The Berean Searchlight™

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

November 2026



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This month's cover features Point Atkinson Lighthouse, in West Vancouver, Canada.

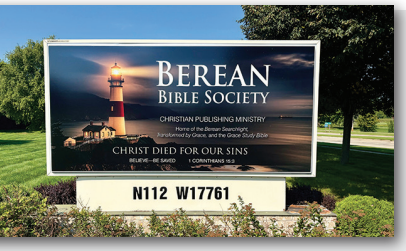
The **Purpose** of the *Berean Bible Society* is to help you understand, enjoy, and apply the Bible. The **Mission** of BBS is to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ by proclaiming the whole counsel of God according to the revelation of the Mystery. Our **Goals** are to *evangelize* the lost, to *educate* the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

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A Note from the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Founder of *Berean Bible Society*, Pastor Cornelius R. Stam, often encouraged *Berean Searchlight* readers to use Christmas as an opportunity to get gospel literature into the hands of the lost. With that same mindset of using holidays as opportunities to share the gospel, one of my goals has been to make gospel tracts available for holidays throughout the year.

This fall, we worked to get holiday gospel tracts into print for Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Our new Thanksgiving tract, *The Value of "Thanks,"* is on page 4 for you to read. Then in next month's *Searchlight*, we will print our New Year's tract, *Your Days Are Numbered*. The tract is based on Psalm 90 and its reminder of the brevity of life. To order these tracts, please see page 28 for ordering information.

In the past, my father, Paul M. Sadler, wrote a tract called *An Epitaph*. This tract has been commonly shared with trick-or-treaters on Halloween. This past year, we printed a tract called *Forever Free* for the Fourth of July, in time for the commemoration of the United States' 250th anniversary. A few years ago, we wrote a tract for Easter: *He's Alive*, which invites the reader to see the miracle, power, and truth of Christ's resurrection, and to believe it. Before that, we wrote a Christmas tract called *Christmas Times*, which plays off Charles Dickens' novel "A Christmas Carol," sharing the gospel by looking at Christmas past, present, and future.

To sum up, we now have gospel tracts for Easter, the Fourth of July, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Each of these holidays provides a natural opportunity to reach out to others and place into their hands the good news of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

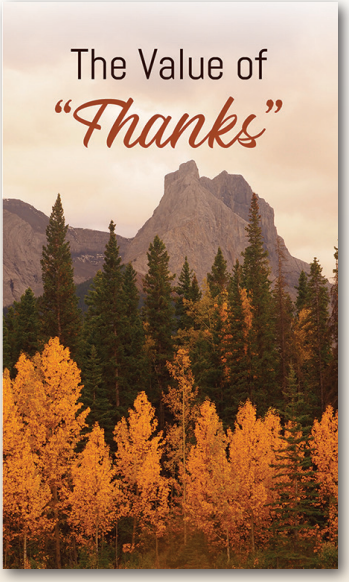
A good gauge of the spiritual health of the Church and local churches is the priority they place on evangelism. This is because "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15). As we walk in close fellowship with Him and grow to reflect His heart and priorities, His concern for the lost becomes our concern as well. Through Him and by His grace, may we reach out as "ambassadors for Christ," proclaiming God's gracious appeal: "we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

Grace and peace,

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.



"Rudyard Kipling was a great British poet, novelist and short story writer in the late 19th and early 20th centuries….

"Hoping for a story, a newspaper reporter once approached him and said, 'Mr. Kipling. I just read that somebody calculated that the money you made from your writings amounts to over $100 a word.'

"Kipling raised his eyebrows and said, 'Really, I certainly wasn't aware of that.'

"The reporter reached into his pocket and pulled out a $100 bill and gave it to Kipling and cynically said, 'Here's a $100 bill Mr. Kipling. Now give me one of your $100 words.'

"Kipling looked at the $100 bill for a moment, took it, folded it up, put it in his pocket and said, 'Thanks.'"[1]

"Thanks" really is a valuable word. And according to the Bible, it is a word that ought to characterize our relationship with God: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord…" (Psa. 92:1).

In everyday life, we thank people when they show us kindness. If someone holds the door for us, gives us a gift, or does us a favor, we naturally say, "Thank you." Our thanks acknowledges their kindness and expresses our appreciation for what they have done.

If it is right to thank others for the kindness they show us, how much more should we thank God for all He has done for us? No one has given us more, and no one deserves our gratitude more than God.

James 1:17 tells us, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." Every good thing we have ultimately comes from God. The food on our tables, the air we breathe, and the life we enjoy are all gifts from His hand (Acts 17:25).

The greatest thing God has done for us, however, is what He accomplished at the Cross. Jesus Christ bore all our sins and paid their penalty in full (2 Cor. 5:21). Three days later, He rose from the dead. Through Christ's death and resurrection, God has completely provided for our eternal salvation.

When we simply believe that "Christ died for our sins…and that He rose again" (1 Cor. 15:3-4), we are saved and given eternal life as a free gift (Rom. 6:23).

This Thanksgiving, as we consider all that God has given us, may we remember His greatest gift—salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ—which gives us the assurance of heaven! One valuable word that should continually rise from our grateful hearts to God is "Thanks!"

—Pastor Kevin Sadler

1. Ken Weliever, "Word of the Week: Thanks," ThePreachersWord, November 21, 2016, https://thepreachersword.com/2016/11/21/word-of-the-week-thanks-2/.



THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER

(Taken from episode #154 of Transformed by Grace)

PASTOR KEVIN J. **SADLER**
BBS President/Editor

An Unwanted Endorsement

"And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

"The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

"And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour" (Acts 16:16-18).

When Paul came to Philippi, he met Lydia and other women who had gathered for prayer on the Sabbath by a river outside the city (Acts 16:13-14). Paul shared the gospel of grace with them, and Lydia heard the message and believed, along with all her household.

In verse 16, we see that Paul again went to the riverside place of prayer. As he and his companions went, they were met by a girl who was "possessed with a spirit of divination," or a demon. With the gospel of grace now being proclaimed, souls being saved, and a new work for Christ taking root in Philippi, the forces of evil quickly moved to oppose and hinder the work.

Translated literally from the original Greek, "a spirit of divination" is "a spirit of Python." Python was the serpent of Greek mythology associated with Delphi, the site of the famous oracle where a priestess supposedly delivered prophetic messages while in a trance. According to Greek mythology, the god Apollo slew Python at Delphi, after which the name Python became closely associated with Apollo and the oracle there. Because of this connection, the name Python came to be associated with divination and those who claimed they could foretell the future.

This girl who met Paul was demon-possessed and practiced fortune-telling. Psychics and fortune-telling have long been profitable businesses. As such, this fortune-telling girl brought her masters "much gain," as people came to her seeking answers about the future and guidance concerning the uncertainties and troubles of life.

As the damsel met and followed Paul and his co-workers, she cried out, identifying who they were—"servants of the most high God"—and what they were doing—"which shew unto us the way of salvation" (v. 17).

The girl followed Paul and his companions for "many days" (v. 18), repeatedly crying out after them with the same words. Paul endured her interruptions for a time, but it reached a point where Paul was "grieved," or deeply troubled and displeased by what was taking place.



