

The **BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

October 2024



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This month's cover features Old Mission Lighthouse located in Traverse City, Michigan.

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.

BBS is a faith-based ministry dependent on the gifts of God's people. We are thankful for your gifts of support.

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From the Editor to You

Dear Friends in Christ,

The *Berean Searchlight* has always been and will continue to be the flagship of the *Berean Bible Society*. We continue to update the publication in order to utilize technology, enhance its appearance, and improve the overall experience for those who receive it each month in their mailbox or through email.

Recent updates have seen the use of QR codes to make it easy to use a mobile device and follow links to various web pages. For example, you can use the QR code on the inside cover to quickly go to our website, or when you see one in the heading of an article that's based on an episode of *Transformed by Grace*, it will take you directly to that episode. You can scan the code in the Spotlight on Grace Churches section to learn more about that church by visiting their website (the next Spotlight will be in the November issue). You might also see a code on the page detailing that month's book sale.

In August, we updated the way people view the *current* month's *Searchlight* on our website. This new viewer allows people to read the *Searchlight* like they were flipping a page in a magazine instead of scrolling through a PDF file. Make sure to check it out and let us know what you think.

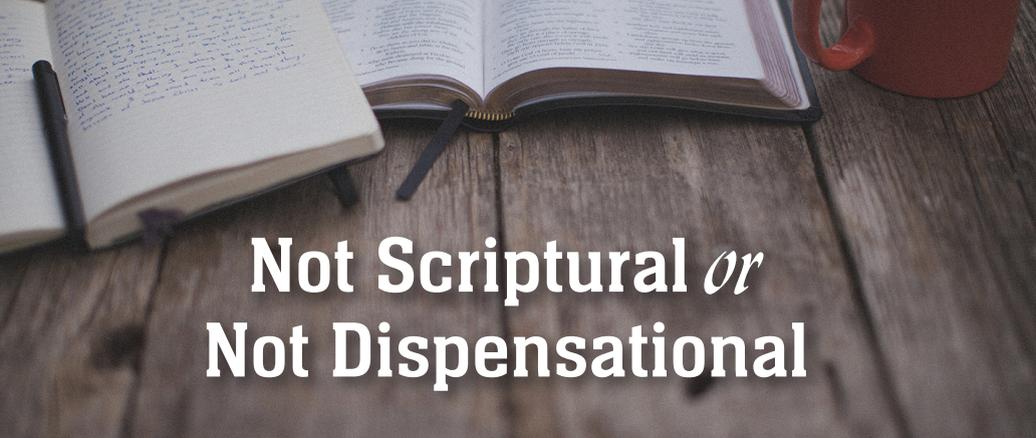
Other parts of the ministry also continue to see improvements and, with them, growth. Since the advent and popularity of smart TVs and streaming apps like YouTube, more and more people have turned off network television. Rather than watching whichever Bible teacher the network puts on, people have the freedom to go and watch precisely whom they want, when they want, and on their TV rather than on a computer. So, we've made growing our social media presence a priority. Praise God, in the past year, *Transformed by Grace* on YouTube has had nearly a 30% increase in subscribers and is approaching 500,000 total views. What are our top three videos by views, you wonder? We couldn't be any more pleased than to report they are:

1. Eternal Security in Christ
2. How to Pray Under Grace
3. Major Events of the Bible Pt 7: Damascus Road

What a joy it is to see these three topics receive the highest number of views, as understanding each is of primary importance for the believer. We hope the recent changes are a blessing to you personally and that you will help us to reach others with the Gospel of the Grace of God and fulfill our purpose of helping people understand and enjoy the Word of God.

By His Grace,

Pastor Don Hosfeld



Not Scriptural *or* Not Dispensational

I was recently at a doctor's appointment when he began to ask questions about the Bible. He knew I was a pastor and the editor of a Christian magazine. His background was from a prominent religious denomination. The conversation eventually moved to salvation, and why is it that there are differing beliefs among the various Christian groups? I was thankful for the opportunity to explain.

While it is no surprise that Christians differ greatly on various doctrines of the Bible, relatively few realize that much of the confusion lies in not recognizing that something can be Scriptural yet not true for today. In other words, when a believer looks to the Word of God for truth that applies to them, they must do much more than simply flip through the pages and see if it is in the Bible; they must know if it applies today. The Apostle Paul refers to this as "rightly dividing the Word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

One of the primary reasons for disagreements in doctrine results from not studying the Bible *dispensationally*. Dispensational Bible study is *essential* if we are to understand the Scriptures and to know God's will for our lives.

Why do some believe in eternal security while others do not? It's clear from Ephesians and other parts of the *Pauline Epistles* that believers today are saved eternally (cf. 1:13; 4:30), yet it's just as clear from different parts of the Bible a person could lose their salvation (Deut. 30:15-20; Matt. 16:24-26; 24:13; Lk. 12:46; Rev. 2:10,26). Must only one be a Scriptural position? Is the Bible wrong or too hard to understand? Or is this not merely an example that something can be Scriptural but not dispensational?

Why do some teach that tithing is not only expected of us but that Christians are *required* to tithe, while others say that giving to your local church or other Christian ministries is good, but it's not mandatory to tithe? Is it possible for the tithing requirement to be Scriptural but not dispensationally true for today?

The truth is, the Mosaic Law is most definitely Scriptural; it's just not dispensational—it isn't operational *today*. The Christian today is not under the curse of the Law, *any part of the Law*, and though not giving financially to the church may have its effects, there is no condemnation for the believer for not giving. Make sure you know what applies today so you know what applies to you!

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained" (1 Tim. 4:6).
—Pastor Don Hosfeld

The Gospel of SALVATION



*(Taken from the Transformed
by Grace episode #335)*

PASTOR KEVIN SADLER
Berean Bible Society President

The gospel of salvation is revealed in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. This is the passage that clearly defines the gospel by which people can be saved today. The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ are verifiable, uncompromised, rock-solid facts that occurred in history. At the core of the gospel are real, historical events. The gospel isn't a matter of religious opinions, platitudes, or mythical tales. It is about real events which changed the history of the world and man's relationship with God.

WHAT THE GOSPEL DOES: ESTABLISHES A STANDING

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand” (1 Cor. 15:1).

