ. It promotes harmony in the Church when we do so. Each person in the Body of Christ has been "purchased with His [Christ's] own blood" (Acts 20:28) and is "in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:1). Each person's gifts and service are needed and important in the Church. In light of these things, we thank God for one another.

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers" (1 Thes. 1:2).

—Pastor Kevin Sadler



IMPOSTERS ON THE ROSTER

PASTOR RICKY KURTH
Searchlight Editor

Two NFL coaches were looking at their clipboard roster of players one day, when one of them asked the other, “Who’s this Quasimodo guy? Why does that name ring a bell?” The other replied, “Don’t you remember? He played halfback at Notre Dame.”

Speaking of rosters, as we look at the roster of believers answering roll call in the Jewish kingdom church at Pentecost, we see there were a couple of imposters on the roster. All the *saved* Jews sold their possessions and laid the proceeds at the apostles’ feet (Acts 4:32-37),

“But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

“And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet” (Acts 5:1,2).

As you may know, they were supposed to bring *all* the money they got from selling their possession to the apostles to share

with the rest of the church (Acts 4:35). We know Peter did, for when a lame man asked him for a handout, he said, “Silver and gold have I *none*” (Acts 3:6). And when Ananias and Sapphira *kept back* part of the proceeds of their sale, that showed *they weren’t saved*. We know this because when “a certain ruler” asked the Lord,

“Good Master, *what shall I do to inherit eternal life?...Jesus said unto Him...sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor...*” (Luke 18:18-22).

So why would this couple try to convince Peter they were saved? Well, if you were living back then and you weren’t saved, wouldn’t you try to bluff your way into Peter’s church? If you saw a bunch of people living *unselfishly* for one another, in perfect harmony, “of one heart and of one soul” (Acts 4:32), wouldn’t you want in on that? Evidently Ananias and Sapphira did too.

But as we read on, we see that God wasn’t about to let them get

away with that kind of incomplete obedience:

“But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?” (Acts 5:3).

How'd He Know That?

Here we have to ask: How'd Peter *know* they hadn't brought him all the proceeds? The answer is, Peter was a *prophet*, and prophets just knew stuff like that! Back when the king of Syria couldn't figure out how the Jews knew about every trap that he set for them, he naturally suspected that there was a spy among his



advisers. But when he asked them who the mole was, one of the members of his staff replied,

“None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber” (2 Kings 6:12).

Elisha knew all the king's secret plans because he was a *prophet*. That's why, when the Lord was able to tell the woman at the well all the details of her private life, she told Him, “Sir, I perceive that Thou art a *prophet*” (John 4:19).

And we know Peter was a prophet as well, for he wrote

two books of the Bible, and all the Bible writers were prophets. That's why Paul spoke of “the Scriptures of the prophets” (Rom. 16:26), and Peter himself called the Scriptures the “*prophecy of the Scripture*” (2 Pet. 1:20). And this was how he knew this deceitful couple wasn't being totally up front with him.

Now when Peter asked Ananias why *Satan had filled his heart* to lie, that makes it sound like Ananias was just minding his own business when Satan snuck up behind him and filled his heart and *forced* him to lie. But Peter was holding *Ananias* responsible for his lie because he knew that that's not how it happened.

The Devil Didn't Make Him Do It

You see, Peter had heard the Lord say,

“...from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts... wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness....All these evil things come from within...” (Mark 7:21-23).

I'm old enough to remember how comedian Flip Wilson used to joke, “The devil made me do it!” when he'd do something wrong. But the Lord said that sins like the “deceit” Ananias and his wife were committing come from within us. Thanks to the perverse fallen sinful nature we all inherited from Adam, we don't need any help from Satan to sin.

If you think about it, that just makes sense. Satan is not omnipresent like God is. He's a finite being who can't be everywhere at once like God can (Psa. 139:7-12).

He also has a finite number of demons, so he can't possibly be behind every sin that men commit all over the world.



Having said that, there were times when Satan *was* behind the sins of men. Like when the Lord and the Twelve had just finished eating the last passover meal together, and John says:

“...supper being ended, *the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him*” (John 13:2).

Satan may not be able to be everywhere at once, but when the Lord was here on earth, you can be sure that he was on Him and his apostles like white on rice, to *personally* afflict the Lord and instigate as much sin among the Twelve as he could.

But even with Judas, Satan didn't overpower his will and *make him* betray the Lord. Judas was just a covetous guy! He *wanted* those 30 pieces of silver that Israel's leaders promised to pay him for selling out his Master (Matt. 26:15). So Satan didn't have to twist his arm to get him to betray the Lord. He *let* Satan enter into him.

And that's what happened here with Ananias as well. Now that the Lord had ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9), Satan turned all of his attention to the 120 disciples who gathered at Pentecost (Acts 1:15). And when he saw that Ananias was just as covetous as Judas, he saw his chance to infiltrate those disciples in Peter's church. That's why Peter asked him “why” Satan had filled his heart to lie to Peter. He was asking why Ananias *let him*.

Now I know it says Ananias lied to *the Holy Ghost* (Acts 5:3), not Peter. But don't forget that, speaking of the disciples, we read that “they were all *filled with the Holy Ghost*” (Acts 2:4). That means when Ananias lied to *Peter*, he was really lying to the Spirit within Peter.

It Takes Two to Do More Than Tango

And as we read on, we see Peter has some follow-up questions for Ananias:

“While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God” (Acts 5:4).

That word “conceived” is a word we usually use to describe what happens when a baby comes into existence. It takes two to conceive a baby, and it took both Satan and Ananias to conceive the lie he told Peter.

But that word *conceive* should make you think of some things that James wrote:

“A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways...the rich... shall pass away...the man that *endureth* temptation...shall receive the crown of life...But every man is tempted, *when he is drawn away of his own lust*, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, *bringeth forth death*” (James 1:8,10,12,14,15).

I think James was actually describing what was going on at Pentecost. I mean, he talked about *conceiving* sin, like Peter did, and made mention of “a double minded man.” Doesn’t that sound like Ananias? He wanted to be part of the little flock, but he also wanted to keep part of the money



that he was supposed to turn in, so he conspired with Satan to conceive that lie. That sounds double-minded to me!

