# BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

May 2022



### **Feature Article**

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This month's cover features Langkawi Lighthouse at Langkawi Island, Malaysia.

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.

The Berean Searchlight is the official organ of the Berean Bible Society, and is sent free of charge to any who request it.

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Dear Friends in Christ,

In 1955, it was announced that several prominent fundamental Bible teachers had been asked to work on a revision of the Scofield Reference Bible, the study

Bible that had done so much to advance the dispensational approach to Bible study during the first half of the twentieth century. Sadly, *Berean Bible Society* founder Pastor C. R. Stam was not asked to help with that revision, nor were any other mid-Acts grace pastors and teachers. This meant it wasn't at all likely that the revised Scofield Bible would present the advancements that had been made in dispensational truth since Dr. Scofield's time.

Upon hearing about the proposed revision, Pastor Stam sent each of the men on the revision committee copies of his book *Things That Differ* and his four-volume commentary on the Book of Acts, along with a letter asking each of them to consider the progress the grace movement had made in dispensational understanding, and reflect it in their revised edition of Dr. Scofield's Bible. When his efforts were rewarded with only a few polite replies, and no assurance that the books he sent would even be read, Pastor Stam was undaunted. He asked the readers of the *Berean Searchlight* to mail postcards to the revision committee, petitioning its members to read at least *one* of the books Pastor Stam had provided them, before proceeding any further with their revision. In response, the committee received several thousand such postcards, but those pleas also seemed to fall on deaf ears.

Still undeterred, Pastor Stam wrote the men serving on the committee again, this time volunteering to meet with each one personally to discuss the truths they seemed unwilling to investigate by reading the literature he had shared with them. This offer was also ignored, and the resulting 1967 edition of the Scofield Bible is peppered with regressions from Dr. Scofield's dispensational position rather than advancements, advancements that could have done so much to eliminate the confusion that still abounds in the professing church to this day.

And so the need for a mid-Acts grace study Bible has gone unmet for decades—until now. Please join us in prayer that the reference Bible that Berean Bible Society is preparing will prove far more effective than any revision that could have been made to Dr. Scofield's pioneering work. Together let's shake the gates of heaven with petitions that the pastors laboring on this crucially important project will be able to produce a work that will shake the gates of Christendom here on earth with a clear understanding of the distinctiveness of Paul's apostleship and message.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Ricky Kurth



# TROJAN HORSE DOCTRINES

"One of the famous Greek stories...is the story about the conquering of the city of Troy. Greeks, you remember, laid siege to the city of Troy for over ten years. They were unable to capture it. In exasperation, a man by the name of Ulysses decided to have a large wooden horse built and left outside the city walls ostensibly as a gift to the unconquerable Trojans. And then the Greeks sailed away in apparent defeat, leaving this horse as a gift.

"The curious and proud Trojans felt confident enough to drag the horse inside the walls, though a priest named Laucoon warned them not to.

He said, 'I fear the Greeks, even when they bring gifts.' That night, Greek soldiers crept out of the horse, opened the city gates from within and let the rest of the Greek forces into Troy. The Greeks massacred the population of Troy, looted, and burned the city."

We are continually surrounded by deception and error as a result of the working and influence of "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world" (Rev. 12:9). Our enemy, Satan, presents his lies like a gift, similar to that of the Trojan horse. Unfortunately, for the last 2000 years, the Church, the Body of Christ, has opened the gates and pulled in deceitful and devastating Trojan horse doctrines. However, our apostle challenges us to

#### "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thes. 5:21).

The term "prove" means to test, examine, or scrutinize. This challenges the Church not to be gullible, naïve, or accepting of every new or interesting teaching that comes along, but rather to be discerning. We are to test and examine *all* things in light of the unchanging, infallible truth of the Word of God, rightly divided. Like the Bereans, we are to receive the word with all readiness of mind, but then search the Scriptures whether those things are so (Acts 17:11).

Here are some good questions to ask when proving a doctrine: *Is it honoring to Christ? Is it consistent with the character of God? Is it based on Scripture?* If yes, does the doctrine fit with the immediate context of the Scripture it's based on? With the dispensational context? With the teaching of the Bible as a whole?

After proving a doctrine, Paul's instruction is that we "hold fast that which is good." "Hold fast" means to retain, to keep firm possession of. As teaching is proved to be good and in line with the truth of the Word, then it's imperative that we embrace it, stand for it, and live it out.

—Pastor Kevin Sadler



One morning a mother said to her little boy: "Johnny, just last night I put four cookies in the cookie jar, and this morning there are two missing. How do you explain this?" Little Johnny answered, "Well, it was kind of dark, and I only saw two cookies"!

Just as that mom was surprised that those cookies were so soon removed from the cookie jar, the Apostle Paul was surprised that the Galatians were so soon removed from the grace message that he had taught them, as we see when he wrote them, saying,

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel" (Gal. 1:6).

The first thing we notice about this verse is that Paul doesn't actually say what I said, that the Galatians had been removed from the grace message. That was true, but that's not what he says. He says they were removed "from Him that called you into the grace of Christ."

Now the "him" there could be an example of Paul talking about himself in the third person, for in describing the apostasy that later swept through Asia, Paul wrote:

"...all they which are in Asia be turned away from me..." (2 Tim. 1:15).

Paul was *the apostle* of grace, so when the believers in Asia left the grace message, it was not inaccurate for Paul to say that they left *him*.

