

The BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

October 2025



Feature Article

Why Paul?, *by David Havard*5

Articles

Paul’s Kind of Church, *by Paul Sadler*11

Major Events of the Bible: Creation, *by Kevin Sadler*.....19

Departments

Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs4

Question Box.....14

“Jesus Loves Us So”.....17

Christian to Christian25

News and Announcements.....30

This month’s cover features Point Iroquois Lighthouse in Brimley, Michigan.

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

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

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A Note From the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

Pastor Don Hosfeld's announcement that he will be returning to the pastorate in Florida has led to numerous questions about who the next editor of the *Berean Searchlight* will be. As it was with our founder, Pastor C. R. Stam, and, for much of the time that my father, Paul M. Sadler, was president, I will now hold the dual titles of president and editor.

The plan is to divide the duties of the editor among myself, the staff, and independent contractors who will work remotely with BBS. I will oversee the *Searchlight* and select the articles for each issue, along with writing the "News and Announcements" and my usual two to three articles. Most people who call in with Bible questions speak to Pastor Jim Tollar, who gives sound answers to these inquiries. Drawing upon the many questions Jim answers, he will write the Question Box each month. The rest of the staff will assist with finding and choosing letter excerpts, creating advertisements, gathering information for our conference announcements, and all the many other things.

Our editor had also been handling our social media and answering the bulk of our email and snail mail correspondence. As before, but working from Florida, Pastor Don Hosfeld will manage our social media platforms on Facebook and YouTube, as well as continue to enhance our website. Working from Arizona, one of our BBS Board members, Pastor David Havard, is now answering and coordinating our email correspondence. His title is Ministry Correspondence Coordinator. Pastor Tollar is answering our snail mail letters.

This is the current plan and may be the long-term approach to covering the editor's duties. However, we may still hire another grace pastor to work at *Berean Bible Society* in the future if the need arises. Please pray for us as we implement these changes.

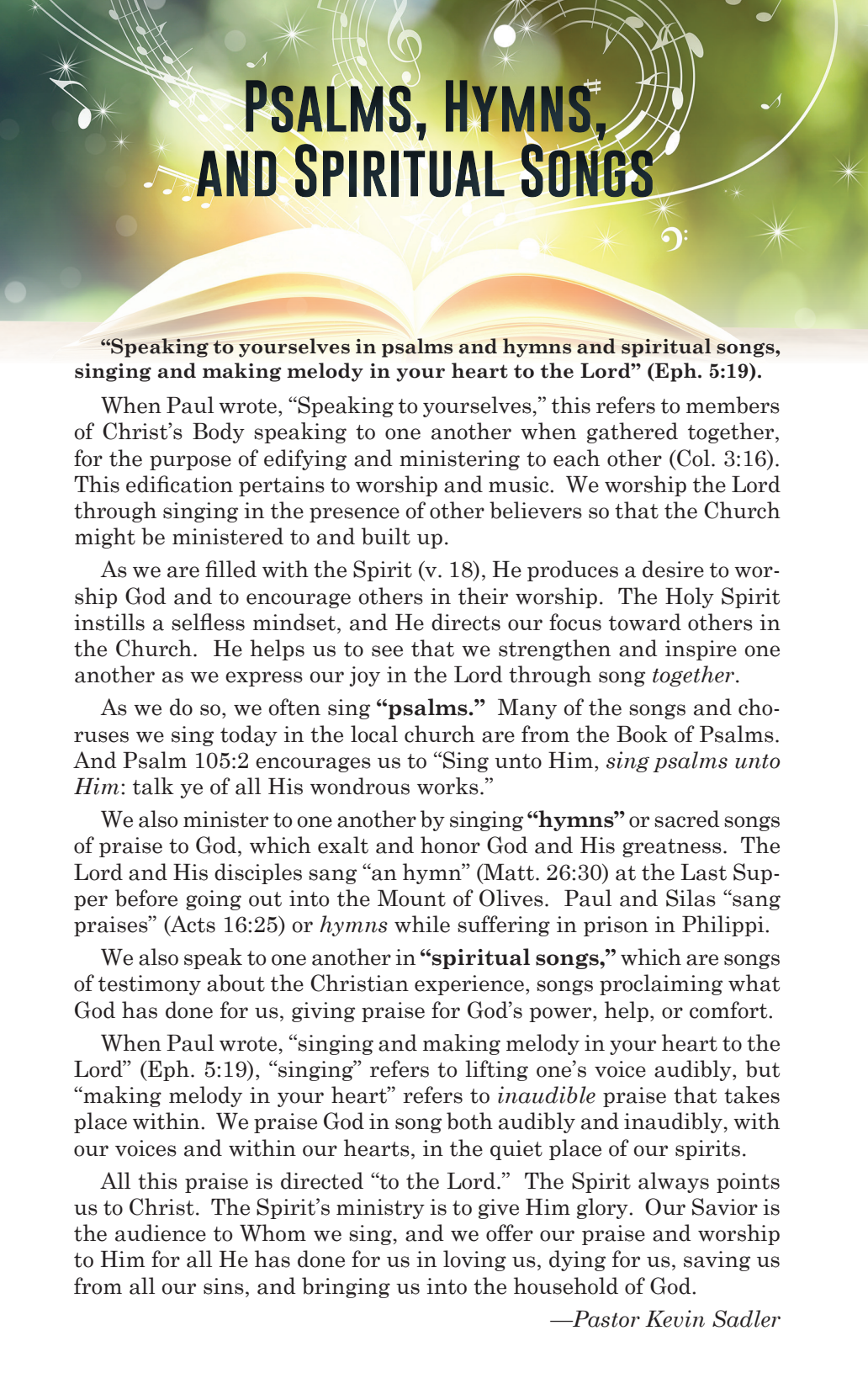
For the last 85 years, the Lord has used the *Berean Searchlight* to ground many believers in grace and enlighten people to the truth. This vital part of our ministry is a priority for us each month, and our goal is to continue publishing a quality, spiritually enriching magazine that brings honor to our Savior and helps people understand, enjoy, and apply the Bible.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler



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



PSALMS, HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS

“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19).

When Paul wrote, “Speaking to yourselves,” this refers to members of Christ’s Body speaking to one another when gathered together, for the purpose of edifying and ministering to each other (Col. 3:16). This edification pertains to worship and music. We worship the Lord through singing in the presence of other believers so that the Church might be ministered to and built up.

