

# *The* BEREAN SEARCHLIGHT™

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

June 2026



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This month’s cover features Holland Harbor Light known as “Big Red,” Holland, 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.

The Berean Searchlight is the official publication of the Berean Bible Society and is sent free of charge to any who request it.

President/Editor: Kevin Sadler | Layout/Design: Jessica Sadler

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TO GIVE



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The Berean Searchlight (ISSN 0005-8890), June 2026. Vol. 87, Number 4.

The Berean Searchlight is published monthly (except July) at no subscription price, by Berean Bible Society, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., Germantown, WI 53022. Periodical postage paid at Germantown, WI. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Berean Searchlight, N112 W17761 Mequon Rd., Germantown, WI 53022 and additional mailing offices.

## *A Note from the President*

Dear Friends in Christ,

The 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America is a significant milestone for our republic. Both my wife and I were raised to be patriotic and to love our country, as well as to give honor to those who have sacrificed so that we could be free. We have passed this down to our children as well. Thus, with so many others, we will join in celebrating our nation's freedom this July 4th during its special anniversary.

On July 4th, we celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which states that it is self-evident that citizens of the United States “are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights.” Our rights being given to us by God, we therefore thank Him for the privilege and blessing of living in a land of freedom. Our country's freedoms allow us, the Church, to assemble freely for public worship of God and to share the saving gospel of God's grace.

We live in a sin-cursed world so, like every other country in this world, our country has problems. Our response to this should be as Paul instructed the Body of Christ: to pray, make intercession, and give thanks “for all men... and for all that are in authority” (1 Tim. 2:1-2). In love and grace, we are called to lift up our country in prayer, faithfully interceding for our president and all who lead, praying for their salvation and for God to give them wisdom in carrying out their duties.

As we pray and align our hearts and minds with God's, we know that what our country needs most is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is through trusting Him as Savior that lives can be truly changed. This is God's desire for everyone:

**“Who [God our Saviour] will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (v. 4).**

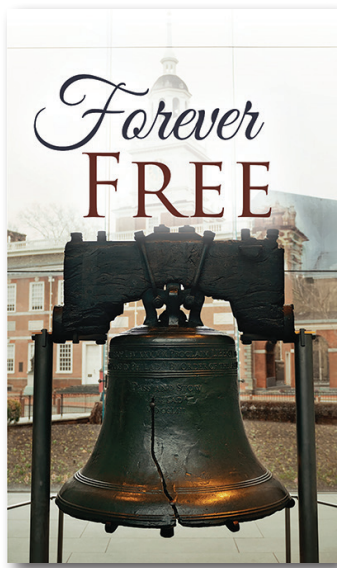
In commemoration of our country's 250th anniversary, we created a new gospel tract called “Forever Free.” It is based on facts about the Liberty Bell and conveys where true spiritual freedom is found: in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. You can read the tract on page 4 of this issue. If you would like to use this tract to share the gospel with others during this season of the 250th anniversary of our country, please see page 29 for pricing and order details.

With hope in Christ and love for our country,

Pastor Kevin J. Sadler, President



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



The Liberty Bell is an iconic symbol of our country's hard-fought independence from the tyrannical rule of the British crown. The bell was originally hung in the steeple of the Pennsylvania State House, now known as Independence Hall. Being devoutly Christian, the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly ordered the bell to be inscribed with words from the Bible: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Lev. 25:10).

Work on the bell, including its inscription, was commissioned in 1751, 25 years before the Declaration of Independence was signed, and long before the bell would be known as the Liberty Bell, underscoring the immense value that colonial legislators placed on the concept of freedom. Between 1753 and 1846, the Liberty Bell "...rang to mark the signing of the Constitution, and the deaths of Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and Thomas Jefferson."<sup>1</sup>

There are many symbols of our freedom as Americans: the Liberty Bell, the American flag, the Declaration of Independence, and the Statue of Liberty. Yet above them all is one symbol that represents true freedom for every person everywhere: **the Cross**. The Cross liberates the soul and sets us free eternally from the penalty of sin.

By the Cross, Jesus Christ redeems those who believe, purchasing us at a great cost, rescuing us, and delivering us from the curse of the broken law and the sentence of eternal condemnation.

The Bible declares that Christ "redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13). Although He never sinned or broke the law, Christ willingly took our sins upon Himself and bore the curse in our place.

When we trust in Christ and His sacrificial work for us on the Cross, we are delivered and set free from all our sins.

***Have you received God's free gift of salvation?*** It is received by grace through faith, simply trusting that Christ died for your sins and rose again (1 Cor. 15:3-4; Eph. 2:8).

The Cross is the way to freedom and to heaven. Because of God's great love for us (Eph. 2:4-5), He sent the Lord Jesus Christ to pay for all our sins, and all that remains is for you to receive His gift of salvation. Believe the good news that Christ died for you and rose again, and eternal life is yours, life *forever free* from the condemnation and bondage of your sins.

—Pastor Kevin Sadler

1. "10 fascinating facts about the Liberty Bell," National Constitution Center, July 8, 2024, <https://constitutioncenter.org/blog/10-fascinating-facts-about-the-liberty-bell>.



# WHAT'S FOR SUPPER?

## First Steps in Understanding How to Understand the Bible

PASTOR DENNIS KISZONAS  
Guest Writer

As suppertime approaches at our house, I often wander into the kitchen while Barbara, my wife, is cooking our dinner, and I'm usually hungry. My question is often, "What's for supper?"

In this study we're going to ask the same question, but this time we're going to ask the Bible—"What's for supper?"—and we're going to see that God has given several different instructions in the Bible at different times about the food that He allowed His people to eat.

Our goal is not just to learn God's instructions about food in the Bible, but to get an understanding of how to understand the Bible. What we'll learn about food is applicable to many other questions we could ask of the Bible.

