

# The **Berean Searchlight**

Studying God's Word, Rightly Divided

January 2006



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The **Purpose** of the *Berean Bible Society* is to help you understand and enjoy 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” (II Tim. 2:15), to *energize* their Christian lives, and to *encourage* the local church.

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Left to right: Pastors Sadler,  
Sobyskogen and Kurth

## From the Editor to You:

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Dearly Beloved,

We have long prayed that the gospel of the grace of God would take hold in the regions beyond America. It is with praise and thanksgiving that this is exactly what is happening around the world in countries like the Philippines, Africa, and recently in Norway. This past October we were contacted by Pastor Tormod Sobyskogen, who is the Associate Pastor of the *Oslo Christian Center* located in Oslo, Norway. Pastor Sobyskogen arranged a meeting with us at the *Berean Bible Society* and flew to America for the sole purpose of learning more about the Grace Message.

During his visit he shared with us how the leadership at the Christian Center had come to see Paul's unique apostleship and message. Of course, they thought they were all alone in their understanding of this blessed truth. A short time later our good friend, Oskar Edin Indergaard, of Norway sent Pastor Sobyskogen a *Berean Searchlight*. Brother Tormod could hardly contain himself when he learned there were others who were teaching that Paul is the apostle of the Gentiles. When he discovered that we had been proclaiming Paul's gospel for over 60 years he immediately made arrangements to visit us.

For nearly a week he met with us at BBS and with other Grace leaders to learn more about the Grace Movement in the United States. We spent the better part of two days at BBS sharing the history of the grace of God in America and answering Pastor Tormod's questions regarding the Word, rightly divided. We were amazed at how far they had come in such a short period of time. They are still growing in grace, but they are well on their way to eventually seeing the fullness of Paul's gospel. This could well impact all of the Scandinavian countries in the region. The *Oslo Christian Center* is a large assembly, which has seven satellite churches in Norway, and has planted seven other churches abroad.

Before leaving to return home, Pastor Sobyskogen delivered a message at the *Falls Bible Church* entitled, *The Message of Power*, that stirred the hearts of everyone in the congregation. He shared how their assembly had been in bondage to legalism for years, but when they came to see *grace* a new day dawned! They saw for the first time their liberty in Christ. Pastor Sobyskogen told a touching story about one of the elderly women in their assembly that when she came to see this truth she stated: "If my Savior sat down at the right hand of the Father, I, too, will sit down and rest in Him."

Please pray with us for these dear saints that they will continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In His abounding love,  
Paul M. Sadler, President

## Is Berean Bible Institute for You?

By W. Edward Bedore, Th.D.  
Executive Director, *Berean Bible Institute*

As you know, **Berean Bible Institute** is a ministry training school that clearly and uncompromisingly teaches the Bible from a dispensational point of view that recognizes the distinctives of “*the mystery*” that the Lord Himself gave to the Apostle Paul (cf. Gal. 1:11-12; Eph. 3:1-8), and the importance of defending that message and proclaiming “*Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery*” (Rom. 16:25).

If the Grace Movement is going to grow, it is imperative that men be trained for the work of ministry. Grace churches, in our country or on the mission field, don’t just happen by chance. They come about, are maintained, and grow through hard work and diligent leadership. **BBI** is doing its part by providing a solid college level Bible and ministry-training program designed to equip believers with the Bible knowledge and leadership skills necessary for a fruitful ministry in the

local church setting or the mission field. The type of ministry that **Berean Bible Institute** is engaged in is important to the life and health of the Grace Movement. For this reason we are determined to press on in the work of helping individuals prepare themselves to effectively serve the Lord.

In every generation, the greatest need has been for young men and women who will stand up to take the place of those who have diligently labored to make Jesus Christ known to a dark world desperately in need of the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, but who are now passing off the scene. And, within the Grace Movement, the need is crucial.

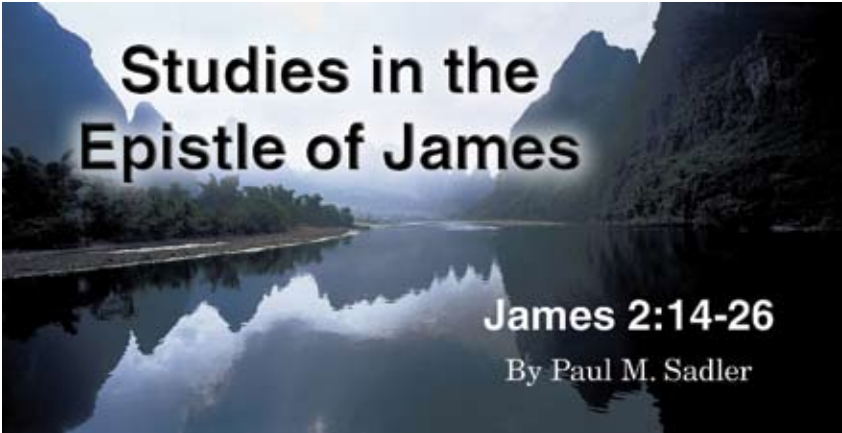
If your heartfelt desire is to be actively engaged in the work of ministry as a pastor, evangelist, missionary, Bible teacher, or youth worker, **BBI** can help you get started. If you are serious, then we invite you to consider **Berean Bible Institute**.

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### Spring Semester begins January 23, 2006!

For more information about **BBI**, please contact Dr. W. Edward Bedore at: **Berean Bible Institute**, 116 S. Kettle Moraine Drive, P.O. Box 587, Slinger, WI 53086-0587, phone: (262) 644-5504, fax: (262) 644-5507, e-mail: [bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org](mailto:bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org), web address: [www.bereanbibleinstitute.org](http://www.bereanbibleinstitute.org).





# Studies in the Epistle of James

James 2:14-26

By Paul M. Sadler

**“For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”**

—Romans 4:2,3

**“But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?”**

—James 2:20,21

## **AN ENIGMA WRAPPED IN A RIDDLE**

Those who oppose the truth, and themselves, often appeal to the words of Martin Luther as evidence that the Scriptures contain glaring contradictions. Luther stated the following regarding the teachings of Paul and James on the subject of justification:

“Many sweat to reconcile St. Paul and St. James, but in vain. ‘Faith justifies’ and ‘faith does not justify’ contradict each other flatly. If any one can harmonize them I will give him my Doctor’s Hood and let him call me a fool.”