As we are filled with the Spirit (v. 18), He produces a desire to worship God and to encourage others in their worship. The Holy Spirit instills a selfless mindset, and He directs our focus toward others in the Church. He helps us to see that we strengthen and inspire one another as we express our joy in the Lord through song *together*.

As we do so, we often sing “**psalms**.” Many of the songs and choruses we sing today in the local church are from the Book of Psalms. And Psalm 105:2 encourages us to “Sing unto Him, *sing psalms unto Him*: talk ye of all His wondrous works.”

We also minister to one another by singing “**hymns**” or sacred songs of praise to God, which exalt and honor God and His greatness. The Lord and His disciples sang “an hymn” (Matt. 26:30) at the Last Supper before going out into the Mount of Olives. Paul and Silas “sang praises” (Acts 16:25) or *hymns* while suffering in prison in Philippi.

We also speak to one another in “**spiritual songs**,” which are songs of testimony about the Christian experience, songs proclaiming what God has done for us, giving praise for God’s power, help, or comfort.

When Paul wrote, “singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19), “singing” refers to lifting one’s voice audibly, but “making melody in your heart” refers to *inaudible* praise that takes place within. We praise God in song both audibly and inaudibly, with our voices and within our hearts, in the quiet place of our spirits.

All this praise is directed “to the Lord.” The Spirit always points us to Christ. The Spirit’s ministry is to give Him glory. Our Savior is the audience to Whom we sing, and we offer our praise and worship to Him for all He has done for us in loving us, dying for us, saving us from all our sins, and bringing us into the household of God.

—Pastor Kevin Sadler

Why Paul?

WHY?

PASTOR DAVID HAVARD

BBS Ministry Correspondence Coordinator

Why? Such a little word that asks such a profound question. From a very early age, we ask questions. Just ask anyone who has parented a toddler and they can tell you about a child's penchant for asking the incessant "why" question. It's a good question.

WHY JESUS?

When we are talking to people about salvation, we often ask them, "Why did Jesus have to die?" If we could be saved by works, Christ did not have to die. This shows the necessity of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. A lot of people believe in God (even the demons—James 2:19), but just a belief in God will not get you into heaven. A lot of folks like to talk in vague terms about God in general, but when you start talking about God, in particular the Lord Jesus Christ, they start to get uneasy.

In Christian circles, a similar thing is true. As long as we talk about "Jesus" in nonspecific

terms, everyone is happy. But if you say that He is indeed the Son of God, that He is Deity, that He is the **ONLY** way to heaven, then folks start to get nervous. Rather than allowing Jesus to speak for Himself, they choose to speak for Him—and then they never get it right. They apparently think that He surely didn't mean those narrow-minded, intolerant things (in their opinion) He said about being divine and the only way to God! Surely He was more "inclusive" and enlightened than that!

No, Jesus Christ said exactly what He meant! When He said that He was the Son of God, He meant it! When He said that He was **THE** way, **THE** truth, and **THE** life and that **NO MAN** comes to God **EXCEPT** through Him, **HE MEANT IT!** He **IS** the only way. Have **YOU** believed the good news of salvation for today? Christ died for your sins, He was buried, and He rose again the third day, proving that He was Who He claimed to be. Believe this good news and you will be saved (1 Cor 15:1-4).

WHY PAUL?

Why? This is also a good question to ask regarding the Apostle Paul. “Why Paul?” If Paul just taught the same thing as the Twelve, if he was in the same group as they, why bother? Why would God go through such trouble to raise up Paul if he was not doing something different?

While religious sorts get nervous when you say that Christ meant what He said, they get even more upset when you insist that Paul meant what he said.

In the gospels, Jesus clearly says that He came only to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” and that His disciples were NOT to go to the Gentiles (Matt. 10:5-6). Repeatedly, events related to Jesus were in fulfillment of prophecy; He never says one word about a new body, a new creation, or a new program. Jesus clearly says that He came in keeping with Israel’s prophetic program.

Likewise, Paul clearly says that he is the apostle to the Gentiles. But just as people think that they know better what Christ meant than Christ Himself, they also seem to think that Paul did not mean what he said either.

They will read Paul’s explicit statement that he is the apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13 cf. Acts 9:15; 13:47; 18:6; 22:21; 26:20; Rom. 1:13; 15:16,18; Gal. 2:2; Eph. 3:1,8; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11; 4:17) and then turn around and explain Paul’s statement away to fit their theology or doctrine. “Oh,” they insist, “Paul was just preaching the same thing as the Twelve apostles.” Some even go

so far as to say that Paul was supposed to be the twelfth apostle to replace Judas despite the clear fact that he was unqualified for the position based on the requirements set forth in Acts 1:21,22 (not to mention the fact that these men were under the control of the Holy Spirit when they chose Matthias, Acts 1:24).



A point of clarification. When we say that Paul did not preach the same thing as the Twelve, we are not saying that the Twelve did not preach Christ. Both Paul and the Twelve preached Christ—the difference is in HOW they proclaimed Christ. While it may be debated if the Twelve began to preach the gospel of grace after Paul revealed it to them, it is certain that they did not preach it BEFORE Paul!

THE DIFFERENCE

The key is to recognize both the differences and the similarities between the kingdom program and the mystery program. The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ was not the mystery. This was prophesied. It was these same Old Testament prophecies that Paul used to convince his hearers that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

Both Paul and Peter preached Christ. The distinction to be made is in HOW they preached Christ. In Romans 16:25 we read, “Now to Him that is of power to stablish you **according to my gospel**, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.”

Paul preached Christ and Peter preached Christ, but Paul preached Christ **according to the revelation of the mystery**, whereas Peter preached Christ according to (or in keeping with) the revelation of prophecy.

In Acts 2, Peter proclaims that Jesus is the Messiah. But he does this in the context of the millennial kingdom. The entire focus is that if Israel will accept her Messiah, God will send Christ back and set up the long-awaited kingdom of God on earth. The Jews always had an earthly hope—a heavenly city yes, but a heavenly city on the earth!

THE PROBLEM WITH PAUL

Do you see the problem here? The Church at large continues to disregard the clear statements of both Christ and Paul and re-interpret them to fit their own scheme of things. How strange that readers can think that they know the intent of an author's statement better than the author himself does!

But nothing has really changed has it? After all, this is exactly what the Pharisees and scribes did during Christ's earthly ministry. They had so twisted God's law to fit their desires that they

argued with the very Author of those laws as to their meaning (Matt. 12:2-8; 15:3-6; Mark 3:1-5; 7:7-13).