Paul then turned and faced the situation head-on. With one authoritative sentence directed to the demon, he ordered, "I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And the demon obeyed, as Luke tells us: "And he came out the same hour" (v. 18).

The persistent declaration of this demon-possessed girl posed at least four problems for Paul and the ministry of the gospel.

First, her declaration could have given the impression that Paul and his companions were associated with the pagan religion and false gods of Greek culture.

Second, with the truth being promoted by a demon-possessed girl, she might speak the truth one minute, but a lie the next, with the unbelieving not knowing the difference.

Third, people were more likely listening to her than to Paul, and they were distracted from hearing the truth of the gospel.

Fourth, because her masters were exploiting her for financial gain, her constant promotion of Paul's ministry could have created the impression that Paul was using her for gain as well, perhaps even working in cahoots with her masters.

For these reasons, Paul could not allow a demon-possessed girl to continue to follow him day after day while he preached the gospel in Philippi. Thus, he commanded the demon to depart and released her from its dreadful bondage.

The Price of Doing Right

"And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and

Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,

"And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

"And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

"And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

"And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

"Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks" (Acts 16:19-24).

When the demon left the young woman, it took with it her ability to tell fortunes and make money for her masters. The girl's masters cared nothing for her well-being; they cared only about the profit she brought them, so when they realized that their source of income was gone, they were enraged.

Out of their rage, these masters seized Paul and Silas and "drew" them into the marketplace. The sense of the Greek word translated as "drew" is that they forcibly dragged Paul and Silas through the streets to stand before the civil magistrates.

The masters of the woman who had been delivered from the demon were just as much under Satan's influence as the demon-possessed girl had been. They were pawns in his hand. Satan's subtle attempt to hinder the gospel had failed, so now he turned from deception to open hostility and violent persecution.



The marketplace to which the masters dragged Paul and Silas was a large, open-air public square in the heart of the city. Vendors sold their goods there, and it was also a center of civic life where public affairs and legal matters were transacted.

The accusations that the masters brought before the magistrates were calculated to stir up the magistrates and the crowd against Paul and Silas. In their anger against them, they falsely charged them, "being Jews," with troubling the city exceedingly and teaching unlawful religious customs (vv. 20-21).

These accusations quickly stirred up the crowd that had gathered. As verse 22 tells us, "And the multitude rose up together against them." The charges had their intended effect, inciting the people against Paul and Silas.

Moved by religious and racial prejudice, and influenced by the angry crowd that had risen against Paul and Silas, the magistrates acted rashly without properly investigating the charges. Paul and Silas were not even given an opportunity to defend themselves against the accusations.



Instead, "the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them" (v. 22) with rods (2 Cor. 11:25). The lictors, officers who attended the Roman magistrates, would have been summoned to carry out the punishment. Paul and Silas were stripped, restrained, and publicly beaten with rods, their backs brutally battered before the watching crowd in the marketplace.

Flogging among the Jews was limited to forty stripes per the Law of Moses (Deut. 25:2-3). But these were Gentiles, and they had no such law; thus, they "laid many stripes" (Acts 16:23) on Paul and Silas.

After this brutal beating, the lictors "cast them into prison." The word "cast" conveys the rough treatment Paul and Silas received. They were forcefully thrown and thrust into prison.

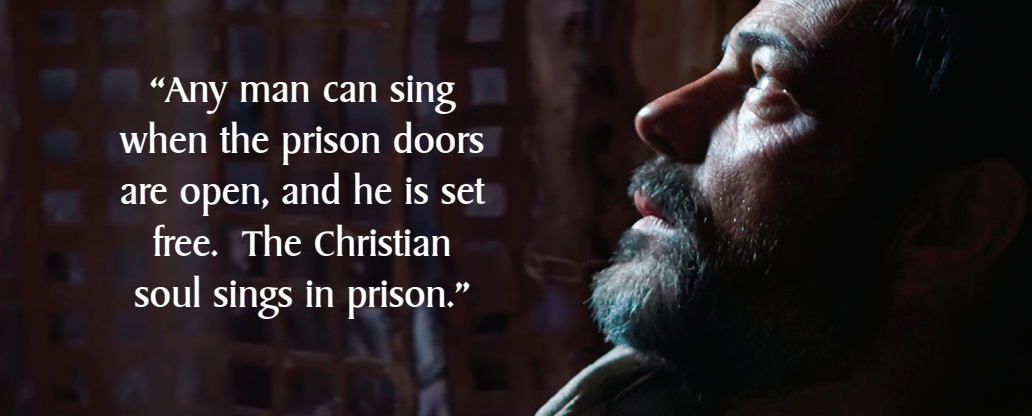
Then the jailer was charged "to keep them safely," that is, to guard Paul and Silas securely and make certain there was no possibility of their escape. Taking this command seriously, the jailer took Paul and Silas to the most secure part of the prison, "the inner prison," where they were again treated roughly, being "thrust"—same Greek word as "cast" in verse 23—or forcefully thrown into its dark confines.

The jailer then took an additional step to make Paul and Silas doubly secure, as he "made their feet fast in the stocks." Not only were they confined in the most secure part of the prison, but their feet were also firmly fastened so that they could not move around or attempt to escape.

The stocks worked in this way: "Two heavy pieces of timber would be opened, the legs of the prisoners stretched widely apart till their muscles began to hurt, and the timbers clamped shut. Clamped in such a spread-legged position they would be unable to walk, and they would be forced to lie with their backs or faces on the ground."[1]

A Midnight Miracle

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.



"And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

"And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

"But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here" (Acts 16:25-28).

Evening came, and then at midnight, unexpected sounds could be heard coming from their prison cell. They were not angry and bitter cries of pain or self-pity. Instead, Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises to God (v. 25 cf. Psa. 28:7; 42:8). In the middle of the night, battered and bound in the stocks, Paul and Silas were having a worship service!

This was the first Christian concert in Europe, and it brought down the house! Paul lived what he later taught the Philippians: "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).

As one commentator writes, "Any man can sing when the prison doors are open, and he is set free. The Christian soul sings in prison. I think that Paul would probably have sung a solo had I been Silas: but I nevertheless see the glory and grandeur of the Spirit that rises superior to all the things of difficulty and limitation."[2]

God heard Paul's and Silas's prayers and praises, "and the prisoners heard them" too (Acts 16:25). The prisoners listened as these two beaten and suffering men prayed and sang praises to God. They heard a powerful testimony of faith, as Paul and Silas still trusted and praised God after all they had suffered.

As the other prisoners listened to Paul and Silas praying and singing praises, "suddenly" the ground began to quake, and the prison itself began to shake. Then the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains were loosed (v. 26).

It was a miraculous and precise earthquake. It did not demolish the prison or harm those inside. Instead, it shook

the foundations, opened the prison doors, and released the prisoners' restraints, setting Paul, Silas, and the other prisoners free.

The jailer was sound asleep, but that does not mean he was neglecting his duty. We know other guards were on duty, because he called for a light from one of them (v. 29). When the earthquake awakened him and he saw "the prison doors open," he immediately assumed that the prisoners had escaped (v. 27). And under ordinary circumstances, that was a perfectly reasonable conclusion. When prison doors suddenly stand open, prisoners do not normally remain inside!