And when James says that the man who *endured* temptation would receive life, it’s obvious that he meant *eternal* life. But that means when he wrote that the rich would “pass away,” it’s just as obvious that he meant the rich would pass away *eternally*. And that too goes along with what

was happening at Pentecost. The only rich people at Pentecost were the ones who *didn’t* sell all they had, and so were not saved. That explains why the Lord said “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, *than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*” (Matt. 19:24).

But now, here we have a dispensational difference. Rich men can be saved today, in the dispensation of grace, without having to share their riches. Our apostle Paul never tells *us* to sell all to be saved. He tells the rich to “be rich in good works” (1 Tim. 6:18), not to give up their riches.

But as we’re about to see, when Ananias let covetousness conceive in his heart, it brought him *death*, just as James said it would. He ends up dying in this passage—and not just physically. We know he also died *eternally* for not complying with God’s terms of salvation.

Who’s Who in the Godhead?

But now, did you notice that in verse 3 Peter said that Ananias lied to *the Holy Ghost*, but here in verse 4 he says that he lied to *God*. You know what that means, don’t you? It means the Holy Ghost is God!

If you are thinking, “Who doesn’t know that the Holy Spirit is God?” the answer is, *plenty of people*. There are a lot of people who don’t even think He is a *person*. They think He’s some kind of mysterious force, like “the Force” in Star Wars. But you can’t *lie* to a force! You can’t lie to electricity, you can’t lie to magnetism, and if

the Holy Spirit is just a force, you can't lie to Him either. But the Bible says Ananias did!

As we read on, we get to the part where Ananias' sin brought forth death, just as James said it would:

"And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things" (Acts 5:5).

It seems pretty clear to me that *Peter struck Ananias dead*. People get a little uneasy when I insist that that's what happened here, but you can't easily read that verse and come to the conclusion that Ananias died of natural causes, especially when Peter struck his wife dead a short time later. That's just too much of a coincidence.

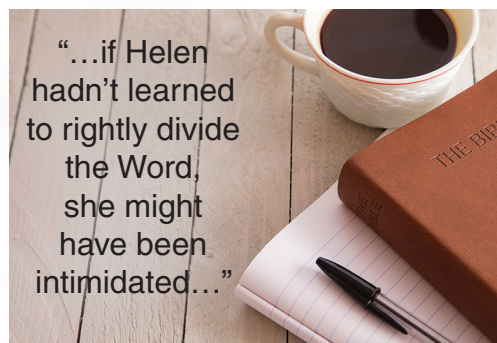
If you don't think God would give men the power to inflict physical punishment, I remind you that this wasn't the first time He gave men such power (2 Kings 1:10-12; Acts 13:11). Peter wasn't the first man with the power to inflict punishment like that, and he won't be the last either (Rev. 11:3,5).

But in all this we have another dispensational difference, for pastors and spiritual leaders *today* cannot inflict physical punishment, although some of them *claim* they can.

A Dispensational Power

Soon after I became a pastor in 1979, a lady named Helen joined our church and learned how to rightly divide the Word. When she did, she stopped sending

money to a popular televangelist. Soon after, he mailed her a letter saying that *something bad would happen to her* if she didn't resume giving to his ministry! I told her that what he was doing was nothing short of *extortion*, and took the letter to our local post office. But the postmaster informed me that there was nothing he could do about such mailings, for they were protected under the freedom of religion. How sad!



But remember, preachers like that aren't being unbiblical, they're just being *undispensational*. Men in the Bible had the power to inflict physical punishment; they just don't have that power *today* in the dispensation of grace. And if Helen hadn't learned to rightly divide the Word, she might have been intimidated by that televangelist, as I'm sure millions of others have been.

Now after Ananias died, they didn't just leave his body lying around, as we see as we read on:

"And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him" (Acts 5:6).

I like to joke that that's why God created young men, to do

all our heavy lifting for us! But seriously, if you are a young man, I don't have to tell you that "the glory of young men is their strength" (Prov. 20:29), and *Christian* young men should *use* their strength to serve the Lord. I'm sure if you ask your pastor for ways that you can use your young strength to assist the ministry of your church, he'll be able to point you in the right direction. When I was a teenager, I shoveled snow from the church walk, burned all the old paint off the exterior of our church parsonage and repainted it, and used my God-given strength to serve Him in other ways. Of course, these days the roles are reversed, and I'm the aging pastor who asks the young men in my church to lift things to save the strain on my bad back.

A Taste of Heaven

What we're seeing in all this is a taste of what life will be like in the kingdom of heaven on earth. We know that God was giving them a *taste* of the kingdom here, for Hebrews 6:4,5 describes the people at Pentecost as,

"...those who...tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted...the powers of the world to come."

"The world to come" here is the kingdom, and one of the "powers" of the world to come is the power to strike men dead.

Now you might be wondering why anyone would *need* to be stricken dead in the kingdom of heaven. But while the kingdom

will be heaven on earth, men will still have the ability to sin during the first thousand years of God's eternal kingdom.

That explains why the Lord compared the kingdom to "leaven" (Matt. 13:33). In the Bible, *leaven* is a type of *sin*. When a man committed unspeakable fornication in the Corinthian church, Paul warned the Corinthians to put him out of the assembly (1 Cor. 5:2,13), for "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (v. 6). When a church countenances that kind of unabashed sinful behavior, it is sure to spread like leaven.

But the Lord's parable teaches us that the leaven of sin is going to exist in the millennial kingdom. And as we are seeing pictured here in Acts 5 in this taste of the kingdom, when sin arises, it will be *judged*. That explains why Isaiah's description of the kingdom (Isa. 65:24,25) included his prediction that "the child shall die an hundred years old" (v. 20). After the longevity we read about in Genesis returns in the kingdom, a man who dies at 100 will be considered a child, for had he not sinned he would not have died.

Better Watch Your Back

But in closing, we talked about how the devil dogged the steps of the Lord Jesus when He was here among us, in order to personally afflict Him, and then turned his attention to His disciples after He ascended into heaven. But where do you think you can find Satan today, in the dispensation of grace? Hanging around believers, of course—especially *grace*

believers who know Paul's gospel! Maybe not him personally, but he has a lot of demons! There's no evidence in Paul's epistles that you have a guardian angel, but if you preach Paul's gospel, you just might have your own personal devil!

