

The BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

November 2025



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This month’s cover features Portland Head Lighthouse in Cape Elizabeth, Maine.

The **Purpose** of the *Berean Bible Society* is to help you understand, enjoy, and apply the Bible. The **Mission** of BBS is to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ by proclaiming the whole counsel of God according to the revelation of the Mystery. Our **Goals** are to *evangelize* the lost, to *educate* the saved in “rightly dividing the Word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15), to *energize* the transformation of the Christian life, and to *encourage* the local church.

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We are thankful for your gifts of support.

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A Note From the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

We are pleased to announce that we are now taking pre-orders for our Grace Study Bible (GSB)! We called this work a “Grace” study Bible because it highlights the doctrines of grace by which the Word should be interpreted. This Bible’s commentary also suggests practical ways to demonstrate grace with fellow members of the Body of Christ.

We proofread the GSB most thoroughly. We had a sizable team of capable proofreaders who reviewed it with a fine-tooth comb. However, we know very well that no matter how many times you proofread something, there will still be typos. We ask for grace if you find a grammatical or spelling mistake, and we also ask that you please pass these along to us so that we can correct them in future printings.

In the introduction of the GSB, we included this statement: “In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.” There were 23 different writers of the notes in the GSB. The writers penned their notes according to their beliefs, and as a result, the notes don’t all agree with one another. You may not agree with all the notes, but we ask that you remember that there is liberty in non-essentials and that we are to show love in all things. While we hope this does not happen, we expect preachers, teachers, or online speakers to take notes from the GSB and build whole sermons around what they take issue with. We encourage you to contact us directly if your view differs from what the GSB presents, but we request that any correspondence be written in a spirit of grace.

So many put their heart and soul into this immense project. We are grateful to the Lord for all those who came together to make this work a reality. After four years, we now have a mid-Acts dispensational Bible with notes throughout the entire Bible. The notes rightly divide God’s Word and interpret it in light of His current dispensation of grace and Paul’s apostleship and message. The gospel of grace is clearly and consistently presented throughout. And it was all prayerfully done with the intent to edify the Church and to deepen one’s walk with the Lord. For this cause may every grace believer praise God.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler



Pastor Kevin J. Sadler has been serving as president of the *Berean Bible Society* since 2016. He appears on “Transformed by Grace,” a daily television program that airs nationally. In addition, he is the editor of the *Berean Searchlight*, authors grace literature, and is a Bible conference speaker.

TRUE Thanksgiving



Many people entertain only vague notions about thanksgiving, just as they do about faith.

They confuse faith with optimism, will power, presumption, imagination, and all sorts of other things. A doctor tells his patient that but for his faith, he never would have come through his illness. Somehow the patient was “just sure” he would recover. A smiling mother encourages her married daughter to “have faith, that everything will turn out all right.” But faith in God is believing God; believing what He has said. True faith is based on the written Word of God (see Rom. 10:17).

But unregenerate men have vague ideas about thanksgiving. A man escapes some great harm and thanks his “lucky stars.” Another says, “I’m grateful for a healthy body,” but to whom is he grateful? He doesn’t say. In many cases it doesn’t even occur to him to ask. He’s “just thankful”!

How refreshing, then, it is to open our Bibles, especially to the Epistles of Paul, the chief of sinners, saved by grace, and to see him giving thanks for specific blessings, and to a specific Person—God!

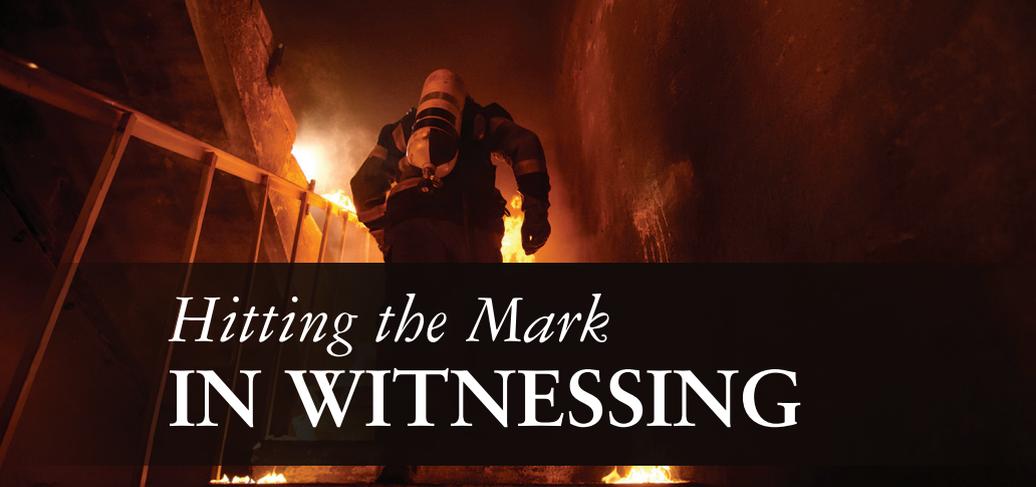
“Giving thanks unto the Father, Which hath made us meet [fit] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son” (Col. 1:12,13).

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift” (2 Cor. 9:15).

“Thanks be unto God, Who giveth us the victory...” (1 Cor. 15:57).

“Thanks be unto God, Who always causeth us to triumph...” (2 Cor. 2:14).

It is our prayer for all our readers that you may be especially thankful for “...the gift of God [which] is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).
—*Pastor C. R. Stam*



Hitting the Mark **IN WITNESSING**

*(From a message given at the 2025 Annual
BBF Conference in Tipp City, Ohio)*

PASTOR KEVIN J. SADLER
Berean Bible Society President/Editor

“Timothy Stackpole was a New York Firefighter, who was severely burned in a 1998 fire. After he recovered, he returned to the force despite the advice of some friends and family and the fact that he could retire comfortably.

“He was a great fire fighter and passionate about his work and was soon promoted to captain. Timothy was one of the fire fighters that ran into the second tower to try to save some people. When he did, it collapsed and took his life. He knew his calling—to save people.”¹

We too, as ambassadors for Christ, have a calling to save people from eternal death by sharing the saving gospel of God’s grace, and to do so with the heart of our apostle, who wrote, “I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22).

TRIUMPH IN CHRIST

“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place” (2 Cor. 2:14).

Paul gave thanks to God because He “always causeth us to triumph in Christ.” The apostle uses a metaphor here in his praise and thanksgiving to God. The idea of “always causeth us to triumph” is a reference to the ancient Roman triumphal procession, which was a victory parade celebrating a successful military campaign. The parade was called the Roman Triumph. In the Triumph, a victorious general was honored with a festive, ceremonial parade through the streets of Rome.

