

Feature Article

Reason for Joy, by Don Hosfeld	5
Articles	
Dressing the Part, by Kevin Sadler	15
Are You Secure?, by Paul Sadler	19
Departments	
Thanksgiving Forecast	4
The Legacy	11
Question Box	
Woman to Woman	13
News and Announcements	

This month's cover features Bear Island Lighthouse, Cranberry Isles, 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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Reader's Rights and Responsibilities: BBS respects a reader's right to hold views that differ from those of our writers. If a reader has a serious concern with a specific article, it is his or her responsibility to act in a manner that endeavors to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This can best be accomplished by contacting the editor, who will then forward your concerns to the author of the article in question. We promise to address all concerns in a timely manner.



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A Note From the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

It took me 300 episodes, but I finally worked up the courage to deal with the subject of water baptism on *Transformed by Grace!* This was by design and the recommendation of the

BBS Board to wait before addressing this important subject. Water baptism is such a hot-button issue that it was important to establish a measure of trust in our TV program and to lay a foundation of right division so that one could see that water baptism is also a matter that needs to be considered in light of God's two programs.

My approach to the subject was to teach it in a positive way. We are called to be "speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15), and "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves [or who are in opposition]" (2 Tim. 2:25). That is how I think we need to talk about water baptism: in love and meekness.

The "one baptism" (Eph. 4:5) is something for us to celebrate and rejoice in as members of Christ's Body. It is an incomparable blessing of God to be baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ and His death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-4). The ironic thing about water baptism is that the Apostle Paul teaches that baptism is what *unites* the Body of Christ (Gal. 3:27-28), but because there are so many beliefs about it, baptism has arguably been the single greatest issue dividing the Church.

We firmly believe in baptism at *Berean Bible Society*. But when we see the teaching of baptism in Scripture, we need to ask, "Which baptism?" because there are multiple baptisms taught in the Bible. The approach I took to explaining this subject was to demonstrate from Scripture how God progressively revealed His will about baptism. First, we point out how there were baptisms under the law for 1500 years. Second, we explain the purpose of John's baptism in the wilderness. Third, we look at the literal interpretation of Peter's baptism in Acts 2:38. Fourth, we note the huge change with respect to water baptism by comparing Acts 2:38 with Acts 10:43–48. Finally, we arrive at the truth for today of the one spiritual baptism as revealed to Paul. The problem in understanding baptism is that most stop short and don't follow God's progressive will all the way through to what is true for us today under grace.

The two episodes, "One [Distinct] Baptism" and "One [Uniting] Baptism," will air on Christian Television Network this month. Please be in prayer for these messages that people's hearts will be open to the truth of God's Word, rightly divided.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler, President



"I've just received the latest forecast for Thanksgiving Day.

"Turkeys will thaw in the morning, then warm in the oven to an afternoon high near 190 degrees. The kitchen will turn hot and humid, and if you bother the cook, be ready for a severe squall or cold shoulder.

"During the late afternoon and evening, the cold front of a knife will slice through the turkey, causing an accumulation of one to two inches on plates. Mashed potatoes will drift across one side while cranberry sauce creates slippery spots on the other.

"A weight watch and indigestion warning have been issued for the entire area, with increased stuffiness around the beltway. During the evening, the turkey will diminish and taper off to leftovers, dropping to a low of 34 degrees in the refrigerator.

"Looking ahead to Friday and Saturday, high pressure to eat sandwiches will be established. Flurries of leftovers can be expected both days with a 50 percent chance of scattered soup late in the day. By early next week, eating pressure will be low as the only wish left will be the bone."

Thanksgiving Day is a distinctive holiday. It doesn't commemorate a battle, a birthday, or an anniversary. It is simply a day set aside to express our thanks to God. It's special to us as believers because it is a holiday that takes its name from Scripture.

Thanksgiving is a time to remember and to heighten our awareness of the blessings we have from God. It's a good holiday because it can grab our attention, cause us to shake the cobwebs loose, take inventory, and consider all God's gifts and blessings in our lives.

Thanksgiving is a God-focused, faith-based response to Him. This special day in November can rekindle in us the gratitude that He desires and deserves on an ongoing basis. Gratitude is the appropriate response to God's grace, and as we grow in grace, it will in turn lead us to become more and more thankful.