If you think that's a good reason to study God's Word, *you're right*. If you think that's a good reason to attend a sound grace church to hear God's Word proclaimed rightly divided, you're

right about that as well. There's simply no way to learn to wield "the shield of faith" (Eph. 6:16), or don any of the other pieces of spiritual armor that God supplies to protect you from the wicked one, without letting His rightly divided Word find deep roots in the soil of your heart, and letting it become part of the very fabric of your life. Why not start *right now*?

You'll be eternally glad you did. 

Question Box

"Why would you quote freemasons like Benjamin Franklin and Will Rogers? By quoting these men you give credence to freemasonry."

I felt comfortable quoting these men in my article in the September issue because our apostle Paul didn't hesitate to quote men whom he knew were unsaved in a couple of instances.

First, in speaking to "certain philosophers" in Athens (Acts 17:18), Paul reinforced the spiritual point he was making by saying,

"...as certain also of your own poets have said..." (v. 28).

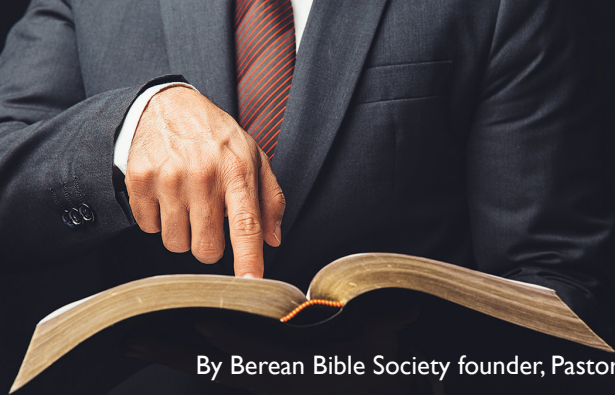
Then, Paul actually quoted a *false prophet* when he warned Titus about the "many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers" in Crete (Titus 1:10), and then added,

"One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars..." (Titus 1:12).

As you can see, our apostle Paul felt comfortable quoting unsaved men if what those unsaved men said was true and helped him make or reinforce a spiritual point.

Over the years, we here at *Berean Bible Society* have been criticized for quoting pastors and teachers who were not *grace* pastors and teachers. But when what these men say is true, and quoting them helps us make a spiritual point, we feel we have good precedent for this in the example of the apostle who tells us, "be ye followers of me" (1 Cor. 4:16).

—Pastor Ricky Kurth



A Personal Testimony

By Berean Bible Society founder, Pastor Cornelius R. Stam

(Drawn from the Introduction to his book Holding Fast The Faithful Word)

Most of the men of God whom I had come to know...frequently expressed regret that certain members of our family have come to believe that water baptism does not belong to this present dispensation; but, speaking for myself, I cannot recall any of them ever approaching me with the Word in an effort to show me the error of my way, with the single exception of Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr. This is typical of the treatment that many of our “grace” folk have received at the hands of those who once were closest to them.

Theirs is a great sin, for professing to love us and expressing grave concern over our lapse into “heresy,” they make no attempts to rescue or restore us. They just pray for us. It's simpler that way, for then one need not face facts or answer questions from the Scriptures.

We are convinced that had we gone into Seventh Day Adventism or Christian Science or joined Jehovah's Witnesses most of them would have come, Bible in hand, to show us the error of our way; but in this case they seem to have concluded that they are not their brothers' keepers; indeed, they seem afraid lest we might seek contact with them!

It is further significant that while the teachings of the so-called “Grace Movement” on the subject of baptism have aroused such bitter opposition among Fundamentalists for more than a quarter of a century, we know of no book of even one hundred pages that has been written to refute them, and almost invariably the smaller books which have been published to answer them have seriously misrepresented our views. We know of no book or booklet that has answered by the Scriptures what we teach.

What is wrong, that our leading Bible scholars do not answer by the Scriptures a teaching which manifestly disturbs them so greatly? Is it possible that they cannot? that the doctrine of the “one baptism” is a Scriptural truth, which they should be proclaiming instead of opposing? In this case, their sin is the greater, for it means that they are wilfully closing their eyes to God's Word, thus depriving multitudes of sincere believers of precious truths which God would have them know.

Their case is similar to that of the spiritual leaders of our Lord's day, to whom He said:

“...ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered” (Luke 11:52).



Don't Be Beguiled

PASTOR JIM HARLEY
Guest Writer

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col. 2:8).

Paul in Colossians chapter 2 deals with the subject of being “beguiled,” being tricked and deceived into turning to religion and leaving this wonderful knowledge of the grace of God and settling for something lesser: “religion.”

The definition of beguile—to practice guile, craft, wily, intended to deceive. To practice guile upon, to deceive to cheat, to trick, or dupe.

Paul uses this word in Colossians chapter 2 to show that religion tricks you out of pleasing God and keeps you from standing for the mystery, grace truth.

The Bible has some examples of beguiling that we will look at to better understand what Satan is trying to do (Eph. 6:10-18).

Jacob. “And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?” (Gen. 29:25). Jacob served seven years for the hand of Rachel but was deceived and married Leah, Rachel’s older sister, and had to serve another seven years to marry

Rachel. The beguiler was beguiled in this illustration. (Jacob had beguiled the birthright from Esau his older brother in Genesis).

Joshua. “And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us?” (Josh. 9:22). They had strategically worked out a plan to deceive, and it worked. Satan works with deception and deceit to get an advantage over us.

The Plague of Peor. “For they vex you with their wiles, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor’s sake” (Num. 25:18). Satan couldn’t get them to change their beliefs, so he caused them to intermingle with the heathen to confuse them.


False Prophets. “Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children” (2 Pet. 2:14). Here we have a warning against apostate teachers, beguiling unstable souls.

Eve. “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Cor. 11:3). The greatest example and insight into beguiling by Satan is in Genesis chapter 3: “Hath God said?” God in Colossians 2 does not want grace believers to be beguiled by Satan and turn to religion. The mystery is such a blessed truth to know and understand and to be part of.

Demas. “For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica...” (2 Tim. 4:10). I believe Demas was beguiled by enticing words.