We've known Christians who *study* the Bible by standing the book up on its spine, then

carefully letting go and letting it fall open to any page at random. Then, with their eyes closed, they run their finger down the page. When it seems like it's the right moment, they open their eyes and read the verse that their finger landed on. That becomes their verse for the day, or their verse for guidance, or their inspiration for the moment.

That's one method of Bible *study* that's sure to leave a Christian in a state of total confusion.

God wants us to have an understanding of His Word. The Apostle Paul often prayed for the believers that he was writing to, and one of his repeated prayers was that God would enlighten the eyes of their understanding, or that they would attain to the full assurance of understanding. If we don't understand the Word of God, how can we believe it?

This study is about one of the most basic principles of Bible study. It is about starting to understand how to understand the Bible. We'll start by looking at five men—five leading men in the Bible—and seeing what God said to them about food. The study is very simple, yet the implications are really profound in helping us to understand how to understand the Bible!

### WHAT GOD SAID TO ADAM ABOUT FOOD

The first man we need to look at is the first man, Adam. When God created Adam, He told him what he was allowed to eat:

**“And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat” (Gen. 1:29).**

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were vegetarians. God commanded that their food was to be the herbs and fruits, no meat. And this same instruction was repeated in the next chapter:

**“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:16-17).**

This instruction about food was very serious, since it was precisely in this area that Adam

sinned and plunged the entire human race into sin. He ate from the tree that he was told not to eat from!

I remember well the first time these verses came to my attention. I was in a Bible study group, meeting in someone's living room. I was a very new Christian, and I almost went into shock. God commanded that man should be a vegetarian, and I loved pizza—pepperoni, sausage, double cheese,



mushrooms. Now I thought I'd have to give up my favorite food...and I never knew that Christians were supposed to be vegetarians!

But someone in the Bible study group, older in the faith and wiser in the study of God's Word, said that I should wait until I had read everything the Bible says about food before I gave up my pizzas. So, before we give up pizza, let's read on....

### WHAT GOD SAID TO NOAH ABOUT FOOD

The next man we need to look at is Noah. There were about

1500 years between Adam and Noah. In Genesis 9, we read about Noah, after the great flood, receiving instructions from God concerning the food that he was allowed to eat:

**“And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat” (Gen. 9:1-4).**

Here God changes the menu for mankind. “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb.” God had spoken of the “every beast of the earth...every fowl of the air...and upon all the fishes of the sea,” and then He says to Noah that all these are to be his food, along with the herbs, that is the vegetables and grains. For the first 1500 years of the human race, God’s instructions were that man was to be a vegetarian; now, after the great flood, God changes the instructions and adds meat, fowl, and fish to the basic vegetable and grain menu.

I breathed a sigh of relief; after 1500 years, now pizza was OK. But there’s more....

## **WHAT GOD SAID TO MOSES ABOUT FOOD**

The next man we need to look at is Moses, the Law-giver of Israel. In Leviticus 11, God gave Moses and Aaron a complete chapter of some 47 verses detailing which animals the Israelites could eat, and which were “unclean” and forbidden.

**“And the Lord spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth” (Lev. 11:1-2).**

Among the forbidden animals was the swine (11:7) or pig, so pork was unclean. Forget about sausage or pepperoni pizza! The chapter lists the seafood that was allowed—fish with scales; and the seafood that was unclean—lobsters, shrimp, and clams. Also listed were birds that were unclean—eagles, vultures, and buzzards; even the insects that were allowed—the grasshopper, cricket, and locust were kosher and allowed to be eaten!

The chapter ends with this instruction:

**“This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten” (Lev. 11:46-47).**

Before we move on further, let’s review....

To Adam God said that his food was to be herbs and fruits. This instruction was in effect for about 1500 years.

Then to Noah God commanded that he and his descendants could eat every moving living thing: animals, fish and birds, meat, fowl and fish, along with the herbs. This instruction lasted about 1000 years.

In the Law of Moses, God again changed His instructions concerning food—at least for the nation of Israel. Only certain animals, fish, and birds were allowed to be eaten. The rest were unclean and not allowed for the Israelites to eat.

This instruction—the Law of Moses with its kosher and non-kosher food—was in effect throughout the rest of the Old Testament, and all throughout the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and on into the early chapters of the Book of Acts. This brings us to the next man we need to study, Peter.

### **WHAT GOD SAID TO PETER ABOUT FOOD**

In Acts 10 and 11, Peter received a startling revelation from the Lord concerning food. One day, Peter was hungry at about noon time. So while lunch was being prepared, Peter was up on a rooftop praying when he received a vision from the Lord.

**“...Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very**

**hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending upon him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven” (Acts 10:9-16).**



Something like a great white sheet descended from heaven in this vision, and in the sheet, Peter saw all kinds of animals, creeping things—insects, lizards, etc.—and birds. Some were kosher, but apparently many, perhaps most, were not kosher. God’s instruction to Peter was, “Rise...kill, and eat.” Peter was now allowed to eat any kind of meat, or fowl or insect, or other living thing.

Peter, though, protests and says to God, “Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.”

From this statement we learn that Peter had kept the kosher laws all his life. When the Lord was with the twelve apostles for those three years of His earthly ministry, the Lord and the twelve apostles never ate anything that wasn't kosher. And in Acts 10, more than a year after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord into heaven, Peter still was keeping the Law of Moses. He had never eaten anything in disobedience to Leviticus 11, which had been written by Moses about 1500 years before.

But now again, God was changing the command regarding food. Now God says to Peter, “What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” Now these animals, birds, and fish that were once “unclean” have been cleansed. Again, let's review....

God commanded Adam that he could eat herbs and fruits only. This instruction stood for some 1500 years.

Then God commanded Noah that he could eat any kind of

moving, living thing along with the vegetables. This instruction stood for about 1000 years.


Then God told Moses that only certain animals, birds, and seafood were allowed to be eaten by the Israelites. Moses' Law stayed in effect for some 1500 years until the middle of the Book of Acts.

This now brings us to the last man we want to look at, the Apostle Paul.