We must remember that God is omniscient—there is no possible way He could ever contradict Himself. He knows the end from the beginning and everything in between. When we are confronted with what seems to be a discrepancy, the problem is not with the Word of God, but with our understanding of it. It is far better to wait on further light rather than make unadvised judgments that one usually lives to regret. Luther wouldn’t have given the critics ammunition to use against the faith had he simply followed the foregoing principle. Thankfully, the light that was not yet recovered on this subject shines brightly today. As we will see, the solution to the problem is rightly dividing the Word of truth. What Luther failed to grasp was, you cannot reconcile that which God never meant to be reconciled.

Justification simply means to be declared eternally righteous by God. It is a legal term. For example, if a prisoner is brought before the bar of justice there is only one way he can be justified—he

must be found not guilty. If he is proven to be not guilty then he is a *just* man. In the event a man commits a federal crime and is found guilty and is sentenced to death, the President of the United States can pardon the man, but he can never justify him or erase his crime. Even though the man is pardoned, he is still a criminal. There is no way of justifying him.<sup>1</sup>

Now wonder of wonders, we are proven *guilty* before the bar of God's justice, yet we are said to be justified by the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9). The law points its bony finger into our face and says, you are a sinner, guilty as charged, and therefore you are condemned to die. But Christ steps forward as the sentence is about to be pronounced and says to the Father, "I will bear their guilt and punishment." You see, He gave Himself a ransom for our sins. Today, those who place their faith in Christ are justified freely by His grace—our sins and guilt were placed upon Christ and in return His righteousness was imputed to us. We are complete in Him by faith alone!

Paul reveals to us that the basis of justification is the shed blood of Christ in every dispensation, but it is God who determined what would be *required* to receive this wonderful benefit.

### WHICH GOSPEL?

The first thing we need to establish is that Paul and James were preaching two entirely *different* gospels. While the Church has traditionally held that there is only one gospel taught in the Word of God, the Scriptures clearly

teach there are many different gospels revealed throughout the dispensations, all of which find their origin in the finished work of Christ.

During the proceedings at the Jerusalem Council, James, Peter, and John "saw that the *gospel of the uncircumcision* was committed" to the Apostle Paul (Gal. 2:7). In fact, they gave Paul the right hand of fellowship that he should go unto the Gentiles. This is the same James who wrote the epistle of James that we've been studying the past several months. James, Peter, and John also agreed at this council that they would continue to preach the *gospel of the circumcision* but would confine their ministry to the circumcision (Israel). This is consistent with the opening words of the epistle of James: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the *twelve tribes* which are scattered abroad, greeting" (James 1:1). So then, Paul and James were laboring under two different gospels, which explains why their teachings on justification are so contrary to one another.

#### a. The Gospel of the Uncircumcision

The "gospel of the uncircumcision" looks back to Abram *before* he became the Father of the Hebrew nation. Abram was an ungodly heathen (Gentile) who came from a family of idol worshippers (Josh. 24:2). When God appeared to Abram He instructed him to leave Ur of the Chaldees unto a land that He would show him, which we now know to be the Promised Land. He also told Abram that he would become a

great nation—his seed would be as the stars of heaven, and all the families of the earth would be blessed through his seed. “And he [Abram] believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness” (Gen. 15:6). God imputed righteousness to him on the basis of faith alone. Therefore, he was justified by faith *apart* from works. This is the basis of Paul’s argument in Romans Chapter 4:

**“For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (Rom. 4:2,3).**

So Abraham was declared eternally righteous by God through faith while he was yet uncircumcised. This demonstrates to us that *justification* never did rest upon ordinances such as circumcision or water baptism, but faith alone! Seeing that the religious leaders of Israel in Paul’s day were convinced that the Gentiles could not be saved apart from circumcision, Paul uses Abraham as an example to the contrary. Thus he poses this question to them:

**“For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision” (Rom. 4:9,10).**

Paul makes an airtight case that if God justified Abraham apart from religious circumcision, why was it so difficult for the leaders in Israel to accept that God could impute righteousness to the Gentiles who received his gospel. This is the good news of

the uncircumcision, which is proclaimed to this very day. Because the Gentiles are saved today like Abraham, he is the Father of all them that believe.

### **b. The Gospel of the Circumcision**

Approximately two years after Abraham was justified, God established the covenant of circumcision with him and changed his name from Abram to Abraham. It has been pointed out that the letter “h” is the *fifth* letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which represents *grace* in the Scriptures. Consequently, when God added the “h” to Abraham’s name He was showing “grace” by raising up Abraham through whom He would channel His blessing. You see, the “gospel of the circumcision” also looks back to Abraham to a time when God established the covenant of circumcision with the Patriarch, which *separated* him from the ungodly heathen around him. Technically this was the birth of the Hebrew nation.

The sign of circumcision was the seal of righteousness of the faith that Abraham had placed in God (Rom. 4:11). Today, the seal is the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13,14). Clearly circumcision was a covenant of *works* (Gen. 17:10-14 cf. 26:5). Every male child was to be circumcised the eighth day in order that he might be made a child of the covenant. Although the rite of circumcision did not save him, one could not be saved who was not circumcised in Israel. Circumcision gave the child an opportunity to be saved. Because Israel had a covenant relationship with God, the message she operated under

was the *gospel of the circumcision*. We should add that the gospel of the circumcision and the gospel of the kingdom are inseparably bound together. Both are based upon a *performance system*. It is this program and message that James was laboring under when he wrote his epistle.

### JUSTIFICATION IN JAMES

**“And He [Christ] spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican....And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other” (Luke 18:9-14).**

During our Lord’s earthly ministry many in Israel went about seeking to establish their own righteousness. With this in mind, our Lord spoke the foregoing parable to demonstrate how a man was justified in His day. We must remember that a parable is taken from a real life experience, or it’s something that could actually happen. In other words, there probably had been two men who had come to the temple to pray prior to our Lord telling the story.

The prideful Pharisee prayed to God that he was thankful he wasn’t like that sinful tax collector standing over there. How God put up with those disgusting extortioners and adulterers was beyond him. After all, he fasted, not once, but twice a week.

He further boasts that he gave generously of all that he owned. The pious tax collector on the other hand humbled himself before God. He dared not even look toward heaven, but acknowledged he was a hell-deserving sinner who was unworthy to even speak to God who was holy and purer than the wind-driven snow. He prayed, “God be *merciful* to me a sinner.” This man, the Lord says, went down to his house justified before God.