But I believe the one who called the Galatians into the grace of Christ was *God*. Every time Paul talks about how members of the Body of Christ are called, it is always *God* who does the calling. For example, Paul told the Corinthians,

"...God is faithful, by whom ye were called..." (1 Cor. 1:9 cf. Rom. 8:30; 1 Cor. 7:15; 1 Thes. 2:12; 2 Tim. 1:9).

As you can see from that verse and those others, believers are called *by God* into the grace of Christ.

Of course, they are not called in some *mysterious* way. God calls people *with the gospel*, as we see when Paul wrote of God,

# "...He called you by our gospel..." (2 Thes. 2:14).

So the Galatians had been called by God into the grace of Christ by the gospel of grace preached by Paul, and were saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8,9). But once we're saved by grace through faith, God expects us to "stand" in grace (Rom. 5:1,2). And do you know what the opposite of standing is? Isaiah 46:7 says,

## "...he standeth; from his place shall he not remove...."

One of the definitions of the word "stand" is to not be removed. So when Paul says the Galatians were removed from God who called them into the grace of Christ, it means they had failed to stand in grace, and those fools were soon parted from God's grace (3:1-3).

### **Leaving So Soon?**

Frankly, the apostle expected this would happen. He knew from his familiarity with the Old Testament Scriptures that men have a natural tendency to depart from God's truth in *any* dispensation. He only marveled that it had happened "so soon." He thought it would have taken longer, as we see when he predicted that

# "...in the latter times some shall depart from the faith..." (1 Tim. 4:1).

So here we have to ask how Satan did it. How did he manage to remove them from the *liberating* message of grace so quickly?

What was the *bait* that he dangled in front of them that was so *tantalizing* that they just couldn't resist it?



Well, to begin with, did you notice that Paul doesn't say they were removed from grace to a false gospel? He says they were removed to another gospel—and he meant another Bible gospel. He was talking about "the gospel of the kingdom" that the Lord preached to the people of Israel (Matt. 4:23). It's the same gospel He sent the twelve apostles to preach (Luke 9:1,2). But that is not the gospel of grace that the Lord sent Paul to preach! You see, the kingdom gospel included the law of Moses, as the Lord made clear when He told the twelve.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." (Matt. 28:19-20).

And what things had He commanded them to "observe?" Earlier He told them.

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do..." (Matt. 23:2,3).

The Lord commanded the twelve to observe the law that the Pharisees taught, and *then* told them to *teach* the law that He'd commanded them to observe *to the nations*.

But the Lord didn't send *Paul* to preach the law. He sent him to preach the very *opposite*, as we see when Paul tells *us*,

## "...ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14).

That's the grace of Christ that the Galatians had believed, but had removed themselves from unto the law of the kingdom gospel. It happened quickly because it's easy to fall for things that come out of the Bible when the Bible is not rightly divided. And when the Galatians fell for the law, Galatians 1:6 says they removed themselves from God.

#### All Is Not Lost

Now that doesn't mean they lost their salvation. It doesn't say that *God* removed Himself *from them*. It says *they* removed themselves *from God*. Remember, "God is faithful" (1 Cor. 1:9), and no matter how far you remove yourself from Him, He will never remove Himself from you, as Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:13,

# "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself."

Even if you get to the point where you no longer believe the gospel of grace that saved you, the Lord "cannot" deny you, for when you believed the gospel, the Spirit baptized you into Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). So to deny you, Christ would have to deny

*Himself,* for you are now *part* of Himself.

But when you no longer believe the grace message that saved you, you are removing yourself from grace. And when you do that, you are removing yourself from God who called you into His grace. You are putting some distance between you and Him. Any time you go back to something God used to be doing in a previous dispensation, but isn't doing any more, you're moving away from God, not toward Him. That's how important "rightly dividing the Word" is (2 Tim. 2:15).

But if the law is the other gospel for which the Galatians had fallen, why did Paul add,



"Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1:7).

If the Galatians had fallen for the law found in the kingdom gospel, how can Paul say that the gospel they fell for was *not* a gospel? Wasn't the kingdom gospel *a gospel*?

Well, the word "gospel" means *good news*. We know this because the Lord said,

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach *the gospel...*" (Luke 4:18).

And He was quoting something Isaiah *predicted* He would say, in Isaiah 61:1:

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings...."

Do you see how comparing those verses defines the word "gospel" as "good tidings," or as we'd say today, *good news?* 



So when Paul said the law wasn't a gospel, he wasn't saying it wasn't good news. What he meant was that it wasn't good news for the Galatians. The law was certainly good news for the Jews to whom the twelve ministered it, for they were under the law, and the law made ample provision for men to be saved under it, and live in such a way that pleased God.

But the Galatians weren't under the law, they were under grace. So the law wasn't gospel to them. It wasn't good news to them. It proved to be bad news for them, as you know if you're familiar with this epistle. And

it *continues* to be bad news to *all* members of the Body of Christ, as even a casual familiarity with the Christian world will attest. Christians who are unfamiliar with the liberating message of grace are *miserable* under the law.

#### **Trouble in Paradise**

Now if you're not convinced that the law was the other gospel the Galatians had fallen for, did you notice Paul used the word trouble to describe the effect it had on them (Gal. 1:7)? That's the word James used for the law after the Jerusalem council met to decide if Paul's gospel of grace was legit. After he heard the arguments on both sides, he decided:

"Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them...And they wrote letters...after this manner...we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must... keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment" (Acts 15:19,20,23,24).