The jailer had been charged to "keep them safely" (v. 23), and death was the punishment for jailers if any of their prisoners escaped. For example, earlier in Acts, when Peter miraculously escaped prison, Herod had the keepers put to death (Acts 12:18-19). For this reason, believing that all the prisoners had fled, the Philippian jailer decided to take matters into his own hands. "He drew out his sword" (Acts 16:27) and was about to take his own life, choosing immediate death rather than facing the punishment and disgrace that awaited him.

We do not know for certain how Paul knew what the jailer was about to do. Perhaps he heard the sword being drawn, or maybe he caught a glimpse or shadow of the jailer in the darkness. Whatever the case, Paul realized what was happening and "cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here" (v. 28).

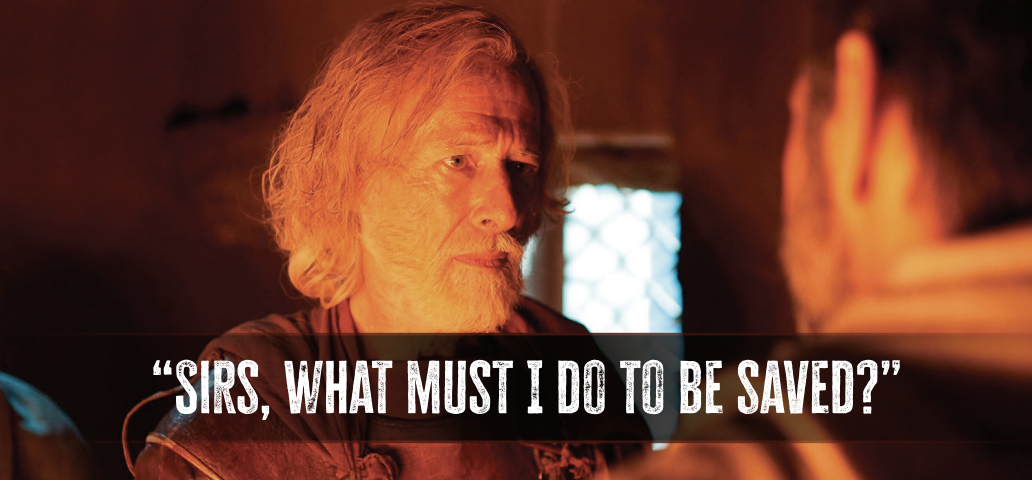
Notice that "all" the prisoners were still there. Every one of them was present and accounted for. Why they remained, Scripture does not tell us. Perhaps they stayed out of fear, but I believe the testimony of Paul and Silas made a powerful impression on them. They had listened to these two beaten men pray and sing praises to God. Then, when their own bonds were loosed, and the doors were opened, they followed the example of Paul and Silas and stayed right where they were.

One Question, One Answer

"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:29-31).



"SIRS, WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

The jailer called for a light, or torch, to be given to him. Holding the torch, he rushed into the prison. Moments earlier, the prison had been trembling from the earthquake; now the jailer was "trembling." Finding all the prisoners still there, just as Paul had said, he "fell down before Paul and Silas." Overcome with emotion, the jailer said nothing. Then he brought Paul and Silas out of the prison.

The jailer's thoughts were on life, death, and eternity at that moment. His brush with death and near suicide, the earthquake, the astonishing fact that none of the prisoners had escaped, and Paul's words that had spared his life—all of it came together to move him to ask an urgent question.

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

The jailer knew Paul and Silas possessed something he did not, and he was convinced they knew the answer that he desperately needed. "What must I do to be saved?" is the most important question anyone could ever ask. It is a question that each person needs to ask before they die.

The Philippian jailer asked, "What must I DO?" Paul and Silas answered that there was no work for him to do; he simply needed to believe: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Salvation is by grace through faith alone in Christ, not of works (Eph. 2:8-9 cf. Rom. 4:5; Titus 3:5). The gospel of the grace of God committed to Paul by Christ for this age tells us that we are saved from our sins and their eternal consequences in hell by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior (1 Cor. 15:3-4).

The words "and thy house" simply mean that the same promise of salvation applied to his household as well. They would not all be saved because the jailer believed; each of them, like him, would be saved by personally believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and trusting in Him alone for salvation.

And the Philippian jailer and his entire household believed in Christ and were saved. Verse 34 says that he "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Paul had first saved the jailer from *physical death* by calling out and stopping him from taking his own life. Then Paul showed him how to be saved from *spiritual and eternal death* by pointing him to the Lord Jesus Christ and sharing the way of salvation.

Sometimes, when I read Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, I like to think of the Philippian jailer. He was one of the believers at Philippi of whom Paul said, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you" (Phil. 1:3). Paul and the jailer definitely shared an unforgettable memory. We can imagine how special Paul's letter of joy would have been to this man who rejoiced in the grace of God that had saved him and his family simply by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. The next time you read Philippians, remember the Philippian jailer, and consider that one day, in glory, you will meet the man who asked Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

*Photo Attibution to Mike Trinklein of Boettcher+Trinklein Television Inc, has kindly donated images from the film *To the ends of the earth*. Used with permission from freebibleimages.com.

1. Gareth L. Reese, *New Testament History: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Acts* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1976), p. 586.

2. G. Campbell Morgan, *The Acts of the Apostles*, quoted on Precept Austin, "Acts 16 Commentary," https://www.preceptaustin.org/acts-16-commentary.

SPOTLIGHT
on Grace Churches

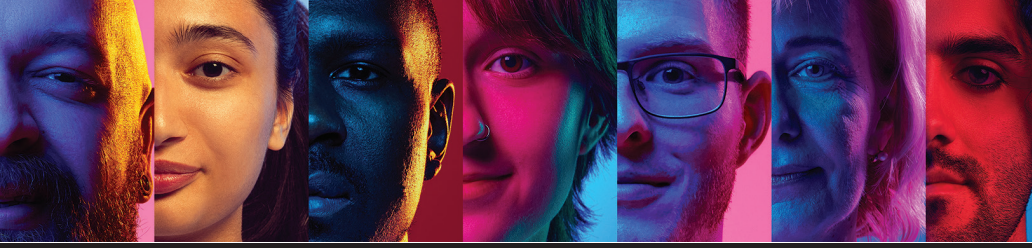
WEST VALLEY GRACE FELLOWSHIP
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PASTOR DAVID HAVARD

Service Time:
Worship Service—10:30 a.m.

Phone: 623-300-5888 | **Website:** westvalleygf.com

We are an independent, non-denominational, Bible-believing church.
We meet in the Quail Room of the Sun City West Foundation building.



7 Kinds of People God Commands You NOT to Help

PASTOR KEN **LAWSON**
BBS Board Member

One of the most fulfilling acts we can do as Christian people is helping others. God calls us to be "other"-directed, and many of His commands center around the privilege of helping those in need. God has a "soft spot" in His heart for the fatherless and widows, and often calls upon believers to help them (James 1:27 cf. Deut. 10:18; Isa. 1:17). Paul wrote to the early church, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

However, helping others demands wisdom and discernment. Otherwise, we may end up helping those whom God commands us to leave alone. One of the most shocking things for Christians to learn is that there are certain types of people that God warns us NOT to help and that if we do so, we will be enabling them to continue in their sinful attitudes and lifestyles. These people are happy to use you to further their goals and pleasures and, thereby, leave you drained of your time, energy, and resources. They may be friends, acquaintances, strangers, or members of your own family.

