

The BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

May 2025



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This month's cover features the Lismore Lighthouse in Lismore, Scotland.

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.

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President: Kevin Sadler | **Editor:** Don Hosfeld | **Layout/Design:** Kevin and Jessica Sadler

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You can reach us at:

BEREAN BIBLE SOCIETY
N112 W17761 Mequon Road
Germantown, WI 53022



Office: 262.255.4750 | Monday-Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, CT

Website: bereanbiblesociety.org

E-mail: berean@bereanbiblesociety.org

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A Note From the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

As of this writing, 65 of the 66 books for the *Grace Study Bible* (GSB) have their notes written and completed. Of these 65 books, 33 have been placed in their final format. The three-man editorial committee and the grammar proofreaders are working hard to complete their part on the remaining books so that they can be passed on to the next steps in the process. We are making a final push and concerted effort to have the Bible available by December 1.

Here at the BBS office, we have had to make some changes to meet this goal. For example, the *Berean Searchlight* has a new/old, temporary graphic designer—yours truly! This change was made so that my wife, Jessica, our current graphic designer, could devote *all* her time to the typesetting and alignment of the GSB. Graphic designer was my position for the first 20 years of my employment at BBS, but it's been 9 years since I prepared my last *Searchlight* for print. In some ways, it has been like riding a bike, but in other ways, it's been a relearning experience!

In addition to their regular duties, all BBS staff members have been given added responsibilities so that we can finish the GSB this year. After the books are passed along to us from the grammar proofreaders, Don Hosfeld, our *Searchlight* editor, manages and tracks the books, and he dispenses them to a team of proofreaders and Scripture reference checkers (which includes himself). Our business manager, Jim Tollar, is one of the reference checkers, faithfully working long hours as he does so. Christine Mulholland, our administrative assistant, has been creating and making corrections to the 25 charts that will be placed throughout the GSB. Emily Siegmann in our mailroom has been our primary one to answer the phones so that Christine and Jim can have additional time for their GSB work. My mother, Vicki Sadler, is one of the last proofreaders after the Bible books have been placed in their final format.

All of us at BBS are excited about the *Grace Study Bible*. At our devotions, we pray together for the Lord to use it for the salvation of souls and to help others in their understanding of His precious Word. Please pray for us as we labor together and work hard to make this important project a reality.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler, President



Pastor Kevin J. Sadler has been serving as president of the *Berean Bible Society* since 2016. He speaks on “Transformed by Grace,” a daily television program that airs nationally. In addition, he speaks at Bible conferences and authors Grace literature.

What Christ Was **MADE**

What Believers Are **MADE** in Christ



WHAT CHRIST WAS MADE

“But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, **MADE** of a woman, **MADE** under the law” (Gal. 4:4).

“And the Word was **MADE** flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14).

“But we see Jesus, Who was **MADE** a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Heb. 2:9).

“Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be **MADE** like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:17).

“Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was **MADE** of the seed of David according to the flesh” (Rom. 1:3).

“For He hath **MADE** Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be **MADE** the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

WHAT BELIEVERS ARE MADE IN CHRIST

“For He hath **MADE** Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be **MADE** the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

“For as by one man’s disobedience many were **MADE** sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be **MADE** righteous” (Rom. 5:19).

“But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is **MADE** unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30).

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are **MADE** nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13).

“Giving thanks unto the Father, Which hath **MADE** us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12).

“To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath **MADE** us accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. 1:6).

“But now being **MADE** free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life” (Rom. 6:22).

“And hath raised us up together, and **MADE** us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6).

—Pastor J. C. O’Hair

Reason for

JOY



PASTOR DON HOSFELD
Berean Searchlight Editor

“If God wanted me to be happy, I would be happy. But He wants me to be miserable, sad, alone, and utterly useless. So, that’s what I am! My houseplants have more purpose than I do. That’s how God wants it, so that’s how it is! You might as well print out a copy of any other fairy tale. But an existence where there’s nothing wrong, no problems, and everything is perfect, everyone loves each other forever, like Peter Pan or Harry Potter—fairy dust, moonbeams, rainbows, lollipops, and unicorns!

“We’re only here for the powers that be to have something to play with. Sentient beings on strings. To be tossed aside when they are done. I can go on, but what would be the point? We don’t have a choice. If we did, the world would be a much better place. Puppets on a string. Period.”

The above is from an email I received recently here at *Berean Bible Society* from someone responding to our *Two Minutes with*

the Bible daily devotion. Sadly, many people are convinced that a life without joy is their destiny. A recent study reported that 57% of teen girls felt persistently sad or hopeless. It seems as the world advances in areas like science and technology, we increasingly hear about more and more people who describe themselves as feeling persistently depressed, totally hopeless, and full of frustration and anger.

We might understand these reactions by those who reject the existence of God and His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, we see Solomon, as if to warn his readers, question the meaning of life and declare the utter futility of an existence without God.

But the feeling that life is destined to be full of sorrow and frustration is not held by unbelievers alone. There are many *believers* who suffer from the idea that God takes little to no part or interest in the affairs of mankind, even

when it comes to our happiness or joy. This issue extends far beyond theological boundaries or denominations. This pastor, and I'm sure I am not alone, has spent many hours counseling people of like-minded doctrine on the question of "Does God care that I am unhappy?"

The idea that God wants anyone to be miserable or sad is not only false, but it is a lie that goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden. No doubt, when Satan asked Eve if God said they could not eat of every tree, he wanted to introduce the idea that man's happiness was something that God was unconcerned about. That "old serpent" truly is the originator of "divide and conquer."