As we believers look back, we can thank God we are saved from our sins and hell and our sinful past. As we look to the left and right, we can thank God that we are blessed with daily blessings from His hand. As we look ahead, we can give thanks that heaven awaits us. And as we look up, we can give God praise for the blessed hope of Christ's return, and that it could be today!

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).

—Pastor Kevin Sadler



"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

November 2023 5

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."

"Many are so distracted in trying to be happy that they have yet to understand that it is far better to have joy."



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 firstfruits 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 sincursed 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 first–fourth century Rome to face almost unimaginable situations while likewise singing, and whose testimony still speaks 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 unshakeable 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.

November 2023 7



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 vet 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."1

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.

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 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:

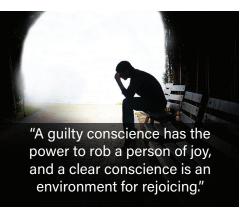
"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not

November 2023 9

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).

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. https://www.studylight.org/pastoral-resources/sermon-illustrations-archive.html?q=Fruit+of+the+Spirit+Joy&t=body&a=search.

The Legacy

She could not give her children gold, so she gave them faith to have and hold. She could not give them royal birth...A name renowned throughout the earth. But she gave them seeds and garden spot and shade trees when the sun was hot.

She could not give a silver spoon or servants waiting night and noon. She gave them love and a listening ear and told them God was always near.

She could not give them ocean trips aboard majestic sailing ships. But she gave them books and quiet time, adventures found in prose and rhyme.

She could not give them worldly things but what she gave was fit for kings. For with her faith and books and sod, she made each child aware of God.



Question Box

"Did John write 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, to the churches started by the Apostle Paul, or to the synagogues scattered about?"

One of the most important keys to understanding Scripture is recognizing to whom they are written *and* to whom they are not. That's not to say that any part of the Bible is to be avoided; it's all *for* us and is profitable (2 Tim. 3:16); it just simply isn't all *to* us. As one of the twelve apostles to Israel, John's writings concerned the fulfillment of prophecy to Israel and were not to churches started by the apostle Paul (cf. Jas. 1:1; 1 Pet. 2:12; 4:3; 3 John 1:7).

The three epistles of John and the other so-called "General Epistles" were written for those who, in the last days (1 John 2:18), will face the Tribulation, which is why they teach a future salvation conditional on faith and works (1 John 2:3; 3:24; Jas. 2:14,24), and why the emphasis is on acknowledging Jesus as the Son of God, instead of believing in the death, burial, and resurrection (cf. 1 John 2:2; 4:2,3,15; 5:13,20). As far as to whom they were given upon completion, we are left to a certain amount of speculation.

In the case of the three epistles of John, he addresses the second to an "elect lady" (2 John 1:1) and the third to a man by the name of Gaius (3 John 1:1), and so we would conclude these letters were given to these individuals apart from any church.

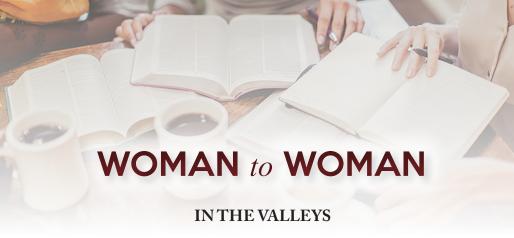
—Pastor Don Hosfeld



Includes all 300 + messages from *Transformed*by Grace by Pastor Kevin Sadler, as well as
messages by BBS staff and board members!



Download the BBS Network for free on Roku and Apple TV!



Whether single, married, or widowed, you may have experienced going through the valley of trials and temptations. God's Word warns that spiritual warfare is waged by Satan and fallen angels against the saints (Eph. 6:12-18). God provides great examples of women who have gone through the valley victoriously.

While Job's wife was used by Satan to encourage Job to "curse God and die," we should realize that she lost everything along with Job. She had deep sorrow for losing her children. She lost all the wealth that God had blessed her family with. Though she didn't have the boils, she had a very ill, discouraged husband. She may have felt helpless and alone to see him in such pain and agony while being accused of punishment by God for sin. She had Satan working against her, seeking to destroy her marriage and her faith in God. She knew Job's friends came to console him, yet they failed miserably by concluding that God was punishing him for sin in his life. The Scriptures never say that anyone ever came alongside Job or his wife to encourage, build up, and pray with them. That was likely part of the testing of Job that Satan designed. It is probable that Job's wife suffered in despair, anguish, and tears while going through the valley with Job and yet came out of it with her marriage intact and more abundant blessings from God.