One commentator painted the scene this way:

“In a Triumph the procession of the victorious general



marched through the streets of Rome to the Capitol in the following order.

“First came the state officials and the senate.

“Then came the trumpeters.

“Then were carried the spoils taken from the conquered land. For instance, when Titus conquered Jerusalem, the seven-branched candlestick, the golden table of the shewbread and the golden trumpets were carried through the streets of Rome.

“Then came pictures of the conquered land and models of conquered citadels and ships.

“There followed the white bull for the sacrifice which would be made.

“Then there walked the captive princes, leaders and generals in chains, shortly to be flung into prison and in all probability almost immediately to be executed.

“Then came the lictors bearing their rods, followed by the musicians with their lyres; then the priests swinging their censers with the sweet-smelling incense burning in them.

“After that came the general himself. He stood in a chariot drawn by four horses. He was clad in a purple tunic embroidered with golden palm leaves, and over it a purple toga marked out with golden stars. In his hand he held an ivory scepter with the Roman eagle at its top, and over his head a slave held the crown of Jupiter.

“After him rode his family; and finally came the army wearing all their decorations and shouting loud exclamations, ‘Triumph! Triumph! Triumph!’”²

It is reminiscent of a ticker-tape victory parade for a sports team in their home city after they have won a championship. From this celebratory scene of the Roman Triumph, Paul drew an analogy about our witness for Christ and the advance of the gospel of grace.

Through His cross and resurrection, Christ has triumphed over our enemies of sin, death, and Satan. As believers in Christ, we are forever on the side of victory. And now throughout all our lives, we

are *always* led in a triumphal procession by our Savior. Having defeated the enemy, Christ, the supreme Victor, marches in ultimate triumph, and no one can stand against Him.

Having trusted Christ as our personal Savior, we are on the side of victory. He won the victory for us, and being on the Lord's side, we get to share in His triumph. He gets the glory, but we, His followers, join Him in the grand celebration of His triumphal procession. And Paul gave thanks to God for this privilege of always being led in triumph in Christ, because it is by the grace of God that we have been saved and that we have victory through Christ.



As the Roman Triumph advanced, clouds of incense permeated the scene, and the sweet fragrance filled the air in the streets of Rome. Paul equated this aroma to how God “maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place.” As the Church is led in triumph in Christ, the aroma of the knowledge of God is diffused throughout the world by our life, witness, and deeds.

Paul refers to this “knowledge” a couple of chapters later, where he wrote: “For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the *knowledge* of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (4:6). At our conversion, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shined in our hearts, and God then uses the Church to make known to the world His saving knowledge. Paul likened the wafting of the Roman Triumph’s fragrant incense to God’s disseminating, through His people, the knowledge of Christ’s triumph over sin and death.

Paul stated that he and his coworkers made known the knowledge of Christ’s victory “in every place” (2:14) they traveled, as they took the gospel of the grace of God to the nations. Following Paul’s example, the Church, the Body of Christ, is called to do likewise, to be a witness to Christ in every place in this world, because in every place there are sinners in need of the Savior.

To be truly Pauline, we are called to follow Paul’s heart and passion for lost souls. Paul wrote in Philippians 4:9, “Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.” When we look at Paul’s life and ministry in God’s Word, what we see is that evangelism and church-planting were the very heart

of it. And the church-planting had as its purpose the equipping of God's people to further reach the unbelieving and to be a lighthouse for truth.



As we read and follow Paul in our witnessing, we learn that Paul was bold in sharing Christ, but he apparently didn't always *feel* that way, because Paul even asked others to pray for his boldness (Eph. 6:19). At times, Paul was even fearful of speaking out for Christ. Paul was not superhuman, and Paul's fear and lack of boldness are very relatable, because evangelism is not an easy thing. In Corinth, the Lord spoke to Paul and encouraged him, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee..." (Acts 18:9-10). Philippians 4:9 assures us that the God of peace will be with us, too, as we follow Paul in our witness and we reach out to others. God will give us boldness to speak out for Him and He will calm our fears and grant us His peace as we do so.

A SWEET FRAGRANCE

"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that

are saved, and in them that perish" (2 Cor. 2:15).

"A sweet savour" refers to a pleasing fragrance, and here it is an aroma that is pleasing to God. Likewise, with the Cross, Ephesians 5:2 tells us that "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a *sweet-smelling savour.*" Christ's offering for sin was a pleasing fragrance to God the Father, and He was satisfied and well-pleased with His Son's perfect sacrifice.

The "sweet savour" in 2 Corinthians 2:15 refers not to the message we proclaim, but to us, the messengers who proclaim the message. As we spread the good news of salvation and are a witness of Christ and His cross, Paul said that "*we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ,*" and *we are pleasing to God.*

When we take that step of faith and reach out and share the good news of Christ, that sweet fragrance goes right to the throne of God. As Paul wrote, "For we are *unto God a sweet savour of Christ,*" and God is well-pleased.

The fragrance is sweet to God based on our faithfulness to make the gospel known, *not* on the success of the response. Paul added that we are "a sweet savour of Christ," regardless of the response, both "in them that are saved, and in them that perish."

There are only two categories or camps of people from God's

point of view, and there is no in-between. Every single person is either saved from their sins, spiritually alive, and going to heaven, or they are perishing in their sins, lost, and headed for judgment in the lake of fire.

The believer's life is an aroma of the knowledge of God that others react to, either in trusting Christ or rejecting Christ. This being so, may our prayer be that of the missionary Jim Elliot, who once prayed, "Father, make me a crisis man. Bring those I contact to decision. Let me not be a milepost on a single road; make me a fork, that men must turn one way or another on facing Christ in me."³

Being an aroma of Christ to the world by our witness includes both our words and our lives. It is important how we live; others are watching. A few verses later in chapter three of 2 Corinthians, Paul wrote, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, *known and read of all men*" (v. 2).

In light of this, Paul challenged the Ephesians, "For ye

were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). To live as a child of light, living a righteous, godly life that stands out and is separate from the darkness of the world is to show love to the unbelieving all around us. It is to love them enough to present them with the contrast between faith and unbelief, life and death. The light of a loving, Christ-like life can expose unbelievers to the contrast between the character and destructiveness of sin and their need for salvation. We show love for the world by not being like it. Our walk as light can point and show the way to Christ. And when a faithful testimony backs our words for Christ, it makes our witness more powerful.