This brings us back to my original question, “Why Paul?” If Paul's epistles only repeat or continue the program and message of the gospels, then why this need to directly intervene in time and history and overwhelm Paul on the road to Damascus?

Why Paul? Paul was raised up because God instituted a whole new program with him. Prophetically, God's next step should have been the Great Tribulation (70th week of Daniel's prophecy [Dan. 9:24-27]) to punish Israel for rejecting Jesus Christ. But instead we see God, in the person of the risen, glorified Lord, confronting Paul on his way to Damascus.

And what did the Lord Jesus Christ tell Paul that day? Did He tell Paul that he was going to be a messenger to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to the lost sheep of the house of Israel? No. Just the opposite. From the beginning, Paul was called specifically to be an apostle to the Gentiles—in keeping with God's new program.

Listen to what God told Ananias about Paul: “he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake” (Acts 9:15-16). In Acts 26:17, in his defense before King Agrippa, Paul says that he was sent to the Gentiles by God.

Can there be any question when we allow the plain words of Scripture to speak for themselves?

Christ came to Israel (“He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.”—John 1:11). His disciples were sent only to Israel (Matt. 10:5-6). Peter preached only to Israel (Acts 2) with a message straight out of the prophetic books. Paul never says he was sent to Israel. But he says or implies many times that he was sent to the Gentiles.

HOW ARE WE SAVED TODAY?

Why Paul? Where else in the Bible do you find salvation by grace through faith alone explicitly stated and laid out so clearly? Where else do you find the concept of the Body of Christ? (Others have seen this distinction as well—see Scofield’s preface to Paul’s epistles in the Old Scofield Bible.)

But some may be thinking that salvation by grace through faith is found before Paul. We beg to differ! While it’s true that salvation has always been by faith, it is only with the dispensation of Grace that it has been by faith ALONE. Salvation has always been by a faith response to what God has said. In previous dispensations,

He said “believe and DO.” It is only now (as Paul says, “But now”) that the message is to “only believe.”

Some folks insist that the same salvation message is found before Paul and use John 3:16 or Revelation 3:20 as evangelistic verses. BUT, without being explained in light of the gospel of the grace of God, these verses could never be used to save anyone today!

The word “believe” in John 3:16 is always explained as having to do with belief in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ—the gospel as related to us in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. In its context, John 3:16 says nothing about the gospel of the grace of God. What was Nicodemus supposed to believe? That Jesus was the Messiah, that He was the Son of God, and in that context, that belief also included baptism and continuing to keep the law (Matt. 3:8; 5:20; John 20:31). Without Paul’s gospel to explain what it is we are believing, no one is saved.

Revelation 3:20 is really a stretch, but some people do still try to fit it into their evangelism. “Behold, I stand at the door, and



knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me” (Rev. 3:20). By itself, there are zero facts about the gospel in this verse. At least John 3:16 had the word *believe* in it, but Revelation 3:20 doesn’t even have that. You can never be saved by “opening the door of your heart” and “letting Jesus come in”—not unless you use Revelation 3:20 as an analogy and compare “opening the door of your heart” to believing the gospel for today (1 Cor. 15:1-4) and “letting Jesus come in” with being saved.

The point is, without reading Paul’s gospel back into these passages, you do not find the message of salvation for today. It is only by explaining these verses in terms of God’s plan for today that they are used to bring someone to salvation.

It is no wonder that so many people are confused and unsure about their salvation. They have never come to fully understand the facts of their salvation. Instead of sticking to Paul’s clear presentation of the gospel for today, we resort to emotional pulls and unbiblical words. Paul says to believe the gospel, that Christ died for your sins, was buried, and rose again the third day; we too often say things like “ask Jesus into your heart” or “make Him Lord of your life” or other such phrasing. No wonder folks are confused as to whether they got saved or are still saved!


The fact is, you do not find the explicit terms of salvation by grace through faith ALONE outside of Paul’s epistles.

WHAT IS GOD’S PLAN FOR TODAY?

Why Paul? It is Paul because during this dispensation of grace God has temporarily set aside Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in (Rom. 11:25). Contrary to popular belief, Israel is not the chosen nation today. After the Rapture she will once again have “most favored nation status,” but not today in the dispensation of grace. Today, God has concluded ALL men in unbelief that He might have mercy on all. Today God is dealing with individuals for salvation, not nations.

Why Paul? Because Paul alone teaches us about the blessed hope of Christ’s return for the Body, which is His Church today (1 Thes. 4:13-18). Our hope is not Israel’s hope. We do not hope for God’s kingdom on earth—our hope is heavenly. Likewise, a Jew never hoped for heaven—he hoped for God’s kingdom on earth (“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”—Matt. 6:10). Some have lost sight of this distinction and are blurring God’s future plans and programs for Israel and the Body of Christ.

Today it seems that some are starting to turn away from a consistent dispensational approach to the Scriptures. Once you leave the literal interpretation of the Bible, only your imagination and reason limit your doctrine. Sadly, it sometimes seems that the post-modern mindset is seeping into the Church.

“Why Paul? That’s a good question! Do you know the answer?” 



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To place an order *beginning* November 1st, please go to our website www.bereanbiblesociety.org or call us at 262.255.4750

No orders before November 1st



SPOTLIGHT on Grace Churches

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Paul's Kind of Church



PASTOR PAUL SADLER
Former BBS President

It seems as though everyone these days is looking for the perfect church. Some years ago *Our Daily Bread* published the following account: A man reportedly came to the British pastor, Charles H. Spurgeon, looking for the perfect church. The famous preacher told him he had many saintly people in his congregation, but a “Judas” could also be among them. After all, even Jesus had a traitor in the company of His apostles. He went on to say that some might be walking disobediently, as had been the case among the believers at Rome, Corinth, and Galatia.

“My church is not the one you’re looking for,” said Spurgeon. “But if you should happen to find such a church, I beg you not to join it, for you would spoil the whole thing.”

The local church will never be perfect on this side of glory, simply because disobedience and carnality are always in attendance with grace and love. If you have ever attended a congregational meeting where opposing sides were having a heated discussion over a thorny issue, you probably tried to leave early to avoid being tarred and feathered. Attending these types of congregational meetings is not for the faint of heart. It reminds us of the old saying, “To dwell above with saints we love, oh that will sure be glory. But to dwell below with saints we know, well, that’s another story!” Interestingly, this statement touches the very heart of the matter. In fact, it’s why the local church is so essential to the plans and purposes of God, as we will see...