“Paul and James were laboring under two different gospels....”

Interestingly, the term “merciful” used in this passage is the Greek word *hilaskomai*, which means to atone for sin. It is the exact same word used for the mercy seat in the Old Testament tabernacle where the High Priest sprinkled the blood of atonement on behalf of the sins of the people. Essentially, the tax collector responded to God in *faith*, but he understood that God *required* him to offer blood sacrifices (works) to atone for his sins. Therefore, faith expressed itself by bringing the proper sacrifice. This is precisely the point that James is making regarding justification under the program he ministered.

**“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say**



**unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (James 2:14-16).**

James poses the following question to his readers: if a man says he has faith, but no works accompany it, can faith alone save him? He then uses a practical example from everyday life to illustrate his point. Suppose a Hebrew brother is suffering through a difficult time because of his faithful testimony for the Messiah. As a result, he doesn't know where his next meal is going to come from or where he will find shelter from the cold. If you say go in peace, dear brother, but fail to help the man, are not your words meaningless? The spiritual application is this, the brother who wished the destitute brother well represents faith alone, but James concludes that faith alone is without profit, for it doesn't help the impoverished man with his everyday needs.

**"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works" (James 2:17,18).**

The conclusion that James draws from the above is, faith without works is dead, which his hearers could fully appreciate because of the economy under which they lived. James further demonstrates what he means: One man says, "I have faith alone." Another man steps forward and says, "But, I have works." James now asks the first man, "show me thy faith

without thy works." The apostle knows that he is unable to do so simply because faith cannot be seen apart from works. The second man is able to show his faith seeing that his works declare it.

**"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (James 2:19,20).**

How often James must have heard one of his countrymen say, "I believe in God." But James observed that there were no fruits in his life that substantiated his claim, which was *essential* under the gospel of the circumcision. James effectively points out, "The devils also believe, and tremble." The fallen hosts of Satan believe there is one God, but they have no desire whatsoever to live for the Lord. In fact, they openly defy and oppose Him. They also shudder at the very thought of God, seeing that they know what awaits them at the judgment to come. Once again, James concludes that faith without works is dead.

**"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:21-24).**

James also uses Abraham as an example, but to illustrate the importance of *living faith* in relation to the message he was proclaiming

to the circumcision. First, it is important to note that James specifically singles out the account when Abraham was called upon to offer his son, Isaac, upon the altar. This is significant because we know Abraham was already *saved* prior to this testing that came from the hand of God. Some years previous to this trial he had also received the sign of circumcision, which was the seal of the righteousness of faith. As we have seen, the rite of circumcision marked the beginning of the Hebrew nation and made Abraham the Father of the chosen nation. We should add that James deals with the *faith* of Abraham after he underwent a severe test in order to try the *metal* to see what sort it was. The patriarch, of course, was faithful through the trial and became affectionately known as the Friend of God.

Abraham's willingness to offer Isaac on the altar demonstrated that his faith was *genuine*. James' question, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works" merely indicates that Abraham's works *confirmed* his faith. The apostle puts it this way, "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" The combination of faith and works *verified* that Abraham's faith was a *living faith*, which manifested itself by works. It was complete! According to James, Abraham served as a *pattern* to the circumcision that faith and works were *required* for salvation under their program.

Pastor Stam has stated: Faith will most assuredly approach God in God's way at any time, and to seek to gain acceptance with Him in any other way would, of course, be *unbelief* and self-will. Thus,

while works never did or could save *as such*, they did once save as *expressions of faith*....Does this mean that works will be efficacious in themselves? No! They will avail only as the expression and evidence of faith as, indeed, James clearly teaches.<sup>2</sup>

Examples of this abound in the history of Israel. Prior to the Lord's ascension, He imparted the Great Commission to His disciples, which included the following:

**"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).**

It is important to note the order here that the Lord *Himself* commanded. He says, he that believes (faith) and is water baptized (works) *shall be saved*. That's the order plain and simple! Thus God *required* water baptism under this commission for Israelites to be saved. Water baptism symbolized the washing away of their sins. If they refused to submit to this water ceremony it demonstrated their *unbelief*, as the following passage substantiates:

"For I say unto you, among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist....And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. **But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him**" (Luke 7:28-30).

*To Be Continued!* 

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## Endnotes

1. Bibliography: *Studies in Romans* by Edward Drew.
2. *Romans* by C. R. Stam, *Berean Bible Society*, Germantown, WI, pp. 101,103.

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The following is the latest installment in our series of articles drawn from Pastor Stam's classic work on *True Spirituality*. Since this book never appeared as a series in the *Searchlight*, many of even our long-time readers may not be familiar with these selections.

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## The Relation of True Spirituality to the Word of God, Cont'd

### PAUL'S FOURFOLD CLASSIFICATION OF THE HUMAN RACE

By Cornelius R. Stam

#### THE CARNAL CHRISTIAN

How often have we all been reminded of the exhortation of the Apostle Peter: "*Desire the sincere [pure] milk of the Word!*" But how seldom have these words been emphasized *in their relation to the rest of the verse*:

**"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Pet. 2:2).**

How often have preachers of the gospel used as their motto the words of Paul to the Corinthians: "*For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified!*" (I Cor. 2:2). "Christ crucified," they think, is the very acme of Christian truth, when in fact it is but the very beginning, the foundation, for the apostle goes on to write in this same passage:

**"Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect [mature]..." (I Cor. 2:6).**

How many there are, even among those who have known Christ for years, who boast about believing the Bible but show little or no desire to *understand* it!

Rather than *study* to attain to a better understanding of the Word of God and become such as know how to *wield* "the Sword of the Spirit," they boast that they have gotten no farther than "the simple things." To them the Bible is actually little more than a fetish; a mystical book containing many wonderful comforting passages. They give the curses and difficult passages but passing glances and choose for their meditation and discussion only those which "warm their hearts."

The Bible itself calls such people *carnal*, or *fleshly* (Gr., *sarkikos*). They possess the Spirit, but *walk* after the flesh, with little interest in learning what the Spirit would have them know. They have been born of God but have not *grown*. They are not actually babes, for they have been saved long enough to have grown to spiritual maturity, but having failed to grow they must be dealt with "*as babes.*" It was among *such* that the apostle determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified (I Cor.