### **WHAT THE LORD JESUS SAID TO PAUL ABOUT FOOD**

What Peter didn't know in Acts 10, but we do, is that a new dispensation had begun in Acts 9. One chapter before Peter's vision, something even more startling happened one day on the road from Jerusalem to Damascus. The Lord Jesus Christ saved a man who later called himself the “chief of sinners,” and appointed him to become the Apostle Paul. And the Lord Jesus began to reveal to Paul a dispensation called the “dispensation of the grace of God” (Eph. 3:2).

Just as Moses was the Law-giver for Israel, and his dispensation included instructions about food, so also Paul became



**“One chapter before Peter's vision, something even more startling happened one day on the road from Jerusalem to Damascus.”**

the *dispenser* of the dispensation of the grace of God, and his dispensation also included instructions about food:

**“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer” (1 Tim. 4:1-5).**

Paul warns Timothy that in the latter times there will be teachers who will command the Christians to “abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.” Paul says that this will be evidence of a departure from the faith, for in the dispensation of the grace of God, “For every creature of God is good [meat, fowl, or seafood], and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.”

Today, for us living under grace (Rom. 6:14) and in this

dispensation given to Paul by the Lord from heaven (Eph. 3:2), all animals, birds, and seafood are allowed to be eaten as food. Nothing is forbidden. For the past 2000 years, ever since the dispensation of grace began in Acts 9 with the salvation of this new apostle, godly people have been permitted to eat sausage and pepperoni pizzas with double cheese and mushrooms!

### **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT “HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE?”**

Back to our purpose in this study...how do these things we have seen about God’s food laws in the Bible help us to understand how to understand the Bible?

First, we need to realize when we’re studying the Bible, that God has given different commands to different people at different times all throughout the Word of God. In regard to food, God gave one initial instruction to Adam and his descendants, then changed the instruction when He spoke to Noah. Then, again, a new set of instructions was given to Moses that was completely changed when God called the Apostle Paul and revealed the dispensation of grace to him for us today.



The instructions would even seem to contradict each other... to Adam: herbs and fruits only; then to Noah: any living thing (animal, bird or fish); then to Moses: only some living things; then for us: “every creature of God is good [for food].”

Unless we realize that God has different instructions for different people at different times, we would have to conclude that the Bible is full of contradictions.

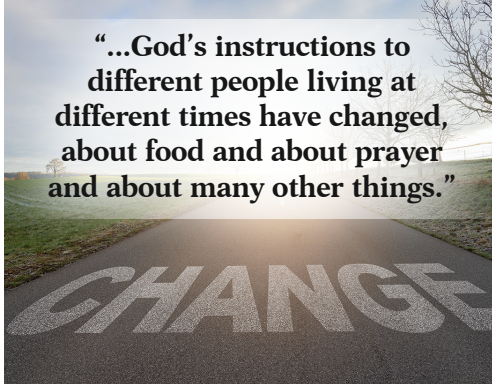
Second: When we study the Bible, we need to be careful to rightly divide the Word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15) to be sure that we are applying God’s instructions for us today, and not God’s instructions to someone living in another dispensation. Just dropping the Bible open and randomly putting our finger down on any verse is not “rightly dividing the Word of truth” and is a good way to become very confused about how to understand the Bible.

Of course, the instructions about food are only part of the Word of God. But many other teachings in the Bible also have to be studied “dispensationally.” For instance, the Lord’s teaching about prayer for us in the dispensation of grace is vastly different from what He gave the twelve apostles during His earthly ministry in Israel.

To Israel the Lord said, “If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you”

(John 15:7). Furthermore, “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” (Matt. 21:22; ).

Many today have tried to claim these prayer promises, only to be sadly disappointed when they didn’t work—they didn’t get “what ye will” or “whatsoever ye shall ask.” Some have even lost their faith in the Bible at this point. They tried the prayer promises for Israel and found that they didn’t work, and so concluded that the Bible isn’t true.



**“...God’s instructions to different people living at different times have changed, about food and about prayer and about many other things.”**

What they failed to realize is that God’s instructions to different people living at different times have changed, about food and about prayer and about many other things. When we want to know what to eat, or how to pray, under grace, we turn to the letters of the Apostle Paul. And when we do, we learn that even the Apostle Paul did not get everything that he asked for—see 2 Corinthians 12:8-9 for one good example, and there are a number of others.

Third, we see that a Bible teacher may be *biblical* and *scriptural*, but he will be wrong if he is not *dispensational*.

Biblical, in the sense that he is quoting Bible verses and passages, and teaching some portion of the Word of God and applying it to believers today. And scriptural, in the sense that he is quoting Scripture to prove his point. But if he is not dispensational, he will be teaching wrong doctrine for believers today.



Example: A preacher could easily preach that we should be vegetarians today—he could find several verses to base this doctrine on in the first few chapters of the Book of Genesis where the Lord commanded Adam to be a vegetarian. The preacher would be biblical and scriptural, but he would be wrong, because he wouldn't be rightly dividing the Word of truth. Yes, Genesis is God's Word, but not God's Word to us today!

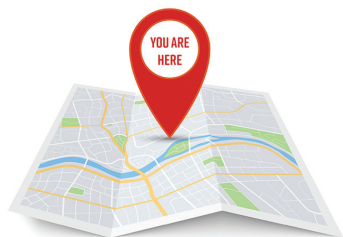
We live in a time of great confusion even among Bible believers and Bible teachers.

In some neighborhoods there's almost a church on every corner, and they're all preaching something different, yet they all have their verses in the Bible to prove that they are right and the others are wrong! And because they disagree about how to understand the Bible, and how to apply the Bible to us today, they are divided into thousands of different denominations and groups. We have seen in our simple study about foods in the Bible how it would be very easy to become confused—and then become divided from other Christians.

One church may be following Adam's instructions in Genesis 1 and 2. Another may focus on Noah's, or Moses', or Peter's, or Paul's—they would all have verses to prove that they were right, yet they would all disagree with each other, and none would be able to eat with the others!