I have had the privilege, by the grace of God, to pastor three Grace churches. The experience was invaluable, and as I look back, while I didn’t realize it at the time, the Lord was preparing me to be the president of the *Berean Bible Society*. During those years of my pulpit ministry, I learned the importance of patterning my ministry after the



Apostle Paul. Essentially I sought to emulate what the apostle did when he planted a local church. In fact, did he not instruct us along these lines to do this very thing?

“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” (Phil. 4:9).

What have we “learned” from Paul? If we carefully study his three apostolic journeys, we find that Paul’s proclamation of the Word of God was the basis for both the establishment and growth of the local church. Everywhere the apostle went he opened the Scriptures to the people, and they responded with grateful hearts. We’ll allow the biblical record to speak for itself:

First Apostolic Journey, Antioch in Pisidia: “And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God” (Acts 13:44). Iconium: “Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the Word of His grace” (Acts 14:3). Lystra and Derbe: “And there they preached the gospel” (Acts 14:7).

Second Apostolic Journey, Thessalonica: “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ” (Acts 17:2-3). Corinth: “And he [Paul] continued there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them” (Acts 18:11).

Third Apostolic Journey, Ephesus: “And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10). Troas: “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight” (Acts 20:7).

Today, the sound preaching of the Word has been replaced in most local assemblies with alternative worship services and marketing schemes to build a popular church that everyone wants to attend. There is rarely a month that goes by that I don't have a colorful brochure come across my desk on church growth programs. Sadly, the church growth movement has relegated the Word of God to a secondary role in favor of song services, skits, films, and testimonials. This concept is merely an attempt to draw larger audiences with the idea that "bigger is better." If they provide more social functions and innovative programs, they'll be better equipped to meet the needs of the community. It's a lofty goal, but a flawed concept.


The problem here is this: when the church across town announces they're building a new gym or they plan to have a contemporary worship service with gifted musicians, probably before long many of your people will be going to this new venue. It wouldn't be the first time a local assembly was left with a small handful of people and a large mortgage. Unfortunately, all of this is at the expense of the Word of God, which is the very thing that will minister to the needs of the people.

The temptation is very real for local churches to go along with the trends of the day, but is it our desire to please men or God? Many church boards are fearful that if Paul's apostleship and message are proclaimed in their fullness, it may upset someone and drive them away! I remember several years ago I was on the platform with a young Grace pastor who spent the first ten minutes of his message apologizing for Paul's apostleship. He felt we made too much of Paul and that we needed to tone it down in the Grace Movement or we were going to offend people. I'm sure most of his comments were for my benefit, but he was speaking to the wrong person. I came out of the confusion of denominationalism years ago, and I have no intention of returning, as this young man was suggesting. I thank God without ceasing that I've been set free from the bondage of tradition, and I'm going to tell anyone who's willing to listen that they, too, can be delivered if they acknowledge Paul's gospel.

Beloved ones, Paul is God's spokesman for the Church today; thus, to speak disparagingly of God's apostle is to reject the counsel of God itself. Paul's epistles reveal the mind and will of God for the Body of Christ during this dispensation. Shall we apologize for the Word of God that has been delivered to us by our apostle? I think not!! While we should speak the truth in love, the truth is offensive (Gal. 5:11 cf. Eph. 4:15). I recall the first time someone told me I was a hell-deserving sinner—I was offended by that statement! But I thank God that I was offended, because through the process I got saved. We must be very careful not to remove the "offense of the Cross" by sugarcoating our words with flowery platitudes, which can condemn men to perdition.

One of the purposes of the local church is to provide an atmosphere where the Word of God can be received with thanksgiving. The preaching of the Word must be the centerpiece of our worship of

Almighty God. True worship begins with God being glorified in the teaching of His Word. It is then enhanced by the singing of hymns, spiritual songs, prayer, and testimonials. For the most part, this order has been reversed in our churches today, which has left the Lord's people floundering spiritually in their Christian lives.

When we speak here of preaching the Word, we are not referring to a 12-minute devotional message on Sunday morning, which has little profit. Rather, whenever we gather around the Word to worship, the preferable way to open the Scriptures is to do a verse-by-verse exposition of a particular book, such as the Book of Romans. We believe this is the most profitable and effective way to teach the Scriptures. Remember, Paul reasoned with his hearers. He alleged, he taught them the Word of life. Whatever format you use, "preach the Word," and the Lord's people will respond as those at Thessalonica did to Paul's preaching (Acts 17:2-3). 



Question Box



"In your 'Did Christ Suffer in Hell?' article, you made no mention of 1 Peter 3:18-20."

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison" (1 Pet. 3:18-19).

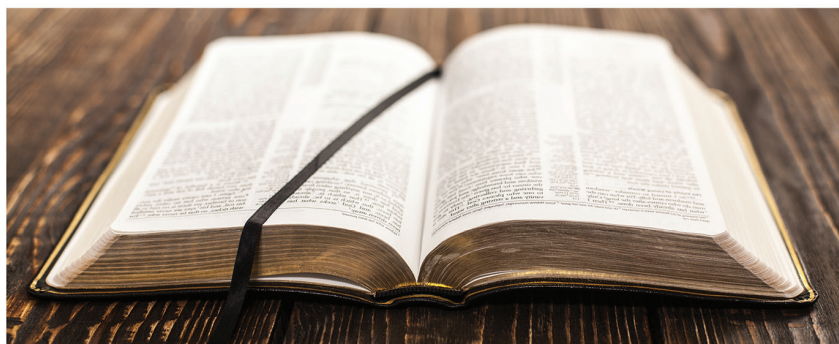
The Savior told the thief on the cross, "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). From this, we know that, during the three days and three nights that He was in the heart of the earth (Matt. 12:40), Christ was in the paradise section of Hades. *From paradise*, Christ "preached unto the spirits in prison" (1 Pet. 3:19), or He addressed spirits in the torment section of Hades. The Lord preached to these spirits from paradise just as Abraham spoke to the rich man in torments across the great gulf in Hades (Luke 16:22-31).

The message the Lord preached to these spirits (1 Pet. 3:20) was one of judgment, assuring them that their everlasting doom was sure, because of His victorious death for sin at the Cross and impending resurrection in a matter of a couple of days and hours at that time.