2:2 cf. 3:1-4). The natural man, of course, cannot take in even this. The carnal Christian, like the babe in Christ, can take in the fact that Christ died for him but can digest little more than this. To such the apostle wrote, by inspiration:

**“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.**

**“I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able” (I Cor. 3:1,2).**

**“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat [solid food].**

**“For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the Word of righteousness: for he is a babe” (Heb. 5:12,13).**

## RETARDED GROWTH

What joy and fellowship there is in gatherings where the newly-saved are present! In the spiritual realm, as well as in the physical, *everyone loves a baby!* But the joy that fills the hearts of loving parents is turned to bitter sorrow and disappointment if their babe fails to grow. The latter condition is as unspeakably sad and embarrassing as the former is joyous. Just so it is in the realm of the spirit.

The carnal Christian has failed to grow. He continues in a state of protracted infancy. He must be kept exclusively on a milk diet because, though saved for years,

he is still unable to “bear” solid food, still “unskilful in the Word” and needing to be taught the elementary things.

## THE EVIDENCES OF RETARDED GROWTH

Retarded spiritual growth is evidenced in many ways, all of which come under the heading of carnality or fleshliness. The Corinthians, so sternly rebuked for their carnality by the Apostle Paul, are said to have been careless about morals (I Cor. 5:1), puffed up (I Cor. 4:18; 5:2), inconsiderate of each other (I Cor. 6:1-7; 8:1,9,12), stingy (II Cor. 8:6-11; 11:7-9). While possessing the Spirit, they *walked* after the flesh.

**“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness.**

**“Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,**

**“Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup>**

**“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,**

**“Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (Gal. 5:19-23).**

One of the most marked indications of retarded spiritual growth is self-interest and party strife, as seen in the case of the Corinthian believers. They were spiritually small and petty, so that the apostle had to write them:

**“For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?”**

**“For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos;<sup>2</sup> are ye not carnal?”** (I Cor. 3:3,4).

It is not without significance that Peter’s exhortation to “new-born babes” to “desire the sincere milk of the Word” that they may “grow thereby,” is prefaced by the words: “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings” (I Pet. 2:1).

Similarly the Apostle Paul writes:

**“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,**

**“With all lowliness, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;**

**“Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

**“There is one Body...”** (Eph. 4:1-4).

We do well to give heed to these admonitions today, with the professing Church divided into hundreds of denominations. To think or talk in terms of “my church” or “our church,” rather than “*the Church*”; to consider only self and party, is a sign of spiritual immaturity. It is childish and petty, and sincere believers should grow up from such an attitude.

In connection with this the apostle writes to the Corinthians: “*Are ye not carnal and walk as men?*” i.e., as other men, in their natural, unsaved state. This aptly

sums up the condition of the carnal Christian. He is saved, but *walks*, in many respects, as the unsaved about him. Put him among a group of unsaved people, and it will be difficult to tell the difference. Fortunately, we are told in II Timothy 2:19 that “*the Lord knoweth them that are His,*” but this passage goes on to say: “*AND, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*” Thank God, the simplest of believers are no longer “the children of wrath, even as others,” but believers who “walk as men” will surely suffer loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

## **THE CAUSE OF RETARDED GROWTH**

In the physical realm retarded growth may be due to some mishap or may be simply one of the results of the curse, having no direct bearing on the behavior of the parents, and certainly not of the child itself. In the spiritual realm this is not so. God has made abundant provision for every child of God to grow to spiritual manhood, and Paul rebukes the Corinthian believers for *not* having grown.

The trouble with the Corinthians was that they did not have much of an appetite for the Word; they did not have a passion to know and obey the truth, for the babe in Christ who “*desires*” the pure milk of the Word will surely “*grow thereby.*” This was the trouble with the Hebrew believers too, for when the apostle would have gone further into the great subject of Christ as “an high priest

after the order of Melchisedec," he was forced to write:

**"Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull [Gr., Nothros, slothful] of hearing"** (Heb. 5:11).

And this is precisely the cause of the carnality among believers today.

During World War II there were several occasions when parents came to the writer with letters from their sons in the armed forces, explaining that a code had been arranged by which "Johnny" could let them know to which theatre of the war he had been sent, but that now it was difficult to understand his letter. Together we would sit down and study the letter in detail in an effort to make out exactly what it was that "Johnny" was trying to make his parents understand.

Such interest and concern over a letter from "Johnny"! and appropriately so, but do the majority of believers show such interest in *the Word of God to them*? Are they as deeply concerned to understand its contents as they would be over a letter from "Johnny"? They are not. They are satisfied with "the simple things," with knowing only a few passages which "warm their hearts." This is what is back of their spiritual immaturity and their carnality.

## **BELIEVERS RESPONSIBLE TO GROW**

Let us put it down, then, and never forget it: *God holds us responsible to grow to spiritual maturity through sincere and diligent study of His Word.*

To the newly saved He says:

**"Desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby"** (I Pet. 2:2).

**"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"** (II Pet. 3:18).

To those who have been saved for some time He says:

**"Ye ought to be teachers"** (Heb. 5:12).

To *all* He says:

**"For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the Word of righteousness: for he is a babe.**

**"But strong meat [solid food] belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

**"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine [Gr., Word of the beginning] of Christ, let us go on unto perfection [maturity]..."** (Heb. 5:13-6:1).

**"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to an fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;**

**"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ"** (Eph. 4:14,15).

## **THE SPIRITUAL CHRISTIAN**

**"But he that is spiritual judgeth [discerneth] all things, yet he himself is judged [discerned] of no man.**

**"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ"** (I Cor. 2:15,16).

From the above passage alone it is evident that the spiritual

Christian stands far above the carnal Christian or the babe in Christ—certainly above the natural man—as far as *spiritual discernment* is concerned. He discerns all things, yet none can discern him, for he is spiritually above them. “*For who,*” asks the apostle, “*can understand the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?*”

“...let this ‘one thing’ be given its rightful place and all the rest will follow naturally.”