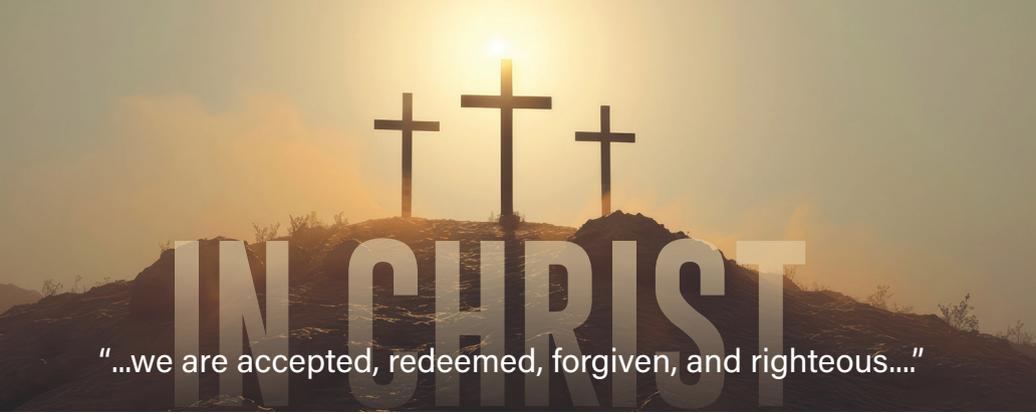
When Paul addressed the Corinthians as “brethren,” he expressed both his spiritual relationship to them and his love for them as family in the Lord. In Acts 20:24, Paul is quoted as saying, “and the ministry, which

I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” In Paul's ministry and travels, when he came to Corinth on his second apostolic journey, he testified and preached the gospel of the grace of God to the Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Paul reminds them of the gospel that he had preached to them.

The word “gospel” means good news or glad tidings. The gospel is good news from God to men. As verses 3 and 4 show, this gospel is the good news concerning the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

When Paul preached the gospel of grace to the Corinthians, they received it: “I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have *received*,” and then, as a result of their receiving it, Paul told them, “wherein ye stand” (v. 1).

We learn three things in this verse about how a person is saved from all their sins. First, the gospel is made known and we *hear* it:



“...we are accepted, redeemed, forgiven, and righteous...”

“So then faith cometh by *hearing*, and *hearing* by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

Second, we *receive* it, and we receive the gospel by faith alone: “In Whom [Christ] ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in Whom also after that ye *believed*, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph. 1:13).

Third, we have a *standing* with God: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By Whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we *stand*, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:1-2).

In the gospel of salvation we stand; it gives us a standing with God. No force that comes against us, and no sin or lack of faith on our part can affect this standing. Our standing is made no better or worse by our actions, good or bad, or our lack of actions. Our standing is who we are “in Christ.” It is the way that God sees us in Him. It is the result of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and all by the grace of God.

In Christ, we are accepted, redeemed, forgiven, and righteous (1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:6-7), and

destined for the glories of heaven. Our standing in Christ is established, fixed, and unchangeable. It cannot improve or worsen; it stays the same eternally. We can never cease to possess the blessings of salvation that are ours in Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 tells us both what the gospel does and what the gospel is. And the point of verse 1 is what the gospel does. The Corinthians had received the gospel of salvation and trusted it, and they had an eternal standing in Christ. The gospel takes those who have no standing before God and gives them a high and glorious standing in Christ by grace.

**WHAT THE GOSPEL DOES:
DELIVERS FROM ERROR**

“By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain” (1 Cor. 15:2).

This verse has been troublesome to many because it sounds like a qualification, a work for salvation, that you have to continue to keep something in memory to be saved. As we must do with all Scripture, we must interpret this verse by its context. When we take a step back to consider

this verse in light of the whole of chapter 15, we find that this entire chapter is devoted to the doctrine and importance of the resurrection, and as such, it is the most extensive treatment of this subject in your Bible.

A report had reached the apostle that there was a doctrinal problem in the Corinthian church in regard to the resurrection. The Corinthians were denying the resurrection of the dead. They were not denying the resurrection of Christ but the future resurrection of the body. In verse 12, Paul confronted this doctrinal error by asking, "...how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"

Paul then built his case and showed the Corinthians that they must accept the truth of the future bodily resurrection of the dead or else reject Christ's resurrection. As Paul wrote in verses 13 and 16, "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen...For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised."

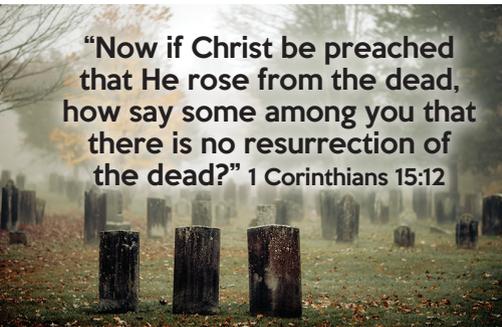
"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both *save* thyself, and them that hear thee."

In this verse, Paul challenged Timothy to hold firm to sound doctrine and to remain faithful to it. In doing this, Pastor Timothy would "save" himself and those in his local church who heard him preach and teach. Our question should be, "Save himself and his assembly from what?" The answer is not saved from the lake of fire but rather saved and delivered from the danger of doctrinal error and false teaching.

This is what Paul was referring to in 1 Corinthians 15:2. In verse 1, Paul told the Corinthians that he was declaring the gospel which he had previously preached unto them, which, as he wrote in verses 3 and 4, was that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and that He *rose again* the third day.

Then, he stated of this gospel, "By which also ye are saved" (v. 2). Our question again, should be, "Saved from what?" The answer is doctrinal error, the bad teaching and belief that was among them concerning the resurrection of the dead.

In verse 2, Paul referred to what he "*preached* unto you." Verse 12 tells us what Paul preached to them: "Now if Christ be *preached* that *He rose from the dead*, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Laying the foundation for his argument, in verse 2 Paul wrote of the need for the Corinthians to "keep in memory what I *preached* unto you," concerning the gospel and Christ's



"Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" 1 Corinthians 15:12

Now the word "saved" means delivered, rescued from danger. The term does not always refer to the salvation of the soul from sin and hell. For example, in 1 Timothy 4:16, Paul wrote Timothy,

death and resurrection. Keeping in memory what Paul had taught them would save them from false doctrine concerning there being no bodily resurrection of the dead.

The phrase “keep in memory” means to retain, to hold fast, keep secure, keep firm possession of. It implies that false teaching, lies, and error seek to seize the truth and snatch it away from us, but in our stand for the truth, believers need to hold firmly to sound doctrine by the Spirit so we are not led astray into error.



The Corinthian “brethren” had received the gospel and believed that Christ died for their sins and rose again. Thus, believing that truth, Paul goes on to demonstrate in this chapter how Christ’s resurrection guarantees all future resurrections (15:23) and the future resurrection of our body at the Rapture (15:51-53).

In verse 2, Paul introduced the possibility, “unless ye have believed in vain.” He raised the thought that those who were teaching and believing that there was no resurrection of the dead had perhaps believed the gospel in vain. That is, their denial of the bodily resurrection of the dead might’ve been due to the fact

that some of them had not really believed that Christ rose again from the dead.

WHAT THE GOSPEL IS: CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3).

Paul did not keep the gospel to himself. As believers, we have good news to share, and Paul delivered this good news to the Corinthians. When Paul wrote, “For I delivered unto you first of all,” the words “first of all” mean that the gospel was among the first things Paul made known unto them in Corinth. The gospel is always of first and primary importance.

Paul wrote that he delivered to them “that which I also received.” Paul brought authoritative teaching from God to the Corinthians. The gospel of grace is something that Paul received, not something that he created, designed, or invented himself. Paul taught others the gospel he had received directly from the risen Christ.