If you are struggling with needing wisdom in your job or marriage, helping an ill family member, a physical need, dealing with an adversary or a difficult child, or simply being attacked by Satan in ministry or family, please keep your heart soft as Job did (Job 23:16). Focus on God's Word with prayer, surround yourself with godly people, listen to wise counsel, and look for the purpose that God is working in and through you. Most importantly, we all need to recognize the importance of edifying (building up) those who are in the valley. It may make a difference in the outcome of victory or defeat. God uses people to lovingly encourage, share the Word of God, and pray with the hurting in the valley. To the unmarried, look to a leader in your church for support and guidance. To the married, respectfully and submissively complete your husband, don't compete. Memorize 1 Corinthians 10:13, remembering that God is faithful. Ultimately, it is He who can bring you and your family through the valley unto spiritual victory!

—Mrs. Terri Fredericksen



From Montana:

"We wanted to take a few minutes to share with you what a truly edifying message you submitted this week [*Two Minutes with the Bible*: 'Helping Those Who Hurt']. It ministered to us

so very much. I will be forwarding this message to dear family members and friends, along with encouraging words of how we are so blessed to be members of this special ministry, and also to encourage them to check out the site, put it in a folder on their phone, sign up for the daily emails, read them, and let it build up their inner man. You will be truly blessed.

"We have several friends and family that live in other states, that we are unable to see very often, and I truly believe your weekly message will minister to them. That's why I'm sending the above message to them.

"We have purchased all your books and have shared some with others. We keep you and your family along with your ministries and everyone at *Berean Bible Society* lifted up in prayer. Y'all are our church. We are in our 80s and have health issues, so we are unable to take long trips, but we are praying we will make it to the meeting in Tipp City, Ohio, next year."



Christmas Times

by Kevin Sadler



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 discusses 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 your *Christmas Times* tracts today, or visit our online bookstore at bereanbiblesociety.org.

Package of 25: \$4.00 / Package of 100: \$12.00 Free Shipping! Wisconsin residents please add 5.5% sales tax

Dressing the Part



PASTOR KEVIN **SADLER** Berean Bible Society President

"You can tell a lot about people in our society by the way they dress. From baseball players to bus drivers, from postal carriers to policemen, people wear the uniform of their profession. Who we are determines what we wear, and failing to 'dress the part' can sometimes have embarrassing consequences. Many years ago a very wealthy man in a Southern California town was found wandering around the local country club wearing shabby clothes. He was promptly seized by security guards and charged with vagrancy—even though he owned the country club. He had failed to dress consistent with who he was.... Christians must dress themselves spiritually in accordance with their new identity."

The dress code of the members of the U.S. Senate was a hot topic at the time of this writing. Many workplaces have dress codes or require uniforms, and we are to dress in accordance with these guidelines in our jobs. In Ephesians 4, our Apostle Paul gives us the guidelines for how to dress the part in accordance with our identity in Christ.

PUT OFF THE OLD CLOTHES

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation [manner of life] the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22).

Our outward behavior is the outgrowth and expression of the inner man. Before Christ, we only had the sin nature to control our behavior (Eph. 2:2-3; Titus 3:3). However, when we trust Christ as our Savior, a new nature, a new man, is created in the believer, in whom the Holy Spirit dwells. When God the Holy Spirit regenerates us, He does not transform the old nature. Rather, with our regeneration a new nature is imparted. God does not eradicate or remove the old nature from us

November 2023 15

at the time of our conversion. Instead, He gives us a new nature and the Holy Spirit to indwell us.

This then results in a conflict in the believer that Paul describes in Galatians 5:17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Believers have two warring natures within them, the flesh and the Spirit, the old man and the new man. The Spirit and the flesh have different desires for our life, and herein lies the conflict. Although some believers see this inner battle as a signal that they might not be saved or have lost their salvation, it actually indicates that one is saved.



In response to this internal conflict, God would have us "Walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16) and yield to the new man. We are further taught by the Apostle Paul that the power of the old nature has been broken and destroyed at the Cross (Rom. 6:6), so we have power over it. Although the old man still can hold sway over the believer's life if one yields to its desires, it does not need to reign over us any longer after we are saved.

Paul challenges the Church, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man." Believers are called by the Spirit to put off their former, unsaved manner of life, which was the unregenerate, unclean, unholy life of the sinner under the domination of the old man.