James called it *troubling* to tell those new Gentile believers in the Body of Christ that they had to keep the law, and he determined to put a stop to it. And all *saved* Jews accepted his decision, and embraced this dispensational change, just as Jews who were saved under the law accepted the dispensational change God made when the Lord added the kingdom program to the law (Luke 16:16; John 17:6).

But *unsaved* Jews did *not* accept this dispensational change. They left the Jerusalem Council and went around *troubling* the new Gentile converts in the Body of Christ with the law. And that word "trouble" here in Galatians 1:7 shows that eventually they troubled *the Galatians* with the law as well.



And what do we call people who make trouble? *Troublemakers!* What else would you call someone who *perverts* the gospel of Christ, as it says in Galatians 1:7? Come to think of it, what do we call someone who *perverts* things? *A pervert!* 

Interestingly enough, my old 1951 Webster's dictionary defines the word "pervert" as someone who has forsaken the *true* religion for a *false* religion. A pervert, it goes on to say, is the *opposite* of a *convert*. A convert is someone who believes a false religion but *converts* to the true one. But a pervert goes the other way—usually because someone *perverted* the gospel.

Of course, nowadays the word "pervert" is usually only used to talk about *sexual* perverts, and people get pretty outraged by

them, and rightly so. But grace believers ought to be *just* as outraged when someone perverts the gospel of grace with the law.

Paul was! You can tell because he goes on in our text to say,

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8).

#### What Do You Mean "We"?

Now don't overlook that little word "we" there. Paul was including himself in his warning about men who might pervert the gospel. So, what's up with that? I mean, didn't he trust himself to continue preaching grace, not law? To answer that, I can think of a couple of possibilities.

First, Alzheimer's might have a new name, but it is not a new condition. And it always starts by erasing the patient's short-term memory, leaving only *old* memories. And what old memories might the Apostle Paul have had from his days as Saul of Tarsus? Memories of the law he grew up on, of course! That may explain why he included himself in his warning of men who might pervert the gospel of grace with the law.

But it is also possible that he was just humble enough to know that all the *persecution* he went through might eventually make him forsake the message that was *drawing* all that persecution! If *you're* not that humble—if you think persecution would never make *you* fall from grace—you need to heed Paul's warning in 1 Corinthians 10:12:

## "...let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Lastly, it's possible Paul was thinking of something he warned the Thessalonians about when he wrote them saying,

"...be not soon shaken in mind...by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand" (2 Thes. 2:2).

Someone had written the Thessalonians a letter telling them that the day of the Lord (the Tribulation) was at hand, *and signed* 



Paul's name to it! The apostle had to write them and say that he hadn't written that letter, and that he didn't teach that false doctrine. He taught that the Rapture would come and take us to heaven before the day of the Lord was at hand (1 Thes. 4:13-5:8).

And that might be what Paul is saying here as well. Something like, "If you get a letter purporting to be from me, saying I'm now teaching the law and not grace, *I didn't write it*, so curse it and put it on the pay-no-mind list!"

### The Voice of an Angel

It's interesting that Paul adds that even if an *angel* preaches the law that believers should pay him no mind. If you're wondering if an angel would teach something undispensational, the answer is that a fallen angel would! I know Paul is warning about "an angel from heaven," but that's where the fallen angels live, and will continue to live until Michael boots them out in Revelation 12:7-9.

But what's it *mean* to be accursed? Is Paul talking about being cursed *to hell?* Was he saying that if he preached the law he would lose his salvation? Of course not! We know from many Scriptures that our salvation is eternally secure. So what does being accursed mean then?

Well, let me ask you: how would you go about cursing someone to hell? You don't have any power to curse *anyone* to hell. But Paul doesn't *say* you should curse someone to hell if he preaches the law. An unsaved man who preaches the law is *already* going to hell; Paul just says "let him be" accursed.

Compare that to what Paul told the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 14:38:

## "But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant."

The men that Paul was talking about there were *already* ignorant. He was just telling them to *recognize* and *accept* their ignorance. And similarly, he was telling the Galatians that if an unsaved man preached the law to them, they should just recognize that he was accursed.

But if a *saved* man preaches the law, how is *he* accursed if saved men can't lose their salvation? Well, in the Bible, the word *curse* is set in opposition to the word *bless* over thirty times. Here's one example:

"Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (James 3:10).

And that's true! Those things ought not so to be.

But if cursing is the opposite of blessing, and Paul was saying that even a saved man like *him* would be accursed for preaching the law, he must have meant that he'd be cursed to losing his *blessing*, not his *salvation*.

#### What Have You Got to Lose?

So what's it mean to lose the blessing of grace? Well, consider what Paul asked the Galatians in chapter 4:

"Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? For...if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me" (Gal. 4:15).

The word "blessedness" there is talking about the *effect* that grace had on them. When they got saved by grace, they were so thankful to Paul for introducing them to grace that they would

have given him their eyes to help with his eye affliction.

Compare that to how Paul described them after they had fallen for the law:

"...ye bite and devour one another..." (Gal. 5:15).

The law caused them to go from being willing to give themselves to him to being people who bit and devoured one another. And when Paul added.

"Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" (Gal. 5:26),

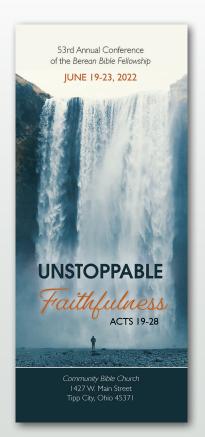
it's obvious that they were provoking and envying one another, or he wouldn't have had to say that. That means they went from being Christians who were willing to give what they had to others to envying what others had instead. It sounds to me like they lost the blessedness of grace.