Few things can be as far from the truth as the idea that God is not actively involved in producing joy in the life of the believer. In that great chapter about the Resurrection of Christ, 1 Corinthians 15, Paul acknowledges that "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," but then he immediately says those two glorious words in which so many precious doctrines rely, "But now."

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:20-22).

A believer, or anyone for that matter, would have reason to be "miserable" *if* it were not true

that Christ died *and* rose again. But because Christ *is* risen, believers have no need to be miserable, and dare I say, nor should we be. This isn't to demean or



question the legitimacy of pain and suffering, depression, or the difficulty faced by living in a sin-cursed world where cancer and other diseases strike not only the old but also the young. But if we truly want to be well, then we must use the correct remedy. If we want to have joy, then we need to understand *how*. We need to know where joy comes from.

Don't Settle for Less

Still, this is not purely a question of how to have joy but also of *what* joy is. Joy is different from being happy. The words happiness and joy are not interchangeable and do not have the same meaning. Happy is related to the words *happen* and *happenstance* and is what you feel when something good comes along in your life. In their quest for *happiness*, many will forsake the very things necessary for joy. Many are so distracted in trying to be happy that they have yet to understand that it is far better to have joy.

“One Sunday, a preacher told how, while sitting in his garden, he had watched a caterpillar climb a painted stick that was for decoration. After reaching the top, the caterpillar reared itself, feeling this way and that for a juicy twig to feed on or some way to further progress. Finding nothing, it slowly returned to the ground, crawled along till it reached another painted stick, and did the same thing all over again. The preacher said: ‘There are many painted sticks in the world, those of pleasure, wealth, and fame. All these call man and say, ‘Climb me to find the desire of your heart, fulfill the purpose of your existence, taste the fruit of success, and find satisfaction.’ But, they are only painted sticks.’”¹

Don’t make the mistake of searching for happiness at the expense of having Joy. Joy comes from the Greek word *chara* and is unrelated to shifting circumstances of health or sickness, whether you make a great salary or are homeless, if you’re in a relationship or are alone. Joy resides deep down in the soul and is unchanged by the winds of struggle, tribulation, and turmoil. It is having consistent and resolute satisfaction and contentment. *Chara* always relates to that joy that’s based on divine realities.

Joy is what allowed Paul and Silas to sing praises unto God after having been beaten with “many stripes” and cast into prison (cf. Acts 16:23,25). It’s what allowed Christian martyrs of the 1st-4th century Rome to face almost unimaginable situations

while likewise singing, and whose testimonies still speak today.

In the catacombs of the Appian Way, near Rome, lie the inscriptions left by Christians who buried fellow Christians killed for their faith and who, if caught, would likely also be tortured and killed. Remarkably, the majority of these inscriptions mention “In Pace,” which means “In Peace.” They were essentially saying, “At Peace Because I Know Where I Am Going After I Die.”



A resounding witness to the truth of Nehemiah 8:10, “The joy of the LORD is your strength.”

The Source of Joy

Joy is not dependent on our circumstances but rises above them; it stems from our unshakable faith in God’s goodness and His faithfulness. It enables us to rejoice even in the face of adversity because we understand that God’s perfect plan will ultimately prevail.

Joy is not a product of our lives but produced in our lives by the One Who gives us life. It comes not from what we have but from whom we are from. Joy is a “fruit

of the Spirit” (cf. Gal. 5:22) and is thus something that is accomplished in us and through us, but we should never think it is accomplished *by* us.

What is fruit but that which is produced by the inherent energy of a living organism? As a fruit of the Spirit, it suggests those with the Spirit have within them the power and means to both express and have joy.

“A certain king instructed his gardener to plant six trees and place statues beneath them representing prosperity, beauty, victory, strength, duty, and joy. These trees were to show to the world that the king had tried to make his reign fruitful. They were also to typify the statues beneath them. The gardener planted six palm trees. When the king came out to inspect the work and looked at the statue of joy, he said, ‘I surely thought you would typify joy with some flowering tree like the tulip or magnolia. How can the stately palm symbolize joy?’

“Those flowering trees,’ said the gardener, ‘get their nourishment from open sources. They

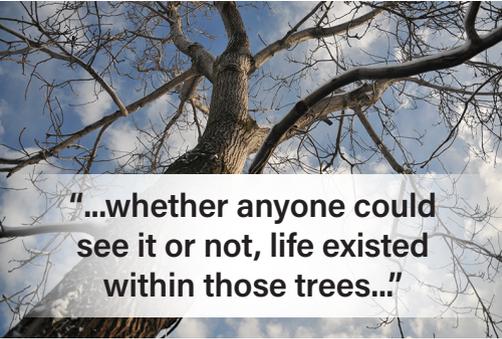
live in pleasant forests or orchards with hosts of other like trees. But I found this palm tree in a sandy waste. Its roots had found some hidden spring creeping along far beneath the burning surface. Then, thought I, highest joy has a foundation unseen of men and a source they cannot comprehend.’ Do you realize that if the light of Jesus Christ is within your heart, it can be the only place in which joy is found, and yet it will be sufficient? You do not need the company of others in order to experience the joy that the light of Christ brings. A palm tree does not need the company of other trees to flourish and bring forth fruit.”²

The fruit of the Spirit is those gracious dispositions and habits that the Spirit produces in those whom He dwells—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Nine are listed, yet they are not called the “fruits” of the Spirit but the singular “fruit.” Nine parts to one fruit expressed not by those that seek them but by those walking in the Spirit.



What If I Have No Fruit

What if you don't recognize joy in your life? What if you are not long-suffering, gentle, or meek? Does it mean you have lost the Spirit or never were truly saved? The listed attributes are indeed a test; however, they are not, as some claim, a test of a person's salvation but of their walk.