"Put off," means to put off a piece of clothing. And God wants the old man cast off like taking off and getting rid of a disgusting, filthy, foul shirt. God wants an intentional, deliberate removal of the old man from the throne of our lives. This instruction is such that God is telling us here to do this by a once-for-all, decisive action, and to go forward in Christ and not look back.

Speaking of the old man that God wants us to put off, Paul gives two reasons for doing so. First, the old man "is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." In the original Greek, "corrupt" means that the old man is corrupt and it is in the process of corruption, getting more and more corrupted. It is rotten and it is rotting. The old man gets worse and worse as time goes on, and it can destroy a person's life.

There is no reforming the old nature. It just needs to be put off and put away.

Second, the old man is being corrupted "according to the deceitful lusts." The old nature is led and controlled by selfish, sinful passions and desires, and these desires are deceitful. They can bring ruin, disappointment, and emptiness to a person's life, instead of the satisfaction and meaning that they appear to promise. So many give their lives to pursuits that they think will bring them happiness, but in the end, they learn they have been deceived, and they don't find the joy or fulfillment that they thought they would.

In Ecclesiastes, we learn how King Solomon was deceived by the lusts of the flesh. As a king with endless resources of time and money, he followed the desires of the flesh to their fullest extent in every direction and in every way one could imagine but, in the end, he found and concluded that "all is vanity [emptiness] and vexation of spirit [grasping for the wind]" (Eccl. 1:14).

Thus, we are shown by the Spirit that we should put off the old man because it has a corrupting influence on us which will make our lives go from bad to worse and ultimately destroy us. And the old man will also deceive us and lead us down a path in life which ends with emptiness, frustration, and disappointment.

PUT ON THE NEW CLOTHES

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:23-24).



Instead of following the old man, God wants us to "be renewed in the spirit of your mind." The believer needs a complete about-face from the thinking that stems from the flesh. In Ephesians 4:17, Paul warned the Church to "walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind."

We need to distrust our own thinking with the old man and his

influence still present in us, and we need to continually allow the Holy Spirit, by His Word, to renew the way we think. In order to turn *from* the old man, we must turn *to* God and His Word so that His truths and wisdom will change our thinking. This renewal of our minds leads to the transformation of our attitudes and our behavior, giving us a new set of desires and a new manner of life. And as the Word and the Spirit renew our minds, it gives us something to live for which brings true meaning and fulfillment to our lives: the Lord Jesus Christ.

November 2023

The instructions of verses 23 and 24 are linked, because as our minds are "renewed" by the Word, we can then "put on the new man" and live in its "righteousness and true holiness."

"Put on" is like put off in that it means to put on clothing. And just like the old man is to be removed intentionally and deliberately, the new man is to be put on in the same way. We are each called to do this also in a once-for-all, decisive action, that this is the direction I am going now and I'm not looking back; I am looking forward to Christ (Phil. 3:13-14). Both of these actions, putting off and putting on, are to be done by the power of the Spirit. As Paul prayed earlier in Ephesians,

"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16).

When we trusted Christ, we got a new garment (Isa. 61:10), and we find here that God wants us to change our clothes. Think of it like a prisoner who has been released from prison, but he continues to wear his prison clothes and act like a prisoner and not as a free man. That person needs to be told to put off those old prison clothes and put on some new clothes and then be taught how to think and live as a free man. Likewise, we are free from sin and free from the bondage of the old man, and we need to put on the new clothes of Christ's righteousness and think and live in light of our freedom from sin (Rom. 6:11-13).



The "new man" is a brand-new nature that did not exist before salvation and which makes possible for each of us a new, previously impossible quality of life. Our new nature is not a renovated man; it is a **new** man. When we live in that new man, we can and will live a new kind of life.

Ephesians 4:24 teaches that the new man is created "after God," or in His likeness, "in righteousness and true holiness." As such, it is fit for the presence of God within us, with our bodies being the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19; Eph. 2:22). The new man is what a believer has been created to be in Christ: righteous and holy (2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:4). And righteousness and true holiness are what will be manifested and worked out in our lives as we yield to the Spirit and put on the new man.

^{1.} John MacArthur, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Colossians & Philemon (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1992), p. 148.



The postwar years from 1945 through 1960 were not only years of rebuilding in America, they also served as an era that provided a sense of security. Those who pursued the "American Dream" found that their employers supplied steady employment along with a comfortable retirement plan. Security seemed to be woven into the very fabric of our society.