That's the curse you reap if you remove yourself from grace. But it's a curse you can avoid by *standing* in grace, and not falling for the law. And that's a stand you'll be eternally glad you maintained!

## Lewis Sperry Chafer Says...

"...in the general distinction between Israel and the Church, it should be observed that, in their systematic theologies, Covenant theologians, amongst many neglected truths, make no reference to the resurrection of Christ though that event is central in Pauline doctrine. There is a reason for this neglect. The doctrinal meaning of Christ's resurrection is that He as the Last Adam became by His resurrection Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the Head over the new creation of God; but a one-covenant theory precludes any distinctly new undertaking upon the part of God and hence the omission of that which the Apostle elevates the place of highest doctrinal import. This new creation isn't a second chapter of Judaism." (BSac Vol. 100, July-September 1943, No. 399, pg. 342)

—Contributed by Glenn Waugh



### 53rd Annual BBF Conference

Dates: June 19-23, 2022

"Unstoppable Faithfulness" (Acts 19-28)

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

Bible Hour Teacher: Pastor Justin Lynn

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Monday Night: College and Career get-together

Tuesday Night: Ice Cream Social Wednesday Night: Campfire/Smores

Noon Fellowship Meals: Please prepay by June 1st (see order form on the BBF or the host church website).

For more information, or to receive a brochure, please contact: Community Bible Church at (937) 667-2710/www.cbctipp.com, John Fredericksen (BBF President) at jrfgrace@gmail.com, or visit the BBF website at: bereanbiblefellowship.weebly.com





"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son" (Rev. 21:7).

The Book of Revelation will be directly applicable during the Tribulation after the Rapture of the Church, the Body of Christ. Those who believe at that time, if they can stay alive, will need to overcome to the end of the Tribulation.

"In 1914, Ernest Shackleton and a team of explorers set out from England to do something that no one before had accomplished—cross Antarctica from one side to the other across the South Pole. Disaster struck when the team's ship, *Endurance*, became entrapped in ice and eventually sank after her hull was crushed. Marooned on nearby Elephant Island, there seemed little hope for their survival.

"In a desperate effort to get help, Shackleton and five others set out in a twenty-foot lifeboat across some of the most dangerous and storm-filled waters in the world. It was an eight hundred-mile journey to South Georgia Island where help could be found. For fifteen days the men battled the treacherous seas and massive storms with waves of up to one hundred feet. Using only a compass and a sextant, Frank Worsley (who had captained the *Endurance*) navigated their course until they safely reached land and found help. Shackleton procured another ship and returned to rescue all of his men. He became a national hero in England for his courage and persistence.

"All of us are making our way through a stormy world. Ever since the first sin in the Garden of Eden, mankind has struggled to make wise decisions about an uncertain future. The only way to ensure that we do not go astray is to have an objective source of truth that will guide



us. Just as a compass can guide sailors through dark and uncharted waters, God's Word can guide us through uncertain and difficult circumstances. We must simply trust it—over our feelings, over our own wisdom, and over contrary advice others

may give us. Because the Bible is inspired by God, it is without error, and we can always trust it."1

With courage and dogged determination, believers during the Tribulation will need to overcome and endure to the end of those seven years to be saved by Christ's Second Coming (Matt. 24:13). As they do so, they must trust God's Word, the Book of Revelation in particular, over their feelings, their thinking, and the contrary advice others will give them. They will have to keep their focus on the Lord Jesus Christ to overcome.

During this current dispensation of grace, we are *not* called to overcome and endure to the end in order to be saved. We just "believe on Him [Christ] to life everlasting" (1 Tim. 1:16). But there is a similarity between the overcomers during the Tribulation and us, the Body of Christ today, because as we navigate this life and "stormy world," we too must keep our eyes on Christ and allow the truth of God's Word to guide us as we live it out with courage and resolve.

The Apostle John reveals in his epistles that the overcomers are those who are born again—those who believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5).

The overcomers are those who are saved under the gospel of the Kingdom, believing "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31). The overcomers are those who will overcome Satan during the Tribulation. They will overcome despite Satan's powerful coercion to take the mark of the Beast to be able to buy and sell. The overcomers are those who overcome the world and the strong social pressure of its majority to follow the Antichrist. They are those who will abide in Christ (John 15:1-7) and in His love (vv. 9-10), and love one another (vv. 12,17), and overcome the hatred directed against them by Satan and their persecutors (vv. 18-21) during the horrific 70th week of Daniel. The overcomers will remain loyal to Christ, either to the end of their lives, in martyrdom, or to the end of the seven-year Tribulation.

Promises were made to the overcomers of each of the seven churches of Revelation 1:20:

- Revelation 2:7 (church in Ephesus):
   "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."
- Revelation 2:11 (church in Smyrna):
   "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."
- Revelation 2:17 (church in Pergamos): "To him that
  overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and
  will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name
  written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."
- Revelation 2:26 (church in Thyatira): "And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations"
- Revelation 3:5 (church in Sardis): "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."
- Revelation 3:12 (church in Philadelphia): "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name."
- Revelation 3:21 (church in Laodicea): "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne..."

The overcomers of the Tribulation have rich promises and blessings awaiting them in the Kingdom on the earth: no second death, to be clothed in white raiment, to sit with Christ in His throne, to have their name confessed by Christ to the Father, the right to eat of the tree of life, etc.