“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:11-12).

The gospel of salvation in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 is a message that Paul had received directly from Christ by special, divine revelation. Christ appeared to Paul to reveal to him this gospel of the grace of God. The Lord delivered it directly to Paul, and Paul, in

death has been predicted and anticipated, and was finally fulfilled at the Cross (Luke 24:25-27).

The question, however, should be asked that if 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 contains the gospel which remained a secret until Christ first revealed it to Paul, why does he state that Christ both died and rose again “according to the Scriptures”?

Speaking of the *fact* of His death and resurrection, Christ did die and rise again in accordance with the prophetic Scriptures because that was indeed revealed in them. However, this does not mean that the special revelation made known to Paul was prophesied or a fulfillment of prophecy; rather, it was *according to or in accordance with* prophecy. There was nothing in prophecy that contradicted his message. One important thing about this gospel of salvation, however, that was not made known prior to Paul was the feature of faith *alone*. You cannot find faith *alone* in Christ’s death and resurrection for salvation, forgiveness of sins, and eternal life in the prophetic Scriptures. It cannot be found outside of Paul.

WHAT THE GOSPEL IS: CHRIST WAS BURIED AND ROSE AGAIN

“And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:4).

The second part of what the gospel is, is that Christ not only “died for our sins according to the Scriptures,” but “that He was buried.” It seems ironic that a burial, a funeral, is part of the good news, but it is the subsequent event that makes it such good news.

Christ had to be laid in the grave before He could be raised from it. Christ’s burial also gives further confirmation of the fact that He did die for our sins on the Cross.

In the Book of Genesis, when Abraham purchased the field and cave of Machpelah, he did so for the purpose “that I should bury my dead *out of my sight*” (Gen. 23:8). We are reminded in 1 Peter 2:24 that Christ “bare our sins in His own body on the tree.” Thus, when Christ died, and His body—which bore our sins—was laid in that garden tomb, it portrayed the putting away of those sins out of God’s sight forever. As the old hymn of the faith, “One Day,” puts it so well, “Buried He carried / my sins far away.”

The third part of the gospel is “that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” Christ’s resurrection fulfilled the predictions found in the prophetic Scriptures, and therefore, He rose again according to the Scriptures. It was prophesied that He would die; it was also prophesied that He would rise again (Isa. 53:9; Psa. 16:10).

CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS

The
Scriptures

Christ’s
Burial

The way the gospel of salvation is presented in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 is that a fact is presented and then two irrefutable evidences are given for each fact. First, the fact

is given that Christ died for our sins. The two irrefutable proofs of that fact are the fulfillment of the Scriptures and Christ's burial. Second, the fact is presented that Christ rose from the dead. The two irrefutable proofs for that fact are the fulfillment of the Scriptures and then the eyewitnesses of Christ's resurrection that are presented in the verses that follow (vv. 5-8).

HE ROSE AGAIN THE THIRD DAY

**The
Scriptures**

**The
Witnesses**

The resurrection makes the gospel good news. Our sins were placed upon the Savior at the Cross. If Christ failed to pay for all our sins, He would have remained in death. If one single sin that God laid upon Christ had been left unpaid, Christ could never have risen from the dead.

Romans 6:23 reminds us "the wages of sin is death," that death is the result of sin. The fact that Christ came out of that tomb on

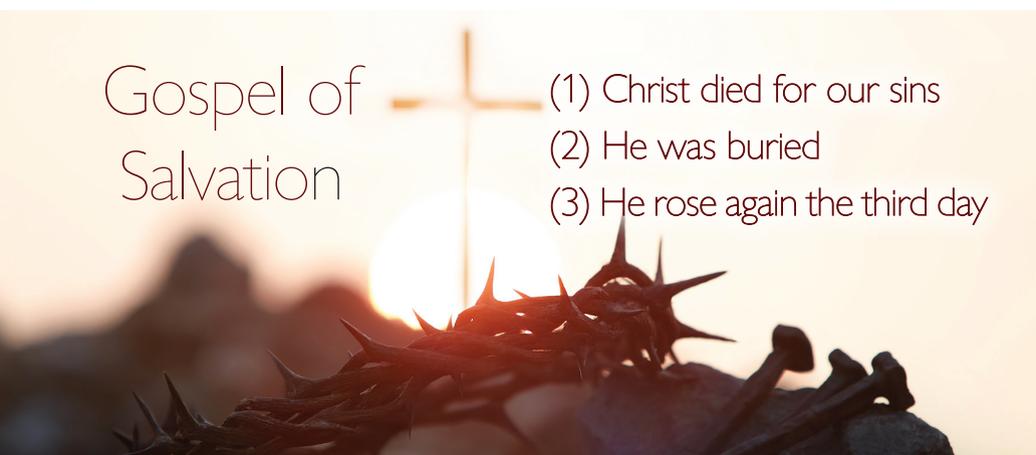
the third day assures us that every one of our sins was paid for by the Cross, that Christ won the victory for us, and that His sacrifice for sin was all-sufficient, complete, and accepted by the Father. No sin could keep the Son in the grave because He paid for all our sins at the Cross!

Now, God turns to us, points us to the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son, and invites us to trust it. The gospel of salvation during the dispensation of grace is just to trust that Christ died for your sins, was buried, and that He rose again. When you do, God saves you immediately and eternally.

The gospel addresses our greatest need—our sins—and provides the only remedy for it. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 tells us the only way to be reconciled with God today, the only way to be saved and have eternal life. The gospel of salvation is based on trust in three profound truths: (1) Christ died for our sins, (2) He was buried, and (3) He rose again the third day. It is a message that all, even young children, can understand and trust. When we receive this gospel, we stand in Christ, and nothing can take our salvation away. 

Gospel of
Salvation

- (1) Christ died for our sins
- (2) He was buried
- (3) He rose again the third day



Question Box



“What did Paul mean when he spoke of filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ?”

“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body’s sake, which is the church” (Col. 1:24).

This is certainly a case where it is important first to point out what this verse is *not* saying. Paul is not suggesting that his hardships or sufferings contribute to, enhance, or assist in fulfilling the debt of sin that only Jesus Christ was able to pay. It was Christ alone, “Who was delivered for our offences” (Rom. 4:25 cf. 8:32). He alone died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3) and gave Himself a ransom (1 Tim. 2:6). There is nothing lacking in Christ’s life and sacrificial death; there is nothing else needed to redeem man. Man needs only to believe the gospel of salvation (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-4). (*See Gospel of Salvation article on page 5*).

Paul is speaking of the suffering that he and the rest of the church endure by living in a world that hates Christ. The world hated Christ and nailed Him to a cross, and that world still hates Christ, and “all that will live godly *in Christ Jesus* shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12). Until Christ overturns the kingdoms of this world, the “afflictions of Christ” will continue. But praise God, we know that “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:18).

—Pastor Don Hosfeld

Don't forget to order these fall themed Gospel Tracts!