1. The Chronic Rescue Case—Many people are tender-hearted, and these can become a target of those continuing rescue cases that never learn and never wish to improve. No matter how many times you rescue them they return to the same path that puts them back in a similar crisis mode. They refuse godly counsel and play the fool Proverbs warns us about (Prov. 13:18; 19:19). Every time you rescue them without consequences, you prevent the painful lessons that could actually transform them. You are not being kind; you are being their enabler. *Your support does not help them; it hardens them* (Prov. 26:11).

2. The Manipulator—They don't want your help but control of you and the situation. They are skilled at guilt manipulation and

emotional blackmail to get what they want. They will not hesitate to relate to you an endless stream of sad, sob stories—and your possible involvement in some of them—to extract from you what seems their fair due. They are entitled to whatever you can give them since life hasn't been fair to them. They will make you feel guilty if you say, "No" and even use 1 John 3:17 out of context to prove that you are not a true Christian if you refuse them. Allowing yourself to be manipulated is not ministry and helps no one. It is a form of lying, and God warns, "Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are His delight" (Prov. 12:22). *Jesus did not help the man who came to Him seeking help in getting his brother to divide his inheritance with him* (Luke 12:13-15).

3. The Lazy Person—Proverbs is filled with wise counsel concerning the danger of sloth and falling into poverty (Prov. 6:6-11; 12:24,27; 26:13-16). Paul also commanded that if any would not work, neither should he eat (2 Thes. 3:10). Hunger is a great motivator to work for your food! The same is true for the other necessities of life. The Philippians worked hard, not only to provide for their own needs, but also to support Paul in his ministry needs. Paul did not solicit their help, but he did give them a precious promise: "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). *Laziness should never be rewarded by handouts! Boundaries are not unloving; they are biblical.*



4. The Divisive Person/ Gossip—These often are joined together. Proverbs also addresses gossips and the harm they cause (Prov. 11:13; 16:28; 17:9). It is one of those pernicious sins that is not often recognized as such but can divide best friends. The word "heretick" in the KJV comes from the Greek word meaning to cause division or party spirit. This could be by teaching false doctrine or, more commonly, by following human personalities and power mongers in the church. Paul commanded, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject" (Titus 3:10). *A person who gossips and causes division in the church does not deserve your support, and giving it makes you a partaker and sponsor of their evil deeds. Being nice is not the same thing as being obedient to God!*

5. The Constant Complainer—Complainers don't want solutions; they want audiences. They vie for the attention of others and are attracted to those of a similar mindset. They refuse to be

thankful for what they have and are hyper-critical of others. They would establish a complainers' society if they could. Jehovah God showed His sore displeasure with those who took His goodness for granted and despised His grace (Num. 11). Paul instructed the Gentiles to "do all things without murmurings and disputings" (Phil. 2:14). A positive attitude and enthusiasm in ministry can be catching, but so is negativity and complaining. A complainer will never be satisfied, even if all of his wishes are granted. *Let's stop watering dead seeds that will never produce fruit.*



6. The Scoffer—A scoffer in the things of the Lord is an unbeliever and is disobedient to wise counsel. Jesus warned His disciples not to "cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7:6). He did not do many mighty works in His own country because of their unbelief (13:58). The scoffer has contempt for God's Word and God's people. They want your help, but reject your God. Ironically, they put you in the place of God, and every time you rush in to help fix the problem, you stand in the place where only God belongs. *God, and Him alone, should be their Source. He can be if they will humble themselves and trust in Him for salvation and the supply of the Spirit.*

7. The Proud/Self-Righteous—This is the besetting sin that God hates and dooms millions to hell and destruction (Prov. 6:16-19). You give sound biblical advice, and they treat you like an enemy. *Don't let them use you as their personal ATM machine.* Jesus was willing to leave alone those who knew the right way but refused to change—the *Rich Young Ruler* (Matt. 19:16-26) and the *scribes and Pharisees* (15:14).

Mark these points: When you give to the right people, you will see growth. When you sow into the right people, you will see fruit. When you help people who are truly ready to change, you will see transformation. *Let God handle those who refuse to listen. When you stop helping the wrong people, you create space to help the ones who are humble, teachable, and truly in need.*

Look at your life now. Who is draining you? It's high time to establish biblical boundaries. Who keeps taking but never changes? It's time to recognize the vampires in your life who refuse to change but suck you of your time, energy, and money. *Remember that obedience to God is better than sacrifice* (1 Sam. 15:22).

Help those who truly want to change. The Bible commands us to bear one another's burdens, but if you are sustaining sin, feeding irresponsibility, or protecting someone that God is trying to confront, then that is not love; it is disobedience.

Question Box

"I loved the topic on food called (What's for Supper—June 2026 *Searchlight*). I noticed that in Mark 7:19, Jesus declared all food clean. Is there some meaning I'm not seeing in these verses about meat?"

God only gave Israel their food laws to show that He separated them from the other nations (Lev. 20:24-26). In Mark 7:14-19, the Lord was not setting the Law of Moses aside. The context of the entire section was that the religious leaders were adding things to the law, like hand washing (Mark 7:5,8). The Pharisees, according to their "tradition," said if someone ate without washing their hands, they were unclean. The Lord was making the point that external things did not make a person unclean, but what was in the heart was what made someone unclean. The Pharisees, outwardly, appeared righteous, but inwardly, they were not righteous at all (Mark 7:20-23). In the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the Lord told the religious leaders they were full of extortion and wickedness (Matt. 23:25; Luke 11:39).

We also know that the Lord's words in Mark 7 were not setting aside the food laws for a couple of other reasons. One, later in the Lord's ministry, He instructed the multitudes and disciples to obey the Law of Moses and the Pharisees since they sat in Moses' seat.

"Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (Matt. 23:2-3).

Second, Peter said in Acts 10:14 (just before his visit to Cornelius) that he had never eaten anything unclean. The Lord used the sheet vision to show Peter the dietary laws were being set aside (after Paul's conversion). So, it wasn't until the Apostle Paul that the dietary laws and all the Law of Moses were taken out of the way (Rom. 6:14; 1 Tim. 4:4-5). Now, under grace, we can all enjoy a good BLT sandwich!