Regarding the fulfillment of His promises to them, the One Who is faithful and true (Rev. 3:14; 19:11) tells them that, in the eternal state, "He that overcometh shall inherit *all things*; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son" (Rev. 21:7). They will inherit everything

that Christ promised them. He will be their God forever. They will be His sons forever. In that eternal position as sons, they are heirs. As such, they receive an inheritance. And it is an infinitely *rich* inheritance when you receive an inheritance from "He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold," is "alive for evermore, Amen" (Rev. 1:18).

# GRANDFATHER to GRANDCHILDREN

The grace message is the most powerful force on earth, as it can take sinners destined for hell and make them the special children of God (1 Cor. 1:18), not just "hoping" to go heaven someday with their Lord (Eph. 2:6-7; Col. 1:12-14). All sins forgiven forever! Once saved, always saved, forever a blessed child of God, joint heirs with Christ. God makes a person "somebody" in the sphere that really counts—spiritually, eternally with the Redeemed. He gives life on earth meaning so we know where we came from, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." We know where we are going, heaven, and we know how to live on this earth as a saved individual by following what is written in 2 Timothy 3:16, 2:15 and following Paul as he followed Christ.

The point of this is not to tell you what you probably know all too well, but to warn you that grace is very fragile! It can be lost to a person or family in just one generation, starting with you. All it takes is for you to reject, or neglect, this wonderful, powerful message and let it slide and it's lost to you and to your children, and grandchildren. If you don't personally accept it and deepen it and make it a very important part of your life, it's lost to you, and you become merely "religious," which is powerless to forgive sin, or to guide you in life as God wants to guide you with His Word. Don't let the grace message stop with you but champion the cause of God's wonderful grace.

I know families who were in a grace church and for some reason they quit, only to see the lives of their children literally thrown to the wolves as they tried different religious churches and could not find peace, nor the answers for living. Don't ever let that happen in your life! Be a "champion" of the grace of God. Don't take grace for granted!

# **Pauline Absolutes**

TRUTH

PASTOR DAVID HAVARD
Guest Writer

We live in a day when it seems that nothing is true. Years ago, when post-modernism was taking root, it affected only discussions about religion, philosophy, or metaphysics. But today, the plague of post-modernism has invaded what used to be the realm of pure science. Nothing is a "fact" anymore. Everything is subject to relativism. The stronger one's opinion or emotion about a subject, the truer it must be.

Back in the 70s, Christian philosopher Frances Schaeffer coined the term "true truth"—truth that is true whether anyone believes it or not. God's truth. It stands alone. It doesn't need to be proven, it simply "is." This declaration of absolute truth is the offense of the cross. Truth can't be known, so how dare we say that we know the truth, much less say that our truth is the only way?

Even Christ encountered resistance to truth. In John 14:6, the Lord Jesus Christ declared,

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: NO MAN cometh unto the Father, but by me."

A few chapters later, Pilate asks Jesus if He is King of the Jews. In John 18:37 Jesus answers Pilate and says,

"Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice."

And Pilate gives the standard answer of a relativist when he replies, "What is truth?" That is still the question for today. Is there any such thing as truth? The answer is YES!

In this article, I'd like for us to look at some Pauline absolutes. Some for unbelievers and some for us, as members of the Body of Christ. To start let's see what Paul has to say is ABSOLUTELY true for the unsaved.

The first Biblical ABSOLUTE truth for unbelievers is that NO ONE is righteous. Romans 3:10-12 says:

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Romans 5:12 says,

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

This is the universal condition of the natural man. ALL are born sinners. Original sin refers not to the sin of Adam and Eve, but to the fact that all are born sinners. As the saying goes, "Man is not a sinner because he sins; he sins because he is a sinner." Man is not born good. He is born a sinner.



Next, we see the absolute truth that the law justifies NO ONE. Romans 3:20 says,

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Galatians 3:11 says,

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." Paul says that this is an evident fact. The law does not bring salvation, but condemnation. "The law" includes both the law given to the Jews and to the law that the Gentiles inherently have "written in their hearts." Neither group lives up to their own standards: not the Jews with their God-given law nor the Gentiles with their self-imposed law. The law brings knowledge of sin, not salvation from it.

This brings us to our third point that NO ONE gets special treatment from God. Romans 2:5-11 says,

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

"Who WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:

"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

"But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

"Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

"But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

"For there is no respect of persons with God."

There is no partiality with God. He is not a respecter of persons. All will be judged impartially by God's righteous standard. The fourth point for unbelievers is the FACT that NO ONE gets to heaven without Jesus Christ. First Timothy 2:5 says,

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

First Timothy 4:10 says that He is "the Savior of ALL men." That does not mean that all men will be saved, but that of all who are saved, He is their Savior. NO ONE is saved without Him. This is perhaps the most offensive of all the absolute truths of Scripture. In John 14:6 Jesus Himself said that

"I am THE way, THE truth, and THE life. NO MAN cometh unto the Father, but BY Me."



If someone does not believe that Jesus Christ is the ONLY way to heaven, that person is not a true believer. He demands exclusivity because He truly is exclusive. There is only one path to God. All are born sinners. No one is born innocent. ALL have sinned and therefore fall short of the glory of God.

Now let's move on to some absolutes for the believer. Some of them are encouraging and some are challenging—we'll look at them first.

Number one, there is NOTH-ING good in our flesh. In Romans 7:18 Paul says,

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."

We'd prefer this verse to say that "not much good dwells within me." But Paul says, NOTHING good dwells within us. There is NOTHING we can do in the flesh, even as a believer, that is pleasing to God. We read the same thing in John 15:5 where Jesus says,

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing."