But as a new day dawned in the 60s, storm clouds began to gather, threatening the very existence of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Everything seemed to come unglued overnight. With the Cuban Missile Crisis, the tension between the U.S. and the Soviet Union was at an all-time high. Most of us sat on the edge of our seats as a nuclear assault appeared to be imminent. The assassination of leaders stunned us, leaving everyone astonished as to how cruel our fellow man could really be. As if that wasn't bad enough, our teenagers suddenly went berserk, rebelling against anything that had even the semblance of authority.

As the years wore on, unexpected mergers and acquisitions of numerous companies started taking place on a nationwide scale, causing many Americans to face uncertain futures. More recently a number of corporations have pulled up stakes, relocating overseas, taking with them thousands of jobs. As a result, many have found themselves out on the street, unemployed, laden with a feeling of betrayal. Gradually the great industrial nation of the world has found itself in a state of fading glory, destined now to become a service nation.

The "American Dream" has to many become the "American Nightmare" as jobs, marriages, and our sense of security have been uprooted. Insecurity is a plague upon the land which will not soon pass. It has caused many people, including believers,

November 2023 19

to pause and consider: "Is there anyone that we can trust?" "Is anything certain in this world of uncertainty?"

HOPE FOR THOSE IN DESPAIR

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2).

The fact that the believer is in the world, yet not of the world, does not diminish the reality that the world around us affects us. Sometimes being weary from life itself can even cause one's confidence in the Lord to be shaken. This is especially true of new believers who are still finding their way in the Scriptures. To heighten their sense of uncertainty, just about the time they are getting a handle on things spiritually, someone informs them that they are not eternally secure and could lose their salvation! Were it not for the grace of God, such times could result in a lethal injection of fear.



The Apostle Paul, when he writes to Titus, calms these fears, turning our doubts into hope—the hope of eternal life. He declares that there is someone we can implicitly trust in a world of

instability, and that someone is the Lord God Almighty.

God has promised the free gift of eternal life to all those who believe on His Son. If God has spoken it, then you can be absolutely certain that He will bring it to pass just as He has promised. He "cannot lie"! The Word of the Lord through the prophet Balaam lends additional confirmation to the Apostle's teaching:

"God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the Son of Man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. 23:19).

When God says that He parted the Red Sea and one and one-half million Israelites crossed on dry ground, I unequivocally take Him at His Word, based on two truths: one, "nothing is impossible with God"; and secondly, He "cannot lie"! All believers can look forward with confident expectation for God to honor His Word and grant sincere believers the gift of eternal life. Be it known, however, that He will also stand true to His Word by confining all of those who reject the gospel to the Lake of Fire.

SALVATION

When we consider the subject of salvation, it is crucial to remember that "salvation is of the Lord." It was God who conceived the plan of salvation and implemented it at the Cross, where Christ died for our sins. God's justice, having been satisfied, paved the way for His acceptance of the finished work of Christ

on our behalf. Now in love He turns to us, revealing that we must respond by faith to what He has accomplished to receive forgiveness.

There is not a believer reading these lines who would hold that we can save ourselves from our sins. Every true believer will acknowledge this conclusion to be unconditionally true, because it is based on the living Word of God. This being the case, we must also acknowledge that the Lord must, according to His Word, keep us saved or eternally secure. If we agree that no one has the power to save himself, then it naturally follows that no one has the power to keep himself either. Our complete salvation, past, present, and future, depends wholly on *Him*.

HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

Is it possible to help those who believe they can lose their salvation? Certainly, but first we must be equipped with the proper Scripture passages in order to minister effectively to those who hold this view. Here are two suggestions: Select a passage, such as Romans 6:23, and graciously ask your friend to read it carefully. Then inquire, "When you initially believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, did you receive the gift of eternal life as promised in this verse?" Brace yourself, because he is going to respond, "Definitely!" Gently reply—again I say gently—"In what sense was it eternal if you can ever lose it?" You see, if you can lose it, then it was never eternal to begin with. The Holy Spirit used the word "eternal" because that is exactly the thought He wanted to convey. If you believe God is eternal, then the life we inherit at the moment of regeneration must also be eternal, because Christ is our life (Col. 3:4).