We've been focusing on only this one area, foods, but the same principle applies to many doctrines in the Bible: salvation, eternal security, prayer, speaking in tongues, healings and healers, the Lord's coming again, and many other areas of teaching. All of these areas of doctrine must be studied, not only biblically and scripturally, but also dispensationally “rightly dividing the Word of truth”—if we really want to understand what God's instructions are for us today.

Here is the simple answer to all the confusion that we find today in the Body of Christ, and the only way of having unity among all the members of the Body of Christ. We need to realize that the Lord Jesus Christ saved a new apostle, the Apostle Paul, for a special purpose, to reveal to him a new program



## DISPENSATION OF GRACE

called the “dispensation of the grace of God” (Eph. 3:2). Here is the key that opens up the Scriptures to our understanding.

### PAUL'S LETTERS ONLY?


Does this mean that we only read Paul's letters in the Bible? Some, who first hear about studying the Bible dispensationally, draw the false conclusion that we should only be reading or studying Paul's letters today. Paul himself wrote to Pastor Timothy:

**“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16).**

The whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is the inspired, God-breathed, Word of God. We are commanded to

study the entire Bible because there are principles in every part of the Bible that teach us doctrine, or reprove us when we are disobedient. The whole Bible is profitable for our study and learning. But the way to get the profit out of the Bible is to study the Bible the way God said to study it, rightly divided (2 Tim. 2:15), recognizing that the Lord Jesus revealed from heaven the dispensation of grace to the Apostle Paul for us today. If we forget this basic principle, the more we study the Bible, the more confused we will become!

This has been a very simple study in the Bible that began with a simple question, “What's for supper?” Yet the principle that we've discovered is profound in helping us to start to understand how to understand the Bible.

As we have surveyed God's different instructions to different people at different times throughout the Bible, the answer to the question—What's for supper?—has seemed to be obvious. Yet, sad to say, most Christians today have never seen this principle in the Bible. We hope that our study together has been profitable to you, that you have not only seen something new or clearer in the Bible, but also will apply this simple Bible principle in your continuing study of God's Word, and that you will want to share it with others. 

**Location:**

*The Methodist Church  
of Blanchard*  
1101 N. Main Street  
Blanchard, Oklahoma

**Speaker:**

Pastor Kevin Sadler

**Conference Schedule:**

10:00 a.m.  
1:00 p.m.  
Q & A Time

For questions or more  
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# Transformed by Grace Regional Conference

*Sooner State Meetings*



OKLAHOMA

July 25, 2026



## Mississippi Grace Conference

August 22-23, 2026

**Location:**

Holiday Inn Express & Suites  
1612 McClure Cove  
Tupelo, Mississippi  
Hotel Phone: 662-620-8184

**Speakers:**

Pastor Kevin Sadler  
*And others*

**Theme:**

“Growing Up in Him—  
Speaking the Truth in Love”

For more information contact

PASTOR JOHN SMITH  
Email: sjohn5358@gmail.com  
Phone: 662-706-5757

# AMERICA:

## *World's Greatest Experiment*

CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.  
The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

PASTOR J. C. O'HAIR (1876-1954)  
Grace Author and Preacher

“When in the course of human events...” Thus began the American Declaration of Independence. Signed by the delegates to the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia, July 4, 1776, it is still one of the most important documents in world history.

It started a new nation, the first independent republic since that of ancient Greece. It proclaimed that “all men are created equal” and have the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” It opposed tyranny of government over people, stoutly holding that all civil authority should “derive from the people.”

The colonists themselves, however, began to have fearsome questions. Could such a nation long endure? They had fought a war to cast off one tyranny and were wary of establishing a home variety of their own. But how to form a strong government, and still hang on to their hard won liberties?


After five years of debate the delegates met in Philadelphia in 1787 to form a constitution. The idea of such a document was without precedent at that time. It was finished and signed on September 17, 1787, and ratified by the states in 1789. The first Amendments were known as the “Bill of Rights.” John Adams called the Constitution “The greatest single effort of national deliberation that the world has ever seen.”

The Great American Experiment has stood the test of time. But can it continue to stand, against the destructive pressures that eat away at nations today? Will “government of the people, for the people” soon perish from the earth?

The answer depends upon the American People “under God,” as Lincoln said. The American colonies were largely settled

by God-fearing people, who came from Europe in quest of a place where they could worship God and serve Him in freedom. God poured out His rich blessing upon them because they honored Him. “Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed” (1 Sam. 2:30). Liberty itself comes from God. “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD” (Psa. 33:12). As Abraham Lincoln resolved, in his immortal Gettysburg address, “that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.” We have wandered far from the God of our fathers. Perhaps the “Great Emancipator” did not realize it, but he put his finger upon the only way back to God—by a new birth!

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). This is the spiritual rebirth that every one of us needs, of God. But God wants to give us His gift of eternal life, for “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).

But this great gift is only available through God’s Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who paid for our sins with His own blood on the cross of Calvary. “But as many as received Him [Christ], to them gave He power to become the sons of God” (John 1:12). “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:36). “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). He wants to be your Savior—today.<sup>1</sup> 

1. <https://paulsgracemessage.blogspot.com/2014/10/america-worlds-greatest-experiment.html>.



# SPOTLIGHT

## on Grace Churches

### GRACE BIBLE MINISTRY CHURCH

**PASTOR JOHN SMITH**

#### **Online Service Times:**

Online Zoom Sunday Worship Service—10:00 a.m. (CT)

Online Zoom Wednesday Bible Study—10:00 a.m. (CT)

Online Zoom Friday Bible & Book Read—10:00 a.m. (CT)

If you would like to join in this online ministry, please contact Pastor John Smith at: [sjohn5358@gmail.com](mailto:sjohn5358@gmail.com)

# AT HAND?

PASTOR KEVIN J. SADLER

*BBS President/Editor*



When John the Baptist came on the scene, he said that the Kingdom was “at hand”: “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is AT HAND” (Matt. 3:1-2).