Through diligent, prayerful study of the Word, and with a sincere desire to obey it, the spiritual man has come to understand God and to know His Son more and more intimately. Babes in Christ and carnal believers cannot “judge” or “discern” him, simply because they have not come to know *God* as he. But he, having grown to spiritual maturity, quite understands *them*, for he has “the mind of Christ.” He is among those of whom it is written:

**“But strong meat [solid food] belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:14).**

Thus there is a great difference between the mere *child* of God and the *man* of God. The immature child of God can digest the milk of the Word and pass *that* on to others, but he must necessarily come far short of God’s will for him. But of the *man* of God we read:

**“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;**

**“That the man of God may be perfect [complete] thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Tim. 3:16,17).**

## THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD

But what is this “*meat,*” this “*solid food*” of the Word? What are these “*deep things of God,*” this “*wisdom,*” that Paul proclaimed to the spiritually mature?

The apostle gives us the answer himself when he says:

**“Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect [mature]; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:**

**“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery...the hidden... which God ordained before the world unto our glory” (I Cor. 2:6,7).**

The “wisdom” which Paul made known to mature believers, then, concerned “*the mystery,*” the secret of God’s eternal purpose and of all His good news; the most precious and exalted truth in all the Word of God.

The apostle says of this great body of truth that believers are established by it (Rom. 16:25) that God would have His saints know the riches of the glory of it (Col. 1:27) that it knits hearts together in love and gives the full assurance of *understanding* (Col. 2:2). He calls it “the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. 3:8) and prays for open doors and an open mouth to proclaim it (Eph.

6:19,20; Col. 4:3,4) and open minds and hearts to receive it (Eph. 1:15-23; 3:14-21). Naturally, the devil hates it and those who stand for it will, like Paul, have to suffer for it (II Tim. 2:8,9; Eph. 6:10-20) but such suffering is sweet—"the fellowship of *His* suffering."

But alas, the vast majority of Christians are too willing to wait until they get to heaven to understand these glorious truths, not realizing that their indifference to the written Word of God will cost them dearly in rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. How many there are who suppose that the apostle is referring to heaven when he says:

**"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (I Cor. 2:9).**

But Paul does not refer to heaven here. He refers to truths *now made known*, for he goes on to say:

**"But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:10).**

It is not with respect to heaven, but with respect to the riches of God's mercy to all under the present dispensation of the Mystery, that the apostle exclaims:

**"For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.**

**"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:32,33).<sup>3</sup>**

## SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

We have already seen that it is honest, prayerful study of the Word, not some emotional religious experience, that brings us to spiritual maturity and understanding. But does it not require superior intellectual powers to understand these "deep things of God?" No indeed. Superior intellects of unsaved men are unable to appreciate even the "simple" truths of the Word, for, as we have already seen, "*they are spiritually discerned*" (I Cor. 2:14). And as to the mystery, the apostle wrote that it was "revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets *by the Spirit*" (Eph. 3:5).

"...it is honest, prayerful study of the Word... that brings us to spiritual maturity and understanding."

The mystery is not merely something more difficult to grasp intellectually, for the apostle specifically states that it is "*not* the wisdom of this world" but "the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 2:6,7) and that only by the Spirit of God can it be understood and appreciated. This explains why many of the humblest believers rejoice in the mystery and understand it so clearly, while so many great theologians and religious leaders fail to grasp it and keep confusing it with God's prophesied program regarding the *kingdom* of Christ.



The mystery is not “hard to be understood” because men are slow of *mind* to *understand*, but because they are “slow of *heart* to *believe*,” because the devil, who “hath blinded the minds of them that *believe not*” also seeks to keep God’s people from seeing and rejoicing in the truth of the mystery with its riches of grace, its “one body” and its “one baptism.” This is why the apostle prayed so fervently that the believers to whom he ministered might be given “*spiritual understanding*” to take in the glorious message he was commissioned to proclaim:

**“[I] cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;**

**“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you *the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him:***

***“The eyes of your understanding [Lit., heart] being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling and...the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,***

**“And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe...” (Eph. 1:16-19 cf. Col. 1:9,10,26-2:3).**

## **WHERE DO WE STAND?**

As we bring this part of our study to a close, a few basic questions are in order.

If carnal Christians “walk as men” rather than as Christ, is the Church today mostly carnal or spiritual? If divisions among believers evidence carnality, is the Church today mostly carnal or spiritual? If the mystery revealed

through Paul cannot be appreciated by carnal believers, but only by the spiritual, is the Church today mostly carnal or spiritual?

Here we must be careful, for the best of us must humbly acknowledge that we are as yet far from having attained to *full* spiritual maturity, and must say with Paul: “*Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect*” (Phil. 3:12).

In the light of this shall we not join the apostle in prayer for ourselves and for the whole household of faith, and shall we not add hard work to earnest prayer, that we may indeed stand approved of God, workmen who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth?

***“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”*** (Eph. 4:13).

## **THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF GOD’S WORD TO THE BELIEVER**

Since, as we have seen, an interest in the Word of God and an understanding of it are the first and surest signs of true spirituality, it is evident that the Bible will always have first place in the life of the spiritual Christian.

It is of utmost importance that we understand this, for some who *feel* themselves quite spiritual give much time to prayer, but little, if any, to the study of the Word. Such have actually fallen for the subtle trick of the adversary to play upon their natural human pride and

cause them to exalt self and push God into the background.

In saying this we do not for one moment minimize the importance of prayer, as we will prove when we discuss the subject later on; we only stress the *supreme* importance of the holy Word of God. In this we are surely Scriptural, for David says, by inspiration:

***“For thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy name” (Psa. 138:2).***

Of those who would still object and place first emphasis upon prayer rather than upon the Word, we would ask one simple question: Which is the more important, what we have to say to God or what *He* has to say to *us*? There can be but one answer to this question, for obviously what God has to say to us is infinitely more important than anything we might have to say to Him. Our prayers are as fraught with failure as *we* are, but the Word of God is infallible, immutable and eternal.

Yet some, having fallen for one of Satan’s “devices” and feeling quite spiritual about it, are like the talkative person to whom one listens and listens, occasionally nodding his head, but receiving little or no opportunity to “get a word in edgewise.” *They* do all the talking; *God* does all the listening.

They expect God to pay close attention to their prayers, but show little interest in *His* Word.

### **THE ONE ESSENTIAL THING**

The place of the Word in the life of the believer is settled once

and for all in the inspired record of one of our Lord’s visits to the home of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42). Commentaries on this passage generally point out that *both* Mary and Martha had their good points! This, of course, is true, but if we limit ourselves to this observation we rob the account of its intended lesson, for our Lord did *not* commend both sisters for their “good points.” He reproved Martha and commended and defended Mary with regard to *one particular matter*.