"A woman was nervously waiting at the airport for her husband to return from his skydiving lesson. The pilot approached her: 'I'm sorry, but there's been an accident. I have some bad news, some good news, some more bad news, and



"Father, make me a crisis man.
Bring those I contact to decision.
Let me not be a milepost
on a single road; make me a fork,
that men must turn one way
or another on facing Christ in me."

—Jim Elliot

some more good news. The bad news is your husband fell out of the plane. The good news is he had his parachute on. The bad news is he hit the ground before his chute could open. The good news is we hadn't taken off yet."⁴



We have a bad news/good news message to make known to the world. The bad news is the worst news possible: we are dead in our sins and headed for the lake of fire. The good news is the best possible news: we are saved from our sins and have eternal life by faith alone, trusting that Christ died for us and rose again. We share this good news, constrained by the love of Christ and out of a deep concern for lost souls. Evangelism is about an overflow of the grace of God in one's life and wanting others to have the blessing of salvation that is ours in Christ. As we do so, "we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ."

WHO IS SUFFICIENT FOR THESE THINGS?

"To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.

And who is sufficient for these things?" (2 Cor. 2:16).

In the Roman Triumph, the aroma of incense was a perfume of joy, victory, and life for the victors. For the captives, however, it was an aroma of doom, a reminder of defeat, captivity, and their impending death and execution. Similarly, a person's response to the fragrance of the gospel depends on whether he marches in triumph in Christ or he chooses defeat, captivity, and death.

A person's response to the gospel has eternal consequences. For those who reject the gospel, "death unto death" refers to the spiritual *death* they remain in, which will ultimately lead to the eternal second *death* if they die in their sins. It is God's desire and heart that people who are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1) receive life and not death (1 Tim. 2:4), but they must respond in faith to the gospel of grace to have everlasting life. "Life unto life" refers to the spiritual *life* unto eternal *life* that one is given the moment one believes the gospel. And for the believer, anytime we hear the gospel of grace, we smell that sweet aroma of its truth, and we know that message means life, peace, and eternity with God for us.

"Death unto death" is what is coming for the unbeliever. In his message at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul warned of God's judgment by quoting a prophecy



LAKE OF FIRE

from Habakkuk 1:5: “Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you” (Acts 13:41). The judgment that God will pour out in the lake of fire upon those who die in their sins is so severe, frightening, and horrific that it is unimaginable and hard to believe, yet absolutely true.

The second death, to be eternally in the lake of fire, separated from God and His life and goodness (2 Thes. 1:8-9), is a horror that is difficult for our minds to conceive. In that place of doom, unbelievers will spend eternity in the midst of unmixed, all-encompassing evil. They will reside in the presence of demons and Satan for eternity.

The lake of fire is a place of darkness, fearsome blackness of darkness (Jude 1:13). They will never see light again. The morning will *never* come. They are spiritually blind and in darkness in their sins, and they will remain in darkness forever.

There is no rest in the lake of fire (Rev. 14:11). The horror of that place, its terrifying sounds,

the pain and torment, and the restlessness of soul will never allow anyone to rest, *ever*. Those who find themselves there will reside in a constant, scorching, suffocating stench of burning brimstone and the experience of never-ending, tormenting pain. The fire burns forever; the heat never relents. There is no respite and no relief from the suffering. It *never* lets up.

Some people are flippant, saying that they’ll party with their friends, in the lake of fire, but the lake of fire is a place of utter loneliness. There will be no companionship; there are no relationships in hell. Each person will be alone forever with their thoughts. And in the anguish and regrets of those thoughts, they will forever weep and gnash their teeth (Matt. 22:13).

You and I have the message, the truth of the good news that saves one from entering this everlasting suffering (2 Cor. 4:7). We have the message that delivers one from this second death and gives one a home in God’s presence forever. That message to others is to trust that Christ died for all, for the sins of each and every one of us, personally,

and that He rose again (1 Cor. 15:3-4).

The good news is that Christ took your sins upon Himself; He faced the judgment of God against them at the Cross; and He paid the price for all your sins (2 Cor. 5:21). And when you trust this, God saves you from hell, forgives you of all your sins, and grants you eternal life as a free gift (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9).

As Paul contemplated the tremendous responsibility of making known the gospel that has such far-reaching, critically important, and eternal consequences, he cried out, "And who is sufficient for these things?" It staggered Paul as it should stagger us. The gospel we share divides humanity eternally. Heaven and hell, life and death, are on the line. Who is equal to such a vitally important task?

God uses rescued people to rescue people, and it is the task of our lives to rescue the perishing (2 Cor. 5:20). And it is true that none of us in ourselves, in our own strength, is adequate or competent to serve God in this supremely consequential ministry. The only way we are sufficient for these things is through God Himself. As 2 Corinthians 3:5 says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." 

1. "Know Your Calling," accessed October 5, 2025, <https://ministry127.com/resources/illustration/know-your-calling>.
2. "2 Corinthians 2 Commentary," accessed October 5, 2025, <https://www.preceptaustin.org/2-corinthians-2-commentary#2:14>.
3. "Missionary Quotes" posted October 4, 2016, <https://missions.tips/missionary-quotes/>.
4. "A woman was nervously waiting at the airport for her husband to return from his skydiving lesson" reddit, accessed October 6, 2025, https://www.reddit.com/r/Jokes/comments/rymtdu/a_woman_was_nervously_waiting_at_the_airport_for/.

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Paul's Distinctive Terms

The following are selections from "Paul's Distinctive Terms," a section in the Grace Study Bible. They are explanations of the terminology we use in explaining our faith.

PASTOR KEN LAWSON
BBS Board Member



Berean Spirit: This is the attitude that diligent Bible students should seek to imitate. It refers to a group of Jews in the city of Berea to whom Paul preached. Rather than rejecting his teaching because it was not tradition or not accepting it because it seemed new, they took the time and effort to do independent Bible research. They searched the Scriptures daily to see if what Paul was saying about Jesus was true. Many found that He fulfilled the prophecies regarding the Messiah from the Old Testament. Through the Spirit's enlightenment, they came to their own convictions as to this truth. The Spirit of God called this attitude "noble" (Acts 17:11). Today we all need to adopt this method and not be satisfied to blindly accept someone else's opinion of what the Scriptures teach.