GOD'S PUMPKIN

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler
(Package of 10) \$4



AN EPITAPH

Pastor Paul M. Sadler
(Package of 25) \$4

Hidden Pictures



When I was a child, there always used to be a picture puzzle in the comic section of the newspaper. It was a complex line drawing with small, hidden images woven into the fabric of the bigger, obvious drawing. Beneath the drawing were instructions, which would say something like, “In this drawing of a woodland scene, find hidden images of a bunny rabbit, a covered wagon, the head of Abraham Lincoln, and a goat.” You’d have to turn the drawing this way and that way and look among the lines to find the hidden images. The fact is that I wasn’t very good at those puzzles.

However, my grandmother was very good at it. If I got stumped, I would take the puzzle to her and say, for example, “Grandma, please show me where the bunny rabbit is.” She would take a quick look, rotating the drawing this way and that, and then pick up a pencil and begin tracing around the outline of the bunny as she narrated. “Okay, here are the bunny’s ears, see? And here is his nose. His tail is here, and these are his hind legs.”

At some point, as she traced the outline with a pencil, the rabbit would suddenly appear to me. There it was, no mistaking it! How did I not see that before? It was so obvious once it was pointed out. Not only that, but once I saw it, I couldn’t “unsee” it. I couldn’t look at the drawing without seeing the bunny there, plain as day.

This is the way it is with rightly dividing the Word. One can read the Bible, perhaps for many years, but not pick up on the different ways God has dealt with humankind—for example, His distinct, prophesied dealings with Israel (Acts 3:21) compared to how He deals with the Church, the Body of Christ. On one’s own, one might not pay attention to how the teachings of the four Gospels differ from the teachings in the Pauline Epistles (Matt. 6:14 cf. Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13).

One might not really see or understand, or might just kind of skip over the passages that say that what the risen Lord revealed to Paul (Gal. 1:11-12) had been kept secret since the world began (Rom. 16:25).

However, when a person hears a Bible teacher who understands how the Bible is put together, that teacher, like my grandmother did with the picture puzzle, sort of “traces around the outline” of the dispensational changes: points out the law and the kingdom program in the four Gospels that were rejected (Acts 7:54-59), and then points



out the transition in the Book of Acts where Israel is gradually put aside (Acts 10:9-11:18; Rom. 11:8, 11-12), and then points out what was revealed to Paul as he established the Church. Often, that person will suddenly “see” what he or she did not see before. And, as with the picture puzzle in the newspaper, once a person sees, there it is! It’s obvious. Now the person cannot read the Bible without seeing the dispensational distinctions, plain as day. Now the person has a framework with which to put the pieces of the Bible together. 

—Sent in by a dear brother and co-laborer and used with permission.



Would you like to help continue the mission of Paul and his faithful friends who, by spreading the truth of God’s Word, “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6)? One powerful way to ensure that your love for the Lord continues long after you’re gone is by including the *Berean Bible Society* in your will or trust. Such provisions serve as a lasting legacy—a tangible way to impact generations to come. For more information, please call us at 262.255.4750.

PASTOR *Appreciation*

PASTOR KEVIN SADLER
Berean Bible Society President

“Several years ago ‘The British Weekly’ published this letter:

“Dear Sir: It seems ministers feel their sermons are very important and spend a great deal of time preparing them. I have been attending church quite regularly for thirty years, and I have probably heard 3,000 of them. To my consternation, I discovered I cannot remember a single sermon. I wonder if a minister’s time might be more profitably spent on something else?

“For weeks a storm of editorial responses ensued, finally ended by this letter:

“Dear Sir: I have been married for thirty years. During that time I have eaten 32,850 meals—mostly my wife’s cooking. Suddenly I have discovered I cannot remember the menu of a single meal. And yet, I have the distinct impression that without them, I would have starved to death long ago.”¹



Just like our daily need for food, God’s people need the regular intake of spiritual food and nourishment by the teaching and preaching of God’s Word. For the pastors and teachers who faithfully take the time to work at studying and preparing messages from the Word so that God’s people might be fed, they deserve the church’s respect and appreciation.

“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you” (1 Thes. 5:12).

In keeping with the grace that motivates our behavior today, Paul begged and urged the Thessalonians “to know them which labour

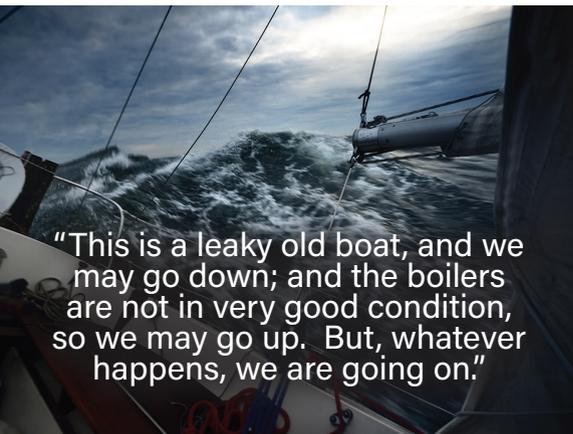
among you, and are over you in the Lord.” God has ordained leadership for the local church so that it may function properly (1 Tim. 3:1-13). In 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, Paul tells us the church’s responsibilities and proper attitude toward those in positions of leadership.

It is the responsibility of leaders to know their assembly and each person in it individually, young and old, and everyone in between. But Paul reminds us that it’s also the responsibility of the church “to know” their leaders.

This means personal knowledge, to know them personally. Church leaders are not all the same. While they may have similar responsibilities, each person is different, and the church is called to know and appreciate its leaders individually. Often, the more you know a person, the more you care about him, the more you hold him in high regard. This is the aim of Paul’s instruction.

Paul begged the church “to know them which *labour* among you.” The word “labor” means to labor with wearisome effort, to work hard. Leaders are laborers. Out of love, they make themselves available to the church, and they work. Leaders lead by example. As the church knows and recognizes the labors of their servant-leaders, that example of hard work can influence the church also to do the work of the ministry and to advance the cause of Christ (Eph. 4:11-12).

Next, Paul teaches the church “to know them which...are over you in the Lord.” The words “are over” mean to set or place before, to superintend, preside over. In submission to the Lord and His will, spiritual leaders stand before the church to oversee, and superintend God’s people according to His Word.



“This is a leaky old boat, and we may go down; and the boilers are not in very good condition, so we may go up. But, whatever happens, we are going on.”

Leaders also stand before the church to cast the vision and inspire devotion to Christ. “One stormy night a boat could make no headway, and while the captain was struggling to get into port, a nervous passenger said to him: ‘Do you think we will get in all right?’ He replied, ‘This is a leaky old boat, and we may go down; and the boilers are not in very good condition, so we may go up.

But, whatever happens, we are going on.’”² When things look bleak in this world and God’s people get discouraged and nervous, leaders stand before the church and influence it by their determination to stand for Christ and move forward with the truth.

Further, Paul says the church is “to know them which...admonish you.” The Greek word translated as “admonish” means to put in mind. It is the offering of counsel and caution by God’s Word, putting God’s wisdom in the minds of the church. It is God’s will that the church knows those who have their spiritual good at heart and who share the truth of the Word for the church’s encouragement and correction.