"...whether anyone could see it or not, life existed within those trees..."

Don't be quick to judge or assume there is no life in you or another because there is no fruit. As it relates to the Body of Christ, fruit does not reveal a person's standing with God. It is not joy or any other attribute that is the test of salvation but faith. The Scriptures do not say we are justified by fruit but by faith (Gal. 3:24).

The power of salvation does not rest in fruit but in "the gospel of Christ: for *it* is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). It doesn't say to every one that believeth *and* has fruit.

When my wife and I moved to Wisconsin, it was the end of January, and nearly every tree in the yard of our new home appeared dead. There were no leaves; the walnut tree had no fruit. If I

were to judge the situation based on what I saw at that moment, I would have completely misunderstood the reality. Even at that moment, whether anyone could see it or not, life existed within those trees, ready to burst forth when in the right environment.

Much like trees in wintertime, Christians always have life within them; even when fruit is not being produced, if you put them in the right environment, what comes out is a product of that life that's within.

What can inhibit the fruit of the Spirit? When I was younger, the term "killjoy" was thrown out toward adults who stood in the way of the freedoms we wished to express. In the Christian life, there are many *killjoys*. Many things will kill joy and rob you of what the fruit the Spirit desires to demonstrate in and through you.

Sin in our lives can quench the Spirit and is the quickest way to kill joy. A guilty conscience has the power to rob a person of joy, and a clear conscience is an environment for rejoicing. Consider Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 1:12, "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."

It's no wonder then that Paul, when teaching the Galatians about the fruit of the Spirit, first warns:

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the

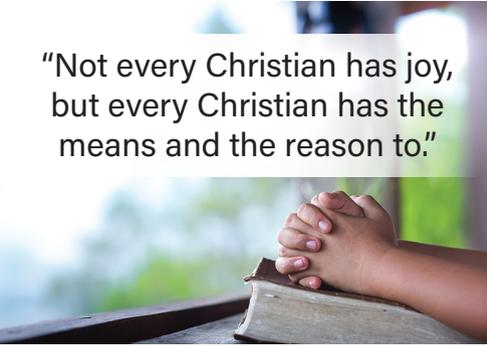
flesh, but by love serve one another.

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

“But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (Gal. 5:13-16).

“Not every Christian has joy, but every Christian has the means and the reason to.”



Walking in the Spirit is something we are told to do, not something God forces upon us, and it certainly is not the means to determine someone's salvation.

Reason for Joy

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace *in believing*, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 15:13).

Not every Christian has joy, but every Christian has the means and the reason to. The nine qualities of the fruit of the Spirit are the natural product of the influences of the Spirit on the mind of man. Renewing our mind is what we are told must happen if we are to “prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom. 12:2). But what must our minds be focused

on? *Christ!* “Christ in you, the *hope of glory*” (Col. 1:27).

Our reasons for joy are not found in what we have or if we are appreciated by others but in what Christ has done for us. We experience true joy as we allow Jesus to take His rightful place in our hearts and minds.

“If you look at the *world*, you'll be *distressed*.

If you look *within*, you'll be *depressed*.

If you look at *God*, you'll be *at rest*.”

—Corrie Ten Boom

If we are to have the joy that God wishes to produce for us and in us, then we must put aside the love for this world and rejoice in *knowing* that “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). But His death was merely the end of the beginning, the tomb is empty, Christ is risen, and because Christ lives, we can face tomorrow.

God has already conquered and declared victory for Himself and for all those who are in Christ: “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?...But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:55,57).

“**For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.**

“**For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent” (1 Cor. 1:18-19).**

This is why Paul could boldly say of saints, “Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. *God is faithful*, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Cor. 1:8-9).

As happiness dissipates in a world destined to be judged by its Creator, we can have joy because “we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7), and though “we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus

might be made manifest in our body” (2 Cor. 4:8-10).

“But let all those that put their trust in Thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because Thou defendest them: let them also that love Thy name be joyful in Thee” (Psa. 5:11).

“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). 

1. “Painted Sticks.” *StudyLight.org*. Accessed April 3, 2025. <https://www.studylight.org/pastoral-resources/sermon-illustrations-archive/p.html>.

2. “Joy in Christ.” *StudyLight.org*. Accessed April 3, 2025. <https://www.studylight.org/pastoral-resources/sermon-illustrations-archive.html?q=palm+tree&t=body&a=search>.

Midwest Grace Fellowship Conference

July 11-12, 2025

Speakers:

Pastor Jeff Seekins and Pastor Dan Wolgast

Location:

Wellsville Manor Care Center
304 W 7th Street
Wellsville, Kansas

Contact:

Thomas Schwartz at 918-499-0276 or
Byron Finley at finfarm@gmail.com



Question Box



Do you think the anointing of Jesus in John 12 by Mary is the same one mentioned in Matthew 26?

“There came unto Him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head...” (Matt. 26:7).

“Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus...” (Jn. 12:3).

It is commonly taught that the anointing of Christ in Matthew 26:6-13 and the similar account in John 12:1-8 are the same event. There are similarities between these accounts but also major differences.

The similarities: Both events took place in “Bethany” (Matt. 26:6; Mk. 14:3; Jn. 12:1). The ointment was worth the same amount, “three hundred pence” (Mk. 14:5; Jn. 12:5). Objection was made that the ointment could have been sold and the money given to the poor (Matt. 26:9; Mk. 14:5; Jn. 12:5). The Lord’s response is practically the same in each account (Matt. 26:11-12; Mk. 14:7-8; Jn. 12:7-8).