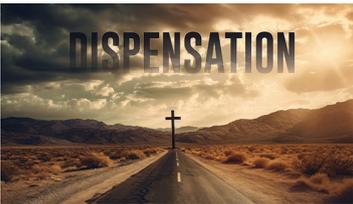
Complete Forgiveness: Prior to the revelation given to Paul, God's forgiveness was always handed out piecemeal, i.e., in an installment program. Under the Law of Moses, forgiveness was conditional and incomplete (2 Chron. 7:14). The Israelites had to keep confessing their sins and offering animal sacrifices to receive forgiveness. Even Jesus Christ ministered under the law, and His teaching of forgiveness, while an advancement of the law, was conditioned upon certain things (Matt. 6:12,14-15; 18:34-35; Mk. 11:25-26; Lk. 6:37; 17:3-4). This was law/kingdom forgiveness. Under the dispensation of the grace of God, we have the pleasure of declaring that all of the sins of all genuine believers have been

completely and eternally forgiven (Acts 13:39; Rom. 4:7-8; Eph. 1:7; Col. 2:13). We live in a state of perpetual forgiveness.



Completed Word of God: Many are claiming to experience visions and voices from God. But God says that His Word is complete and perfect (1 Cor. 2:9-10; 13:10; Col. 1:25). Many of the cults would never have taken root if this truth had been understood.

Paul's revelation of the Mystery was the final word from God adding to His revelation from the law, the Prophets, the Gospels, and Acts. It is the capstone of divine revelation and is fully sufficient for all things pertaining to life and godliness.



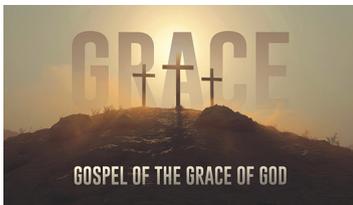
Dispensation: The word “dispensation” is a biblical word (1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 1:10; 3:2; Col. 1:25) and comes from the Greek word *oikonomia*, which literally means “house law.” It signified the management of a house and so became used to express

the idea of a stewardship or administration. In the plan of God it refers to the dispensing or administering of new truth to govern man, a process that takes thousands of years. A dispensation in the Bible covers a period of time in which man is tested in respect of obedience to a specific revelation from God. Most dispensationalists recognize seven biblical dispensations that are accompanied by the Bible character to whom and by whom they were revealed. They are as follows: (1) **Innocence**—*Adam*; (2) **Conscience**—*Adam in sin*; (3) **Human Government**—*Noah*; (4) **Promise**—*Abraham*; (5) **Law**—*Moses*; (6) **Grace**—*Paul*; and (7) **Kingdom**—*Christ*. We are presently living in the dispensation (or administration) of the grace of God (Eph. 3:2) and the ones that most affect New Testament studies are those which precede and follow it—law (past) and kingdom (future). Each dispensation ultimately ends in human failure and so demonstrates the sinfulness of man without God and his continuing need of Him.



Following Paul: Time and again we have been warned against following human leaders. In fact, many of today's cults are perpetuated by doing this very thing. Paul even says that choosing human leaders is an evidence of carnality among

Christians (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4). And yet, Paul is the only one in the New Testament, other than Christ, who commands believers to “Follow me” (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:2). Knowing that Paul is writing as he was moved by the Holy Spirit, how should we reconcile this seeming contradiction? Remember, that the ministry of Jesus, while on earth, was only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel according to their prophetic program (Matt. 10:5-6; 15:24; Rom. 15:8). The words which He spoke to them were not His own but the words which the Father gave Him to speak (Jn. 8:26-28,38). Our Lord Jesus Christ also had a subsequent heavenly ministry from His ascended glory. In that one, Paul was chosen by God to be the speaker of Christ’s words to the Gentile world and to live it as an example to others. The red letter Bible has been popular for years with the words of Jesus printed in red. Few realize that, to get to the words of our Lord Jesus for today’s dispensation, you must go to the letters of Paul written to the Gentiles. Paul was firmly against following human personalities with their teachings and commandments of men. His ministry was not about that, but rather the divine authority given to him as the Apostle of the Gentiles and God’s spokesman for the dispensation of the grace of God. If the believers missed that, they could not be established in the present grace truth (Rom. 16:25).



Gospel of the Grace of God,

The: This is that aspect of God’s good news that pertains to the *mystery program* and the formation of the Church, the Body of Christ (Acts 20:24; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 3:5-8). It requires personal faith in Christ’s

death, burial, and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3-4; 1 Thes. 4:14; Rom. 3:22-28). It also confirms the truth of Christ’s Person as being the Christ, the Son of God (Rom. 1:1-4). Its salvation is based entirely on God’s free gift by grace. Therefore, no good works, ceremonies, rituals, sacraments, or law-keeping will avail to help earn acceptance with God (Rom. 3:28; 4:5; 11:6). Faith only in the shed blood of Christ brings eternal life (Rom. 3:25; 6:23).



Gospel of the Kingdom, The:

This is that aspect of God’s good news that pertained to the *kingdom program* with the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth and Israel’s Messiah reigning upon David’s throne (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Lk. 1:32-33; Acts

2:29-30). Its salvation required personal and national repentance and water baptism (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 3:19) and confessing the name of Jesus that He is the Christ, the Son of God (Matt. 16:16; Jn. 11:27; 20:31). It was first declared at hand (i.e., near at hand—Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:5-7). However, its establishment was contingent upon Israel receiving it in faith and her willingness to become the channel of blessing to the world. Her golden opportunity was ultimately squandered through unbelief and the gospel of the kingdom awaits a future opportunity after the Rapture. Israel will be willing in the day of His power (Psa. 110:3; Isa. 66:18-20; Matt. 24:14).



Grace Reigning: Grace, like faith, is present in every age and dispensation. But today the Holy Scriptures portray grace as a king reigning on the throne (Rom. 5:20-21). That means that the gift of grace forms the basis of all of God’s dealing

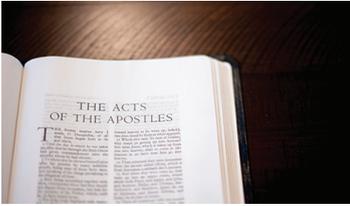
with mankind. It reaches beyond certain individuals or nations and is extended to all people everywhere. It refuses human merit and shines the spotlight of glory upon Christ and His love as demonstrated in the Cross. It saves, seals, equips, motivates, and gives the believer hope for the future. In short, everything the Christian has or ever will have is a result of the grace of God (2 Cor. 8:9; Eph. 2:7; 1 Tim. 1:14).