What, exactly, was Mary commended for? How often she has been portrayed as an example to us to spend more time with the Lord in prayer! But this is missing the point of the passage again. Mary was not praying; she “*sat at Jesus’ feet, and HEARD HIS WORD.*” She just sat there, drinking in all He had to say. This was “*the one essential thing*” which Mary had “*chosen*” and which our Lord said was not to be “taken away from her.” Thus, while prayer and testimony and good works all have their importance in the life of the believer, *hearing God’s Word* is “*the one essential thing*” above all others. Indeed, let this “one thing” be given its rightful place and all the rest will follow naturally.

It is granted, of course, that we must even study the Word prayerfully and with open heart, or it will have disastrous, rather than beneficial results, but this only goes to place still further emphasis upon the supreme importance of the Word of God, which we seek, by sincere and prayerful study, to understand and obey.

## RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD

It must not be supposed, however, that it is enough to use the Bible as a grand book of wonderful sayings from which we may choose what we wish for our inspiration, nor will one who truly realizes that “God hath spoken” ever hold so shallow an opinion of the sacred Scriptures.

“The Word of truth” must be “rightly divided”; for while it is all given for our spiritual profit, it was not all addressed *to us*, nor written *about us*. Thus one who truly desires to understand and obey God’s Word will seek first to determine what Scriptures are particularly related to him and will study all the rest in the light of these.



Sad to say, however, there are many who fail to give the Book of God the respect and reverence it deserves. They flip it open at random, let a finger light upon the open page and then read the verse indicated to see if perchance they may find leading from the Lord in that way. And if it doesn’t “work” the first time they try it again and again until it *does* “work.”

They use “promise boxes” in the same way, on the basis that “every promise in the Book is mine.” A mother begins her day by taking a promise out of the box. She reads:


*“Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day” (Psa. 91:5).* Her brow, wrinkled in apprehension, she murmurs to herself: “Oh dear, I wonder what’s going to happen today!” After further reflection, however, she comforts herself as she remembers that the verse said: “Thou shalt not be afraid”!

They take passages out of their contexts, “spiritualize” them, and give them “private interpretations.” Finding “precious passages” anywhere at all, no matter to whom addressed or when or why, they place their own constructions upon them and claim them as promises of God *to them!*<sup>4</sup> To take isolated statements from the writings of men and use them in such a manner would be considered dishonest, but even Bible teachers do it with the Word of God!

They say: “*If it’s in the Bible I believe it!*” while even the most superficial examination of the Bible will reveal that it records many lies of men and Satan, that much of it is not addressed to us but to those of other dispensations, and that therefore things *commanded* in one passage may be positively *forbidden in another* (E.g., Cf. Gen. 17:14 with Gal. 5:2).

The Word, rightly divided, is of supreme importance to the Church at large as well as to the individual believer, and it is because this fact has not yet been sufficiently recognized that we have not experienced the true, heaven-sent spiritual revival that the Church so sorely needs.

How much is said about “praying down” a revival; how little

about the relation of Bible study to revival! In many cases the “revivalist” asks his hearers to raise their hands to indicate how many have spent one hour, one half-hour or fifteen minutes a day in prayer. But when has the reader last heard one inquire how many of his hearers have spent one hour, one half-hour or fifteen minutes a day in the study of God’s Word? 

### Endnotes

1. Obviously this does not mean that the saved who indulge in these things are therefore lost, for God counts us as perfect in Christ (Eph. 1:6; Col. 2:10). After a similar list the apostle says to the failing Corinthian believers: “*And such were some of you: but ye are washed...in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*” (I Cor. 6:11). This is why we should desire with all our hearts to please and honor Him.

2. As though Paul and Apollos were rivals.

3. The phrase “past finding out” is the very same in the original as “unsearchable” in Ephesians 3:8, where the apostle has been unfolding the mystery of the Body of Christ.

4. Some time ago the writer received a circular letter from a missionary in Africa, using the following Scripture passage as a heading: “*And behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land*” (Gen. 28:15). The body of the letter contained these words: “During this year of furlough we claim, and have claimed, the above promise...For us, ‘this land’ is Africa.” Clearly, the passage in Genesis records God’s promise to bring Jacob back to Canaan, *not* to bring a missionary back to Africa. The missionary may have *felt* that the promise applied to him in some way but in reality he was perverting the Word and *claiming* from God a promise which He had not made. See the author’s booklet entitled: *Your Faith in God’s Word; Is it Superstitious or Intelligent?*



## Spotlight on Grace Churches

This month’s church is:

### Grace Bible Church

**Location:** 1928 Colony Court, Beloit, Wisconsin 53511

**Pastor:** Matthew Ritchey

**Services:** 9:45 a.m. Sunday School  
11:00 a.m. Morning Worship  
6:30 p.m. Evening Service

**Additional ministries:** Wednesday evenings: *Coached by Christ* at 6:45 p.m. and Youth Group at 6:30 p.m. Thursday evenings: Bible Study and Prayer at 7:00 p.m. (Alternate locale, please call for information).

**Contact information:** Church: (308) 362-3744; Pastor: (262) 306-0427, or e-mail: [mattyhoss@juno.com](mailto:mattyhoss@juno.com).

**Our mission:** To glorify God; To reach individuals for Christ; To edify and establish believers; To help all men see the fellowship of the Mystery.

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Our good friend Fred Lewis has long had a burden to have a better grasp of the End Times. During his years of searching for the truth one thing became evident: there were so many differing views on the subject that it left him wondering if anyone could find their way through the maze of confusion. It wasn't until he came to see the Word, rightly divided that the veil was lifted from the eyes of his understanding. Since his retirement as a financial advisor, Fred has been busy sharing what he has discovered with anyone who will listen. The following is the *Preface* to his soon-to-be-released work entitled: *Understanding the Bible and End Times*. —Pastor Sadler

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## Understanding the Bible and End Times

By Frederick E. Lewis

Permit me to preface this book with part of my personal story. I was raised in a Baptist Church and my wife, of over forty years, in a Lutheran Church. When we were first married we would alternate between the two churches as we lived in the same city in which we grew up. After a stint in the military, the children started to come and we visited new churches to find a single church home. This went on for about twelve years and during that time I began to have an interest in studying about End Times, known as *eschatology*.