—Pastor Jim Tollar



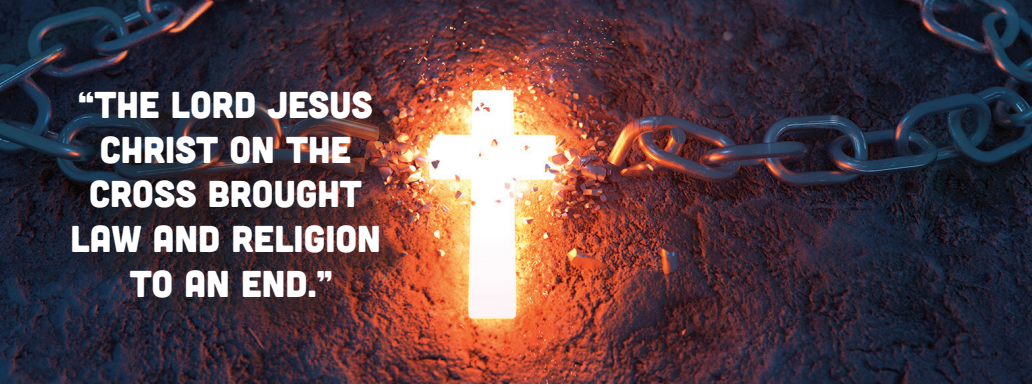
THE END OF RELIGION

Originally published in the February and March 1937 edition of *Bible Study for Bereans*.

PASTOR J. C. **O'HAIR**
Grace Theologian

There are more religions in the world now than there have ever been. There are hundreds of different religions in India and Africa. There are several hundred religions in the United States. Most people are naturally religious. But most people do not permit their religion to interfere with their sinning. Even if they desired otherwise, religion could not keep them from sinning. Although religious sinners are restrained from certain immoral habits, there is no cure for sin in even the best of all the religions of the world. Religious endeavors frequently lead to self-righteousness, which is as much sin as is adultery or drunkenness or stealing.

We say that sin is human weakness: sin is a shortcoming—missing the mark. But what is the mark? What does it mean to come short? Every intelligent man, whether religious or not, acknowledges that the only adequate, perfect code of ethics, by which a thought or word or deed can be judged right or wrong, is the law, which was given to man 3,400 years ago—the Ten Commandments. No intelligent man will think of challenging the perfection of that perfect law. The one who would accept that challenge to perfectly obey that perfect law would display profound stupidity. The greatest of all the commandments contained in the law was stated by the only One Who ever perfectly kept all ten of them. *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy strength and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself"*



(Luke 10:27). If this is the greatest of all the commandments, and sin is the transgression of the law, then the greatest sin is to transgress the greatest commandment. All are guilty before God. "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20). "...that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

All religions, except one, followed by men during the past 6,000 years, were established by a very religious creature who is accused of deceiving the whole world. He is called "the prince of the world," "the god of this world." It is truthfully said concerning him that he is transformed into an angel of light.

The one exception is the religion that God gave to Israel at the time He gave that people the Ten Commandments. "Thou shalt," "Thou shalt not," was the program for poor sinful humanity for 1,500 years. It was under that law that the Sinless Man was made. He came to earth and lived among this people. He lived their religion and kept the perfect law without offending in one point. But despite that, His own people had Him nailed to the Cross. Such was the treachery, malice, and crime of the religious law-keepers. They were sabbath-keepers and were zealous concerning the law; but they killed "the Prince of life."

Then note what became of their religion:

COLOSSIANS 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross."

GALATIANS 3:13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

HEBREWS 7:19: "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God."

ROMANS 10:4: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Christ is the END OF THE LAW for righteousness. The law and religion were inseparably united. The Lord Jesus Christ on

the Cross brought law and religion to an end. God's declaration is that the law has been abolished; sin has been put away; and death is abolished (2 Tim. 1:10).

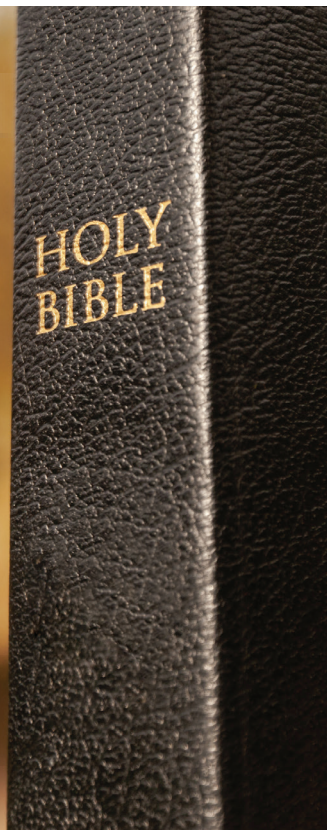
The sacrifices of shed blood, under the law, took care of the sins of the penitent lawbreakers until Christ went to Calvary to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Pray tell, why do people get a good religious feeling when they smell, or touch, or feel religious things? There is as much difference between religious reformation and reckoned righteousness as there is between hell and heaven. Christ died to save religious sinners from religion as well as from sin. God has removed all religion from His spiritual program, declaring that Christ is our righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30). Righteousness is all that is required as a passport to heaven.

There is not one particle of righteousness in religion. Joining the church never saved any sinner. There'll be no religious people in heaven. Christ is the end of religion for righteousness to every one that believeth. Christ is our righteousness. Christ is the world's superlative and urgent need. Believers are accepted and complete in Christ. God says so. Receive Him as your Savior right now.

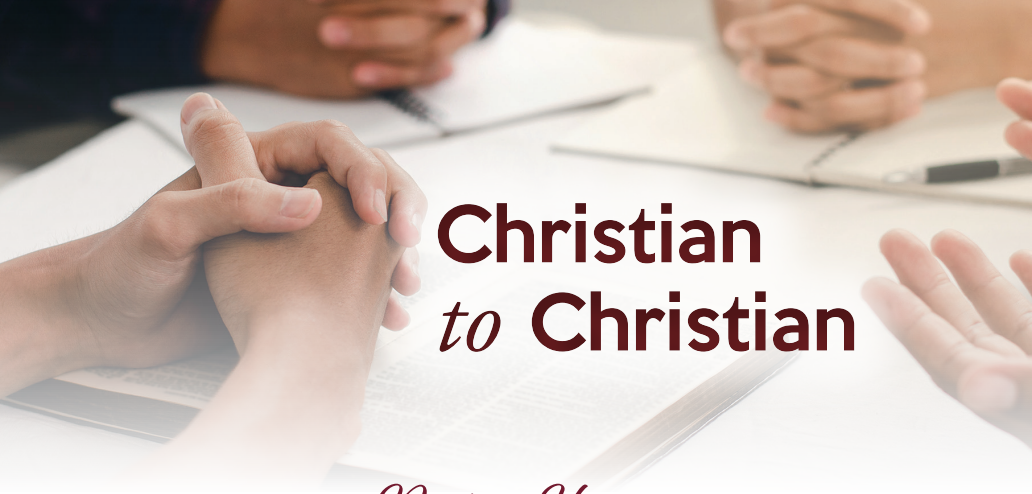
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Christian *to* Christian

Patient Hope

"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and PATIENCE OF HOPE in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father" (1 Thes. 1:3).

If there is one area in which the Holy Spirit has to work overtime in my life, it is in the area of patience. It is one thing to hope in my Lord Jesus Christ, but it is quite another to hope patiently! You see, I have no hope or expectation in this world system. As Abraham, I acknowledge that I am a stranger and a pilgrim on earth. My citizenship is in heaven. Hope? Yes. Patient hope? Well...there are days when the cares of this present evil age press in so hard upon me that I have an impatient hope.