Now think of the lottery. One, two, or three people will win a lottery that millions have contributed to by paying money for lottery tickets and never getting anything back. In the Clearinghouse Sweepstakes, millions of people order magazines for the opportunity to be the winner of a sweepstakes check that only a few receive.

How about fundamental believers who are told that God wants to bless you with health, wealth, and prosperity? This is a false system that is beguiling people today. There is no one being healed by a faith healer in this age of grace. But yet, Satan beguiles people through enticing words that everything is physically going to be perfect if you have enough faith or pray the right prayer. So many leave their grace church and start attending a church that promises them an easy life. God never promised us today that all will be easy or good or perfect. What is promised to us from God is: an eternal home in heaven, the forgiveness of our sins, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Only by rightly dividing the Word of truth and seeing the mystery do you understand what God is doing today positionally before Him and practically in the way to live. Don’t be beguiled into turning away; stand for and in the blessed truth that we have from God that was given to the Apostle Paul for us today. Grace through faith alone in the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4). 

The Conversion of Saul

(From a message given at the 2021 BBF Summer Conference in Tipp City, Ohio)

PASTOR KEVIN SADLER
BBS President

Imagine, if you will, that the most dangerous terrorist in the world has just left God's holy and blessed city in the United States, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (where I was born), and he is on his way to your home. He is specifically targeting believers in Christ for destruction. His intent is to arrest you and have you put to death.

If you found out he was coming, you would surely consider leaving your area. But what if, after locking the doors, you then decide to pray. How would you pray?

Maybe you would pray that God would somehow strike him dead or that he would have a divine accident along the way. Perhaps your prayer would be that he'd be delayed so you'd have time to get far away, or that something would direct his attention away from your location. You might pray that God would set a hedge of protection around you and your home.

Would you ever expect or consider praying that the terrorist would be converted along the

way and saved from all his sins, and become a believer in Christ and have a complete change of heart and mind? Probably not! Yet, that's exactly what happened to the terrorist named Saul of Tarsus. How unexpected his conversion was for believers of that time! Having come from God's city, Jerusalem, and just outside the city that Saul was targeting, Christ broke through the clouds and saved Saul by grace and completely redirected the trajectory of his entire life.

Letters to Damascus

"And Saul, yet breathing out threatnings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1,2).

Since Stephen's martyrdom, Saul had been persecuting those who believed in Jesus of Nazareth

as Israel's Messiah (Acts 8:1-3), and so throughout this time he had been "breathing out threatenings and slaughter [murder]" against the followers of the Lord. Saul became a one-man army against what he considered to be the most dangerous heresy of his day: that Jesus Christ was the Messiah and had risen from the dead.

The words "breathing out" paint the picture that Saul was intense in carrying out his persecution against those who believed in Christ and that he was like a wild beast that snorts before it attacks. Saul was consumed by his murderous mission. Threatening and slaughter had become the very air that Saul breathed.

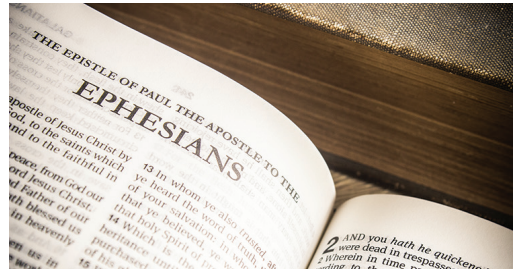
Having persecuted believers in and around Jerusalem, Saul's zeal led him to travel to far-off cities (Acts 26:11-12), like Damascus in Syria, to search for believers there. Thus, he "went unto the high priest," desiring "letters," or legal documents addressed to the Jewish synagogues in Damascus.



The letters given to Saul granted him permission and legal authority from the high priest to go to each synagogue in that area to place under arrest all those who believed in Christ and to extradite

them to Jerusalem. Acts 22:5 adds the detail that they were to be brought to Jerusalem "for to be punished."

Stop and think about these "letters." Saul desired these letters so he could continue breathing out threatenings and slaughter against Christ's followers. They were letters of hatred, violence, condemnation suffering, and death. Then think about the 13 letters in your Bible authored by



the Apostle Paul. These are letters which encourage the saints; they are letters of grace and love and faith in Christ, which declare the good news of Christ's death and resurrection and our eternal life in Him. When you compare these two sets of letters, you know this is a man who was converted and transformed by the risen, glorified Christ.

Seeing the Light

"And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" (Acts 9:3-4).

As Saul was still charging full speed ahead with his persecution and had almost reached Damascus, "suddenly there shined round

about him a light from heaven.” Saul had been walking in darkness, but then he suddenly was confronted with the true Light, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:9).

The light engulfing Saul was not anything from the material creation. In Acts 26:13, Paul described it as “above the brightness of the sun.” It surpassed the brilliance of the sun, which was shining in its full strength “at mid-day” (26:13) at that moment. This bright light from heaven was the radiance of the glory of God. And this glory-light, and the power of it, caused Saul and those with him to fall to the earth (9:4; 26:14).

Saul then heard a voice from heaven asking him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” The repetition of Saul’s name was for emphasis, but repetition of names in the Bible is also born out of an intensity of personal feeling at critical moments.

When Abraham was about to sacrifice his son Isaac on Mount Moriah, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, “Abraham, Abraham” (Gen. 22:11). As He was appointing Moses as Israel’s deliverer, out of the burning bush, Jehovah God called to him and said, “Moses, Moses” (Ex. 3:4). And when our Lord was made sin for us and was forsaken by the Father at the Cross, the Lord cried out, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” (Matt. 27:46).

Here at a critical point in God’s dealings with mankind, and to stop this man who was severely persecuting His people, the Lord called out, “Saul, Saul.” First,

we find that Christ knew Saul’s name, and second, Christ knew what Saul was doing, “For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He pondereth all his goings” (Prov. 5:21). Thus, the Lord asked him, “Why persecutest thou Me?”

The Lord didn’t ask Saul why he was persecuting them, or the Kingdom Church, or My Kingdom Church, but why he was persecuting “Me.” Christ so identifies Himself with His people that to persecute His people is to persecute Him. Christ is so inseparably united to His people that what they suffer He suffers, and their persecution is His persecution.

What Will You Have Me to Do?