“And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake” (1 Thes. 5:13).

To esteem spiritual leaders means that, for their labor in the church and in the Word, they should be respected and appreciated. It is to hold them in high regard for their work’s sake in caring for the souls of God’s people, overseeing and presiding over the church, and proclaiming God’s truth.

Due to the great responsibility and difficulty of the leader’s work, with its burdens, battles, struggles, and hard decisions, Paul stated that it is right to “esteem them very highly in love.” Spiritual leaders need prayer; they need you to work alongside them, and they need you to encourage them. Leaders are esteemed in these ways.

October is Pastor Appreciation Month. This is a good time to esteem your pastor and, out of love, let him know that you are grateful for his “work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes. 1:3)! 

1. “The Importance of Preaching,” Sermon Central, posted June 18, 2007, <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon-illustrations/60904/the-importance-of-preaching-by-sermon-central>.

2. “One Stormy Night A Boat Could Make No Headway,” Sermon Central, Posted June 18, 2007, <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon-illustrations/61601/one-stormy-night-a-boat-could-make-no-headway-by-sermon-central>.

GRACE FAMILY BIBLE CHURCH

November 2-3, 2024

Location: *Grace Family Bible Church*

2243 Mill Road, Duncansville, Pennsylvania

Speaker: Pastor Kevin Sadler, BBS President

Contact: Pastor Jim Zaebst at 814-327-3028

Grace Family Bible Church at 814-696-4366



MISSIONARY *to the* CHURCH

WHEN IS ENOUGH ENOUGH?

It isn't! Not when we're talking about sharing the gospel to revive a soul! We all know the phrase "patience is a virtue," and it is; it's also a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). We should never give up pursuing hearts for Christ. I want to encourage each of us to continue to explore new ways of sharing the gospel and create opportunities to minister to the needs of others. All cultures, backgrounds, races, and generations have needs....Christ knows the need, and we are the vessel to deliver and to meet those needs.

There is a God-shaped need in every individual; we were designed that way (cf. Ecc. 3:11). Hence we mustn't lose heart since people are seeking. The days are evil; thus, we must redeem the time (Eph. 5:16)!

The moment we give up doing the very thing God designed us for means we have totally taken our focus off His Will, and our hearts need a serious reboot. The cause is so great, the statistics are so shocking, it's obvious that not enough of the Body is functioning the way it should. There are still 3+ billion people in this world who are walking around, struggling through life without any clue that there is hope in Jesus; they've never even heard His Name! There are many faithful Saints who proclaim the message of truth; they are vigorously attempting to add to the number of saints that will live in the light of Christ now and rejoice in heaven later. Many Christians seek to serve and share in their communities and even in the wider areas of their own country. However, there is a massive need for us to boldly stand with Christ and trust Him to lead us to the "regions beyond" (2 Cor. 10:16), to the very nations and people that have been left in the dark because they do not know and they have not heard (Rom. 15:20-21).

Lord, send us! This should be our personal, individual, and even corporate cry! Did you know that out of the world's mission-sending force, only 3% of those missionaries are serving in "unreached" countries? When I heard this fact, I was overwhelmed with disbelief. Why? I do not believe that in this day and age, we have any excuse at all as to why that statistic of 3+ billion is what it is. We can see the weakness, we are aware of the darkness, and we know what needs to change, so what are we doing about it? Are you ready to shine your light into the darkest corners of the world? Don't hold back; just trust the Lord.

—Julia Liles Hong

WHO AM I?



Living Out Our Identity In Christ

PASTOR DON HOSFELD
Berean Searchlight Editor

“A famous preacher visited a Nursing home that had some patients with Alzheimer’s in it. He went around and greeted the people, who were very glad to see him. He walked up to one lady and asked, ‘Do you know who I am?’ She said, ‘No, but if you go to the Front Desk, they can tell you.’”

WHO AM I

If we consider what are the most essential questions in life, near the top needs to be “Who am I?” People often overlook this simple yet profound question that helps us understand our identity. Moses asked God this question while doubting himself as he was about to be sent back to Egypt to bring God’s people out of slavery (Ex. 3:11). Four times, we find David asking this question: Once to King Saul while questioning his worthiness in becoming the king’s son-in-law (1 Sam. 18:18). The other three occasions, David was asking God, and likewise, it

was because he questioned his worth.

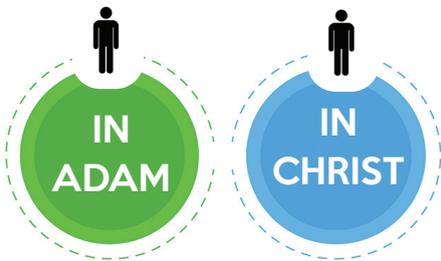
Moses and David, two men whom God plucked out of living a life in obscurity and behind the scenes and made to be so much more than they ever were or would be apart from Him, are asking God this pivotal and timeless question, “Who am I?” Every person should do the same, especially Christians.

Knowing our identity and who we are in Christ is one of the most impactful doctrines the believer needs to grasp because it will affect nearly every aspect of the believer’s life, including every relationship we have, personal and professional, as well as our walk with God.

What is identity? It’s a sense of self and a sense of worth. All people, regardless of how confident or timid they are, need to have a sense of self and worth. Though all people are not the children of God (cf. Rom. 8:16; Gal. 3:26), we are all made in the

image of God (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6), and as such, we are *all* made to be relational. We were created to have and need relationships, and that will inevitably lead to situations involving friendship, competition, romance, love, commitment, disappointment, and failure. All of these necessitate the need for a sense of self and worth.

How can we interact and have relationships with others if we don't know who we are? Do I have a sense of fairness and justice? Am I someone who turns my head or intervenes if I witness a crime occurring? Am I to base my reactions and decisions on emotions or in truth? To be in the world means we must know how we are to interact with the world and those in it. We need to know our identity, especially if we are to relate to our Creator. Thankfully, we don't have to wonder; God has told us.



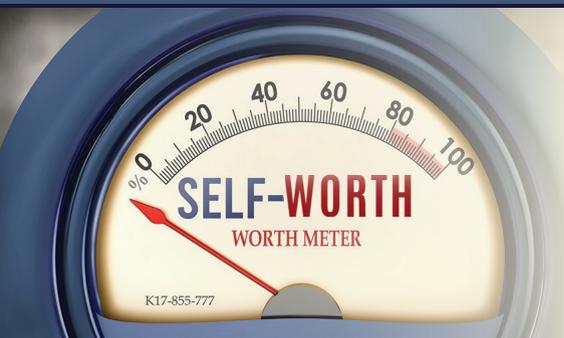
At his core, man is either *in* Adam or *in* Christ (cf. Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22). This means we are *identified* either with Adam or Christ; that is where we get our identity. Believing the gospel results in being taken

from Adam and placed into Christ (Gal. 3:27) and thus having peace with God (Rom. 5:1). We are regenerated and given a new nature (Titus 3:5-6; Rom. 8:1-16), given a new standing before God: justified (Rom. 3:24-26; 4:24-5:2; 5:8-11; 8:28-30; Gal. 2:16). We have been sanctified (1 Cor. 6:11), forgiven (Eph. 4:32; Col. 2:13), and provided a new hope (Rom. 5:2; Gal. 4:1-7; Eph. 1:5; Titus 2:13). These are but some of the “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places *in Christ*” that we receive the moment we believe the gospel (cf. Eph. 1:3,13).