The next inquiry that naturally follows is this: "If you can lose your salvation (eternal life), which sin is it that will place you again in danger of the hell-fire judgment to come?" Understanding the Word rightly divided means that we must confine ourselves to Paul's revelation, seeing he is the apostle to the Gentiles and received the commands of Christ

"When God says that He parted the Red Sea and one and one-half million Israelites crossed on dry ground, I unequivocally take Him at His Word, based on two truths: one, 'nothing is impossible with God' and secondly, He 'cannot lie'!"

for the Church today (Rom. 11:13; 1 Cor. 14:37).

After years of studying Paul's Gentile epistles, I know of no passage of Scripture that sets forth a sin or sins whereby one could lose his salvation. Where God is silent, the believer is also bound to be silent. But some will say, "It's the more serious sins named in the Bible, ones like murder or adultery that can finally condemn us." But according to Proverbs 6:16-19 the sins of pride and lying are a greater abomination in the sight of God. Furthermore, Paul says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). In other words, those who are in Christ are beyond the reach of judgment.

Another dilemma you will find yourself in if you hold to the doctrine of "eternal insecurity" is trying to determine when you've sinned that undefinable sin too many times. If for example it was lying, is it one lie or the tenth lie you may tell? A bewildered saint said to me one time, "I am not really sure, but I'll know it in my heart when it happens." I needed only to remind him of the words of Jeremiah. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9).

OUR RELATIONSHIP

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6).

"In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14).

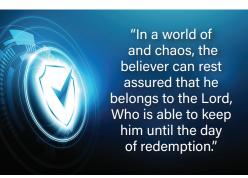
A father and a son had worked together for several years when one day the son became disgruntled and angrily approached his father. "Dad, I've had it. I don't like how you operate this business and I feel you have treated me unfairly. I plan to move away, change my name, tear up my birth certificate, and I never want to see you again!"

While the fellowship between the father and the son had been disrupted because of the young man's sinful behavior, the son could never change the fact that he was still the son of his father. He could not alter the blood relationship he had with his father. Such a relationship is irreversible for all of the days of one's life.



If you count this to be the indisputable fact that it is, then you must also acknowledge the Scriptures when they instruct us that we have the same type of relationship, spiritually, with our heavenly Father. The Word of God declares that we are the sons of God, which clearly indicates we have a *relationship* with Him. We are bound to the Father by the blood of Christ for all time and eternity. Since this relationship can *never* be broken, it can

only mean that every believer in Christ is eternally secure!



But will some object that this teaching provides a license to sin. Quite the contrary! Which is better: a father who rules with a rod of iron demanding the letter of the law, or a father who, out of love and respect, is willingly obeyed? The latter of course, which is a divine exhibition of *grace*. Because God has achieved so much on our behalf, it is out of love and respect for Him that we would not want to do anything that would bring disgrace to His holy name.

ETERNAL SECURITY

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,

"Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:13,14).

From this passage we learn that the Holy Spirit plays a vital role in the eternal security of every believer. The moment we have received Christ as our personal Savior, the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the Body of Christ, sealing us there until we are redeemed bodily at the Rapture. We are not sealed with a mere circular impression as on a legal document, but rather the Scriptures disclose that the Holy Spirit *Himself* is the seal that secures us in the Body of Christ. Years ago when a woman sealed iars of jelly with wax, the jellies were sealed by the woman, but with wax. The wax was the seal. In similar fashion, according to Ephesians 1:13, believers are sealed by the Father "with that Holy Spirit of promise," the Holy Spirit Himself being the Seal. keeping them safe forever.

During biblical times, when a ruler would fix a seal to a certain thing, whether a den or a tomb, it was done to secure his decree. thus making it irrevocable. When the presidents persuaded King Darius to make a declaration against petitioning any God, the King was forced to place Daniel in the lion's den, sealing it with his own signet. The record informs us that the sealing with the King's signet was done, "that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel" (Dan. 6:16,17). If this is true in the affairs of men. how much more so in the affairs of God. Every believer has been sealed with the Holy Spirit, and this proclamation of God can never be reversed—we are safe and secure in the everlasting arms.

The apostle Paul goes on in the Ephesian letter to show us that the earnest of the Spirit is the pledge or the down payment until the transaction is completed.

November 2023 23



To place earnest money down in Paul's day, as well as in our day, meant three things:

- It was a non-refundable down payment which made the deal binding.
- 2) If the payor did not follow through on the deal, he forfeited the earnest money.
- 3) It was a foretaste of what was to come.