“And he said, Who art Thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do” (Acts 9:5-6).

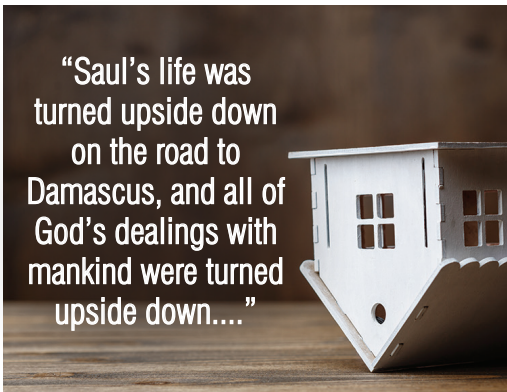
Saul asked the One speaking to him, “Who art Thou, Lord?” The word “Lord” in the original Greek does not in itself imply that Paul regarded the voice he heard as belonging to God. However, given the supernatural aspect of the event—the bright light from heaven, and the fact that the One speaking to him knew his name and what he was doing—it seems evident that Paul must have suspected he was being addressed by the Sovereign One of heaven.

Saul asked, “Who are you Lord?” but he didn’t expect the answer to his question. He did not believe that Jesus of Nazareth was Lord, or God, or risen from the dead. He thought Christ’s followers were mistaken at best and liars at worst. Thus, the Lord’s response to the trembling questioner—“I am Jesus”—was astonishing. In that moment, everything Saul believed was shattered as he suddenly learned that Jesus is God and is risen from the dead. It changed Saul’s view of his whole world. In that instant, Saul knew that Christ is all that He claimed to be, that He is the living Savior.

Saul was now seeing the same One Stephen had seen as Saul witnessed the death of Stephen (Acts 7:55-60). Stephen was the last person before Saul to have seen the resurrected, glorified Christ. Saul consented to Stephen’s death and was complicit in it in that he cared for the outer robes of those who stoned Stephen; it is therefore a powerful testimony to God’s infinite grace that Saul would be the next one to see Jesus Christ. The connection between Stephen and Saul is crucial in understanding the Bible. With Stephen, Israel was temporarily set aside in unbelief. With Saul/Paul, God turned to the Gentiles and raised up the Apostle of the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13).

The Lord told Saul that “it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” “Pricks” refers to goads, which were long sharpened sticks. In biblical times, goads were used to goad or prod oxen along (Judg. 3:31). When oxen

were used for plowing, if they did not move as the farmer desired, he would prick them with a goad. Sometimes a stubborn ox would kick back against it and harm itself, driving the goad deeper into its own flesh and causing itself more pain.

A white wooden house is shown lying on its side on a wooden surface. The house has several windows and a door, but its orientation is upside down, with the roof facing the ground. This visual metaphor represents the idea of being turned upside down, as mentioned in the text.

“Saul’s life was turned upside down on the road to Damascus, and all of God’s dealings with mankind were turned upside down....”

The Lord told Saul that he had been kicking back against the spiritual pricks to his heart, kicking against the working and conviction of the Holy Spirit. These pricks were a result of the faithful testimony of those whom Saul persecuted. It pricked Saul’s heart to see their suffering, their devotion to Christ, and even their willingness to die for Him and the truth of His resurrection. However, Saul had been stubbornly kicking back against those pricks, resisting the Spirit, and refusing to believe the truth.

The Lord told Saul that those pricks were “hard,” or difficult and painful to kick against. Saul was only harming himself in doing so, because you can’t fight, rebel, and kick against the pricks of God’s working in your life and not feel pain. It’s much better and wiser simply to trust Him.

You can see from Saul's response that his heart was softened and won: "And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). That's a heart that has been broken. Right here is Saul's conversion.

As we ponder the circumstances of his conversion, we take note that there was no baptism on the Damascus road. There was no Lord's Supper table. There were no good works for him to do. It was just Christ and Saul. And the one and only thing Saul did was trust Christ *alone*. That's all we do too. We follow Paul's pattern for salvation and just "believe on Him [Christ] to life everlasting" (1 Tim. 1:16).

Saul's conversion tells us that the people we believe to be the most unreachable are, in fact, reachable. It teaches us that anyone is savable by the grace of God. By God's limitless grace, He saved Saul, the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15). And He will save anyone who believes and trusts Christ as Savior.

After he believed, Saul wanted to know God's desire for him and for every person who trusts Christ as Savior: "Lord, What will you have me to do?" As it was with Saul, God would have us hand our lives over, being willing to do anything and go anywhere for the One who saved us by His grace.

From that point on, Saul gave up his rights to himself and handed his life over to his Savior. Before his conversion, all Saul could think of was what he could do to Jesus of Nazareth and His followers, but after he was saved,

all he could think of is what he could do *for* Christ. And we see how this proud man, on his way to arrest others, was himself arrested by the Lord and became a humble, zealous servant of Christ for the rest of his days.

The Meaning of Saul's Conversion

"And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink" (Acts 9:8-9).

The vision of the Lord and His glory blinded Saul. When Paul recounted his conversion in Acts 22, he recorded that he "could not see for the glory of that light" (22:11). And thus, the one who came storming to Damascus with eyes wide in fury and hatred was led by the hand into that city, blind and helpless.

For three days, Saul then sat in his own personal darkness. This was a deeply significant time of spiritual reflection and prayer during which he did not eat or drink, as he considered the meaning and richness of his conversion. And we, the Church, still need to ponder and consider the depth and meaning of Saul's conversion: the chief of sinners saved apart from Israel and the law, by grace *alone* through faith *alone*. Why did this happen? What does this mean?

Saul's life was turned upside down on the road to Damascus, and all of God's dealings with mankind were turned upside down and changed, beginning

“Saul’s conversion marked the dawning of a new dispensation...”

with this conversion. Saul’s conversion marked the dawning of a new dispensation, a new way of dealing with mankind, and to Paul was revealed and committed the dispensation of the grace of God and the revelation of the mystery which had been kept secret since the world began (Eph. 3:1-9; Rom. 16:25).

God in His providence maneuvered Saul out of the land of Israel. Once he was outside the borders of the land, *then* Christ appeared to him. The reason for this was that, in the new program of God, this man was to be the Apostle to the Gentiles (1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11).