The differences: John’s account took place at the home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary (12:2); the other account is at “the house of Simon the leper” (Matt. 26:6; Mk. 14:3). John’s account took place “six days before the Passover” (12:1); the other took place “two days” before the Passover (Matt. 26:2; Mk. 14:1). In John, it took place before the Triumphal Entry (12:12-15); the other took place after it (Matt. 21:1-11; Mk. 11:1-11). In John, “Mary” is named (12:3); in the other, the “woman” is unnamed (Matt. 26:7,10; Mk. 14:3). In John, the ointment was poured on Christ’s “feet” (12:3); in the other, the ointment was poured on Christ’s “head” (Matt. 26:7; Mk. 14:3). In John, Mary “wiped His feet with her hair” (12:3); in the other, the woman’s hair is not mentioned. In John’s account, only “one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot” objected (12:4-6); in the other, “some” of the disciples objected (Matt. 26:8; Mk. 14:4).

The details of the two accounts differ significantly, and not because of any contradiction, but because these were two similar but different anointings of Christ that took place four days apart.

—Pastor Kevin Sadler



21 Facts on *Tithing*

KEN LAWSON
BBS Board Member

1. The English word “tithē” as well as its Hebrew-Greek equivalents *ma`aser* and *apodekatoō* means a tenth.

2. Many Christian churches preach tithing as a means of supporting the work of the Lord today. There are many variations of this theme. Some pay the local church one-tenth of their income after taxes and bills are paid; some pay before. Others demand tithing on unemployment, inheritance, gifts, tax refunds, social security, and even gambling winnings. The tithing issue has caused a great deal of strife and division in our churches over the years.

3. The most well-known passage on tithing comes from the Old Testament Book of Malachi 3:7-10. This Scripture has given rise to the practice of “Storehouse Tithing.” Simply stated, the congregation is exhorted from the pulpit to channel all of their Christian giving through the local church (storehouse). If they wish to give to a Christian organization, radio or television broadcast, etc., it must go through their denominational machinery in order for the local church to get “credit.” Also the pastor and elders often must make the determination if the cause supported by the giver is “worthy.”

4. This use of the Malachi passage is a good example of Scripture being taken out of its historical and dispensational context. “This whole nation” in verse 9 is the backslidden nation of Israel, NOT the present day Church (Mal. 1:1; 3:6). They were under the Law of Moses as a system of conditional blessing. Believers today are not under the law but under grace (Rom. 6:14). As such we have already been blessed by God with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3) and are under a system of unconditional blessing with grace on the throne (Rom. 5:21).

5. This should put an end to the common charge that believers who don't tithe are "robbing God" and will be "cursed with a curse." The storehouse mentioned in verse 10 is not a local church but a storage bin or silo in the Jewish temple where the grain from the Hebrew's tithes was stored (2 Chron. 31:4-12).

6. Under the law only agricultural products were tithed. They included grain, fruit, and livestock. Only products produced within the boundaries of the land of Israel were to be tithed. Jews living in Gentile lands were exempt (Lev. 27:30-34).

7. Others exempt from the tithing law included the hired hands, fishermen, miners, lumber workers, construction workers, soldiers, weavers, potters, manufacturers, merchants, government workers, and priests. In short, all who were not farmers were exempt.

8. A farmer with only 9 cattle did not tithe because the law specified the "tenth which passeth under the rod." Likewise a farmer with 19 sheep paid only 1 sheep to the Lord's tithe.

9. The Jewish farmers in the land could redeem (buy back) the tithes of their crops with a penalty of one-fifth. In other words, if a farmer wished to keep his tithe of grain worth \$1,000, he could pay the cash equivalent of \$1,200 (Lev. 27:31).



“Under the law only agricultural products were tithed.”

10. Livestock could not be bought back, nor could the farmer exchange a good animal for a bad one or vice versa. Any attempt to substitute any other animal, other than the tenth which passed under the rod, would be penalized by the farmer forfeiting both the tenth and its substitute (Lev. 27:33).

11. God ordained the Levites to be the ones to whom the tithe was paid (Num. 18:21). They were one of the 12 tribes of Israel to whom no inheritance was given in the land. The Lord Himself and the tithes of the children of Israel were their inheritance. It was used for the service of the tabernacle (later the temple) (Num. 18:20-28).

12. It was unlawful for anyone outside of the tribe of Levi to receive the tithe, such as prophets, preachers, kings, or evangelists.

13. The Levites paid one-tenth of their tithes to the high priest. Not all Levites were priests but only the sons of Aaron. The priests did not tithe.

14. The Lord Jesus Christ did not ask for or receive a tithe for support of His ministry. Being of the tribe of Judah (not Levi), He could not without breaking the law (Heb. 7:14; Rev. 5:5).

15. Neither Peter (not of the tribe of Levi) nor Paul (of the tribe of Benjamin) could receive tithes for the support of their ministries.

16. Even the Jews do not practice tithing today because there are no Levites, priests, or temple worship in Jerusalem. Jewish rabbis know biblical law well enough to know that tithing under the present circumstances is unlawful. According to them, when the temple is rebuilt in Jerusalem with a consecrated altar with priests and Levites officiating, all Jews living within the biblical tithing zones will tithe.

17. Some Christian ministries today continue to support tithing, using the argument that it predates Moses and the law. But this reasoning is not valid, for the Sabbath also predates the giving of the law (Ex. 16:23-29), and yet it is not binding on God's people today (Rom. 14:5,6; Gal. 4:9,10; Col. 2:16,17).

18. Abraham gave tithes to Melchisedec, king of Salem, but this was the spoils of war, not the legalistic tithe of the land which Moses commanded. Also, God did not *command* the tithe, Abraham chose to give it of his own free will (Gen. 14:17-23; Heb. 7:1-10).