Initially this can be quite a blow to our ego, to realize that we can do NOTHING in and of ourselves to please God. Philippians 2:13 adds to this and says,

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

Anything good we do for God as a believer is because God is Himself working through us. He will accomplish His purpose through us if we submit to Him.

The second point follows the first. Since there is NOTHING good within our natural man, Romans 13:14 says that we should "...put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

To make provision has the idea of taking forethought or planning ahead. We are not to plan ahead or make plans, physically or mentally, for the flesh in order to fulfill its lusts.

Next, we see in Romans 12:17 that we are to return evil for evil to NO ONE. Paul echoes the same thing in 1 Thessalonians 5:15 where he says,

"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men."

Here in Thessalonians Paul goes even farther and says that instead of rendering evil for evil we should be doing what is good for everyone concerned. Again, this would be much easier if Paul said "most people" instead of everyone because there are some people we'd much prefer to get even with. We've all had to deal with people who "had it coming" so to speak. But God says to take revenge or get even with NO ONE. This is just one way in which we can shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15).

This leads up to our next admonition. Instead of taking revenge, Romans 12:18 tells us that we are to live peaceably with ALL MEN. Again, we'd prefer that it didn't say ALL men. But at least Paul is a realist. He understood that sometimes this simply isn't possible, so he added the caveat of "if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

God knows our heart. Sometimes it truly isn't possible to live peaceably with someone, but we need to make sure that we are doing all we can to try. After all, blessed are the peacemakers.

Number five, in Philippians 4:6 Paul tells us to "be careful

[anxious] for NOTHING...." Do we realize that worrying to the point of distraction is a sin? This is another of those verses where we'd prefer it said "only a few things" instead of "nothing." Worrv is a lack of faith. Whatever is not of faith is sin. Do you remember how often Jesus chided His disciples for their lack of faith? But this verse should be an encouragement to us. While we are commanded not to worry about anything, we are also provided with the remedy or alternative. Instead of being anxious or worrying, we are to "let your requests be made known unto God." God. and verse 7 tells us that "...the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Don't worry. Trust.



Next, we see that we will ALL stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Romans 14:10 says,

"...for we shall ALL stand before the judgment seat of Christ."

First, we need to remember that the Judgment Seat of Christ is an assessment of our service, not a judgment for salvation. We do not do good works to get saved, but because we are saved. We are indeed saved by grace alone, but what we do still matters for service and sanctification. We are not saved to sit. We are saved by grace, but not unto nothing. Ephesians 2:10 says that we are saved unto "good works." Notice also the individuality of this warning by Paul—EACH ONE will receive gain or loss of rewards for his own actions. We are not saved by works, but we should all aspire to hear

"Well done, good and faithful servant...enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:23).

To finish up, let's look at the ABSOLUTES that give us confidence and joy as believers. The first of these is the ABSOLUTE fact that ALL of our sins have been forgiven. Colossians 2:13 says,

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, HAVING FORGIVEN you ALL trespasses."

It's vital that we understand this. Notice the verb tense of this verse—HAVING FORGIVEN you ALL trespasses. It doesn't say that our sins might be forgiven if we or God does something. Nor does it say that they will be forgiven by God sometime in the future. BUT it says that ALL of our sins HAVE ALREADY BEEN forgiven! Past completed action. One of Satan's primary weapons against us is to accuse us, both before God and in our own hearts. He wants to constantly remind us and accuse us of our sins. But in Colossians 2:13 God tells us that

He has ALREADY FORGIVEN us ALL of our sins. Not just some of our sins, but ALL of them!

Building on the FACT that ALL of our sins have been forgiven, Paul goes on to tell us in Romans 8:28 that

"...we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

The phrase "work together" comes from the Greek word sunenergeo; we get our word "synergy" from it. You could translate this as "and we know with an absolute certainty that all things are constantly being synergized by God for our good." How many things are being constantly worked together for our good by God? ALL things! It may not seem like it



or feel like it at times when we go through hard times, but we know that even when we don't understand it, and even when it doesn't feel like it, we KNOW, based on the Word of God, that ALL THINGS are indeed being worked together for our good.

Finally, based on the facts that all of our sins have been forgiven and that all things are being worked together for our good, we can also know that in ALL things we are more than conquerers. Romans 8:37 says,

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

"These things" refers back to all of what Paul has said about our standing in Christ that was listed in chapter 8. In the face of everything and anyone, Paul says, we are MORE than conquerors. We are not just barely squeaking by. We are not just barely edging out a win. The phrase "more than conquerors" comes from the word hupernikao or huper plus nikao. Huper means above or

over; we get our word "hyper" from it. Nikao means victory; you've heard of Nike the goddess of victory? The idea is that of a super-victory. In ALL of these things, in EVERYTHING, we are victors in Christ.

So, what difference does any of this make? How should doctrine affect our everyday walk as a believer? We should be living confidently in the knowledge of all that we have in Christ. We can stand firm knowing that ALL of our sins are forgiven. We have contentment in knowing that EVERYTHING is being worked together by God for our good. And we have confidence in knowing that God is for us, and therefore, NOTHING can truly be against us.