Saul saw the glorified Lord from heaven, and so began Christ’s heavenly ministry as the Head of the Church, the Body of Christ (Col. 1:18).

This dispensation of grace was inaugurated with an appearance of Christ from heaven on the road to Damascus, and it will end with an appearance of Christ from heaven at the Rapture of the Church (1 Thes. 4:13-18).

The dispensation of grace began with the salvation of an individual by the grace and longsuffering of God, and this dispensation of grace is about the salvation of individuals. “Now is the day of salvation” in 2 Corinthians 6:2 is a reminder

and challenge to the Church that today is a day of salvation and that we need to act in it, sharing Christ and winning souls in keeping with the Church’s ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-21).

Christ had us Gentiles in view when he saved Saul. God saved Saul for your sake and for mine. Because of Paul’s conversion, message, and ministry to the nations we are saved by grace and have the free gift of eternal life and a relationship with the living God. And thus, we should each stop and thank God and give Him glory for the conversion of Saul.

Reflecting on what took place in the conversion of Saul, William Barclay stated this: “When we accept Christ we enter into three new relationships: (1) We enter into a new relationship with God. The judge becomes the father; the distant becomes the near; strangeness becomes intimacy and fear becomes love. (2) We enter into a new relationship with our fellow men. Hatred becomes love; selfishness becomes service; and bitterness becomes forgiveness. (3) We enter into a new relationship with ourselves. Weakness becomes strength; frustration becomes achievement; and tension becomes peace.”¹ 

1. William Barclay, AZQuotes, accessed October 4, 2021, <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/589354>.



The Greatest Giver

PASTOR TRACY **LESAN**
Contributing Writer

As earthly parents delight to give to their children, so God delights to give to the creatures whom He has made. The Lord Jesus affirmed this when He said, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?” (Matt. 7:11). Jesus’ apostles added their testimony to this as well, declaring that God “left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts 14:17). The Creator of heaven and earth richly bestows what we need to live and is even involved in the minutest details of our lives. Every “breath” that we take, every “move” that we make, is possible only because of Him (Acts 17:24-28).

And God is infinitely more generous than we! In stark contrast to our natural tendency to do good only to those who return the favor, God showers blessings upon everyone without exception: “He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:45). Even those who reject God—who worship idols or pay homage to the evolutionary trinity of time, chance, and natural selection—are allowed to partake of His gracious provisions. Every day. Entirely for free. By furnishing such feasts of lovingkindness, God wishes to draw us to “seek” and, ultimately, “find” Him, the only living God (Acts 17:27). Have you started looking yet?

The Greatest Gift

The blessings of this creation are, indeed, out of this world. Yet there is still more. From God’s generous hand we can receive yet another gift, one so precious that He spared no expense in preparing it for us. All of earth’s riches combined are but dust in the shadow of its surpassing splendor. Its matchless benefits extend far beyond the

ability of flesh and blood to estimate. The most enlightened minds can only faintly grasp its endless worth. Yet the Bible expresses it in just two words: “the gift of God is eternal life” (Rom. 6:23). Eternal life! Rapturous existence with the glorious God of the universe forever. That is without doubt the greatest gift of all. Tragically, a myriad of false and conflicting teachings have, for centuries, shrouded this vital truth.

One of the most common misconceptions regarding eternal life is that virtually everybody will get it. The reigning image of God is that of an all-tolerant grandfatherly figure who is concerned about little more than welcoming through “the pearly gates” as many as possible, regardless of our foul behavior or even unbelief. Very few accept the reality of “hell” as a place of eternal condemnation,¹ and even most of those who do, it seems, imagine that only particularly wicked specimens like Hitler or Stalin—or their personal enemies—will actually end up there.

Another erroneous, though widespread, view could be labelled “scales theology,” the notion that God one day will “weigh” all our deeds and, if the good outweigh the bad, let us into heaven. With this understanding in mind, we intuitively keep a running log of all the times that we have attended church or prayed or helped elderly ladies cross the street. As

the number rises, we can almost see the “good” side of the scales getting heavier, until we eventually gain a degree of certainty that we will pass the test. To be sure, some of us do get slightly troubled when we consider the bad things that we have done. In more enlightened moments, we may even wonder, “What if my giving a dime or even a hundred dollars to the homeless guy on the street won’t be enough to cancel out the lie that I told my boss last week?” But then we quickly soothe our Spirit-pricked conscience with comparison therapy. “Of course I sin. But so does everybody else. And besides, I’m at least as good as most of the people that I know, if not better. So I’ll probably be OK after all.”

I am quite familiar with such false beliefs, because I used to hold them myself. Despite having grown up attending church every week and hearing countless stories and sermons from the Bible, I did not really know the Bible well at all. It was not until I was 17 that I began to take God’s Word seriously and read it—not just for a few hurried



minutes before my occasional turn to teach in the church's youth group, but frequently (eventually daily) and actually to learn for myself. And I soon discovered that what God said in His Book about His gift of life was very different from my pet theories.

Specifically, I learned that God would not automatically accept almost everybody into heaven and that hell was not reserved for only a few whom I judged to be exceptionally bad. I also learned that God was not only loving but also holy and just. Therefore, He cannot simply overlook our bad deeds or somehow cancel them out. He must punish evil. Because of our sin, each of us is separated from him: "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Having the right perspective is crucial. When we look at people up close, we see many differences: big nose...too skinny...cute blonde ...cool shoes! But have you ever peered down from the top of a tall building? From there, we all look like black specks moving around. This analogy helped me to understand what our "goodness" is like in God's sight. He evaluates us not based upon how we compare with others but based upon how we compare with Him. Even those whom we admire as moral giants, like Mother Theresa or Mahatma Gandhi, are but ants when viewed from the heights of God's holiness. As the verse above says, it is His glory that we "come short" of, not the standards of those around us.

It does not matter in the least, then, how we see ourselves or how others see us. All that matters is how God sees us, and the Bible clearly pronounces His verdict: guilty. We are all equally guilty of treason against the Heavenly Crown, and we all deserve His punishment: "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (2 Thes. 1:9).