19. The only other scriptural reference to tithing before Moses is Jacob. Again there is no command to tithe. In fact Jacob puts up numerous conditions to be met before he will pay the tithe to the Lord (Gen. 28:20-22).

20. The biblical references which address the tithing issues are Genesis 14:20; 28:22; Leviticus 27:30-32; Numbers 18:20-28; Deuteronomy 12:6,11,17; 14:22,23,28; 26:12; 2 Chronicles 31:5,6,12; Amos 4:4; Malachi 3:8-10; Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42; 18:12; Hebrews 7:5-9.¹

21. Paul the apostle to the Gentiles for this present dispensation of grace does not mention tithing but says a great deal about Christian giving. Romans 15:25,26; 1 Corinthians 9:7-14; 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9; Galatians 6:6-10; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Timothy 5:9-18.

WHO is to give to the Lord's work? The Christian! He gives systematically, sacrificially, and joyfully. TO WHOM does he give? To Christ! FOR WHAT does he give? For the cause of Christ! NOT to a man or to a church, not for gain, but for the gospel. 

1. According to Deuteronomy 14:22,23,28; 26:12; and Amos 4:4, the tithe was only given every three years.

Thinking Ahead

“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7).

If you are planning to draw up a will or update one that’s outdated, please consider including *Berean Bible Society* in your estate planning. (Of course, we do not mean to imply that your loved ones should not be remembered first). Estate planning is important, because failing to do so means that your estate could be used in a way that does not fully reflect your wishes or beliefs, and could even fall into the hands of the state to use as they desire.

Historically, gifts from estates have been instrumental in enabling the *Berean Bible Society* to print and reprint our literature and to faithfully send the truth to others, free of charge, through the *Berean Searchlight*. BBS has been in existence since 1940 and, if the Lord tarries, we will continue to serve the Savior for years to come. By giving a portion of your estate to BBS, you can continue to make an impact for Christ after your homegoing. When your last will and testament is pulled out of the drawer, it can be used of the Lord to promote the pure gospel of the grace of God and aid the purpose of BBS in helping others to understand, enjoy, and apply the Bible by “rightly dividing the Word of truth.”

If you are preparing to draw up a will, it is important for you to know how *Berean Bible Society* functions and is funded:

1. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, governed by a board of directors.
2. It is not endowed or underwritten by any denomination or parachurch organization.
3. It does not charge any subscription price for the *Berean Searchlight*, which reaches into all 50 states and 60 foreign countries.
4. Its television ministry, *Transformed by Grace*, is available to view in millions of households nationwide with the teaching of the Word, rightly divided.
5. It is a work of faith supported entirely by the voluntary contributions of those who give, so that others may come to rejoice in the riches of God’s grace.

Our founder, Pastor C. R. Stam, wrote a booklet called *To Prove the Sincerity of Your Love*, which provides more information about giving and estate planning. If you would like a copy, please contact us, and we will send you one free of charge.

—Pastor Kevin Sadler

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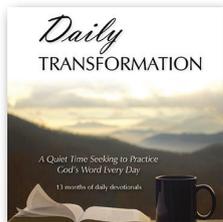
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MAN *to* MAN

“And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible” (1 Cor. 9:25).

Paul’s epistles have much to say about the competitive sports of his day. He uses the gymnasium and stadium, the races, the boxing and wrestling matches, to drive home vital spiritual lessons.

As he witnessed the intense enthusiasm of the masses and the grim determination of the contestants in the Greek games, he was gripped with the challenge to believers to put as much into the issues of life and death as these put into their games. How rigidly the contestants, then as now, controlled and denied themselves! How tirelessly they trained themselves!

“Now they do it,” says the apostle, “to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible one.”

In this pleasure-loving, self-indulgent age, believers are prone to forget that the Christian life is a race and that the divine Judge is watching their performance. He observes those who are running with all that is in them—and He likewise observes those who have so indulged themselves in the things of this world that they can hardly run at all.

Realize it or not, the race will soon—perhaps very soon—be over and the prizes awarded. Let each of us, therefore, ask himself: How will I fare then? Am I heeding the exhortation: “So run that ye may obtain,” or do I scarcely care whether or not I receive the approval of the One Who gave His all—Himself—to save me from a just and certain doom and to bless me with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies?

May God convict us, beloved, and help us to arise to meet the challenge that faces us every day while the millions of lost about us continue their course to Christless graves, and a confused and divided Church points them in a dozen different directions.

May He give us a burden for the lost—and the saved. May He convict us of our responsibility for their condition. May He help us to live lives of true, practical devotion to Christ, rather than mere sentimental devotion; to practice self-control and self-denial, to put our all into the race, so that when we stand before Him, He may confer upon us a garland of victory that will never fade away, and with it, everlasting joy that we have brought honor, rather than reproach, to His worthy name.

—Pastor Cornelius R. Stam

MYSTERY

An excerpt from Pastor Kevin Sadler's book, *Key Words of Our Faith*.

PASTOR KEVIN SADLER
Berean Bible Society President

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest...” (Rom. 16:25-26).

“Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse... recounted how he once employed a single woman named Elizabeth as his private secretary who was terrific, and so far as he knew had never dated anyone. This was fine with him because he did not want to lose her. However, one Sunday morning as he parked his car someone approached him saying, ‘Max and Elizabeth are engaged.’ He did not believe it. However, when he got to the church door someone else said the same thing. When he stepped into his office there stood Elizabeth beaming radiantly, confirming the engagement. She and her new husband planned to serve with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Mexico. Barnhouse reflected:

“Here was a true *musterion* [mystery] in the New Testament sense. It had been completely hidden, absolutely unknown, totally unsuspected. Then suddenly it was whispered to one person, and the news spread like leaves in the wind.”¹

The Greek word, *musterion*, translated as “mystery” in Romans 16:25, does not mean something mysterious or puzzling, as the English word suggests, but rather a secret or something that was unknown. The message of grace for today was once hidden in God. But the Apostle Paul tells us, “How that by revelation He [Christ] made known unto me the mystery” (Eph. 3:3). The Lord revealed this blessed truth first to Paul, and then Paul made it known to others, and it spread “like leaves in the wind.” And we, the Church, are tasked with spreading this thrilling message to others: “And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery” (Eph. 3:9).

God Is Able to Establish You

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you...” (Rom. 16:25).

God is He Who is “of power.” God is the source of all power. He is all-powerful. As Jeremiah prayed, “Ah Lord God! behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee” (32:17).

The God of all power is able to establish each believer spiritually in Christ. He does so by the power of His Word. One of the ways God reveals His power today is by establishing His people in the truth of His Word (Psa. 119:160).



By being established, Paul means for us to be put on solid, stable ground, spiritually speaking. We’ve all probably sat at a table where all four legs don’t touch the floor at the same time. It rocks back and forth and is shaky. You might try to establish, or stabilize it by putting something under one of the legs, so that it will not wobble.

That is the idea that Paul has in mind with the word “stablish.” God wants to bring us to a place where we are no longer spiritually wobbly, shaky, or unstable. Instead, God wants our faith to be solid, secure, and firm, being

“Rooted and built up in Him, and *stablished* in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving” (Col. 2:7).

The resource for the establishing of our faith is God Himself. God, Who is of power to establish us, transmits His power to us through the indwelling Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit always works in conjunction with His Word, and thus it is by the Word of God that we are established. This is the goal of God’s Word, and certainly the goal of the Book of Romans, that believers would be established and brought to a place of security, strength, and stability in their faith.

According to Paul’s Gospel

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel...” (Rom. 16:25).

Paul notes that we are spiritually established specifically “according to my gospel.” Paul’s gospel, which he received directly from the Lord, was “the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

This gospel is at the core of the truth of Romans, and all of Paul’s epistles, regarding the preaching of the Cross and all that Christ has accomplished for us by His shed blood. It involves the fact that we are justified by faith alone (Rom. 4:5).

Understanding all that is true of us based on the Cross of Christ establishes us. When you know you are “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (3:24) and that “being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (5:1), these

truths, among many others, bring stability to your faith.

Paul calls it “MY gospel” for a reason. It’s Paul’s gospel because it was first revealed directly to him by the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul was given a special, sweeping revelation that no one else possessed or had ever received. It was a gospel that Peter, James, John, and other writers of Scripture did not know and had never received. As Paul told the Galatians,

“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).

No man taught Paul his gospel. He did not receive it from Peter or the other apostles of the Kingdom. Paul received his gospel *directly* from the risen, glorified Lord Jesus Christ. After He temporarily set Israel aside in her unbelief, the Lord revealed from heaven this formerly unknown gospel to Paul.

Christ, apart from the law (Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:16). Paul’s gospel tells us that, upon believing the gospel of grace, the Holy Spirit immediately baptizes us and identifies us with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-4), and places us into the Church, the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Paul’s gospel reveals that all who are in the Body of Christ have a heavenly hope (Col. 1:5).

These are truths that are *new* and *unique* to the good news committed to Paul by the risen, glorified Lord; these truths cannot be found outside of Paul’s letters. Knowing these things of Paul’s gospel, we are established in our faith. We are established by truth, that is, by the truth of God’s Word rightly divided. We find spiritual stability by a proper understanding of God’s Word and living in light of it by faith.

According to the Revelation of the Mystery

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery...” (Rom. 16:25).

“The preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery” defines Paul’s gospel. It is good news that is concentrated on the Person of Jesus Christ. It is about His Cross and Resurrection.

The Lord Jesus Christ can be preached two ways in Scripture: 1) according to the revelation of prophecy or 2) according to the revelation of the mystery. The Twelve, including Peter, preached Christ according to the revelation



Paul’s gospel is that Gentiles no longer have to become proselytes of the Jews’ religion to be saved, and that salvation is by grace through faith alone in

of prophecy, which had been made known to the prophets of old (Acts 3:20-21). Paul preached Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, which had *not* been revealed to the prophets.

Jesus Christ preached according to the revelation of prophecy has to do with His office as King over Israel. It is about the prophetic fulfillment of the Messiah establishing a kingdom on the earth, delivering Israel from her enemies, and reigning over all the earth in righteousness, justice, and peace.

Jesus Christ preached according to the revelation of the mystery has to do with His office as the Head of the Church, the Body of Christ. It has to do with Christ's heavenly ministry today in His exaltation at the right hand of the Father, offering His finished work in grace to the world.

Paul wrote that we are established in our faith today by "the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery." God would have us know and be established in this aspect of Christ's ministry and His finished work that is the basis of today's gospel of grace.

The heart of Paul's epistles is the proclamation of Jesus Christ. Everything centers in Him. He is the Savior of the Body (Eph. 5:23). He is the Church's foundation (1 Cor. 3:11) and its Head (Col. 1:18). He is our life (Col. 3:4), our hope (1 Tim. 1:1), and our all (Col. 3:11).

Seeing the twofold ministry of Christ, that of prophecy and that of the mystery, establishes our faith and enables us to grow

in Christ. It allows us to grow even deeper in Him because we recognize what our Lord is doing in this dispensation of grace and how He is working today in and through His Church.