Following His baptism by John the Baptist, when the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ began, He said that the Kingdom was “at hand”: “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is AT HAND” (Matt. 4:17).

When the Lord sent out His twelve apostles, He told them to proclaim that the Kingdom was “at hand”: “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is AT HAND” (Matt. 10:7).

In the original Greek, the single word translated, “is at hand,” means to approach, to draw nigh, to come near. The earthly kingdom of Christ was fast approaching and drawing nigh in the days of John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, and His disciples.

It was near because the forerunner of the King had arrived to announce the King’s arrival and to prepare the way before Him. Then the King of that kingdom arrived, and He taught Israel how to live in view of that coming kingdom, prepared Israel to go through the Tribulation, and explained His Second Coming to establish His kingdom at the end of the Tribulation. And the King gave Israel the teachings that she was to follow and live by under His reign.

Two thousand years have passed since then and that earthly kingdom still hasn’t started. Why? How could it have been “at hand” back then but still not have happened yet today? The Lord Jesus surely meant what He said, and He cannot lie (Num. 23:19).

According to the prophetic timeline, the literal Kingdom was indeed “at hand.” Centuries earlier, the angel Gabriel spoke to Daniel the prophecy of 69 weeks of 7 years—483 years—extending “unto the Messiah the Prince” (Dan. 9:25), which is precisely this point in Israel’s history, the four Gospel accounts, and Christ’s earthly ministry. After the Messiah would be “cut off” (v. 26) at

the Cross, one final week would remain to be fulfilled (v. 27), referring to the seven-year Tribulation.

The 70 weeks will be completed “to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy” (v. 24). This refers to the everlasting righteousness of the Messiah’s kingdom, and the anointing of the Holy of Holies in the millennial temple by the blessed presence of the Holy One of Israel.


How near was the Kingdom? First, there was the *three-and-a-half-year* earthly ministry of Christ. Second, due to her rejection of Christ, *one additional year* was to be given to Israel to accept her Messiah, according to the Lord’s parable of the barren fig tree (Luke 13:6-9). This was the year of the Holy Spirit’s ministry following His coming to Israel on the Day of Pentecost. Third, when Stephen was stoned, Israel’s rejection of her Messiah was complete. Before he was killed, Stephen saw Christ standing at the right hand of the Father (Acts 7:56) and ready to pour out His judgment on Israel and the world in the *seven-year* Tribulation.

When you do the math—3 1/2 years plus 1 year plus 7 years—the Kingdom in those days was about 11-12 years from being established. Thus, the Kingdom being described as “at hand” was accurate. It was very near. Israel was told it was “at hand” by John the Baptist, Christ, and His disciples, because the Kingdom was legitimately being offered and it literally was drawing near in those days.



## So why didn't the kingdom take place?

When Israel stumbled at the Stumblingstone and fell (Rom. 9:32-33), instead of bringing in the prophesied Tribulation followed by the Millennial Kingdom, God postponed these events, temporarily suspending His prophesied program. Israel fell in Acts 7, and then in Acts 9, Christ, by His grace, saved Saul of Tarsus, the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15) and called him to be the Apostle of the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13). Then began a “dispensation of the grace of God” (Eph. 3:1-2), a program with the Gentiles, that had never before been revealed (v. 9).

For the last 2000 years, mankind has been living in the dispensation of grace. This dispensation will close with Christ’s return at the Rapture to catch away to heaven the Church, the Body of Christ (Rom. 11:25). At that time, the Kingdom will again be “at hand.” Following the Rapture, the seven-year Tribulation will take place. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will return to Israel at the Second Coming. After the Second Coming, Christ will establish His literal kingdom on the earth. 



# Father *to* Father

The father is to be the spiritual leader of the home. God would have fathers set the pace, take the lead, and be the point man, providing spiritual leadership for the family. God wants children to learn from their father's example of what it means to love the Lord. As a father, if we want our children to love God and know that God loves them, we ourselves need to love God. Fathers need to prioritize their personal relationship with the Lord and their own spiritual growth to set a proper example for their family.

“Gospel musician Hilding Halverson tells the following story about overhearing a conversation between his son and two other little boys:

“When my small boy was playing with his buddies in the backyard I overheard them talking one day—and the conversation was, amusingly, one of those ‘my dad can whip your dad’ routines. One boy said proudly, ‘My dad knows the mayor of our town!’ Another said, ‘That’s nothing—my dad knows the governor of our state!’ Wondering what was coming next in the program of bragging, I heard my son say, ‘That’s nothing—my dad knows God!’ I slipped away from my place of eavesdropping with tears on my cheeks. On my knees in my room, I prayed earnestly and gratefully, ‘O God, I pray that my boy will always be able to say, My dad knows God.’”<sup>1</sup>

Our children observe us closely. God wants our children to know that we know Him. To bring our children up in the nurture and admonition of *the Lord*, we need to know the Lord and His Word. David Mains said it well: “I have come to the conclusion that the best way I can improve my children’s spiritual lives is to continually improve my own.”

**“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4).**

—Pastor Kevin Sadler

1. “Teach Your Children,” contributed by Clyde Grimes, Sermon Central, November 28, 2017, <https://sermoncentral.com/sermons/teach-your-children-clyde-grimes-sermon-on-parenting-53505?page=5>.

# Question Box



“What is the meaning of Revelation 22:16?”

**“I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star” (Rev. 22:16).**

The Lord told the Apostle John that the message, testimony, and prophecy of Revelation was for “the churches,” meaning the seven churches in Asia Minor (Rev. 1:11). Revelation was written for the direct benefit of these seven future Kingdom churches who will go through the Tribulation. The book was *not* written to the Church, the Body of Christ, which is “delivered...from the wrath to come” (1 Thes. 1:10), referring to our deliverance from the Tribulation via the Rapture.