—Pastor Kevin Sadler

Grace Study Bible Charts and Maps

TIME PAST, TIME PRESENT, AND TIME FUTURE



"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

TIME PAST	BUT NOW	AGES TO COME
EPHESIANS 2:11-12 God Deals through the Mosaic Law	EPHESIANS 2:13-16 God Deals through Grace	EPHESIANS 2:5-7 God Resumes Dealing through Law
Begins with creation (Gen. 1)	Begins with the conversion of Saul (Paul) (Acts 9:1-31)	Begins with the rise of Antichrist (Rev. 13)
Israel raised up as a witness of Jehovah (Gen. 12:1-6)	Israel temporarily set aside in unbelief (Rom. 11:11-15)	God resumes His focus on Israel (I Pet. 2:9)
Israel's history of faithfulness and failure (I Cor. 10:1-11)	No difference between Jew and Gentile (Gal. 3:28)	Jews are intensely persecuted (Rev. 13)
Promise of the coming Redeemer (Isa. 53:1-12; Matt. 3)	Paul specified as the single apostle today (Rom. 11:13)	The Tribulation and Kingdom fulfilled (Matt. 7:9-28)
Prophecy: The coming Tribulation and Kingdom (Isa. 11)	Unprophesied (mystery) program of Grace (Eph. 3:1-6)	Prophecy fulfilled. Ends with the unsaved judged (Rev. 20:11-15)
Ends after Christ is rejected as Israel's King (Matt.-Jn.)	Ends with believers going to Heaven (I Thes. 4:13-18)	Believers live eternally with the Lord (Rev. 21:1-22:5)
Genesis through Mid-Acts	Mid-Acts through Philemon	Hebrews through Revelation

Understanding the Bible begins with the foundation of the three divisions
in Scripture, revealed in Ephesians chapter two.



“Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock...That led them by the right hand of Moses with His glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make Himself an everlasting name...That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?” (Isa. 63:11-13).

“Jesus Loves Us So”



PASTOR CORNELIUS R. STAM
Berean Bible Society Founder

There is much in the Holy Scriptures that the best and wisest among us do not yet understand. In fact, the best and wisest of us have only *begun* to grasp the truths contained in that blessed Book.

Among these, bless God! are those which we cannot understand because they are *too wonderful* for us mortals to comprehend.

It was concerning such truths that David exclaimed:

“Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain unto it” (Psa. 139:6).

Far more has been revealed to us than David ever dreamed of, and we have graciously been given divine help to understand truths then unknown. But still God has kept far ahead of us with His revelations of blessing, and there are precious passages, especially in the Pauline epistles, which we will never fully grasp in this life, simply because they are “too wonderful” and “high” for us to fully comprehend. We *can believe* them, however, and *rejoice* in them.

Thus, we believe and rejoice in the glorious revelation of our position in Christ in the heavenlies, though we are only *beginning* to understand this precious “mystery.” Thus, too, we rejoice in “*the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge*” (Eph. 3:19) and “*the peace of God, which passeth all understanding*” (Phil. 4:7).

One such passage which has always gripped this writer, yet has left him ever again overcome with wonder, is 2 Corinthians 5:21:

“For He [God] hath made Him [Christ] to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

Again and again, as the writer has pondered over this verse, he has responded: “Can it be! *He* made *sin* that *I* might be made, not merely righteous, but ‘*the righteousness of God* in Him’! Lord, I cannot take this in. It is too wonderful for this poor sinful heart to fully grasp.

Yet I do believe it and rejoice over it ‘with joy unspeakable and full of glory.’”

But there is another *kind* of passage which in another way is equally hard, for this writer at least, to grasp in its fullness. One example of this kind of passage is Ephesians 4:30:

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

Again I ask: “Can it be! *GOD grieved!*” How it can be that eternal and almighty God can be *grieved* over *anything* that I, a poor speck of sinful dust, might do, is more than I can grasp. It overwhelms me that He is so deeply concerned about me.

Yet I know that it is so, for as far back as Genesis 6:5,6 I read a striking statement about our sovereign God:

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

“And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, *and it grieved Him at His heart.*”

If then, a sovereign God was grieved over the wickedness of the ante-deluvian race, how He must be grieved when I, His son in Christ, fail Him!

While as yet we are unable to comprehend all this, such passages as Ephesians 4:30 can bring us untold blessing if we simply *believe* them.

Surely this passage teaches us that God loves us deeply. Indeed, He has scarcely besought us not to grieve His Holy Spirit when, almost in the same breath, He assures us that the Holy Spirit *has sealed* and *does seal* us unto the day of redemption.

And is not this the *reason* for the exhortation? He says, as it were, “Do not grieve the Spirit, Who loves you; Who loves you so that regardless of your faithfulness or failure He continues to keep you safe in His care.”

It is well that so many children’s songs emphasize the fact that Jesus loves them, for it is this that is most apt to draw from them a response of faith and love while they are still young.

Perhaps the greatest hymn ever written was that wonderful children’s hymn:

**“Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so.”**

We, their elders who have come to know the Lord Jesus Christ, should sing these words with greater joy and deeper gratitude than they. There it is again! Let us not grieve Him—for *He loves us so.*





Major Events of the Bible

CREATION

Genesis 1:1-31

*(Taken from Transformed
by Grace episode #318)*

PASTOR KEVIN SADLER
BBS President

The Eternal Creator

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).

As with the rest of the Bible, the first 11 chapters of Genesis are to be interpreted literally unless the context demands otherwise. There is nothing that requires anything other than a literal interpretation of the creation account. It is wrong and dangerous to inject outside ideas and theories about origins into Genesis chapter 1. We must let God’s Word speak to us simply and naturally and accept it by faith.

In a court of law, eyewitness testimony carries the most weight. Hearsay testimony is thrown out. The same is true of creation. God asked Job the question, “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?” (Job 38:4). God was there, and the revelation of His Word can and should be trusted.

When you trust the first words of the Bible, you won’t find it hard to believe all that follows in the

Bible, because the God Who is wise and powerful enough to have created the heaven and the earth can easily do all the rest of what the Bible says that He did, and does, and will do.

The Book of Genesis explains Israel’s origin, identity, and God’s divine purpose for her on the earth in the land promised to Abraham. And in Genesis, God taught His earthly people, Israel, about the origin of the world, because the earth is their eternal hope.

“IN THE BEGINNING God.” The first thing you learn from these words is that God existed before all things. God was before the beginning. Before anything else existed, He was. God is eternal, without beginning or end. As Psalm 90:2 tells us, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.”