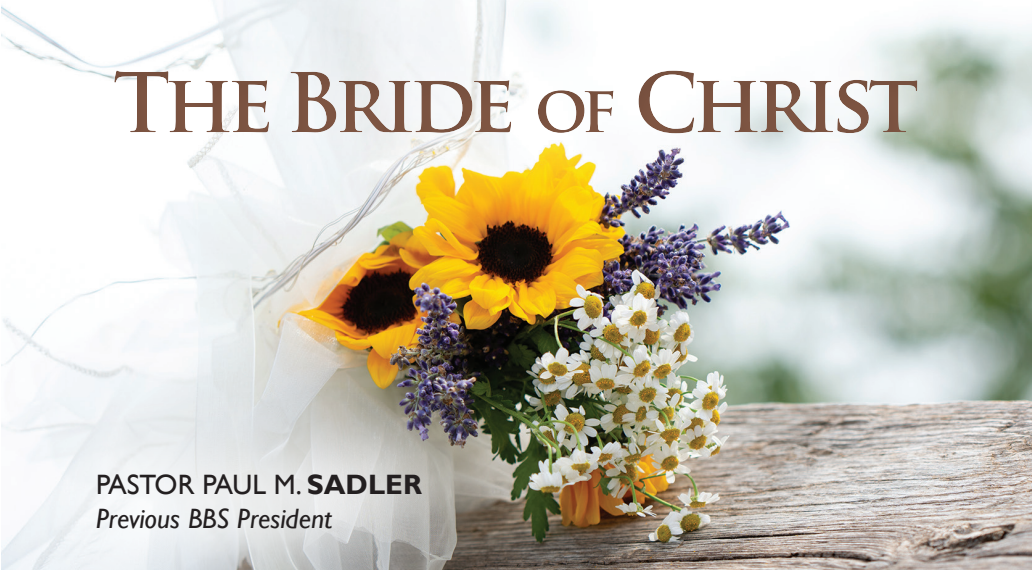
Many times I find it hard to wait for the "glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). I am selfish enough to want Him to return right now, and can identify with the Apostle Paul when he says that he would much rather depart and "be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23)! Yet Paul had his personal desires postponed (vv. 24-26) in order to minister to the saints. He willingly accepted this as God's will for his life. (Not a bad example!)

I am working on developing patient hope. I am learning to view my world through God's perspective. Yes, I still have days when the Rapture is my deepest desire—to be with Him!

I am also learning something of the longsuffering and patience of God to rebellious mankind (2 Pet. 3:9). The more I understand God's plan for the ages, and my small part in it, the more He enables me to be patient in hope! The more we understand God's secret purpose in Christ, as revealed through our Apostle Paul, the more easily we can say, as our Lord, "Nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

—Pastor David Havard

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST



PASTOR PAUL M. **SADLER**
Previous BBS President

Although the Bride of Christ falls under the classification of a "secondary issue," the very nature of the subject has a profound effect on how certain passages are interpreted. After bringing everything into focus, I am more convinced than ever that the Body of Christ is *not* the Bride, the Lamb's wife. To me it seems terribly inconsistent to make distinction after distinction between Israel and the Church and then turn around and say that they are one and the same, that is, the Bride of Christ. One thing is clear in this discussion: the opinions of men are inconsequential in view of the eternal question, "For what saith the *Scripture*?" (Rom. 4:3).

WORDS AND PHRASES

In our quest to rightly divide the Word of truth, certain *words* and *phrases* are identified with the Prophetic program, while others are associated with the Mystery. Interestingly, "the Bride of Christ" is an *unscriptural* phrase that is foreign to both programs of God. It is merely a theological expression that originated in the mind of man to describe those who will be present at the *marriage of the Lamb* preceding the *kingdom* (Rev. 19:7-9). The accurate phrase used in prophecy is only found in the Apocalypse, where one of the seven angels said to John: "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Rev. 21:9).

The terms "bride," "Lamb," and "wife" (in relation to the marriage of the Lamb) are woven throughout the pages of prophecy. For example: "He that hath the *bride* is the Bridegroom" (John 3:29 cf. Jer. 2:32). "Behold the *Lamb* of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29 cf. Isa. 53:7). "...for the marriage of the Lamb

"Who is the Bride of the Lamb?"



is come, and His *wife* hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7 cf. Isa. 54:4-7).

One will search in vain to find any of this terminology in St. Paul's epistles. In fact, Paul frequently makes reference to Christ as Savior, Lord, and Head, but he never speaks of Him as the Lamb of God, and for good reason. In prophecy, God had graciously imparted the sacrificial system which foreshadowed the once-for-all sacrifice. Thus, Christ was the sinless, spotless Lamb of God Who satisfied the righteous demands of the law. He was consistently portrayed as the innocent *victim*—a *lamb* being led to the slaughter (Lev. 4:3-7; Isa. 53:3-8). With the introduction of a new dispensation, the Apostle Paul portrays Christ in a completely different light. Today He is the *Lord of glory*, the mighty *victor* Who has conquered sin through His death and resurrection (1 Cor. 2:8; 15:20-23).

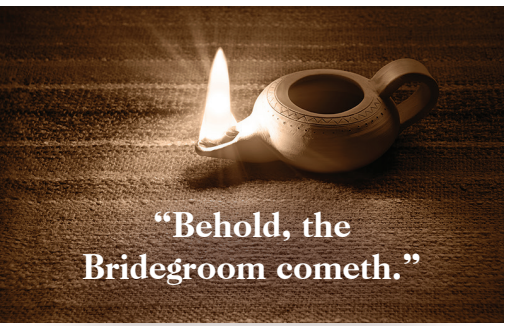
THE BRIDE IN PROPHECY

Who is the Bride of the Lamb? Thankfully, we do not have to rely on our own human reasoning to answer this perplexing question. The Scriptures are explicitly clear that the "bride" is *Israel*. When John the Baptist was asked why all men sought the Master and his ministry was fading in glory, he responded: "He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom: but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:29-30).

Working in reverse order, clearly the "friend of the Bridegroom" is John the Baptist. John says it was cause for rejoicing to hear the voice of the Bridegroom. "...this my [John the Baptist's] joy therefore is fulfilled." The "Bridegroom" is none other than Christ Himself. In the previous verse, John stated that he was "...not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him" (v. 28). He then confirms this by applying the illustration of the Bridegroom. John was merely the forerunner, preparing the way for the Messiah. Hence, "He [Christ] must increase, but I [John] must decrease" (v. 30).

Bearing in mind that John's gospel is a record of the earthly ministry of Christ, the "bride" is obviously *Israel*. John the Baptist plainly declares in this record, "And I knew Him not: but that He should be made *manifest* to ISRAEL, therefore am I come baptizing with water" (John 1:31). Did not our Lord instruct His disciples to "Go not into the way of the Gentiles.... But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of ISRAEL" (Matt. 10:5-6)? Did not our Lord Himself say during His earthly ministry, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of ISRAEL" (Matt. 15:24)?