The Lord told John, “I am the Root and the Offspring of David.” Christ is, at the same time, both the ancestor (“Root”) and descendant (“Offspring”) of King David. David’s beginning came from Christ. As God, Christ is David’s Root and Creator. As man, Christ is David’s greatest and prophesied Descendant. In His earthly ministry, the Lord baffled the Pharisees with this thought of the Seed of David being David’s Lord (Matt. 22:41-46). As the Root and Offspring of David, Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the prophecies made to Israel regarding her King that would descend from David’s line (2 Sam. 7:12-13). It is He Who will establish God’s earthly throne and Kingdom forever in accordance with the Davidic covenant.

In this verse, the Lord Jesus also calls Himself “the bright and morning Star.” Numbers 24:17 prophesies of the Messiah, “...there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel.” Jesus Christ is that Star out of Jacob (Israel), and the Scepter out of Israel.

The appearance of the bright morning star heralds the dawn of a new day on the earth. When Christ, the Light of the world, appears at His Second Coming, it will herald the glorious dawn of a new day which is Israel’s great hope: the Lord’s long-awaited reign on the earth.

—*Pastor Kevin Sadler*



# The Unjust Steward

PASTOR JIM TOLLAR  
*BBS Business Manager*

In His earthly ministry the Lord Jesus Christ often used parables which were short, simple stories to illustrate spiritual truths about the **coming Millennial Kingdom and how to enter**. The Parable of the Unjust Steward is one of the more interesting parables because the steward is commended for being wise (Lk. 16:8), but at the same time, the Lord used it to show the disciples (including Judas) and the Pharisees (v. 14) that those who are unfaithful with worldly wealth will not enter the coming Millennial Kingdom.

## UNJUST BUT WISE?

**“And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods” (Luke 16:1).**

In those days a steward was a person that took care of his master’s household and

financial affairs. When you think of a steward, it helps to think of the classic movie from 1959, *Ben Hur*. In the movie, Judah Ben Hur had a faithful steward (servant) by the name of Simonides, who managed all of Judah’s estate and finances. In this parable, however, the steward was not like the faithful Simonides. Also, he had a problem because someone told his rich boss that he had wasted his goods. Although we’re not told of the specific infraction[s], his master’s wealth was no doubt handled carelessly as the next verse illustrates.

**“And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward” (Luke 16:2).**

Having heard the news that his goods were wasted, the rich man confronted his steward and wanted an accounting of his business dealings. Not being



“...ALL the believer’s sin debts have been paid in full...”

able to give a positive report of his work, the steward was immediately fired from his position. Now he was in trouble—no job and he also had no place to live, since stewards often lived in their master’s house! So, what was he going to do? Often in high pressure situations, like losing a job, people talk to themselves to organize their thoughts, and that’s exactly what he did.

**“Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses” (Luke 16:3-4).**

Having his stewardship taken away, the steward needed to devise a plan for his future. The steward could not do manual labor, perhaps thinking it was beneath him or it’s possible he just didn’t have any manual labor skills. Also, he was too ashamed to beg (cf. Lk. 16:20). With no alternative career options, he devised a plan to make friends so he’d have a place to live once he was “out on the streets.” Wisely, he proposed what we

might call a “debt forgiveness plan” to those that were in debt to his former master.

**“So he called every one of his lord’s debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore” (Luke 16:5-7).**

He wanted to quickly settle the debts, so he called on two debtors who owed large amounts of oil and wheat. Both commodities were very valuable and were used as a method of payment. For example, when Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem, he paid Hiram yearly for his services with these items (1 Kings 5:11). Oil was also used for cooking food (Ex. 29:2), lighting (Ex. 27:20), anointing (Ex. 29:7), and even for injuries (Lk. 10:33-34). The Greek words translated as “measures” in verses 6 and 7 are different Greek words. Verse 6 (*batos*)

refers to a **liquid** measure and verse 7 (*koros*) refers to a **dry** measure. The first debtor owed 100 measures of oil (600-900 gallons of oil), and the steward reduced the amount owed by 50% to 50 measures (300-450 gallons). The second debtor owed 100 measures of wheat (600-1,100 bushels of wheat), and that was reduced by 20% to 80 measures (480-800 bushels). This was quite a reduction for these debtors, although they still had to pay something. *But today as members of the Body of Christ—isn't it a great spiritual blessing that ALL the believer's sin debts have been paid in full by the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ* (2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:13)?

Now you'd think the master would've been angry that his former steward had collected less than what was owed, but we read,

**“And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light” (Luke 16:8).**

The rich man must have been impressed with his former steward because he commended him for being wise. The question is though, what made him wise in the eyes of his former boss? By making friends among the debtors, he now had places to live (Lk. 16:4). That's why the Lord Jesus ended the parable with the statement, *“for the children*

*of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light”* (v. 8). The Lord Jesus did not condone the actions of the unjust steward but used this illustration to show that he was wise (meaning prudent or sensible) to **quickly prepare for his future.**



With the Millennial Kingdom at hand (Matt. 4:17; Mk. 1:15), many in Israel, including the religious leaders, **were not prepared for their eternal future**, while the unsaved (Gentile “dogs”) showed more foresight in planning for their worldly future than those who were meant to be *“the children of light”* to other nations (cf. Isa. 60:3; Jn. 12:36). A good question to ask yourself is: Are you ready for your **eternal future**, have you trusted the Lord Jesus Christ alone for your salvation?

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN?**

**“And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations” (Luke 16:9).**

Maybe you're wondering, how would they "make to yourselves friends of the wealth of unrighteousness?" The answer, **by forgiving the monetary or other debts that were owed them.** The Pharisees and the other religious leaders were unforgiving (Matt. 23:23; Lk. 7:39-43; 11:42) and were very greedy and dishonest when it came to money. This same chapter tells us that, "...the Pharisees...who were covetous" (v. 14).

Another example of their greed is found in Matthew 15:4-6 where they twisted the Law of Moses to accept gifts from the common people that should've gone to the parents instead (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16)! The excuse being, since the gift was for God, it wasn't necessary to honor your parents according to the Law of Moses.