A PASTOR'S JOURNEY

"The Lord had us start a non-denominational church in the early 90s. My emphasis was 'verse-by-verse' teaching—one line at a time. I emphasized grace, grace, grace over and over and the completed finished work of Christ on the Cross over and over. However, at that time I probably was a typical pastor who, with a sincere heart, 'blenderized'



much of the Scriptures, and over time, it became more and more apparent through my studies that a number of things just did not and could not line up. Fitting a round peg in a square hole. Ten to twelve years ago or more, I realized what I was teaching from the pulpit really didn't line up with my own understanding of what was 'really' being said or laid out in the Scriptures when you 'rightly divide' them...BUT...the association of churches with which I was affiliated did...not approve of my 'change of direction.' I'm sure you understand. Anyway, there is such a great need for believers to get a grasp of this. It is so liberating and freeing." (Pray for this pastor as he prays about starting up a grace church!—Ed.)

## **Question Box**

"In the March issue, you wrote that 'apostles had all the gifts of the Spirit.' What Scripture verifies that statement?"

When the gifts of the Spirit were given, each man was given *one* gift, as Paul makes clear when he wrote,

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another...knowledge...to another faith...to another...healing... to another the working of miracles...tongues...the interpretation of tongues...but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will" (1 Cor. 12:8-11).

That word "severally" means *one* at a time, each by itself, apart from others, a definition that the context there makes clear when it says that only "one" was given the gift of wisdom, while others were given other gifts.

The Apostle Peter, on the other hand, had the gift of tongues (Acts 2:4), as well as the gift of healing (Acts 3:6-8; 5:16) and the working of miracles (Acts 9:36-41). He also exercised the gift of prophecy when he was able to tell Ananias was lying (Acts 5:3,4). Prophets just knew stuff like that (2 Kings 6:12; John 4:18,19). The Apostle Paul could speak in tongues (1 Cor. 14:18), heal the sick (Acts 28:8), and work miracles (Acts 13:11,12; 16:16-18; Acts 20:8-12; 28:3-5).

So "the signs of an apostle" (2 Cor. 12:12) weren't exhibited when a man used *one* gift of the Spirit. They were exhibited when a man showed he could exercise *more than one of them.*—Pastor Kurth



## MONEY TALKS

An old saying says that "money talks," an expression that is used to point out that a person with money can have a powerful influence on others. That's not always true, of course. But it is always true that your money can have a powerful influence on others even after you're with the Lord. Just consider naming Berean

Bible Society in your will or trust, and your money will continue to speak the words of Pauline truth long after you cannot.

## **Apple TV and Roku Update**

We recently updated our BBS Network channel to make it easier to find, select, and view our videos. If you have our channel on your Roku or Apple TV devices, these two pages give step-by-step instructions for how to update it. All our *Transformed by Grace* videos are available to watch on-demand on Roku and Apple TV, and the newest video is added each week. If you don't have the BBS Network, it is a *free* download. No subscription is required!

# UPDATE THE BBS CHANNEL ON



Open the App Store app on your Apple TV. This is the app on your home screen that looks like a blue "A."



Then scroll up and select the magnifying glass icon. Next, search for the

Berean Bible app. You can do this by entering the name letter-by-letter. If you have a voice remote, you can also press the microphone button and say the name of the app.



Select the app, then select Update. If you don't see this option, it means the app is up to date.



## UPDATE THE BBS CHANNEL ON ROKU



Press the **Home** button on your Roku remote.



From your main ROKU home screen, scroll through your apps until the "BBS" app is highlighted. On your ROKU remote hit the asterisk button (\*).



This will open up a new message window. Scroll through the options until you see "Check for Updates". With the "check for updates" text selected, click the Okay button.



Your ROKU device will then check to make sure the latest version is installed. This may take a couple of minutes.

After it is done updating, click the okay button.



# BBS Letter Excerpts

#### From Massachusetts:

"I have never been as happy as I am now, having read Pastor Sadler's announcement that you have a grace reference Bible in the works. This is desperately needed. Can't get it fast enough. I do realize it will take time to put together such a treasure.... I'm so happy I could cry with overwhelming joy. My donation for it is enclosed."

#### From Missouri:

"That's great news about the Bible you are working on. Please hurry, for I am 87 years old. Ha! Thank you for all you do to help guys like me."

#### From Florida:

"I am so blessed to hear about the endeavor to produce the grace Bible.... I was saved through Pastor Stam's teachings in the 1960s."

#### From Michigan:

"Hurry up with that study Bible!"

#### From Wisconsin:

"We sure do appreciate all that you do to share the gospel of the grace of God. We talked to someone the other day who is homebound in a wheelchair, and he has been watching the new program *Transformed by Grace*."

#### From Florida:

"It took me 50 years to know how to rightly divide God's Word, and Pastor Kevin does it perfectly....I share his videos with all of my friends."

#### From Georgia:

"I watched the TBG program on CTN, and I feel greatly blessed. As a pastor myself, your commitment to the truth of God's Word uplifts me."

#### From Minnesota:

"My family has been blessed so much by *Transformed by Grace*. Keep up the good work!"

#### From Florida:

"We watch you on channel 22.3 on CTN in Lakeland. We look forward to every episode. Much better to listen to you than watch the news!"

#### From Wisconsin:

"I have SO enjoyed the December *Searchlight*, especially the article, "The Fullness of Time."

#### From New York:

"I read your most recent article in the *Searchlight* magazine called 'The Temple Hour of Prayer.' I really enjoyed reading this. It helped me to see what the gospel message was during Jesus' earthly ministry."

#### From Pennsylvania:

"I very much appreciated the following Searchlight articles... 'The Unpardonable Sin'...gave such an excellent explanation, Pastor Sadler. I told four of my relatives to read it online.... Also, the Mother to Mother article where Vicki Sadler talked about how Mary had a sinless baby, and then was shocked when her other babies were born with sin natures!"