It has been said that “With great power comes great responsibility,” and this is true. Through the power of the gospel, God brings salvation and righteousness to the believer (Rom. 1:16-17), and that power has also produced a responsibility for the believer:

“And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Cor. 5:15).

We are not our own; we have been bought with the blood of Christ (1 Cor. 6:19-20). He “gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, *and* purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). We are God’s “husbandry” (field) and “building” (1 Cor. 3:9). Though we were changed instantly and made a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), we are also *being* changed to live a life dedicated and set apart for Him. God’s grace towards us



“All people, regardless of how confident or timid they are, need to have a sense of self and worth.”

teaches us (Titus 2:12-13) and is working in the lives of believers “both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). Our lives are to be a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service (Rom. 12:1)—we are to *live out* our identity in Christ!

LIVING OUT OUR IDENTITY: TOWARD OTHERS

“Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth” (1 Cor. 10:24).

No doubt, if we are to look for an example of how to live out our new Christian identity, we should look to the Apostle Paul. That statement may strike some as odd and question, “Why not Christ?” Are we worshiping Paul? In no such way as the Scriptures remind us, not once, not twice, but three times, to be followers of Paul (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17).

The fact is, we don’t know Christ “after the flesh” (2 Cor. 5:16). Christ’s life on earth was as a “minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers” (Rom. 15:8). Christ’s earthly life pertained to the promises made to Israel and *not* to “the mystery,” which the risen Christ gave to Paul (Eph. 3:1-9; Col. 1:24-27).

What do we learn from Paul’s life and ministry of living out his new identity in Christ toward others?

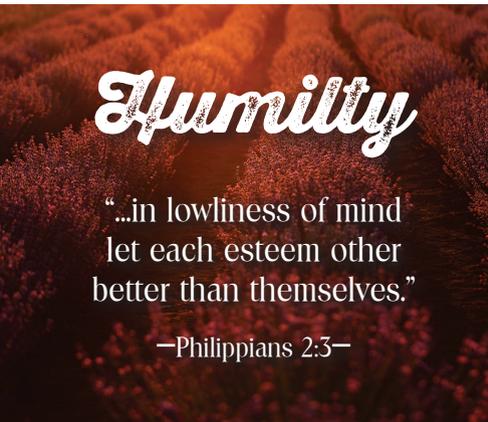
“Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily” (Col. 1:28-29).

We need to get to work: The one constant I hear from missionaries is that they need more missionaries. I hear the same from fellow pastors. We need more Christians going into ministry. Don’t wait to feel worthy of going into the ministry; a need seen is an assignment given. Study the Word and teach the Word. Make yourself available to fill in for Sunday School or mid-week Bible study.

Prayer: Earnestly and sincerely pray for others. To those in Rome, Paul wrote, “For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers” (Rom. 1:16). To my count, forty-six times Paul discusses prayer and goes so far as to tell us that “*first of all*, supplications, prayers, intercessions,

and giving of thanks, be made for all men” (1 Tim. 2:1).

Humility: Man is prideful and has been since the beginning. The battle truly is for the mind. We tend to think we are *owed* something by others and treat people with the 50/50 rule—if you give 50%, I’ll give 50%, but if you don’t, then I’m out of here. But living out our identity in Christ says, “whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31), and that means giving 100% regardless of how our boss at work treats us or if our friends or spouse lives up to our expectations. We are told, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves” (Phil. 2:3).



Humility

“...in lowliness of mind
let each esteem other
better than themselves.”

—Philippians 2:3—

In so doing, we stop being a stumbling block (1 Cor. 10:32; 2 Cor. 6:3), begin to give forgiveness when undeserved (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13), and “in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses...By pureness, by

knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned” (2 Cor. 6:4-6). Impacting the world for Christ does not require riches or prestige; all you need is to “put off the old man...be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man” (Eph. 4:22-24).

LIVING OUT OUR IDENTITY: TOWARD OURSELVES

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17).

Live by Faith: Few things, if any, are discussed by Paul or the whole of Scripture as much as faith—faith *is* the constant theme of Scripture. God wants one thing *from* us: faith; everything else He wants *for* us. It is evident and plainly stated that “...without faith it is *impossible* to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe [have faith]...” (Heb. 11:6).

Likewise, the justified believer is to *live* by faith. Faith in trusting God’s Word more than just on Sunday morning while the preacher speaks or the worship team sings, but also when the so-called experts of this world claim the ways of the Bible are outdated. We need to have the faith to stand: stand up, stand out, and stand apart: “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (1 Cor. 16:13).

“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise” (1 Cor. 3:18).

Refuse to be Identified with the Culture: This world is trying to mold and shape us, and we must refuse to allow the culture to define us or redefine us. As Paul puts it, "...be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). The word "prove" in this verse is not referring to proving to others, but to discern or test for *ourselves*. The meaning is that our minds should be transformed so that we might test or *live out* "that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Our faith "should not stand in the wisdom of men" but in God (cf. 1 Cor. 2:5). It is imperative that the believer be willing to *stand out* from the unbeliever, *stand apart* from this world, and *stand up* for the truth—stand up for Christ.

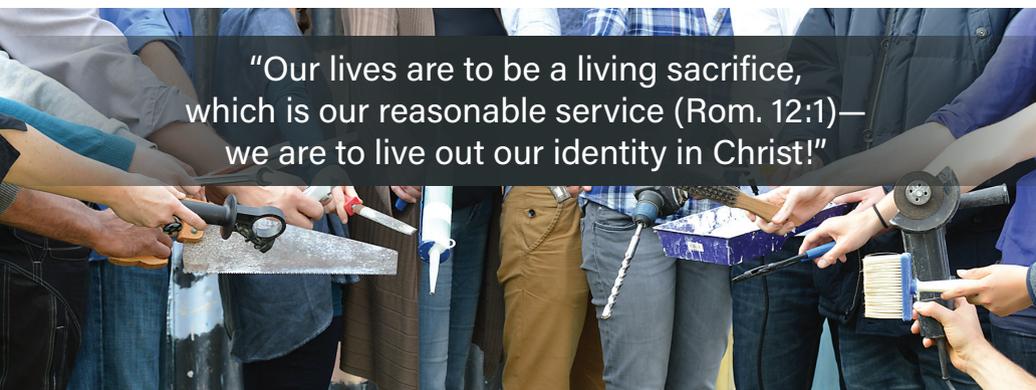
Exalt Truth, Not Your Desires, and Establish Biblical Priorities: We need to make Christ's priorities for our lives our priorities. We need to conform our desires to the truth, not the other way around. Too often, we live our lives around what we want to do and not what we should do.