Grace Walk, The: While all of the Bible is for our learning and profit, only Paul’s Epistles contain the revelation of our exalted position in Christ and unique instructions for the grace walk. We may profit from the counsel concerning wise living

from Proverbs or James, but where do they explain the truth of how our union with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension to the Father’s right hand has set us free from the sin nature to walk in newness of life? Where do we find the mechanics of how the Spirit of God works “hand in glove” with the Word of God to impart power and grace motivation to live lives well-pleasing to God? The bulk of the teaching concerning the grace walk is contained in sanctification/holiness portions of the Book of Romans (chapters 6-8). Interspersed throughout Paul’s letters there are little “snippets” of these truths sparkling like little gems for our delight and enjoyment (Gal. 2:20; 4:6; 5:16,25; 6:14; Eph. 4:13,24; 5:2; Phil. 1:21; 2:13; 3:14; Col. 3:1,17; 1 Thes. 5:23; 1 Tim. 3:16;

2 Tim. 1:7; 2:2-3; Tit. 2:11-14; 1 Cor. 1:30; 5:7; 6:11; 10:31; 15:10,58; 2 Cor. 1:9-10; 3:18; 4:7,10,16; 5:17; 9:8; 12:9). These kinds of “life verses” have transformative power to change your Christian life for good, lighten your load, and give you hope for the future.



Mid-Acts Dispensationalism:

This is that which distinguishes the notes in the *Grace Study Bible* from other fundamental groups and evangelicals. Most traditional dispensationalists believe the main boundary between law and grace is

Pentecost and the message of Acts chapter 2. We see that Pentecost and beyond show a continuation of Israel’s past prophetic kingdom program, not the beginning of a new program of grace with the Gentiles. In Acts chapters 2-8, there is abundant evidence of Jewish continuance under the law, sign gifts, miracles, temple worship, ritualism, and communal living. God only gave this dispensation of grace by revelation to Paul (Eph. 3:2-6). A much better place to begin the new dispensation is with Paul at his conversion and special commission (Acts 9). Others put it even later at Acts 13 where Paul turns to the Gentiles, thus the term mid-Acts dispensationalism. A general rule to remember is that the present dispensation of the grace of God began in the middle of the Book of Acts (chapters 9-13) before Paul wrote his first letter. That means that all of Paul’s writings are written specifically to fellow members of the Body of Christ and constitute our “private mail” as Gentiles under grace.



Paul in the Transition:

Many Christians see clearly the spiritual perfection that Paul’s final revelations led up to in Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, but are also perplexed to see Paul practicing certain things in his early ministry which do not fit

into God’s order for today. Among them are circumcision, water baptism, healing, miracles, speaking in tongues, casting out of demons, laying on of hands to receive the Holy Spirit, commending the sign gifts in the Corinthian church, keeping Jewish feast days, and taking a Jewish vow. All of these things were practiced by Paul in the transition period that covered the latter part of the Book of Acts (chapters 9-28). During this early period, God was still extending His hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people—the Jews. This testimony (including the transitional elements) was

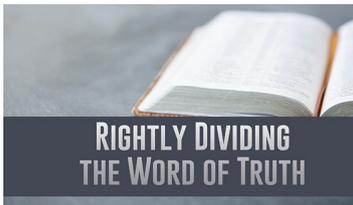
extremely important in order for the Word of Christ to receive favor among the Jews. Paul was keenly aware of that fact and his heart ached for his offending brothers in Israel (Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1-3). He knew that his brethren, according to the flesh, would not accept any message that lacked signs or that offended the law and Jewish customs. Acts 28:28 is the cut-off point for this kind of testimony. After this final pronouncement of their unbelief by God through Paul, the testimony to the Jews was complete and thus ended these transitional elements. The final installment of the revelation of the mystery awaited Paul's prison ministry.



Revelation of the Mystery, The:

The word "mystery" in the Bible is a transliteration of the Greek word *musterion*, which simply means "a secret." In Paul's case, it refers to a sacred secret that God kept hidden in His own heart until the due time

for its revelation (Rom. 11:25; 16:25; Eph. 3:3-9; Col. 1:26-27). The revelation of the mystery is more than just one aspect of Paul's many revelations from Christ. It actually comprises an entire spiritual program of grace to the Gentiles today in our present dispensation of grace. It covers all of his revelations and can be viewed as a multifaceted jewel with many different but related aspects. It includes such things as the Church which is His Body, Christ as Head of the Church, the equality of Jews and Gentiles, one baptism, our heavenly position, the ministry of reconciliation, the Rapture of the Church, the Judgment Seat of Christ, and much more.



Rightly Dividing the Word of

Truth: This phrase is taken from 2 Timothy 2:15 and refers to the dispensational method of understanding the Bible. To distinguish between Israel and the Gentiles, prophecy and mystery, law and grace, and the

twelve apostles and Paul, is foundational to an intelligent understanding of God's Word. We recognize that all Scripture is profitable and we can learn lessons from the entire Bible (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:1-11; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). However, the failure of many Christians to practice dispensational Bible study and sharpen spiritual discernment has led to much confusion and frustration as they try to mix these great themes into one spiritual program. The result has led to a wide variety of cults, legalism, ritualism, and strange religious practices. The Pauline teaching of God's pure grace leads to joy, peace, and spiritual stability. 

Question Box



"In John 6:64-66 some disciples went back and walked no more with Jesus. Jesus said He knew there were those who did not believe. How does this fit in with the eternal security of the Christian... it seems to be saying that those so-called disciples never believed. Am I understanding it correctly?"

Yes, you understand this passage correctly! The Lord Jesus had just finished explaining that He was the "Bread of Life" (Jn. 6:48). Many of the Jews did not understand what He was talking about (Jn. 6:52) and many of the disciples that were following Him were offended at His words and complained about it:

"Many therefore of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at it, He said unto them, Doth this offend you?" (John 6:60-61).

The disciples offended in John's Gospel are like those the Lord spoke about in Matthew 13:21 where, during the seven-year Tribulation, we read:

"Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

During this terrible time of judgment on the earth, some will follow ("dureth") for a while, but when trials and troubles come along, they will fall away (Lk. 8:13 cf. Matt. 13:21), proving they never believed (Jn. 6:64).

In the dispensation of grace, when someone believes the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4), that person is eternally sealed (Eph. 1:13) even if not "following" the Lord's instructions in His Word. Members of the Body of Christ do not have to "prove" salvation because it's by God's grace—not of works (Eph. 2:8-9). However, we should "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4) and "as children of light" (Eph. 5:8) as a testimony to a lost and dying world.