Moving farther along in the gospel according to Matthew, we have the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13). Here we learn that only *believing* Israel will participate in the actual marriage of the Lamb. You will recall that there were five wise virgins and five foolish. When the Bridegroom delayed His coming, the lamps of the unwise virgins ran out of oil as they



slumbered. Therefore, the five foolish virgins, representative of the unsaved, were unprepared when the midnight cry came, "*Behold, the Bridegroom cometh.*" While they went to purchase oil, the Bridegroom came, "...and they [five saved virgins] that were *ready* went in with Him to the marriage" (v. 10). In addition, this portion teaches us that the *marriage* will take place when our Lord returns in His glory at the close of the Great Tribulation (v. 13).

The above is confirmed by the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself *ready*. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19:7-8).

It should also be noted that John refers to Israel as the "wife" of the Lamb. Of course, this excludes the Body of Christ as participants in this ceremony since Paul always addresses us in the *masculine* gender. Christ is our Head, not our Groom. But in what sense is Israel the "wife" of the Lamb if she is to be united to the Messiah in the holy bonds of matrimony? The answer lies in the law of the *betrothal* (Deut. 22:23-25).

In days of old, when a man and woman came together before a rabbi, they were betrothed to one another. Similar to our present-day engagement,

the betrothal was a binding agreement wherein the parties were actually classified as *husband* and *wife*. Upon completion of the ceremony, the couple returned to their respective homes for one year. This period gave the husband an opportunity to *prepare* a home for his bride-to-be. It was also to ensure that the woman had been *faithful* and was not with child. Of course, it was during this time that Mary was found with child before she and Joseph had come together in the intimacy of the marriage relationship (Matt. 1:18-25).

In this regard, Christ has returned to heaven to *prepare* a place for His bride in the kingdom. Since this aspect of the kingdom of heaven is brought to the earth, it will be like heaven on earth. As the Tribulation runs its course, Israel will be observed to determine who among them has been *faithful* to the commands of Christ contained in the kingdom gospel (John 14:1-3 cf. Luke 19:11-27).



It is imperative that we glean from all of these principal passages that the marriage of the Lamb will occur on the *earth* when Christ returns to set up His kingdom. Following the wedding, the Apostle John was instructed to write, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:9). These guests are undoubtedly the kingdom *Gentiles* who are invited to enjoy the blessings of the coming golden age (Matt. 25:31-46; Luke 14:15-24).

THE BRIDE AND PAUL'S EPISTLES

It is essential that the reader keep in mind that the Church, the Body of Christ, was *hid in God* from ages and generations past (Col. 1:24-26). Thus, with the advent of the administration of grace, a number of *new* metaphors are applied to the Church, such as Body, stewards, ambassadors, etc. Some seem to think that Paul does, indeed, speak of us as the Bride of Christ in Ephesians 5. But they have failed to distinguish between Paul's usage of a *metaphor* and a *simile*. A well-respected theologian from the turn of the century writes:

"The confounding of the Church as the Bride in Ephesians 5, has resulted from not seeing the Figure of Speech used throughout the passage is that of *Simile,* and not *Metaphor*: 'Metaphor' places one thing for another. It is representation. 'Simile' is but resemblance.

We must therefore not say when comparing one thing with another that that one thing is another. Observe the continued comparison between Christ and the Church of His Body, and the conduct of wives and husbands. Note the presence of simile in every instance, and the absence of metaphor."[1]

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, **as unto the Lord**" (v. 22).

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even **as Christ is the Head of the Church**" (v. 23).

"Husbands, love your wives, even **as Christ also loved the Church**, and gave Himself for it" (v. 25).

"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even **as the Lord the Church**" (v. 29).

So then, the apostle, by using a simile instead of a metaphor, is desiring to show the resemblance between the marriage relationship and Christ and His Church. Thus, Paul points to the *love relationship* to demonstrate that "as Christ also loved the Church," husbands should love their wives. In like manner, wives are to emulate the Church by submitting to their own husbands. Nowhere in the portion under consideration does the apostle use the metaphor of a bride. In fact, just the opposite is true: "...and He is the Saviour of the BODY" (v. 23). "For we are members of His BODY, of His flesh, and of His bones" (v. 30).

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:2).

Paul had founded this assembly and naturally had a godly jealousy over them as their spiritual father. Insofar as the Corinthians had a propensity to live carelessly, the apostle again uses the marriage relationship



to show the importance of living a godly life in Christ Jesus. Marriages are built on trust, fidelity, purity of heart and life. Paul was challenging the Corinthians to be *faithful* to the One Who called them into His grace.

It is our firm conviction that the Body of Christ is not the Bride, the Lamb's wife. We believe teaching otherwise brings a kingdom truth into the Body of Christ, where it is not only unnatural, but a forced interpretation. May God, in His grace, give us a Berean spirit to study to see if these things are so.

1. Source unknown.

BBS Letter Excerpts



From Our Inbox:

"In the September 2026 *Berean Searchlight* magazine, the article entitled 'God's Timetable,' I enjoyed and laughed with this one phrase, 'A grazing Mace, how sweet the hound, that saved a wrench for me.' I thank God for you Pastor Kevin."

From Missouri:

"Thank you so much for your TBG ministry. On Bible Study nights, my Baptist Christian friends and I have been watching the series on 'Joseph,' which is so good. Also, the articles, 'What Is a Mid-Acts Dispensationalist?' by David Havard and your article about walking circumspectly in the August issue of the *Berean Searchlight* have helped me learn more about His Word. Keep up the good work."

From Minnesota:

"Thanks for being there. Your ministry means so much to me."

From Our Inbox:

"I am 83, and many years ago working in my shop I heard Cornelius Stam on the radio. He made so much sense I ordered his books and was so blessed. Taught Sunday school in a Bible church—adult classes loved when I taught Acts. They clearly got the message. Thank you for your continued work. TO GOD BE THE GLORY!"

From Arizona:

"Thank you for preaching God's Word, rightly divided. Your messages are always backed up by Scripture and I appreciate your loving demeanor. I appreciate your sense of humor as well. Have you considered doing a series on the chart showing time past, but now, and ages to come, from beginning to end? If you could, it would be appreciated. We listen to your YouTube videos at church and appreciate your ministry."

From Our Inbox:

"I'm writing to let you know how much I really love your ministry. I'm very new to your BBS/TBG website, and I have not stopped watching and studying the Word. I really love the way that you open up *Transformed by Grace* with a story before you go to the lesson. Your stories help the lessons really well. I will continue watching and studying, not because of your website, or your teachings, but through the continued solid biblical teachings that are led through God's Word."

From Our Inbox:

"I want to take a moment of your time to thank you for your faithfulness in composing and emailing your daily devotionals. I am blessed by your works and want you to know that I appreciate them very much."

From California:

"Thanks go out to the only two television and radio ministries which rightly divide the Word of truth (*Transformed by Grace* by Kevin Sadler and *Through the Bible with Les Feldick*). But thanks be especially to BBS for their diligence in maintaining the greatest collection of rightly divided reading material, i.e., Stam and O'Hair and all the other great rightly dividing authors made so readily available to the public. To anyone who has not read the material of this tremendous organization, I highly recommend to do so. Thanks in particular for the *Berean Searchlight*—which is free I might add! God bless you for all, and in all, you do!"