“In the beginning GOD.” The opening statement of the Bible introduces the primary subject of the entire Bible: the true and living God. The word “God” is

translated from the Hebrew word, *Elohim*. It is a name that stresses God's majesty and power, that He is the Supreme One. This is the Hebrew name of God throughout Genesis 1-5. *Elohim* refers to the Trinity. It's been said that "Elohim is a plural name with a singular meaning, a 'uni-plural' noun, thereby suggesting the uniplurality of the Godhead. God is one, yet more than one."¹ God is One God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

"In the beginning God CREATED." It can be demonstrated from Scripture that all three Members of the Godhead participated in the Creation (Gen. 1:2; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11). The one God in three Persons "created." The Hebrew word translated as "created" in Genesis 1:1 is used only for God's creative activity in Scripture and means to bring into existence. Only God can create or call into existence something that has no previous existence. We talk about humans creating things, but we are merely forming and reorganizing already existing materials into something else. However, when God created, He brought something totally new into existence. Out of nothing, the

universe and all space and matter, was made by God's decree.

"In the beginning God created THE HEAVEN." We know that "the heaven" is not speaking of the stars because the stars were created later, on the fourth day of creation (Gen. 1:14-15). "The heaven" (Gen. 1:1) refers to the stretched-out space in the universe. God created the empty space in which to put all the things He would make.

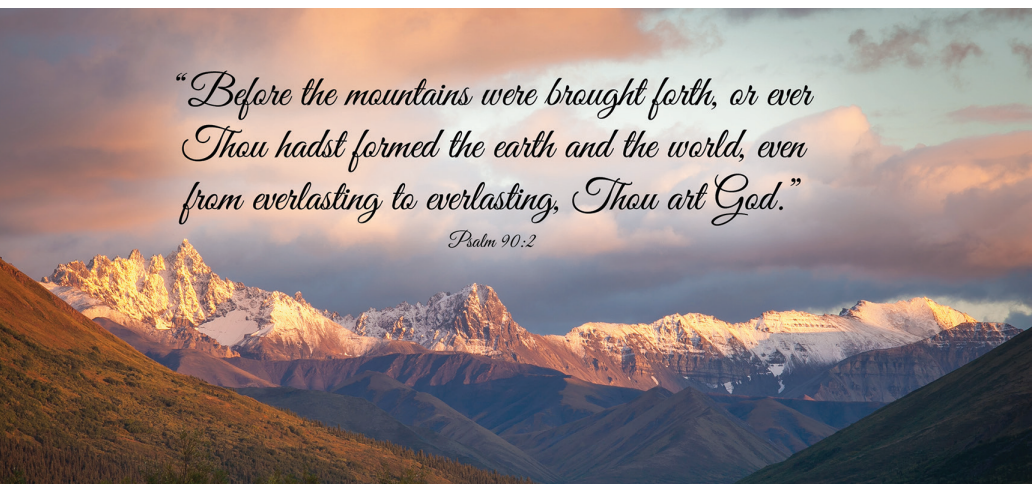
"In the beginning God created the heaven AND THE EARTH." On day one of Creation, the heaven was created, and then the earth was created and placed within the heaven of space that God made. At that time, there were no planets, stars, or other material bodies in the universe. This shows us that, in God's master plan, the center and focal point of attention for His entire universe is *the earth*. The earth is promised to believing Israel in the final, eternal state, and God wanted His chosen nation to see the priority this world was and is in His creation.

God Divided

"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was

*"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever
Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even
from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."*

Psaln 90:2



upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

“And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

“And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day” (Gen. 1:2-5).

At first, the earth’s surface was covered with water. The creation of the earth was not yet complete, but on day one it was perfect for the first stage of God’s six-day plan of creation. Verse 2 tells us, “And the earth was without form, and void.” The “And” connects us back to verse 1 and shows sequential action by God during the Creation week, and we see this throughout the rest of the chapter by the continual use of “And God.” Thus, there is no room for a “gap” (as some “old earth” creationists suggest).

When the earth was spoken into existence by God, it was “without form.” “Without form” means that the earth did not yet have the organized form it would have at the end of the creation week, which included the separated land and seas (vv. 9-10). The earth was also “void,” or empty, uninhabited by creatures. But as we continue reading Genesis 1, we find God filling up the earth. Genesis 1 gives the steps by which God brought form to the unformed earth and created living beings to fill its void. First, God formed, and then He filled. He *formed* a trinity of spheres—the heaven, the dry land, and the waters—and then He *filled* each of them.

“And darkness was upon the face of the deep” (v. 2). In other words, over the earth’s “deep,” entirely water-covered surface, there was darkness. Wherever the “deep” was, there was also darkness, and thus the entire globe was in total darkness.

Upon the deep, “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (v. 2). And here we see a specific Member of the triune Godhead in action, moving, superintending, and exercising divine care and supervision over one aspect of the creation of the earth. When God began to transform the earth into something beautiful in accordance with His perfect plan, it was through the work of the Spirit of God. (And the same thing happens today in our Christian lives: we are transformed and made something new [2 Cor. 5:17] through the Spirit’s working!)

There is another *moving* of the Spirit of God mentioned in the Bible. The Spirit did the same thing in the revelation and inspiration of the Scriptures: “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were *moved* by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet. 1:21). With the inspiration of the Scriptures, as the Spirit of God moved, then the Word of God was spoken. Likewise, at the Creation, when the Spirit *moved* upon the face of the waters, God *spoke*, “And GOD SAID, Let there be light: and there was light.”

God spoke light into existence in His creation, and this dispelled the darkness that was over the entire earth. God created natural, physical, visible light on the first day. Light was created prior to the

establishment of the sun, moon, and stars on day four of creation. “God is light” (1 John 1:5), and all light exists because of Him.

Light being created before the sun, moon, and stars means that these heavenly bodies get their light from God. The sun, moon, and stars have been and are revered as gods by many people in this world. But Genesis declares God’s infinite greatness and supremacy over these heavenly bodies because He created them, and their light comes from Him. He alone is worthy to be worshipped.

Having created light and seeing it was good, “God divided the light from the darkness.” The creation of light separated day from night. It’s important to note something about the creation account and the beginning of the Bible, which in turn teaches us how to understand and interpret God’s Word. The creation account demonstrates that He is a *dividing* God. This does not imply anything negative about God; it is simply a truth concerning His Person and nature. The creation is divided.

“...God DIVIDED the light from the darkness...And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it DIVIDE the waters from the waters...Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to DIVIDE the day from the night” (vv. 4,6,14).