—*Pastor Jim Tollar*

HONORING A LIFETIME OF GRACE MINISTRY

A U S T R A L I A



Pastor John and Jan Shriver

PASTOR JOHN SHRIVER

Pastor John Shriver, originally from Nebraska, USA, celebrated his 90th birthday on July 9, 2025 in Perth, Western Australia.

John has been in ministry for 63 years.

He and his wife Jan met while they were both studying at the *Milwaukee Bible College* during which time they became engaged. After graduating, Jan left for the Philippines ahead of John who followed as soon as he had graduated. They were married the day after John arrived in the Philippines.

John and Jan served together as missionaries with *Things to Come Mission* (TCM) in the Philippines for 10 years, initially teaching at the *International Bible Institute* in Ozamis, Mindanao, followed by several years as missionaries in Legapsi, Bicol.

After completing their missionary service in the Philippines with TCM they returned to the USA, but It was not long after this that they left the USA again, this time for Australia where over a 30 year period they established churches in Adelaide, South Australia and later Perth, Western Australia.

John is still active in ministry as co-pastor of a grace church in Perth city. He also has a radio ministry and produces a weekly program called "Grace & Truth" which is broadcast by three local radio stations. His church sermons are also posted on YouTube every week.

John has been a faithful minister of the gospel of the grace of God since the days he was a student of Pastor Cornelius Stam, the founder of the *Berean Bible Society*.



It has been said that the letter "e" is the most unfortunate character. It is always out of cash, forever in debt, never out of danger, and in trouble all the time, but it can be considered in another way. "E" is never in war, but always in peace. Moreover, it is the center of honesty, and ease begins and ends with it. Best of all, God's love, mercy, and grace all contain it.

It is in the Name above every name, Jesus, and is written in His gospel and our redemption. Eternal life has it at its beginning and at its end. Seen in the statement, "Give Thanks," and so we

**"...give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good:
for His mercy endureth for ever" (Psa. 107:1).**



7

BASIC BIBLE FACTS

Every Christian Should Know and Believe

(Taken from “7 Basic Bible Facts” tract)

ROBERT BROCK
Guest Writer

1

FACT NO. 1— That the Bible **MUST** be rightly divided in order for it to make sense.

Notice what it says: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the Word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). This is one of the cardinal rules for interpreting the **whole** Bible. Neglect of this rule or a faulty use of it will lead to only one result, **confusion**, and our God is not the author of confusion.

The reason for a right division of the Bible is because of God’s two distinct purposes: (1) His purpose concerning Israel and the world according to **prophecy**, and (2) His purpose concerning the Gentiles in this present age according to the **mystery** revealed to Paul. God doesn’t want us to confuse the teaching of these two purposes.

He has very graciously given us the key for a proper understanding of this.

2

FACT NO. 2— That the **distinctiveness** of Pauline truth is a most important doctrine of the Bible. The

risen Lord Jesus Christ revealed His heart and His mind to the Apostle Paul: “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). “If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward; how that **by revelation** He made known unto me the **mystery**...” (Eph. 3:2,3).

This proves conclusively that Paul did not preach what the Twelve Apostles preached.

Rather he went up to Jerusalem to **tell them** of the special gospel of grace that Christ gave to him (Gal. 2:2). He preached Jesus Christ according to the **revelation of the mystery** which was kept secret, hid in God (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:9). He was the Apostle to the Gentiles and magnified his office (Rom. 11:13).



FACT NO. 3— That the gospel we are to preach is called the gospel of the grace of God. “But none of these

things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify **the gospel of the grace of God**” (Acts 20:24). This is God’s only message for the lost in this present age. We’re to follow Paul as he followed Christ (1 Cor. 11:1). In his writings **alone** do we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the Christian.

Some other important aspects of grace are:

- *We are saved by **grace*** (Eph. 2:8,9).
- *We are justified freely by His **grace*** (Rom. 3:24; Titus 3:7).
- *His **grace** is sufficient for us* (2 Cor. 12:9).
- *We are not under law but under **grace*** (Rom. 6:14,15).
- *This age is the age of **grace*** (Eph. 3:2).
- *We are to approach the throne of **grace** in prayer* (Heb. 4:16).



FACT NO. 4— That the Bible definitely teaches that water baptism was and is a part of Israel’s religion (Heb. 6:1,2; 9:10). It was for the remission of sins and was by sprinkling (Mk. 1:4; Acts 2:38; Ezek. 36:25).

In this age there is only **one** baptism, not two: “One Lord, one faith, **one baptism**” (Eph. 4:5). This baptism is the placing of the Christian into the Church, the Body of Christ, by the Holy Spirit: “For by one **Spirit** are we all **baptized into one Body**, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13). This baptism takes place once for all at the time of salvation.

The Apostle Paul was not sent to baptize with water: “For Christ sent me **not to baptize** but to preach the gospel...” (1 Cor. 1:17). **Only a change in God’s purpose would necessitate a statement like this.** There is no importance attached to water baptism, today. It is not a part of Christianity and only causes confusion.



FACT NO. 5— That we must understand the twofold ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. During His earthly ministry, He ministered exclusively to Israel: “But He

answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the **house of Israel**" (Matt. 15:24). His whole ministry to the nation was under the Law of Moses (Matt. 5:17; Gal. 4:4,5). Christians are not under the law, so we are not to live according to Israel's teachings.

During His present ministry in heaven, He is ministering according to what He revealed to the Apostle Paul. He is saving men according to His gospel of grace. He is at the throne of grace making intercession for us (Rom. 8:34). We are to live in Paul's Epistles where pure Christianity is found. This is not to say we should neglect the rest of the Bible. It is ALL for us but not all TO us (1 Cor. 10:6,11).



FACT NO. 6— That **signs** belong to the Nation of Israel and its religion: "For the **Jews** **require a sign,**

and the Greeks [Gentiles] seek after wisdom" (1 Cor. 1:22). Speaking in tongues is a SIGN: "Wherefore **tongues** are for a **sign,** not to them that believe but to them that believe not..." (1 Cor. 14:22).

In Jesus' day, those who sought after signs were called an evil and adulterous generation (Matt. 12:39). The eight miracles of the Gospel of John are properly called **signs**, which included the raising of Lazarus from the dead; and in the

commission of Mark 16:15-18, water baptism is associated with **signs**. This is proved in the Book of Acts because everywhere water baptism is mentioned a **sign** is mentioned in the immediate context.

This present age is a signless age. We have been blessed with all **spiritual** blessings in the heavenlies in Christ (Eph. 1:3). This is where the emphasis lies for the Christian.