From YouTube:

(Responding to *Transformed by Grace* "The Apostle of Grace") "Most teaching and preaching is incomplete since the interconnectedness of truths of salvation are intricate and multitudinous. These problems are largely addressed right here. Thanks for your industrious Bible study."

From Ohio:

"So thankful that *Transformed by Grace* found me. Watch almost every night after *Through the Bible with Les Feldick*. A friend and I have been watching for about six years. Thank you. Pastor Kevin is such a good teacher of God's Word and is helping us understand Scripture, rightly divided. Thank you again. God bless your ministry."

From Alabama:

"I recently moved back to my home state of Alabama after 36 years....I look forward to receiving your *Berean Searchlight* magazine each month."

From Missouri:

"The 'Unions or Unity' article that came in my email this week was spot on. I really appreciated the simplicity of the words and am so glad I receive the 'Two Minutes with the Bible.' Keep up the good work. Praying for you guys."

From Our Inbox:

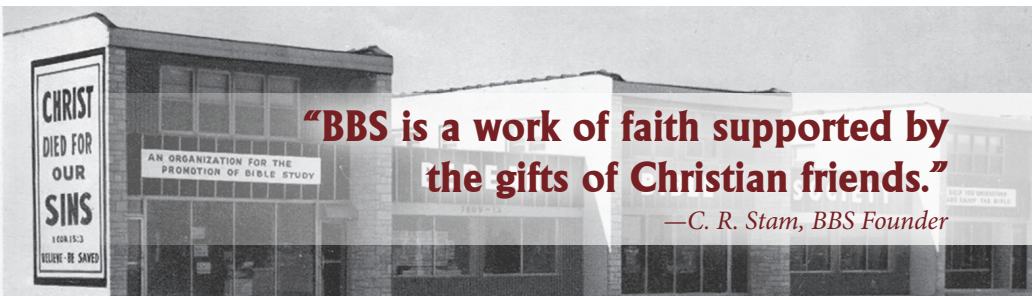
"Pastor, I wrote you some months ago and asked for prayer as I was going to start the fourth book in the [Revelation] series that you took in from your dad. I'm upon page 140 now. I usually read very quickly, and even through good and bad disruptions, I finish. But I have never had more distractions from a book like this before....I stop after a few paragraphs to praise God and pray. It's that good! Page 140 has really done it! I've never heard it taught so well. It honors Jesus Christ. So once again, keep me in prayer to continue."

From Florida:

"Thanks for preaching the WORD!"

From Arizona:

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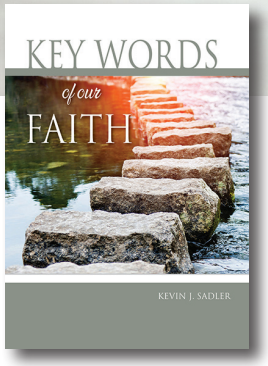
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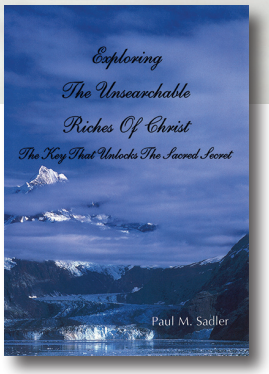
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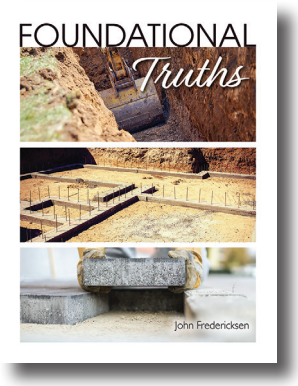




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News & Announcements

New Audio Sermons: Each week on the *Berean Bible Society* Facebook page, we are posting an audio sermon by BBS Board member Pastor David Havard from his ministry at *West Valley Grace Fellowship* in Sun City West, Arizona. Included in every post are the sermon handout notes. These messages are also available in the Audio Sermons section of the BBS website.

Berean Bible Fellowship Winter Conference: On January 16-17, the *Berean Bible Fellowship* will hold its Winter Conference at *Grace Bible Fellowship* in Inverness, Florida, located at 4979 East Arbor Street. The theme will be "Pauline Distinctives—Ephesians 3:2-3." Speakers will include Pastors John Fredericksen, David Havard, Kevin Sadler, Don Hosfeld, Jim Tollar, and Ken Lawson. For a conference brochure or more information, please contact BBF President Don Hosfeld at (941) 320-1474 or don@unitedbyhisgrace.org, or visit the BBF website at bbfnews.org. And now might be a good time to consider attending the BBF Annual Summer Conference, which will be held June 20–24, 2027, in Tipp City, Ohio.

Ministry Links: On the BBS website, you can find links to churches led by BBS Board members and staff. These church websites offer many audio and video messages to help you grow through the sound teaching of God's Word, rightly divided. You can find the Ministry Links page under the "About" tab at the top of the BBS website or by visiting bereanbiblesociety.org/ministry-links/.

Prayer Card: If you would like a BBS prayer card, just let us know, and we will gladly send you one free of charge. We deeply appreciate your prayers for our staff and for the ministries of the *Berean Searchlight*, *Transformed by Grace*, the *Grace Study Bible*, our literature, and our conferences.

Upcoming Conferences to put on your calendar!

Texas Special Meetings
November 8, Fort Worth, TX

BBF Winter Conference
January 16-17, 2027, Inverness, FL



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J.C. O'HAIR

- You Do Need Him

KEVIN J. SADLER

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- The Value of "Thanks"
- Forever Free
- Your Days are Numbered
- God's Pumpkin (10 pack)
- Not Too Narrow
- He's Alive!

PAUL M. SADLER

- An Epitaph
- Rescued by the Blood

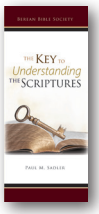
C.R. STAM

- Basic Distinctions Between Prophecy and the Mystery
- A Big Little Word
- Don't Come an Inch Closer
- Going Somewhere
- How to Please God
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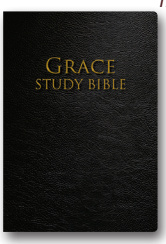
- The Timeline of Paul's Ministry, Conversion to Martrydom (fold-out brochure)

PAUL M. SADLER

- The Key to Understanding the Scriptures (fold-out brochure)
- According to the Scriptures booklet

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$3.00 each -or- 10 pack for $18.00

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



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"How can I say thanks for all the things
You have done for me?
Things so undeserved yet
You gave to prove Your love to me.

"The voices of a million angels
could not express my gratitude.
All that I am and ever hope to be
I owe it all to Thee."

—Andraé Crouch



TBG Network 24/7 streaming channel on Roku, Apple TV, and Apple Fire TV
Also available on TBG YouTube, BBS website

BEREAN BIBLE SOCIETY TV MINISTRY

Christian Television Network (CTN)
Monday–Friday 6:00 pm ET:

- DirecTV: Channel 376
- Dish Network: Channel 262
- Glory Star Satellite: Channel 117

World Harvest Television (WHT)
Monday–Friday 8:30 am ET;
Sunday at 9:00 am ET:

- DirecTV: Channel 367
- Available on Comcast/Xfinity (select markets)