When purchasing property it is a common practice to place a certain amount of earnest money down. If the buyer fails to purchase the property, he forfeits the earnest. So it is with God. He has given us the earnest of the Spirit (the indwelling Spirit). Would God the Father forfeit God the Holy Spirit? By no means! Therefore, when the trump sounds at the Rapture, God will claim His purchased possessions, ushering us home to be forever with Him (1 Thes. 4:17).

THE BENEFITS OF BEING SECURE

The world can fall apart around us, but "if God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31). In a world of uncertainty and chaos, the believer can rest assured that he belongs to the Lord, Who is able to keep him until the day of redemption.

One of the many benefits of understanding the doctrine of eternal security is that it removes the fear of ever losing our salvation and the confusion that accompanies it. Instead of finding ourselves in an emotional frenzy, wondering if we have gone too far in sinful behavior, we can rest in the truth that, by His grace, we are still safe and secure. This will motivate us to serve the Lord because He loves us. We then can devote all of our time and energy to carrying out the commands of Christ to the praise of His glory!

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

"As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

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

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

"Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35-39).

In verse 36 of this passage, Paul borrows a passage from the Old Testament to point out that we are like sheep—vulnerable! As we know, sheep are susceptible to vicious attacks by predators, much like we are. Simply name the name of Christ in a public forum and you will be shocked to find how much the natural man hates

that name and what it stands for. In some countries, your life would be in jeopardy.

But, thankfully, the apostle goes on to add, "we are more than conquerors." The term conquerors in the original language conveys the idea that we are actually "super conquerors." Today, the world is captivated by "super heroes," "super sonic jets," "super novas," but we are to understand that we're super conquerors in Christ. The fact that we are more than conquerors has nothing to do with our ability, but everything to do with Christ and what He has accomplished for us at Calvary. Because of Christ's finished work, we are justified freely by His grace, forgiven, and sealed with the Holy Spirit. As we have seen, we are beyond the reach of judgment.

In my pulpit ministry, I often use the following illustration to

illustrate why we are more than conquerors in Him. In my left hand I hold an open Bible, which represents the Lord Jesus Christ, but in my right hand I have a piece of paper representing the sinner who has trusted Christ. I then place the folded piece of paper into the Bible and close it. Then I point to the front of the Bible and ask. "What do you see?" Christ! We are in Him! We are perfect in Him! So when God the Father looks at His beloved Son, He sees His holiness and His righteousness put to our account.

"Safe am I, safe am I
In the hollow of His hand
Sheltered o'er, sheltered o'er
With His love forevermore.
No ill can harm me,
No foe alarm me,
For He keeps both day and night;
Safe am I, safe am I
In the hollow of His hand."



Jesus Christ is at the heart of God's program of grace for today (Col. 1:25-29). Dive deep into God's Word as you explore the plans and purposes of God across all dispensations (Eph. 3:1-21), grounding yourself in the fundamentals of Grace doctrine. Be challenged and equipped to go further in your walk of dependency and faith in Christ through your time in this program.

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"Brother Kevin, I had you on my heart this morning and wanted you to know how much I appreciate you and your ministry. Your videos and writings have been such a help to me. Thank you for all that you do for the Body of Christ."

From Texas:

"Hope you all are doing well, and may the Lord bless you for all you do for Him. I enjoy reading *Two Minutes with the Bible* first thing every morning! It's a great way to start my day. I know you will put this donation to good use." (We agree that 'the best part of wakin' up' is not 'Foldgers in your cup,' but the Word of God in your mind.—Ed.)

From Missouri:

"I thank all of you for your hard work. I am so thankful that I can get on your website every day to hear great sermons. All of your preachers make it so plain."

From Illinois:

"Just a note to thank you for your faithful teaching of God's Word. Only eternity will tell of those whose Bible study has been changed because of reading and listening to your teaching."

From Oklahoma:

"I will be sending money each month as long as the Lord provides." (Thank you for your support and partnership in the ministry.—Ed!)

From our Inbox:

"I recently embraced Pauline dispensationalism and abandoned my view of the one gospel in the New Testament. The Scriptures have become more clear and easy to understand ever since. God bless you."

From New York:

"Enclosed, please find a check. I look forward every day to *Transformed by Grace* on TV. Thanks to Pastor Kevin for his excellent teaching. He makes Scripture learning so understandable and interesting." (Thank you for your support! –Ed.)

From North Carolina:

"We continue to enjoy the *Searchlight* and the TV program. Keep on keeping on."