What is "the revelation of the mystery"? The word translated "mystery" (Gr. *musterion*) is derived from Greek words that mean, to shut the mouth. It refers to that which was hidden or kept secret, something about which God never "opened His mouth" to reveal to mankind. "Revelation" speaks of an uncovering, a disclosure of something which was previously unknown.

Putting these two terms together, the *revelation* of the *mystery* refers to the truth of God which had been hidden in time past, but now has been revealed and disclosed. The mystery *was* kept hidden until it was given first to the Apostle Paul. By direct, divine revelation, the Lord Jesus Christ personally made known to Paul "the mystery" (Eph. 3:3).

The mystery is God's body of truth regarding His current administration of grace and is Christ's instruction for His Church today. This truth and instruction was "hid from ages and from generations" (Col. 1:26). It thus required a direct revelation from God to make known His previously unknown truth. Christ revealed it to Paul, and in Paul's letters, we learn about the mystery, the truths of grace for the Church to trust and live by.

The mystery is multifaceted and has many unique truths and characteristics that were revealed to Paul, such as Paul being our

apostle (Rom. 11:13), believers becoming one body in Christ (Rom. 12:5), no difference between Jew and Gentile (Rom. 10:12), the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-20), and the pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church (1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thes. 1:10; 5:1-11).

Kept Secret Since the World Began

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began” (Rom. 16:25).



Imagine how absurd it would be to search the archives of ancient history to find a reference to an iPhone as a form of communication. That's what it is like trying to find the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery in the pages of the Old Testament. You can search, but your search will be in vain.

God's truth of the mystery is nowhere to be found in Genesis, the law, the historical books, the wisdom literature, or the prophetic Scriptures. It is not in the four Gospels. It is not hidden in prophecy, nor foreshadowed

in the types. It was “hid in God” (Eph. 3:9).

God kept the knowledge of His Son according to the mystery a hidden secret since the world began. God was there when “the world began,” when He created all things by His almighty power. And from the beginning of the world and then throughout the thousands of years of the Old Testament, into and through the years of the four Gospels and early Acts, God kept the mystery hidden. He never breathed a word of it or ever spoke of it.

Concerning His Son, the Messiah, and the plans and purposes God has for the earth through the nation Israel, of those things God most certainly spoke “since the world began.” In Luke 1:69-70, Zacharias prophesied, “And [the Lord God of Israel] hath raised up an horn of salvation for us [Israel] in the house of His servant David; As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been *since the world began.*”

However, concerning His self-same, only Son, the living Head of the Body of Christ, and God's plans and purposes for the heav- enlies through the Church, God kept those things a secret “since the world began.” You cannot find this truth of Christ apart from the message revealed to the Apostle Paul, which is only found in his epistles.

But Now Is Made Manifest

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which

was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest..." (Rom. 16:25-26).

The preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery was kept secret in time past, but then Christ appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road and saved him. Following this, the Lord revealed "the mystery," His teachings of grace, to Paul, by a series of revelations (Acts 26:16; 2 Cor. 12:1-7; Gal. 1:15-2:2).

The mystery was a mystery, kept secret in time past, but no longer, for as Paul wrote, "But now is made manifest." Similarly, Paul wrote the Colossians, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, *but now is made manifest to His saints*" (Col. 1:26). Now the mystery is fully revealed! It is in the pages of God's Word within the letters of Paul, Romans through Philemon.

As the revelation of the mystery has been "made manifest," so it is now God's will for it to be

made manifest to all people. God instructs the Church, the Body of Christ "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery" (Eph. 3:9).

We are constrained to do so by God's love and grace (2 Cor. 5:14). It is a message of Jesus Christ, making peace by His Cross and providing the way for any and all to be reconciled to God by faith alone in His once-for-all sacrifice on their behalf. We also do so because it opens up to believers the understanding of God's Word, and we see what God is doing today under grace, and we find what our Savior's will is for the Church. Thus, like Paul, we should ask God for open doors to make it known,

"Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ" (Col. 4:3). 

1. "Donald Grey Barnhouse on Mystery Engagement," Sermon Central, <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon-illustrations/73919/donald-grey-barnhouse-on-mystery-by-sermon-central>.



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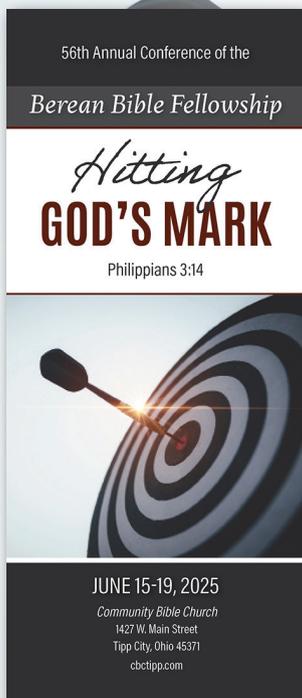
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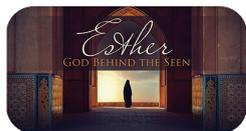
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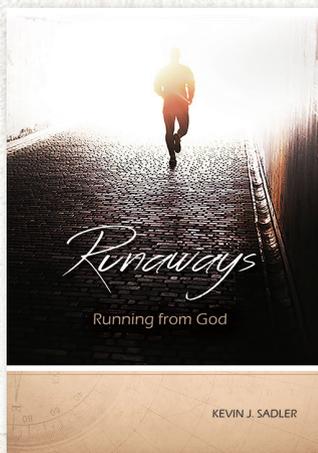
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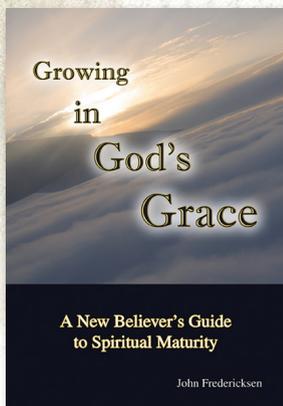
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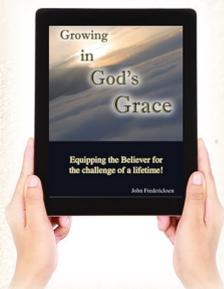
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News & Announcements