During the late 70's, I read a book by Hal Lindsey titled *Late Great Planet Earth* and it was helpful in kindling my interest. As I would try to study in the various churches we visited I discovered that there was a wide variety of opposing views concerning what the Bible taught about End Times. I was still a few years away from coming to a knowledge of the *mystery* given to the apostle Paul by direct revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Basically, I found two main systems of theology, covenant and dispensational. Covenant theology centers around the belief that God has but one overall program in dealing with us and it tends to spiritualize many passages that the dispensationalists take as literal. Dispensational theology includes a belief that God has changed the program from time to time in dealing with us.

On the covenant side you have amillennialism, where it's believed that the kingdom promised to Israel is occurring now in the spiritual realm, and there isn't to be a literal earthly kingdom set up in the future. Under this covenant system there would be no *rapture* of the church prior to the end and the majority of the events of the Book of Revelation are taken to be fulfilled in a spiritual setting only. My wife's upbringing in the Lutheran Church embraces this type of interpretation.

The dispensationalists, on the other hand, believe in a literal earthly kingdom established after the *rapture* of the church and the period of time known as the *tribulation*, when the Book of Revelation events will be literally played out. My Baptist upbringing embraces this type of interpretation.

As I was wrestling with trying to sort out the above, some friends invited my wife and me to their baptismal ceremony as they were joining a new church. At that service we met the preacher of their new church, which turned out to be a non-denominational church, that was on the covenant side of interpretation. We ended up joining that church in the early 1980's. The preacher was a great teacher and we had a good sized Bible study that met each week for years. Without that Bible study I would never have learned how the covenant side worked.


As I studied I realized that what I was learning was very different from what I was taught growing up, but I couldn't seem to find a way to understand what the Bible really taught on End Times and many other issues. For example, I was water baptized by immersion when I was ten years old after making a public statement that I wanted to trust Christ for my salvation. My wife, on the other hand, was water baptized by sprinkling as an infant. The new church believed that water baptism by immersion was a necessary act for anyone wanting to trust Christ for salvation and my wife and kids were all water baptized in this fashion (they also were water baptized by sprinkling as infants).

After about five years at the new church, I had studied about everything I could get my hands on regarding End Times and many other topics. At this time I began reading the Bible through cover to cover to see if I could figure out which system of interpretation fit the Scriptures.

A friend of mine, Dave, called me one day about one to two years after my starting to read the Bible on a daily basis. He said he had an idea he wanted to run by me. When we were together he seemed more serious than I usually saw him and said he had something to share that he didn't know with whom else he could share it with but me. Over the years, he and I had talked extensively concerning matters of the Bible, and through the Bible studies we both attended he came to know the Lord.

He related a story to me that took him back to his younger school-days. As the story went he had run away from home, due to a disagreement, by hitchhiking from Michigan to Indiana. On one of the rides he received, somehow his wallet worked its way out of his pocket and was undiscovered by Dave until it was too late. Through a series of events his father drove down to pick him up and he was homeward bound still with no wallet. After being back home for a few days a package arrived containing his missing wallet. It turned out that the driver was a local pastor, who found the wallet, was able to get an

address from its contents, and mail the wallet back to him along with a Bible tract titled, *Simple As Can Be* by Cornelius Stam. Dave was delighted to get the wallet back and took the tract, without reading it, and zipped it into the Bible he received when he was confirmed a few years before at his local church.

After over twenty years, and during a move to a different house, the zippered Bible showed itself and Dave realized that he hadn't opened that Bible in over twenty years. When he did the Bible tract popped out and this time he read it and called me for the meeting mentioned earlier. Our conversation over lunch centered on the concepts in that tract, which outlined a system of Bible interpretation that takes into consideration the idea that God changed the program of his dealings with mankind about midway through the Book of Acts. At that point God essentially concluded the kingdom program temporarily and ushered in a new program, known as the *mystery*, through the apostle Paul. The complete changeover to the new program took about thirty years as Paul was receiving direct revelations concerning the new program from the ascended Lord Jesus Christ. This system of Bible interpretation is dispensational except that it recognizes that the current church, the body of Christ, began in the mid part of the Book of Acts and not as most view its start in the first part of Acts. The significance of the mid Acts position is that the truth of the distinctive message and ministry of the apostle Paul is recovered. When you view his letters, as such, all the confusion disappears that occurs when you mix the previous kingdom program with the current one, known as the *mystery*, communicated to him. It took some time to discover the broad and sweeping nature of this new program, but it has led me to a much clearer understanding of topics such as End Times and others. 



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If you are interested in reading *Understanding the Bible and End Times*, republication, contact Brother Lewis at [fredjanun@brucetel.net](mailto:fredjanun@brucetel.net).

## The Importance of Literature

If this story of a dispensational booklet bearing fruit *twenty years* after it was given to someone has challenged you to become a disseminator of Grace literature, we offer 20% off on any order of 25 or more of Pastor Stam's booklets of the same title.

# In Loving Memory

By Paul M. Sadler

On November 13th Pastor Harland Shriver departed this life to be with Christ. Every so often the Lord sends a very special man to minister to the members of the Body of Christ and Harland was one such man.

Pastor Shriver's first love was preaching Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery. But he also had a burden for lost souls both here and abroad. In addition to serving on the Board of *Things to Come Mission* for over fifteen years, Harland was a fixture at *Rocky Mountain Grace Camp* where the young people just loved him. He faithfully did the work of an evangelist his entire life and only eternity will bear out the countless souls that were saved because he was unashamed of the gospel of Christ. Those who attend our Grace Conferences will all agree that Harland was a natural when it came to song leading. I remember one year at the annual *Berean Bible Fellowship Conference* when he led us in the singing of *How Great Thou Art!* Those of us who were present that evening were lifted into the heavenlies in song.

Pastor Shriver's signature introduction when he walked up to you was always the same: "Let me ask you a question..." He would then always impart a few words of wisdom. I have come across few people in my Christian life that could match his wit and humor. He shared with me one time that when he was born his mother told the doctor that she was going to name him, "Theophilus." The doctor replied, "Why in the world would you want to name your son Theophilus?" Well, she said, "He's the awful-lest thing I've ever seen!" I vividly recall the time when he was preaching on *Paul's Companions* that he referred to Aquila and Priscilla, Paul's fellow-tentmakers as "old sew and sew." "You know," he said, "the ones who were always needling Paul."