From Florida:

"This ministry has been such a blessing to me for many years, and I'm so thankful for you guys. There is so much good teaching (rightly divided), so much encouragement, and so much love. From Pastor Stam all the way down to Pastor Hosfeld. God bless you, and thank you so very much for all your efforts and good work in spreading the gospel of the grace of God to all who desperately need it."

From Facebook:

"I record *Transformed by Grace* every day and watch at my convenience. Thank you for the good teaching."

From our Inbox:

"I want to say thank you for putting the May 20th [Transformed by Grace] Regional Conference on YouTube. I enjoyed watching it and learning about Eutychus and Dorcas."

From Arizona:

"I thank God for your great mission to teach the Word of God. You've helped me to understand the Word of God when I was stumped....Please keep up your good work; your work is not in vain. I pray that God will greatly bless you...."

From Washington:

"Watch you every day!"

From Wisconsin:

"I am writing to share...with you that I believe Pastor Fredericksen's devotional...Daily Transformation... is the best I have ever found. I am often surprised so few brothers and sisters in Christ have never heard of it. I have often sent it to friends as a gift. After all, aren't we to think of others first? Thank you ever so much for all the work that each of you does. Your Berean Searchlight is the best! I have more than once sent copies to those who love our Redeemer."

From Pennsylvania:

"This is a donation for the *Search-light* magazine. I love reading it every month, then passing it on to my sister and cousin. We are all grace believers. Praise the Lord for the grace message." (Amen to that! –Ed.)

From Indiana:

"I thank God for your ministry. I learn something new in each program. God bless you as you teach God's truth."

From Alabama:

"Thank you so much for all you do for our Lord Jesus Christ. *Transformed by Grace* is a wonderful program, and Pastor Kevin and the team really make rightly dividing God's Word understandable. P.S. I watch the program online on YouTube."

From Tennessee:

"Dear Pastor Kevin, my wife and I enjoy your Bible program each afternoon on Dish Network. Your proclamation of the Word is informative and rightly divided, which leads to a greater understanding of the Bible. Remembering you and the staff in prayer."

From Oregon:

"I love the *Searchlight* and all the work put into it. All these years have blessed me so much, and you all are dear to my heart....While I may not have much these days to contribute, in my heart, I'm totally supporting you and everyone there."

From Alabama:

"I miss the *Searchlight* in July and can't wait until August so I can read it. Thank you so much for *Transformed by Grace*. I'm telling all my friends. Maybe someday you'll start a July issue."

From Virginia:

"Thank you for your ministry of truth. You are on my daily prayer list."

From Arizona:

"I've been studying 'Romans' by Pastor Stam. It really opened my eyes to God's grace. I thank God and pray for you all the time. May God keep you and His hand upon you."

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

—2 Timothy 2:15



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News & Announcements n e w s

BBS Speaks Spanish: BBS Hablando Español. Did you know *Berean Bible Society* offers a variety of books and commentaries in Spanish for download and purchase? Why, you might ask? Spanish is the second most spoken language in the world, and it's estimated that over 20 million people in the U.S. speak *only* Spanish. The Spanish page (under Bible Study on the main menu) provides options for both free downloads and books for sale, including popular commentaries like *Acts, Romans, Galatians*, and recently added 1 and 2 *Corinthians*, as well as the books *Moses and Paul, True Spirituality*, and of course, *Things That Differ*.

Engage: As Captain Picard would famously say, when ready to head off at warp speed. Let's face it: We live in a world that's become more reliant on social media for information, and for BBS to continue to be the leader of the grace movement and to reach as many people as possible with our message, we must have a strong presence on platforms like YouTube and Facebook. That's why we ask those who use these platforms to please share and like our videos and other content. It truly will make a difference.

TBG Schedule: Now available on the BBS website, you'll find a list of upcoming episodes of *Transformed by Grace*, which airs on CTN. TBG airs Monday-Friday at 6:00 p.m. Eastern time. You can find CTN on the following channels: DirecTV: Channel 376, Dish Network: Channel 262, Glory Star Satellite System: Channel 117. For more information, go to https://bereanbiblesociety.org/transformed/.

BBS 2024 Conferences: Are you interested in having a Bible conference in 2024? Bible conferences provide several benefits for churches of all sizes, not only in the teachings and insights imparted but also in creating a sense of unity among believers who come together to explore God's Word. Additionally, these conferences can attract visitors who may not regularly attend church services. If you are interested in having Pastor Kevin and BBS come and speak, now is the time to contact us before the 2024 schedule is full.

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