FACT NO. 7— That the **commis-**
sion the Church, the Body of Christ, is to work under is found in 2 Corin-

thians 5:14-21 and Ephesians 3:9. The kingdom commission of Matthew 28:19-20 and Mark 16:15-18 does not belong to God's present grace purpose. The message of reconciliation has been committed to US, the Body of Christ.

RESULTS:

- The Christian would begin to perceive and grasp the deep things of God (1 Cor. 2:10-12).
- There would be a wonderful growth into spiritual maturity and adulthood (Eph. 4:12-15).
- He would become a faithful steward of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 2:7; 4:1,2).
- He would possess the biblical answer to Satan's false cults like Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Christian Scientists,

Unitarians, Modernists, etc. They all borrow some aspects of Israel's religion.

- A mighty revival would take place if Christians would get back to Pauline truth.

My friend, if you are not saved, the grace of God invites you to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. You are a sinner and need to be

saved (Rom. 3:23). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved..." (Acts 16:31).

"I have heard thee in a time accepted...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). It is infinitely better to receive Him and spend eternity in heaven than to reject Him and spend eternity in the lake of fire! 



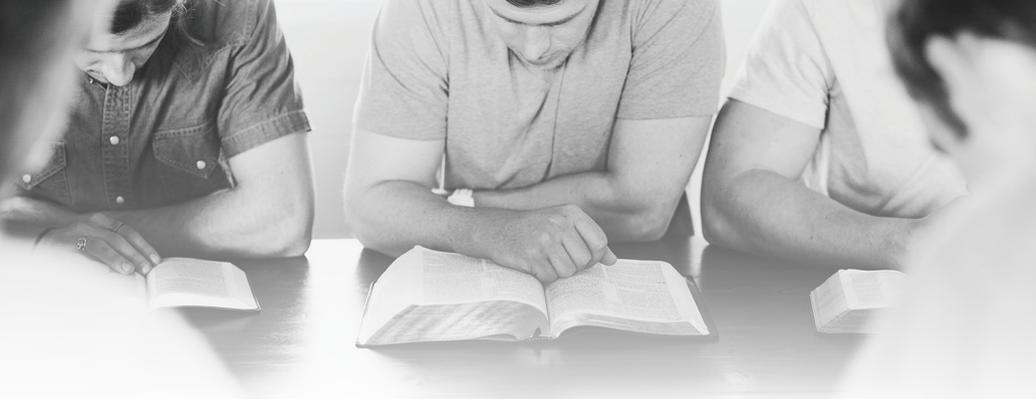
Preaching the Kingdom of God

The Book of Acts concludes with Paul under house arrest in Rome, and Luke records that he was "Preaching the kingdom of God" (28:30-31). Elsewhere in Acts, you find Paul expounding on the kingdom of God (14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23). And you find him often referring to the kingdom in his epistles (Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 15:50; Eph. 5:5; and others).

When Paul preached the kingdom of God, he likely explained how the earthly kingdom was promised plainly and in detail in Scripture, but that now the coming of this promised kingdom had been temporarily suspended and was "on pause" because Israel had rejected her Messiah. Because God is faithful to all His promises, the kingdom *will* come and be established on the earth literally one day, but now awaits the completion of the current dispensation of grace (Eph. 3:2) and God's program with the Gentiles (Rom. 11:25-27). To preach the kingdom of God after Israel's fall in Acts 7 is about explaining the suspension of that kingdom which, although temporary, has continued to this day.

Preaching the kingdom of God under grace must also explain how and in what way believers today are a part of the kingdom of God. Through the revelation given to Paul, we learn that the Church, the Body of Christ, has a position and inheritance in heaven within the overall kingdom, dominion, and eternal reign of God. When we trust the gospel of the grace of God, Paul wrote that we are delivered from the power of darkness, and "translated...into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:13), meaning we are given an eternal hope in the light and glory of the kingdom in heaven above (2 Tim. 4:18).

—Pastor Kevin Sadler



HUSBAND *to* HUSBAND

In June of 1971, just days before his 26-year-old son Michael got married, future U.S. President Ronald Reagan sent him the following letter of advice.

Dear Mike,

You've heard all the jokes that have been roused around by all the "unhappy marrieds" and cynics. Now, in case no one has suggested it, there is another viewpoint. You have entered into the most meaningful relationship there is in all human life. It can be whatever you decide to make it....

There are more men griping about marriage who kicked the whole thing away themselves than there can ever be wives deserving of blame. There is an old law of physics that you can only get out of a thing as much as you put in it. The man who puts into the marriage only half of what he owns will get that out...

It [takes] quite a man to remain attractive and to be loved by a woman who has heard him snore, seen him unshaven, tended him while he was sick, and washed his dirty underwear. Do that and keep her still feeling a warm glow and you will know some very beautiful music.

Mike, you know better than many what an unhappy home is and what it can do to others. Now you have a chance to make it come out the way it should. There is no greater happiness for a man than approaching a door at the end of a day knowing someone on the other side of that door is waiting for the sound of his footsteps.

Love, Dad

P.S. You'll never get in trouble if you say "I love you" at least once a day.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).

BBS Letter Excerpts



From New Zealand:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace* “I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life”) “What wonderful truth. You do an awesome job of explaining God’s Word. I have been edified through the *Berean Searchlight* for about 35 years now. It is so good to know and understand God’s Word, rightly divided. It clears up any confusion that people have regarding God’s Word.”

From Ohio:

“I am thankful for your continued strong stand for the gospel of grace. Standing with you.”

From Illinois:

“Oh, how I thank God to receive Bible studies and lessons from you. Yes, I really don’t mind telling you and anyone else, my soul is happy! Keep on letting the world know it’s all about Jesus....”

From New York:

(Responding to *Grace Study Bible*) “Can’t wait till December.”

From Florida:

“This (donation) is to help with the new Bible.”

From Wisconsin:

“Pastor Don, the devil is having a heyday in America’s churches. Men like you are greatly needed. I like the following, ‘Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.’”

From YouTube:

“I lift this ministry up in the mighty Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I ask Father in heaven to help them in all the needs they have and to encourage them all in the work they are doing to glorify the gospel and the power of it through the study Bible. Bless them Father. They listen to You through Your Word through Paul, and we need that. Encourage them, and please give them Your gifts to both complete it and deliver it to Your saints who need it and to those who do not understand the Word.” (Thank you for your prayers; we appreciate them.—Ed.)

From Georgia:

“We count it a joy to be part of this ministry. We are thankful to the Lord for this Body of Christ.”