The divisions God made in creation remind us that when we read and interpret His Word, we should *expect* to find divisions. We need to make special note of those divisions of God’s dealings with mankind to understand His

Word properly, and especially make note of the critical division of His dealings with the nations today under grace. 2 Timothy 2:15 reminds us to take special notice of these divisions: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly *dividing* the Word of truth.”



On day one, God established the definition of a day. Genesis 1:5 reads, “And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.” It is for this reason that the beginning of each day begins at night—at midnight. Just like light came after darkness on creation’s first day, so each day starts with darkness followed by light.

At creation, God established our 24-hour days, as well as our seven-day weeks. The word “day” is given boundaries of “the evening and the morning,” and this qualification strictly defines the Hebrew term for “day” (*yom*) as a 24-hour day. God made everything in these six, literal, 24-hour days, and on the seventh day, He rested. To this moment, the whole world, mostly without realizing it, follows a seven-day-per-week schedule that God established at creation.

Creation Summary

"And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day" (Gen. 1:31).

Creation was a series of supernatural, instantaneous miracles by God that took place over six days. Each of the six days of creation involved God speaking. By the power of His spoken Word, God created the heavens and the earth and all things in them (Psa. 33:6,9).

The following is a summary of each day of the creation week.

Day one (Gen. 1:1-5): God created the heaven, the earth, and the waters that covered the earth. He created light and established the earth's cycle of day and night.

Day two (1:6-8): God divided the waters from the waters on the earth, and put a firmament in the midst of the waters. God placed a firmament, an expanse, or an atmosphere above the earth between the water that remained on the earth and the water that God divided so as to be above the expanse. God called the firmament between the waters "Heaven." This is the first heaven, where the birds "fly above the earth in the open firmament of *heaven*" (1:20).

Day three (1:9-13): God gathered together the waters on the earth, allowing the dry land to appear out of the previously shoreless ocean that had covered the face of the planet for the first two days. This gave birth to the earth and the seas. Now that there was dry land, God commanded the earth to produce plants. Thus, fruit trees, green grass, flowers, vegetation, trees of every kind,

and all manner of plant life sprang up from the earth.

The order of things in creation is often not as we would expect. According to the Bible, the earth existed before the sun, moon, and all the stars. Light, as well as day and night, existed before the sun, moon, and stars. Plants existed before the sun. Just as light was created before the sun and stars to show that their light comes from God, so vegetation existed before the sun, which teaches that its life and growth come *from God*.

Day four (1:14-19): God filled the space in the universe with the sun, moon, and the stars. The earth is the center and focal point of God's entire universe, and the sun, moon, and stars are all made in relation to and for the benefit of the earth (v. 15). The movement of these heavenly bodies is for the earth's tracking of time: "for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years" (v. 14). The moon determines our months, and years are determined by the earth's revolution around the sun. Which stars are visible also changes depending on the season.

Day five (1:20-23): God filled the waters and the sky. God stocked the oceans, creating all life that lives in the water in all its great diversity. God also created birds and other creatures that fly in the sky above. All marine life and birds were created on the same day.


Day six (1:24-30): God filled the dry land. God created all the land animals after their kind. Each one was created to reproduce according to its kind. After God finished creating the animals, God turned to His most



important creation: mankind. Everything in the creation week builds toward this event on day six. The crown of God's work was the creation of man. When God planned to create man, the three Persons of the Godhead took counsel together: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (1:26). God made man in His own image, and thus mankind is special above all other things. And man was given authority and dominion by God to rule over His creation and all its sea life and animals (v. 28).

Genesis 1 teaches that light comes from Light, that life comes from Life, and that God is the first Cause in our cause-and-effect universe. The design and wisdom we continually see and

discover in the world are due to the work of the Intelligent Designer. God, the Creator, declares plainly in Isaiah 45:12, "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even My hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded."

We find our purpose in life by knowing, enjoying, and living for the Creator. May we submit our lives to Him and allow Him to use us for His glory. As the Psalmist wrote, "The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our Maker" (95:5-6). 

1. Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1979), p. 39.

Maryland/West Virginia Grace Conference

October 17-18, 2025

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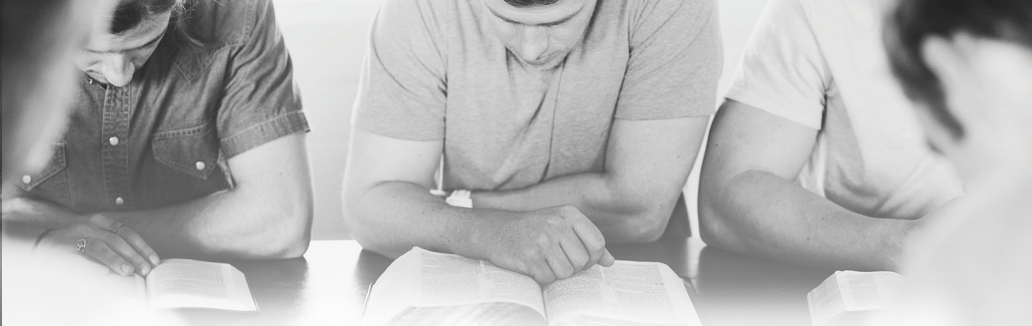
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For room reservations or more information, please contact:

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*On October 19, Sunday services
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CHRISTIAN *to* CHRISTIAN

OWE NO MAN BUT LOVE

“Render...to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another....” (Rom. 13:7-8).

With love being so important, it’s no surprise that God expects man to love one another. In Romans 13, as Paul lays out the believer’s responsibility to be subject to “higher powers” and to “render therefore to all their dues...” (v. 7), he points out that one of the things we owe is love. He says, “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another...” (v. 8). The word for “owe” in verse 8 corresponds to the word “dues” in verse 7. Love is a due we need to render and a debt we can never pay off.

As Charles J Ellicott said, “When you have paid all your other debts, taxes, and customs, and reverence, and whatever else you may owe, there will still be one debt unpaid—the universal debt of love.”

Just as Paul reminded those in Thessalonica, this debt of love is to all men, not only to fellow or even like-minded believers: “And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men...” (1 Thes. 3:12). One of my mom’s favorite sayings was, “Practice what you preach,” and Paul certainly did. In 2 Corinthians 11:23-29, Paul describes many of the sufferings he endured but finishes with, “Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?”

If anyone had a right to “burn” because of how others behaved, it was Paul. What allowed Paul to endure so much and yet “abound in love...to all men?” The answer is found in 2 Corinthians 5:14: “For the love of Christ constraineth us.”