Many will *not* find time to attend a Bible study or even read their Bibles, yet will find plenty of time for Facebook, Instagram, TV, their phone, sports, hunting, and much more. Men: if your yard looks great but your Bible is unworn, your priorities need adjusting. Understand that whatever captures the mind will capture the heart: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21; Luke 12:34).

Hear the warning of God:

"Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall *turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*" (2 Tim. 4:2-4).

Christ *is* the truth (John 14:6), and being in Christ *demand*s we always stand with the truth. Individually and collectively, the church is called to be "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). Thanks to pride and the desires of the flesh, the truth is not always easy to accept, but faith and love will say, "God said it; that settles it."



"Our lives are to be a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service (Rom. 12:1)—we are to live out our identity in Christ!"



"An achieved identity
is a fragile identity."

LIVING OUT OUR IDENTITY: TOWARD GOD

"That men may know that Thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth" (Psa. 83:18).

Exalt God Above All: Probably the first and most important thing we believers can do to live out our identity in Christ is to have the right view of God. If we are identified with Christ and He exalted the Father above all things (John 14:28), should we do any less?

Knowing that the "new man" is "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him [Christ]" (Col. 3:10), we must conclude that to honorably and accurately bear the image of Christ, we, too, must exalt the Father and the entire Godhead above *all* things: our goals, our jobs, our relationships, even our families. If we genuinely trust that God is true, that He loves us and wants what's best for us, this should not be a fearful thing, though, admittedly, sometimes it can be.

Because we are relational, we tend to seek approval and validation from the most important parts of our lives. Some find validation in their jobs. While there is nothing wrong with working

hard and trying to build a stable and successful career, putting work in such a place that your identity is wrapped up in your success is a recipe for heartache.

The same is true when we put our friends and family, even our spouses, in such a high place that we rely on them to provide our sense of worth. All of these examples have at least one thing in common: *your achievement*. If you find your value in beauty or being noticed and acknowledged by others, or how well you succeed at work, how good a friend, brother, parent, or spouse you are, you are relying on your achievement. It's been rightfully said that "An achieved identity is a fragile identity." Allowing your identity to be wrapped up in yourself or others in order for you to find your value is unstable because people fail, people sin, and people die.

If your identity is found in beauty and attention from others, what happens when your beauty fades, or people don't give you the attention you seek? If your identity is found in work, what happens when you fail or lose your job? If it's found in friends, what happens if they move away? If it's found in your spouse, what happens when they die? These

are a recipe for heartache and despair and have led many in that situation to give up.

God is not fickle or moody. Our identity and sense of worth from Him is not the result of our performance; it is not earned. With God, our identity is not achieved; it is received. This is why exalting God above all else is so important.

For us to live out our identity in Christ, we must not allow anything or anyone to become that idol that replaces our love and adoration for God above all else. We cannot try to *add* Christ to our identity; we must allow Christ to become our identity.

God already gave us an identity the moment we believed the gospel. While the world says, “Go find yourself.” God says, “Come find me.” Our new identity in Christ is meant to end our search for an identity. As members of the Body of Christ, we have an identity that can’t be taken away, and combined with the correct view of God, we *can* live out our identity in Christ for all to see.

Exalt God above all else because the more we esteem the opinion of someone, the more we seek their approval. “The praise of the praise-worthy is above all rewards”—J.R.R. Tolkien. 

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Excerpts



From our Inbox:

“I’ve been a subscriber of the *Berean Searchlight* for several years. The publication is of great help to me. As a pastor under *Things to Come Mission*, the *Searchlight* is a good reading aid. Thanks for including me in the list. God bless you and your ministry.”

From the Philippines:

“I am currently residing in the Philippines. I am a worker in our church in leading people to Christ. I have a ministry, a house church here in our place. I am so blessed by your ministry. I have been using the Bible study articles on your page, and it’s really helpful in our small group Bible study. I have been looking for a church here in the Philippines that teaches the Scriptures in a manner that is rightly divided. I have been a part of a church that does not divide the Word correctly—such as mixing law and grace, going back to the old system of the law, no understanding of the distinction of the programs of God [prophecy and mystery], etc. May the Lord continue to bless you and grant you wisdom in your ministry.” (You, too! Keep up the good work! —Ed.)

From YouTube:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace* “Major Events of the Bible—Pt. 2 | The Flood”) “Thank you, Pastor Kevin, for this well-presented picture of Christ through the ark. We serve an amazing God Who shows Himself to us through so many small details!”

From New York:

“Friends at *Berean Bible Society*, we send you our love.... We are praying that you keep on serving Him and blessing so many others with His Word.” (Thank you, we covet the prayers of God’s people. —Ed.)

From YouTube:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace*—“Grace in Gray Areas”) “Such practical teaching! I certainly needed to hear this! It is so easy to judge others. Thank you!”

From our Inbox:

(Responding to *More Minutes with the Bible*—“The Believer’s Inner Conflict”) “One day, a believer told me that he liked talking to me because I always looked toward God for positions in doctrine. I always wanted to get it right rather than to be right. I wanted to thank you and tell you that I am happy that one day, I met your ministry. I think that when you take a position, you take the position that you know that God stands for. You get yourself out of the way, for God honors the Word of God above His name (Psa. 138:2). Thank you for such a wonderful presentation of the truth of the living God.”

From Canada:

“Oh, how we love this ministry.... Also, the thumb drive with all those teachings is awesome. We listen to the teachings every night and gave two of them to fellow believers. Awesome!”

From Illinois:

“Thank you for your faithfulness in the ministry. We are praying for all of you that make the gospel of grace so understandable to all through your various outreaches.”

From our Inbox:

“Greetings from Kumba, Cameroon. We are grateful for all your efforts to spread the gospel of the grace of God throughout the world, particularly in Cameroon.”

From our Inbox:

(Responding to *Two Minutes with the Bible*, “The Gift of Righteousness”) “Two of my favorite verses are used in this message. The Romans verse was used by God to save me, and the Corinthians verse was used to help me out of a cultic church. Thank you for the reminders.”

From our Inbox:

“You’ve made such a difference in my understanding of God’s Word.”

From Kentucky:

“I continue to enjoy *Transformed by Grace* messages. Keep up the good work.”

From YouTube:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace*—“Scenes From The Final Act—Pt. 1 | The Devil’s Days Are Numbered”) “I have gained so much understanding of this subject that I am confident to share about future events with my friends and family as never before. Thank you, Pastor Kevin. I can’t thank you enough for your faithful ministry. You really know your stuff!! Keep being faithful and know you are doing the Lord’s work....”

From Tennessee:

“So looking forward to the new Bible [Grace Study Bible]. Please use this donation as needed. Thank you for opening God’s words to my heart and mind.”

From Florida:

“Dear Pastors Kevin and Hosfeld and staff at BBS, as always, thank you so much for your ministry and faithfulness to His Word, rightly divided, and the Grace message. I look forward to receiving the *Searchlight* each month.”