Your Help Is Still Needed: The entire team at *Berean Bible Society* would like to extend our gratitude to all those who have prayerfully and financially supported the work of the *Grace Study Bible* (GSB). Without your help, this project would never have been possible. *And your help is still needed.* It won't be long now, and we will complete our writing and editing phases and be ready to send the GSB out for printing. As you might imagine, however, the costs associated with printing and shipping have increased significantly since this project began. Would you consider helping BBS defer the costs by donating toward the GSB project? Every contribution, no matter the size, helps. By contributing to this project, supporters play a vital role in ensuring that sound doctrine is available not only for this generation, but also for future generations. You can donate by mail or online at bereanbiblesociety.org. If you have any further questions, please contact us at berean@bereanbiblesociety.org or 262.255.4750.

Are You Social?: Show your support for *Berean Bible Society* and *Transformed by Grace* by subscribing to our YouTube channels and liking, sharing, and commenting on our videos and posts on social media. Your engagement helps us reach a wider audience and spread the message of grace and truth. Together, we can inspire others to deepen their understanding of the Bible and grow in their faith. Consider leaving a comment or sharing your thoughts on our content—your feedback is invaluable! Thank you for being a part of our community and for helping us share the gospel of the Grace of God and the Word rightly divided!

Oshkosh Grace Conference: Mark your calendars for May 10 and consider joining BBS President Pastor Kevin Sadler at *Grace Bible Church Oshkosh*, located at 145 W 24th Ave., Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The theme is "A Stormy Voyage (Acts 27)." For more information, please contact the church at 920.279.1340 or contact@gbcoshkosh.org.

Upcoming Conferences to put on your calendar!

Oshkosh Grace Conference, May 10, Oshkosh, WI
BBF Summer Conference, June 15-19, Tipp City, OH
BBS Regional Conference, August 16-17, Concord, NC

BIBLE COMMENTARIES & More Grace Works

COMMENTARIES

Matthew (J. Fredericksen)	\$30.00	The Twofold Purpose of God	9.00
Acts Volume 1 (C. R. Stam).....	26.00	True Spirituality.....	14.00
Acts Volume 2 (C. R. Stam).....	26.00	Two Minutes with the Bible (Devotional)	14.00
Romans (C. R. Stam).....	20.00	PAUL M. SADLER	
1 Corinthians (C. R. Stam)	15.00	Exploring the Unsearchable Riches of Christ.....	\$15.00
2 Corinthians (C. R. Stam)	15.00	The Oneness of Marriage	10.00
Galatians (C. R. Stam).....	18.00	The Triumph of His Grace	17.00
Ephesians (P. Sadler).....	20.00	KEVIN J. SADLER	
Philippians (P. Sadler)	15.00	Key Words of Our Faith	\$12.00
Colossians (C. R. Stam)	18.00	Runaways, <i>Running from God</i>	10.00
Thessalonians (C. R. Stam).....	15.00	RICKY KURTH	
Pastoral Epistles (1,2 Timothy/Titus, C.R. Stam)	15.00	Rightly Divided Answers to FAQ.....	\$12.00
James (P. Sadler)	12.00	More Rightly Divided Answers to FAQ.....	12.00
1 and 2 Peter (P. Sadler).....	15.00	JOHN FREDERICKSEN	
Revelation Volume 1 (P. Sadler)	15.00	Daily Transformation (Devotional)	\$15.00
Revelation Volume 2 (P. Sadler)	17.00	Foundational Truths	15.00
Revelation Volume 3 (P. Sadler)	17.00	Growing in God's Grace.....	10.00
Revelation Volume 4 (K. Sadler/P. Sadler)	18.00		

GRACE STUDY BOOKS

C.R. STAM		GROWING UP IN GRACE SUNDAY SCHOOL	
Baptism and the Bible.....	\$11.00	Bible Events Book 1	\$24.00
Divine Election and Human Responsibility	13.00	Bible Events Book 2	24.00
Holding Fast the Faithful Word.....	12.00	Bible Events Book 3	24.00
Man, His Nature and Destiny.....	15.00	Bible Characters Book 1	24.00
Moses and Paul	9.00	Bible Characters Book 2	24.00
Our Great Commission, What is It?	11.00	Bible Characters Book 3	24.00
Paul, His Apostleship and Message	11.00	Bible Doctrines Book 1.....	24.00
Things That Differ	12.00	Bible Doctrines Book 2	24.00
The Lord's Supper and the Bible	9.00	Bible Doctrines Book 3.....	24.00
		The Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ	24.00

Free Shipping! *Wisconsin residents please add 5.5% sales tax*

BEREAN BIBLE SOCIETY N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., Germantown, WI 53022

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

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“Faith does not eliminate questions. But faith knows where to take them.”

—Elisabeth Elliot

TBG

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BEREAN BIBLE SOCIETY TV MINISTRY

Monday–Friday 6:00 pm ET:

- Christian Television Network (CTN)
 - DirecTV: Channel 376
 - Dish Network: Channel 262
 - Glory Star Satellite: Channel 117

TBG Network 24/7 streaming channel on
Roku and Apple TV

Also available on TBG YouTube, and the BBS website