Christ demonstrated His love for all in His willingness to die for all. The love that Christ showed for all also constrains all believers “that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again” (v. 15). We are told to “walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour” (Eph. 5:2). The love of Christ compels us to “abound in love...toward all men.”

—Pastor Don Hosfeld

BBS Letter Excerpts



From Our Mailbox:

“Thank you for, first of all, your magazine, the *Searchlight*, and your TV program, *Transformed by Grace*. I believe both of these do an awesome job in ‘rightly dividing!’”

From Ethiopia:

“I am a Bible student from Ethiopia and just wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for the incredible resources I have received from BBS. The books have been instrumental in deepening my understanding of the grace message, and I find myself growing more and more each day in this truth. The monthly magazine (*Searchlight*) has also been a tremendous help—each issue brings fresh insights and encouragement, reinforcing what I am learning. Thank you for making these resources available; they have truly been life-changing.”

From Florida:

“I just wanted to say that I have been reading the *Berean Searchlight* for over 60 years, and this is the best edition I have ever read! Praise the Lord! You all knocked it out of the park with this edition.”

From Washington:

“I missed 15 minutes of the program (Paul the Preacher: Antioch in Pisidia, Pt. 2) because I was laughing so hard at the opening joke! I had to rewatch the program to see what I missed! My wife and I watch it each evening on CTN.”

From Illinois:

“Thank you for helping me with my learning, and understanding God’s Word. God bless you.”

From Our Mailbox:

“Just wanted to say you are making a difference. Your podcast, newsletter, and other resources are helping this Baptist (not 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...God bless you.”

From YouTube:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace* “The Commission for Israel”) “Wonderfully spoken...thank you.”

From Our Mailbox:

“I wanted to send money to help with the *Searchlight* magazine. I enjoy it very much and pass it along to others to read.”

From YouTube:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace* “One Distinct Baptism”) “God bless you. I agree very much with what the Holy Scriptures teach. And you, Brother, have explained it according to the Scriptures...Amen.”

From Facebook:

(Responding to *Two Minutes with the Bible* “The Servant of God for Today”) “Thank you for this morning’s message. Powerful for those willing to study the text.”

From Our Mailbox:

"I am grateful for your ministry and enjoy the *Transformed by Grace* videos that encourage hope, peace, and joy in Christ."

From Our Mailbox:

"I can't wait for BBS to publish the *Grace Study Bible*. Please put my donation towards the printing of it."

From Our Inbox:

"I just found you tonight when I was doing the study of 2 Timothy. Wow, wow, wow. Now I want to follow you on Facebook, if possible. I'm sharing this teaching with my friends."

From Our Mailbox:

"As always, we appreciate your [*Berean Searchlight*] magazine, TV ministry, and books, especially when on sale!"

From Arizona:

"We're a new grace church in Black Canyon City, Arizona. We listen to Pastor Kevin Sadler every Sunday. Thank you very much for your ministry."

From North Carolina:

"Thank you for all y'all do. And I would love to let Pastor Kevin know that his corny jokes and puns get some groans and lots of laughs from me, and remind me so much of my dad. He would've loved them all!"

From YouTube:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace* "The Love of Christ") "Deeper truths in Scripture! Learning from our Apostle Paul what was revealed to him by our ascended Lord."

From Our Mailbox:

"I appreciate the *Searchlight* magazine articles very much! My Bible study is greatly enhanced by your teaching."

From Our Mailbox:

"Just a note and enclosure to thank you for sending the *Berean Searchlight*....May our Lord continue to bless your ministries!" (Thank you for your support.—Ed.)

From Facebook:

"Love the BBS app!"

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"This is a great inspirational program. I have a Roku TV and have been enjoying all the prerecorded programs on TBG [*Transformed by Grace*]. Kevin Sadler is such a great teacher. I've loved his teaching for years."

From Tennessee:

"I watch *Transformed by Grace* every day. How wonderful it is to hear Pastor Kevin preach the Word of God. I'm just a humble man who's thankful for your program."

From our Inbox:

"I am on the edge of my seat in anticipation of the new Bible."

From Missouri:

"Thank all of you for a great job in helping me to understand my Bible more."

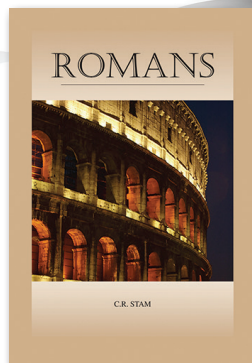


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Doctrines That Define Us

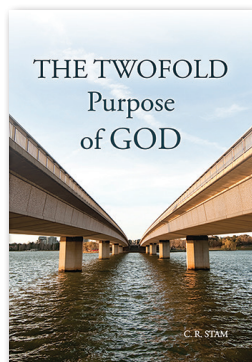


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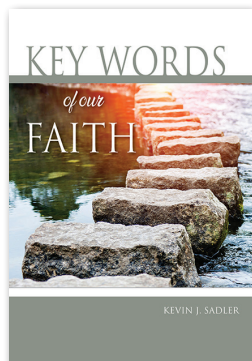


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News & Announcements



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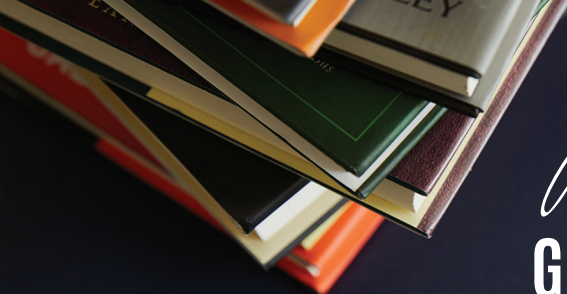
Grace Study Bible Pre-Orders Begin Next Month: The *Grace Study Bible* (GSB) is entering its final phase—it's off to the printer and nearly ready to be shared with believers hungry for rightly divided truth. Built on Pauline doctrine and dispensational insight, the GSB is designed to deepen study and clarify doctrine. Pre-orders officially open on **November 1**, and we invite you to partner with us in bringing this project to life. Your donations will help cover printing costs and support *future plans for a digital edition*, expanding access to grace teaching across generations and platforms. To support the work, visit bereanbiblesociety.org or call 262.255.4750.

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BBF Fall Conference, October 4-5, West Bend, WI
West Virginia Grace Conference, October 17-18, Ridgeley, WV



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not a divided heart.”***

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“...but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and
of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word” (Isa. 66:2).

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