From South Carolina:

“I just want you to know what a blessing your daily messages [*Two Minutes with the Bible* and *Daily Transformation*] and *Transformed by Grace* are. I am praying for the Rapture; this world is not my home. I pray the Lord will continue to bless your ministry.”

From Ohio:

“*Transformed by Grace* is very edifying.”

From Michigan:

“Enclosed is a money order for the book, *Acts Dispensationally Considered Vol. 1*. Keep the remaining money for your way-too-cool ministry.” (It’s great to hear that the “coolest” thing about BBS *isn’t* from the fact we are in the cool weather of Wisconsin.—Ed.)

From YouTube:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace*—“Losing Religion to Find Salvation”) “Such awesome teaching, Brother Kevin. We always learn more about God’s Word by watching and listening to your teachings. Thank you!”

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—C. R. Stam, BBS Founder



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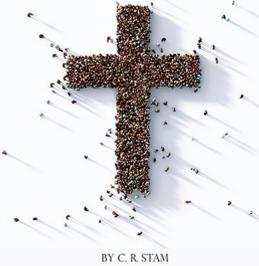
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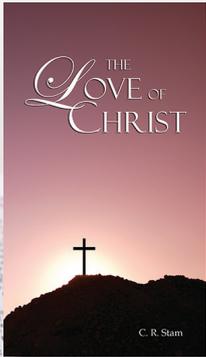
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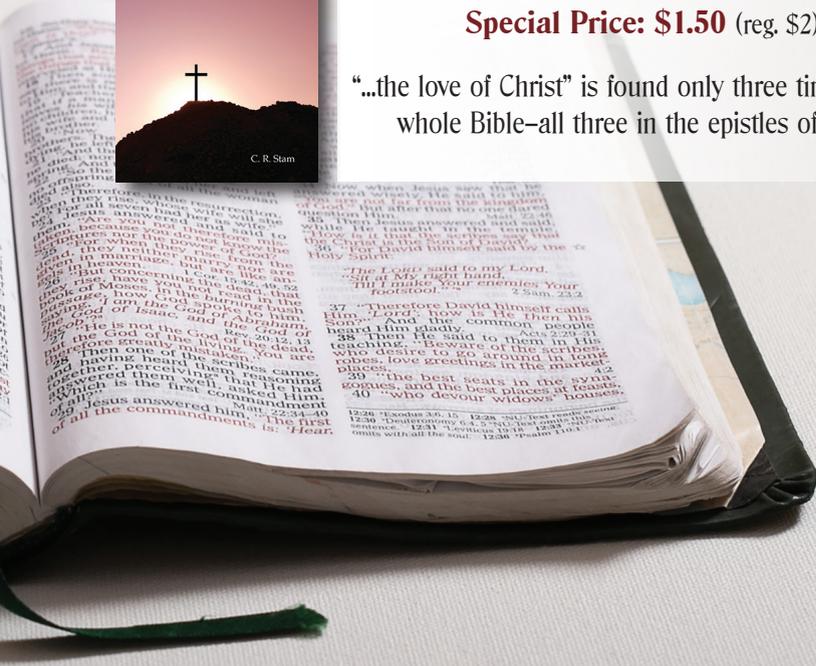
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News & Announcements



Daily Devotions Update: In our hope to reach more people with the transformative truths of Scripture rightly divided, we are pleased to announce that we now offer Spanish versions of our two daily email devotions, *Two Minutes with the Bible* and *Daily Transformation*. With over 41 million Spanish speakers in the United States alone and many more around the world, this is an excellent opportunity to impact many lives. Each devotion is designed to be concise and meaningful, providing readers with a moment to reflect on God's Word that can easily fit into even the busiest schedules. To sign up, click on the appropriate link under "Bible Study" on our website.

BBS Makes Smart Devices Even Smarter: Did you know that BBS has an app for your phone or tablet? You can use the app to read the *Searchlight*, read the Bible, access articles and charts, send us a question, watch video messages (including *Transformed by Grace*), or even keep track of upcoming conferences. If you are looking for a way to share the gospel and the message of grace for today with friends and family via Facebook, Twitter, or email, this app may be just the thing you need. For information on how to download, you can visit <https://bereanbiblesociety.org/app>.

2025 Conference Schedule: Have you considered or are you interested in having a Bible conference in 2025? Such events provide several benefits for churches, regardless of size. Besides delivering valuable teachings and insights, they also help create a sense of unity among believers who come together to explore the Word of God. Additionally, these conferences can draw in attendees who might not typically participate in regular church services. If you are interested in having Pastor Kevin or Pastor Don come and speak, now is the perfect time to reach out to us before our 2025 calendar fills up.

Upcoming Conferences to put on your calendar!

BBF Fall Conference, October 5-6, Friendship, WI

Grace Family Bible Church, November 2-3, Duncansville, PA

BOOKLET Price List



DAVID ADAMS
Bible Contrasts \$4.00

RICKY KURTH
Discerning the Will of God \$4.00
Now That I Believe 4.00

KEN LAWSON
The Confession of Sins \$3.00
Pentecost, Was it the Birthday
of the Church? 3.00

J. C. O'HAIR
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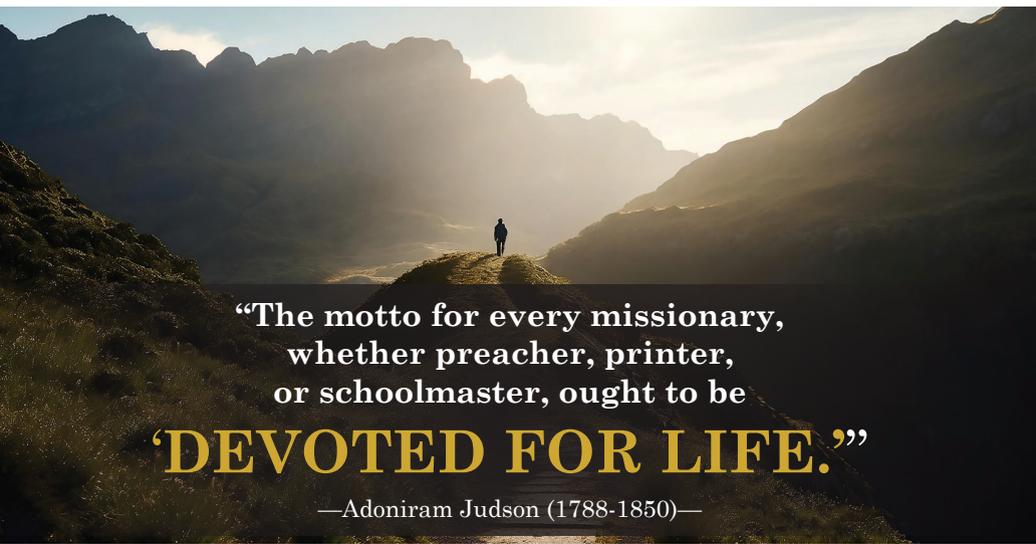
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