The Lord was challenging the leaders and others in Israel to put away greed along with showing mercy and forgiveness so when they "fail" (cease or die), they would be received into **everlasting habitations**—the Millennial Kingdom. Remember that forgiving others (Matt. 6:12,14-15) and selling all (Lk. 12:33; 18:22) were requirements to enter the kingdom, and the Pharisees and others needed to prepare for their eternal future by forgiving and being merciful to others in faith.

Now when the subject of forgiveness is mentioned in Scripture, it is important to

remember dispensational distinctions. Under the kingdom program, forgiveness was required to enter the kingdom. *Today, though, the Lord Jesus Christ, through the Apostle Paul, instructs us to forgive others as God's already forgiven the believer, but it is not a requirement for salvation* (Eph. 4:30-32).



## FAITHFUL VS. UNFAITHFUL

This parable also provides another lesson—an example of how NOT to be like the unjust steward. The Lord Jesus continued,

**“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?” (Luke 16:10-11).**

In these verses, faithfulness is contrasted with unfaithfulness. When it came to money matters, faithfulness with earthly wealth meant forgiving debts owed (v. 9) and selling all to follow the Lord Jesus,

just like the apostles (Lk. 5:28; 18:28). Those “*faithful in that which is least*” (faithful with earthly wealth) will be “*faithful also in much*” (faithful with eternal riches). But he that is “*unjust in the least*” (earthly wealth) will also be unjust also in much (eternal riches). Besides the unjust steward from this parable who was not faithful with his master’s assets, Judas, who betrayed the Lord, is also an example of someone not faithful with worldly wealth, as we read about him in John 12:6, “...not that he cared for the poor; but because **he was a thief**, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.”

The key point is that the faithful will enter the Millennial Kingdom and will be rewarded with true riches. In another parable about faithful and unfaithful servants, we read in Luke 19:16-17, “*Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.*” However, later in the same chapter, when an

unfaithful servant returned with the nobleman’s pound (vv. 20-26), we read in verse 27, “*But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.*” Matthew 25:30 explains what happens to unfaithful servants, “*And cast ye the **unprofitable servant** into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*” Instead of an entrance into the Millennial Kingdom, it would be an eternity in the Lake of Fire, forever separated from God. The Lord Jesus explained further,

“**And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?**” (Luke 16:12).

Everything belongs to God. Abram called the LORD “...*the possessor of heaven and earth*” (Gen. 14:22). King David wrote, “*The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein*” (Psa. 24:1). The problem was that those in Israel with material wealth were **not faithful** with what God had given them, and were in fact, greedy for more. If they were not faithful

“...each member of the Body of Christ will have to give an account of their stewardship at the Bema Seat.”

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## The JUDGMENT SEAT of CHRIST

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with what the Lord had given, then true riches promised to the children of the covenant (Acts 3:25), would not be given to them.

### WHOM TO SERVE?

**“No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Luke 16:13).**

In the kingdom program, with salvation at stake, a choice must be made. Much like in the final days of Moses when he challenged Israel about serving or not serving God (Deut. 30:15-20), the Lord Jesus challenged them to choose between serving for the world’s wealth, which was temporary and led to eternal judgment (Matt. 25:30), or following and serving Him to inherit

true riches in the Millennial Kingdom. We must remember that this parable and others used by the Lord were written directly to the nation of Israel, but we (the Body of Christ) can learn some practical lessons for today. Though salvation is not the issue, each member of the Body of Christ will have to give an account of their stewardship at the Bema Seat (Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10 cf. Lk. 16:2).

Believers should choose to put God first and serve Him as Paul wrote in Romans 12:1, *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”* A good question to ask ourselves every day is this: *Are we faithful with the message God has entrusted to us, both in doctrine and practice* (Eph. 3:1-12 cf. 1 Cor. 4:1-2)? 

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# BBS Letter Excerpts



## **From Illinois:**

(Responding to *our conference ministry*) “Pastor Kevin, It was so great to see you and your wife [at our conference]. I love your preaching and your corny jokes.... You both are truly a blessing to me. Praying for you, and for BBS!”

## **From North Carolina:**

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace*) “Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, thank you for your teachings on *Transformed by Grace* on channel 376 DirectTV @ 6:00 p.m. We love it.”

## **From Florida:**

(Responding to *Berean Searchlight*) “My husband and I are so grateful for all the efforts to produce this publication of inestimable value. What a blessing. May God continue to bless this ministry.”

## **From Our Inbox:**

(Responding to *Berean Searchlight*) “Thank you for the *Berean Searchlight*, they are such a blessing to me. Please keep them coming. Thank you again.”

## **From Pennsylvania:**

(Responding to *Daily Transformation* “Causing Us to Triumph”) “Thank You Lord Jesus for the strength and courage You give me to lead many lost souls to the Throne of Grace.”

## **From Our Inbox:**

(Responding to *The Timeline of Paul’s Ministry*) “I have learned so much from your pamphlet. Thank you.”

## **From Missouri:**

“A great big thanks to all of you for the hard work that you do.”

## **From Colorado:**

(Responding to *Grace Study Bible* and *Transformed by Grace*) “So happy to hear things are coming along for the *Grace Study Bible*, especially the large print...I have enclosed two checks for the Bible and another for *Transformed by Grace*. I pray donations from us all will meet the costs for BBS.”

## **From California:**

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace*) “Your teaching is a blessing. I am an 80-year-old Christian that knew nothing about rightly dividing the Word of truth or dispensationalism. In all my years I never heard one sermon about that subject. Praise God that two years ago I saw a message on YouTube (not my favorite but God took care of me) about rightly dividing the Word of truth. It hit me like a freight train. It solved all my conflicts that I had with Matthew, Acts, Hebrews, James, etc. God richly blessed me with your ministry. Thank you.”