Once I grasped the sobering reality that hell was real, that I deserved to be there because of my sin, and that I was getting closer to it each day, only then did I begin to appreciate the majesty of God's gift: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). Rather than receive from God the just "wage" or punishment for my sins, I could gain the boundless blessing of a heavenly home forever, and that as a "gift," absolutely free! Why free? Because Jesus Christ paid for it by dying for our sins: "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" (Rom. 3:23-24). His incomprehensible loss was my infinite gain: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9).

Always before, I had thought that I must be baptized, go to church, say my prayers, help others, and be good enough in order to be accepted by God. But now I realized that God was offering me eternal life

without cost. All that I needed to do was accept it by faith, no longer trusting in myself but only in the Lord Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection. This I finally did with great eagerness, and what a difference it made! The assurance of God's forgiveness, an unwavering hope for the future without the fear of hell, the joy of knowing God personally and of experiencing His love—I had never known anything like it. Decades later, I still marvel at the miracle of His saving grace.

As we sit at the table on Thanksgiving Day this month, let us make a point to thank our Creator for the precious gift of physical life and all that He continually gives to sustain it. And let us express once again our deepest gratitude for the greatest gift of all—life everlasting in Jesus Christ. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift” (2 Cor. 9:15).

1. The Lord Jesus often warned about hell (see Matt. 5:22, 29-30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:33). Another name for the place of eternal condemnation is the “lake of fire” (see Rev. 19:20; 20:10-15; 21:8).



Veterans of a Different Kind of Battle



As with most Christian organizations, the financial burden is usually carried by a small percentage of the overall number. However, like the veterans of foreign wars, the numbers of these soldiers of the Cross, who give sacrificially so others might hear Paul's gospel, are slowly diminishing. With more and more of these veterans being called home, the Lord may well be calling you to step forward to fill their shoes. The question is, will you take advantage of this opportunity to the praise of His glory?

Of course, we are not referring to those dear saints who are on fixed incomes, barely able to make ends meet. Rather, we have those in mind that are in a position to help, but assume that the needs of the Lord's work are being supplied. God indeed has been gracious, but always remember, He uses those who are willing vessels through whom He might channel His blessings. If you are not currently a donor to the ministries of the *Berean Bible Society*, will you prayerfully consider giving a regular monthly donation of \$25, \$50, or \$100, as the Lord has prospered you? It would be a tribute to those who are now gone who made it possible for you to enjoy more fully the riches of His grace. —Paul M. Sadler



PASTOR TO PASTOR

One Sunday morning a Christian man walked into the church that I pastor in addition to my duties here at *Berean Bible Society*. When I asked this man what had prompted him to pay us a visit, he said that it was because his daughter had gone out on a date with my son, and he wanted to make sure that ours was a solid Bible-teaching church. That date didn't lead to more dating, but that concerned dad soon became a solid grace believer!

Some years later, after finishing my usual late night grocery shopping, I pushed my cart out of the store and stopped to toss some bags of water softener salt onto my cart. I'd paid for them inside, but the store kept them out front on a pallet due to their 40-pound size. I then broke into a run as I pushed the cart toward my car, as I often did in those days to get a little exercise wherever I could grab it. This raised the suspicions of the store security guard, who pulled alongside me in his unmarked car and asked to see a receipt for those bags of salt. I explained to him that I wasn't allowed to steal, being the pastor of a local church and all, and invited him to attend our services. It turned out he had just started watching Les Feldick on television, and so it didn't take long before he too was a grace believer.

If you pastors pray that the people of your community will be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth as I do, I hope these examples of how God answers prayer will encourage you. The door to door canvassing that I've done throughout most of the community hasn't yielded any visitors, but God is not limited to such outreach measures when it comes to His ability to answer our prayers for our communities. He still answers prayer by His Spirit using His Word in the hearts of His people, and I know that He will answer yours if you continue to pray—hopefully without you nearly getting arrested for stealing salt!

—Pastor Ricky Kurth

Arizona Bible Conference

February 4-6, 2022

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 Dille at jjdster@gmail.com, 623-377-3071 or
Jim Humphrey at jhumph783@gmail.com, 623-466-7636



BBS Letter Excerpts



From Botswana:

“Wow Wow!!! What an endowment!!! So simple yet so powerful. I am delighted, my brother, for the time you took to help me understand these rather tricky Scriptures. This will not be of benefit to me only, but to our little Bible study group as well, who are yearning for these truths.”

From Facebook:

“Okay, mind blown now. You have no idea how much meaty word is in your response to me that has opened my eyes to things I just didn’t get before....I can’t tell you how much I appreciate your response.”

From Georgia:

“This was perfect. It allowed me to break through the brain freeze on Acts 19. Now I can see that John did all the baptizing and Paul only laid hands and gave them the Spirit....Thanks, I needed that. I knew things didn’t fit, but couldn’t break out of my mental groove.” (Groovy! –Ed.).

From our Inbox:

“Oh my gosh, thank you so much for taking the time to explain [“that which is perfect,” (1 Cor. 13:10)] to me! I knew something wasn’t right but couldn’t put my finger on it. Thank you again!”

From Georgia:

“At the age of 65, I was introduced to right division. I am now 74, and my wife and I look forward to every new issue of the *Searchlight*.”

From California:

“We enjoyed fellowshiping with Pastor Kevin last month at *Grace Bible Church* in Anaheim, CA. Loved his preaching and Sunday School lessons.”

From New York:

“What denomination are you guys? I also read something helpful that you sent to me. I always wondered if I need to confess each sin in order to receive God’s forgiveness. Your booklet answered my question thoroughly. Forgiving myself is very hard to do, as is forgiving others when my emotions scream, NO!!! Thanks for your booklet!”

From Michigan:

“My granddaughter recently attended your singles get-together. Years ago when I was their age, my mother and I supported Pastor Stam on the radio. Our prayers are always with you.”

From West Virginia:

“We have been to a couple of the conferences and love Pastors Kevin and Ricky! We hope to see one of them in the Fall.” (If you mean in Ashtabula, Ohio, the boss will be there! –Ed.).

From Missouri:

“Thank you for the materials you put out. It helps with studies in my church. The *Searchlight* is always looked forward to each month. Thank you for helping strengthen my walk with the Lord!”