From Florida:

“Two checks for donations to the *Berean Searchlight* and the printing of the *Grace Study Bible*. Father, May BBS find success and blessings. May all the outreach of BBS change lives and spread the Grace/Pauline message, Amen.”

From Our Inbox:

“So grateful for this ministry as it has allowed me to share the book with others so they don’t have to take it from me! I have always appreciated all of your ministries and staying true to God’s written Word!”

From Our Mailbox:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace*) “I really like Pastor Kevin’s explanation of a message because I can relate to it. I’m just totally blessed by the program. We have been watching for about a year now.”

From Our Mailbox:

“Thank you for maintaining the print version.”

From California:

(Responding to *Grace Study Bible*) “I can hardly wait for the KJV Bible that all of you are working on.”

From Our Inbox:

(Responding to *Two Minutes With The Bible* “Accepted”) “Thanks for this reminder. I’ve read this many times and heard it taught/preached/talked about and still need to be reminded of it...I love your ministry, and am very thankful for it, and pray daily for everyone there though I don’t know any of you. God bless you all.”

From Missouri:

“I love the *Searchlight* and I hope I live long enough to get one of the Bibles.”

From Illinois:

“Just wanted to say you are making a difference. Your podcast, newsletter, and other resources are helping this Baptist (not so Baptist anymore, lol) preacher. I’ve started sharing the truths with our congregation here in central Illinois. I even started a podcast myself to share my journey.”

From Facebook:

(Responding to *Grace Study Bible Update*) “Put my name at the top of the list, lol! I can’t wait to get mine. I’ve been praying for one of these for a long time.”

From Facebook:

(Responding to *Grace Study Bible Update*) “So pumped about the new Bible.”

From Facebook:

(Responding to *Grace Study Bible Update*) “I cannot wait to make an order. One for me, one for my granddaughter and her father, and one for my other son. Of course, I need the big print these days, so that will be mine.”

From Facebook:

(Responding to *Grace Study Bible Update*) “Praise the Lord. Amen! Can hardly wait.”

From Facebook:

(Responding to *Grace Study Bible Update*) “Excited to see the layout. You’re doing great work.”

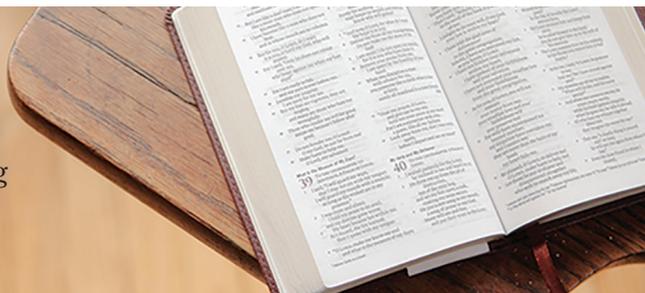
From North Carolina:

“We continue to see more and more the need for the gospel to be given, rightly divided. A teacher recently requested to be placed on our text list to receive our daily grace text message. We are up to 110 receivers—all by the grace of God.”

From Arizona:

“Please find a small gift to help with your *Berean Bible Society* ministry. Time here is growing short—we appreciate the work you all are doing. Thank you!”

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.”



Order NOW

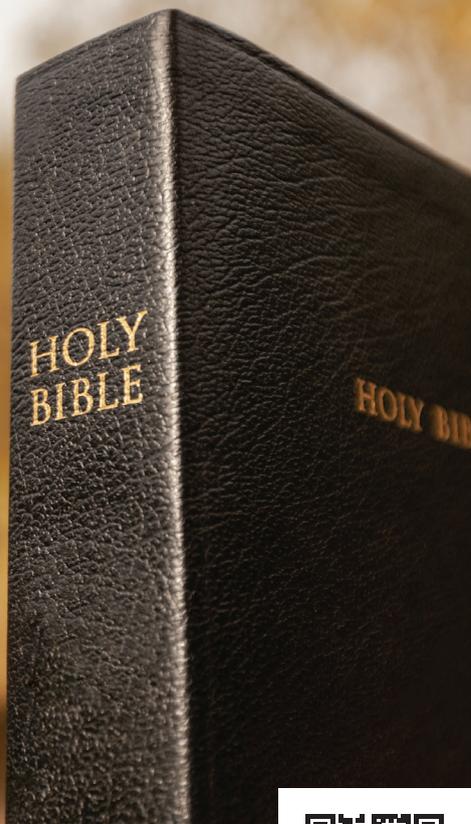
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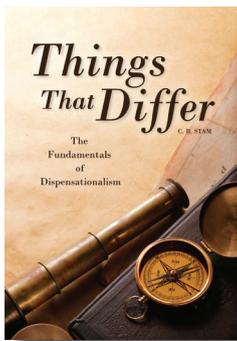
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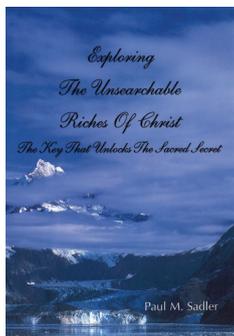


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News & Announcements



Free Items: We have free items at BBS that we would be happy to send to anyone who requests them. This includes our BBS prayer card, the BBS Doctrinal Statement, a BBS bookmark, and *Transformed by Grace* promotional business cards. Our website also offers a wide variety of free articles and MP3 audio messages that you can print, download, and share. If you'd ever like a free BBS pen with your order, just ask, and we'll be happy to include it!

Font Size: One difference you might notice in this issue of the *Searchlight* is that we are increasing the font size on our main articles to make them easier to read. You will see other changes in the *Searchlight* going forward, but one thing that will never change is the sound teaching of God's Word, rightly divided.

2026 Conferences: We are looking to visit new destinations in 2026 and in the future. If you would like BBS president, Pastor Kevin Sadler, to come to your assembly or Bible study in 2026, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us. No group is too small. Don't let finances hold you back from inviting us, and it doesn't need to be an organized, 2-3 day conference.

Christmas Times: Don't forget to order our Christmas tract in time to include in all of your holiday greeting cards. Inspired by the Charles Dickens tale, this tract elaborates on Christmas Past, Christmas Present, and Christmas Yet to Come in a way that makes it clear "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15). Call to order or order online at beranbiblesociety.org.

BBS Polo Shirts: For our 85th year of ministry, we had polo shirts made with the BBS logo on them. We offer these in both men's and women's styles, in a variety of sizes and colors. They sell for \$25.00 (free shipping). Visit our store on the BBS website to place your order or call 262-255-4750.

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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
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