#### From Georgia:

"I'm not sure how I got on your *Searchlight* mailing list, but I'm thankful for the publication I've been receiving! Your commentary has been such a blessing to me that I'm led to enclose a check."

#### From our Inbox:

"It is so gratifying to know that someone actually reads and responds to comments/questions. Thank you. I look forward to reading those articles you sent."

#### From Arizona:

"Thank you for another good answer....I've truly been enjoying your book, *Rightly Divided Answers*. Now I have better ways to answer people who ask me those questions."

#### From Minnesota:

"I am so appreciative of your ministry, as I am constantly enlightened by the *Two Minutes* articles I receive in my email."

#### From North Carolina:

"I am growing so much in my Christian life because you rightly divide the Word! I'm 72 and always thought I understood the Bible, but a lot of what I thought was not correct....By the way, I'm a Bible institute graduate!"

#### From our Inbox:

"This *Two Minutes* message on patience ["Your Greatest Need"] is right on the money with what God has been doing in my life."

#### From Michigan:

"I'm using Pastor Paul's Ephesians commentary for a Bible study at my church. It's a treasure!"

#### From Arizona:

"I came across a sample of Pastor Stam's writing on Amazon.com. I then bought *Things That Differ*, and have been reading BBS books ever since. His two volumes on Acts have been especially helpful."

#### From Indonesia:

"I became a grace beliver when my friend recommended me a book by J.C O'Hair entitled, *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ.* It was a lifechanging book for me. After that I read *Things That Differ* by Stam....I am looking forward to see you and have a deep talk with you and with the other grace believers as I did in TCM grace conference in Thailand, 2018."

#### From Colorado:

"Wow, thank you for sending such a lengthy response. I have printed the chapter and will enjoy diving into it....In searching for an answer to my question below, I went to the BBS website. Since I get the Searchlight, I didn't think I needed the website and have not been on it for (gulp) years. Was I ever wrong about that! What a treasure to be able to search articles from past Searchlights with a passage entry! From now on, I will be frequently availing myself of that wonderful resource."

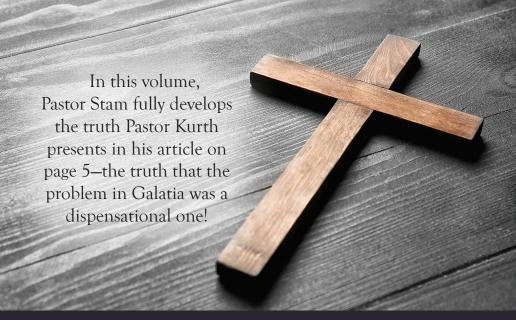
#### From Missouri:

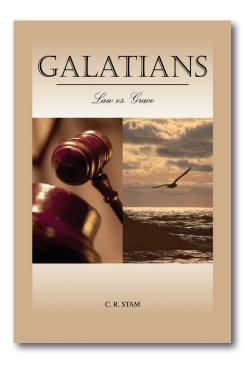
"I love Two Minutes With the Bible. I get the More Minutes With the Bible also, that I love even more, since there is more to love! I just found and downloaded your app, and I also found the podcast in the media section....All I could say when I saw the list was holy cow!...Thank you for helping me to rightly divide the Word."

### **BEA 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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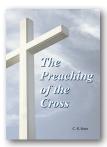
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# News and Announcements

England Bible Conference: Things To Come Mission missionary Barry Pumphrey has been ministering God's rightly divided Word at the Cloverley Hall Christian Conference Center for 50 years, and has invited BBS president Pastor Kevin Sadler to come help observe this milestone anniversary. If you've never been across the pond, here's your spiritual excuse to visit Whitchurch in Shropshire County, and tack on all the additional sightseeing your heart desires. So take note of the May 13-15 date, book your passage, and let Pastor Pumphrey know you're coming: barryjp33@gmail.com.

**Georgia Special Meeting:** The warm-hearted saints of *Grace Bible Church* of Appling will be observing their 14th anniversary on June 12, and have invited *Berean Searchlight* editor Pastor Ricky Kurth to come and help them mark the occasion. They have a new church building in which to observe their homecoming, so they said I could invite you as well! Just direct any and all questions you may have to Pastor Tim Lewis at (706) 799-6819, or at loydt.lewis@yahoo.com.

**Our BBS app** has many new podcasts that have been uploaded, including all of the *Transformed By Grace* episodes, as well as messages from other BBS speakers. The app is also a great place to read the *Searchlight* on your phone when you find yourself waiting for something and your Bible isn't at hand. You can also check the dates for our Bible conferences when you're in the midst of a call to book your reservations for one of them. All in all, it's *the* app to have for the busy grace believer on the go!

Your Contribution is Invited: Did you enjoy the quotation from renowned Bible teacher Lewis Sperry Chafer on page 11? It was contributed by our good friend Glen Waugh, and we would welcome doctrinally sound quotes like that from you as well. Our Bible study articles rarely end neatly at the bottom of a page, but citations like that often fill the remaining space nicely. So, if you read something by J. C. O'Hair, C. R. Stam, or other giants of the faith that you feel succinctly conveys an important Scriptural truth, this is your chance to share it with others.

#### UPCOMING CONFERENCES TO PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR!

Grace Bible Church Special Service, June 12, Appling, GA

BBF Summer Conference, June 19-23, Tipp City, OH

Missouri Conference, July 8-10, Salem, MO

Grace Family Bible Church, July 23-24, Duncansville, PA

Transformed by Grace Conference, August 20, Streamwood, IL



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