From California:

"An echo: I absolutely *love* your program! Pastor Kevin totally helps lift me up. The teaching has deepened my knowledge of the Word, and the Lord. You're doing exactly what the Scripture teaches. You're building up the Body of Christ."

From New York:

"Thank you Pastor Kevin Sadler, for your preaching and teaching on TV here in Spencerport, NY, Ch. 376 DirecTV....A real blessing to me. The application for our walk is encouraging to us."

From Wyoming:

"Thank you so much for the *Berean Searchlight*, which I have received since 1948." (That beats the editor's 50 years of receiving it by nearly a quarter century!—Ed.).

From Indiana:

"I like the articles that Jessica writes. She does a good job. I like the Christian woman/wife/Mom connection she made."

From our Inbox:

"Thank you Jessica for the Mother to Mother segment! This is definitely something relatable with our children ages 2 months, 2, 4, and 6 years old."

From Facebook:

"Thank Pastor Ken Lawson for the very clear explanation from the Word of God."

From Pennsylvania:

"For someone very visual like me, the timeline is a wonderful aid in understanding Paul's ministry. Thanks, Pastor Kevin!"

From Delaware:

"I am a new subscriber to the *Searchlight*, and I am so excited in reading my first article, 'Rightly Divided Worship.' I cannot tell you how this article blessed me in so many liberating ways!"

From New York:

"Wow, okay! I've been praying for more understanding and I think my prayers are being answered. After reading the material you attached, I've spent the last several hours...going through the BBS site....That question led me to seeing a whole new depth in the Bible through the way you explain things. It makes so much sense that water baptism was for the Jews and spiritual baptism for the Gentiles. I've never seen that division before."

From Florida:

"My Bible study group is studying John, and last week we were finishing chapter 15 and this verse. Loved the explanation on your MP3 message!"

From Michigan:

"My brother gave me a hard copy of *The Berean Searchlight* (March issue). I would like to be placed on your mailing list to receive them. I am a 74-year-old Vietnam Army veteran and have been the pastor of four churches." (Thank you for your service to our country.—Ed.).

From The Netherlands:

"My sister has accepted Christ because I started telling her about Jesus Christ....If you wouldn't answer my Bible questions, I couldn't explain to her about Jesus Christ. Thank you pastor!"

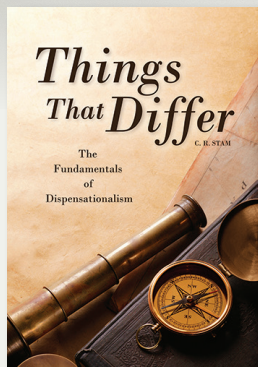
BE A BEREAN

"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."

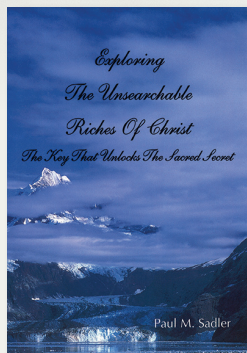
—Acts 17:11



If you're not feeling thankful for all we have in Christ this Thanksgiving, you may need to brush up on these foundational works.

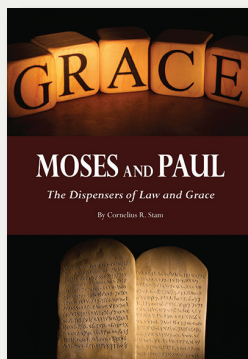


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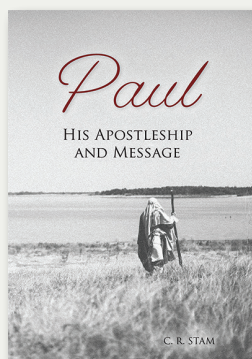


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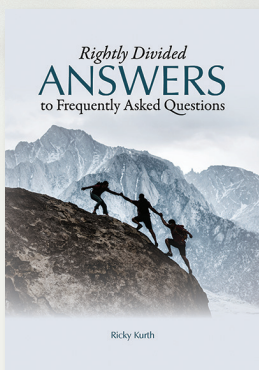


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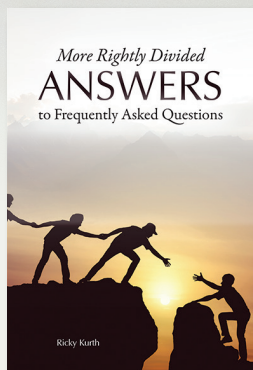


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News *and* Announcements

Ohio Bible Conference: If you've been thinking that it's probably too late to attend any of our conferences this year, think again! The warm and gracious grace believers at *First Grace Gospel Church* of Ashtabula have invited BBS president Pastor Kevin Sadler to bring our conference season to a close with two days of pre-Thanksgiving feasting on the bread of life. Just mark November 13,14 on your calendar, and host pastor Michael Morris will set aside a chair with your name on it if you give him a call at (440) 997-8191.

Additional Shipping Information: Last month we announced that all our orders would now include no extra charge for shipping. But we thought you should know that you have the option of paying for priority shipping if you call to let us know that you just can't wait to study our Bible study helps or share them with others. In addition, if you place an order with us from a foreign land, we can extend our free shipping offer to you as well, but only if you can wait for your order to arrive at the same time as the bi-monthly delivery of your *Searchlight*. Finally, the astronomical cost of shipping to Canada makes it impossible to not charge for shipping, so we've decided to give our northern neighbors a 20% discount on our prices.

Pastoral Opportunity: If you are a grace pastor looking for a church, the saints of *Grace Church* in Indianapolis just might be looking for you, now that Pastor Don Sommer has retired after many years of faithful service in the ministry. But you'll never know unless you contact Theresa Kemp to begin to get acquainted with the members of this historic grace church. You can reach her at tkemp454@gmail.com.

The answer to your Bible question might just be an email away! Our BBS homepage (www.bereanbiblesociety.org) has an "Ask A Question" link that you can click on to ask us about puzzling verses of Scripture or receive biblical counseling. If your question manages to stump all three grace pastors here at BBS, we'll consult with others and get back to you as quickly as we can. Just no "how many angels can dance on the head of a pin" questions please!



UPCOMING CONFERENCES TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR!

Northeast Ohio Bible Conference, November 13-14, 2021, Ashtabula, OH

Arizona Bible Conference, February 4-6, 2022, Sun City West, AZ

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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