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by Paul M. Sadler

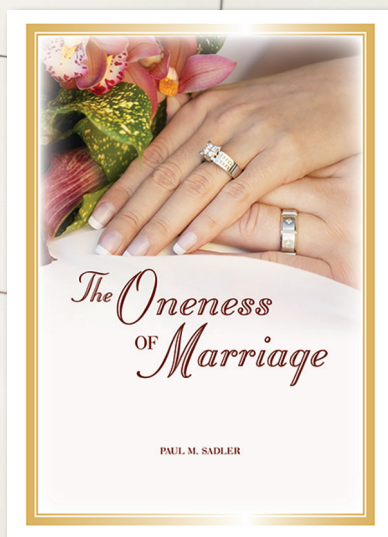
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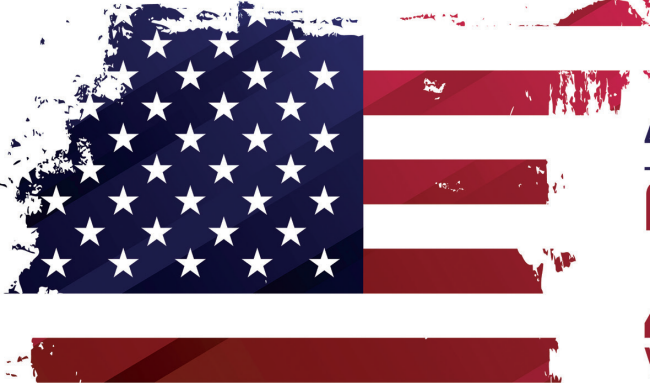
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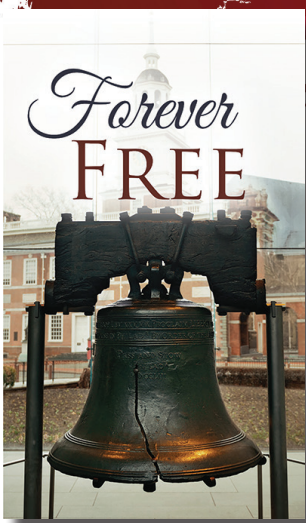


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**Expansion of Transformed by Grace:** We will soon be extending the outreach of our program, *Transformed by Grace*, to be seen in additional locations and on new stations. As part of this expansion, we plan to add a Sunday broadcast, providing another consistent opportunity each week for viewers to tune in and be encouraged by God's Word rightly divided. Please watch upcoming issues of the *Searchlight*, where we will share detailed information about these new times, stations, and viewing options.

**Berean Searchlight Scripture Index:** A very helpful resource on the BBS website is the Berean Searchlight Scripture Index. If you are ever struggling with a particular Bible verse, you can easily look it up in this index, and it will display every *Searchlight* issue from the past 27 years that references that verse. Even more convenient, each result includes a direct link that takes you to the exact issue and page where the verse appears. You can access this valuable tool at [bereanbiblesociety.org/berean-searchlight/scripture-index/](http://bereanbiblesociety.org/berean-searchlight/scripture-index/).

**Fellowship Request:** Anna Spedaliere in Laval, Quebec, Canada (near Montreal), is looking for fellowship with like-minded grace believers in her area. She is hopeful that there is a Bible study she could attend or even individual saints nearby that she could meet or visit with. If you are anywhere near Anna, please contact her at [annaspedaliere@sympatico.ca](mailto:annaspedaliere@sympatico.ca).

**Pastor Needed:** *Grace Bible Church* in West Allis, Wisconsin, is in need of a pastor to lead and feed their assembly the truth of God's Word, rightly divided. If you are interested, please contact the chairman of their elder board, Mark Kiel, at [mkiel48@gmail.com](mailto:mkiel48@gmail.com) or by calling (414) 541-4252.

## Upcoming Conferences to put on your calendar!

*BBF Summer Conference*  
June 21-25, Tipp City, OH

*Sooner State Meetings*  
July 25, Blanchard, OK

*Mississippi Grace Conference*  
August 22-23, Tupelo, MS



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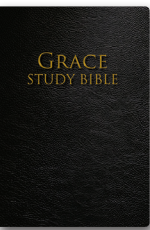


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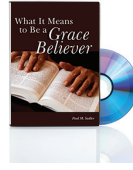
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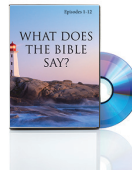


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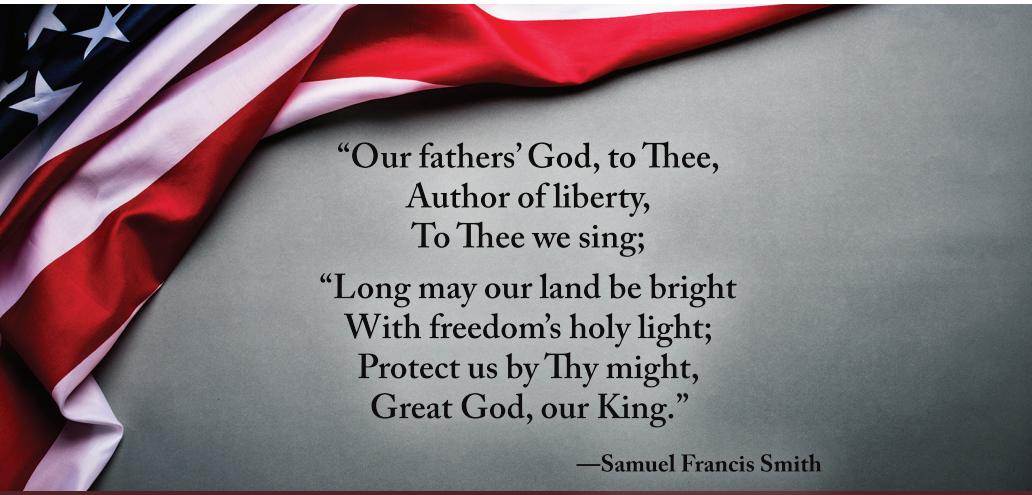
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