Since Harland's passing many have shared with me how Pastor Shriver was their mentor in the faith. He truly loved the Lord and his godly example will long be remembered by those of us who had the privilege of working alongside him. Pastor Shriver was a frequent contributor to the popular devotional guide, *Amazing Grace*. One of the articles he wrote for the magazine appears on the following page. It's fitting that the subject of the article is on the *resurrection*. This was Harland's blessed hope, which was near and dear to his heart.

Harland and his dear wife of 57 years, Virginia, were both dedicated to sharing the gospel in song. When Ginny was at the piano and Harland was on the platform you could be certain that the selection was going to bring honor and glory to our Lord. Thanks, Ginny, for sharing your beloved husband with us all these years. May God richly bless your ministry of music until the trump sounds and we'll all be reunited.





## Resurrection Glory

By Pastor Harland L. Shriver

**“But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?”**

**“Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:**

**“And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:**

**“But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body” (I Cor. 15:35-38).**

A most amazing fact prevails at this very moment! Every God-ward individual who has been “sown” will be bodily resurrected with two likenesses. That one will be in the likeness of our blessed resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, while retaining the identity with which he or she has been known. That is an astounding fact, but it is true.

Seed while scattered may develop in different manners. See Matthew 13. No one can guarantee the outcome of planting seed into the soil. Many factors are in force governing that sowing and growth. But, not so with the body which is entered into the ground, that of a believer.

The believer is said to have been “planted” together in the likeness of Christ’s death.

**“For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection” (Rom. 6:5).**

“Planting” anticipates the sperm of the seed will grow after the outside shell is decayed. The word for “sown” is indeed that “sperm.” Thus, there is perfect identity, since our Lord has insisted in Genesis each seed bears after its kind. So, we anticipate identical likeness with the Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom we have been planted in salvation, as well as the likeness we now bare. What a glorious hope awaits the believer!

This side of heaven, we have the “seed” within us that relieves us of any anxiety about the future. When the funeral is conducted, the sowing occurs. And, there can be no begrudging the home-ward arrived child of God of that glorious day in which both identities shall be actuated. Surely the poet has well voiced this much-longed-for day, when it was offered:

*“O that will be glory for me, Glory for me, Glory for me;  
“When by His grace I shall look on His face,  
“That will be glory for me.”*

**From Australia:**

“We praise God for an understanding of His Word, rightly divided, as the *Searchlight* teaches. Wow! For me personally it has been like being born again a second time. That is to say, we who thought ourselves well-versed in the Word now find ourselves in need of a fresh start, learning how to rightly divide the Word.”

**From Arizona:**

“I must thank you for your time devoted to the edifying of the Body of Christ. Without you, my brother and I would be lost in the world of religious confusion.”

**From California:**

“The May *Searchlight* article on ‘The New Creation’ is open still to Page 14, and will be for the rest of my time here in this institution. I read this page every morning to awaken the new man to put on his armor... ‘Now That I Believe’ is wonderful, most helpful for my tool box. Could you send five copies?” (With a toolbox *and* armor, this brother believes in Nehemiah 4:17!—RK).

**From Florida:**

“Your writings have opened my eyes to teachings that were in error, and I have had to redo several chapters in the book I am writing, which is now at a standstill, as I am having to relearn a lot of things.”

**From the Internet:**

“My father and I have enjoyed these books and I want you to know that one is open where my dad studies every time I come home—and he was skeptical when I first began to study ‘dispensational’ material.”

**From Illinois:**

“Thank you for the gospel tracts written by C. R. Stam.”

**From Alabama:**

“Before I knew the difference between the Kingdom gospel and the gospel of Grace, I stayed very confused biblically. Keep up the great work on right division.”

**From the Internet:**

“This ‘*Two Minutes*’ article is the reason I like Stam so much. So simplistic in approach and so profound in Scripturally-supported conclusions!”

**From Norway:**

“In our church we have had a remarkable development the last five years, where the message of Grace has developed and the gospel according to Paul have been in focus. When it started we had no other reference or contact with other churches that preached this message. Our church has 3,000 members and we are planting new churches nationally and internationally. This message is totally new in Norway and many are now attending our conferences. We call it the ‘new reformation.’ I am one of four associate pastors here.” (Brother Tormod visited *Berean Bible Society* in November, eager to learn about the Grace Movement here. See Page 3 for details.—RK).

**From Colorado:**

“Super site! Added to bookmark. Thanks!”

**From Brazil:**

“I have just finished translating your excellent article, ‘A Sound Mind.’ I cannot express adequately my feelings regarding this article. I have never read an article that so touched me and was at the same time the solution to many problems connected with the ministry here. You have put on paper, in a succinct form, what I have been trying to convey over the years, but in a much broader manner.”

### **From North Carolina:**

“A friend sent me several past issues of the magazine and I am looking forward to receiving it personally.”

### **From Florida:**

“Just a note to say ‘thanks’ again for the *Berean Searchlight*. It’s the best!! Enjoy these articles so much and have for years!!! I’m still introducing people to it—most, not all, accept it.”

### **From the Internet:**

“Thank you for your kind and detailed reply—yet another puzzle has been solved! I thank God for the BBS; there’s sadly very few churches that would give a rightly divided answer to this question, and yet again BBS has.”

### **From Pennsylvania:**

“It was great to see Pastor Sadler at White Sulfur Springs. We so miss the fellowship; poor health keeps us isolated and travel is almost impossible. If you have any men up to the challenges of rural central PA, I’ve been praying for God to send someone for a long time. The tapes are wonderful, but no substitute for a real person.”

### **From California:**

“It is amazing how timeless and refreshing rightly divided truth is.”

### **From Tennessee:**

“Thanks for the access to your wisdom. Most do not care about such things, but I cannot truly settle into things that I cannot at least have some idea as to what they mean. I spent most of my life with no hunger for my own understanding, I was content with what everyone told me. Not anymore.”

### **From Indiana:**

“Amazing, truly amazing the grasp you have on Scripture. I hope some day I can be as developed to answer the questions posed to me as I have posed to you. Thanks again.” (It is our privilege to carry on II Timothy 2:2.—RK).

### **From Arkansas:**

“Please send the *Searchlight* to my special friend and pray that God will give him more understanding. Over 30 years ago he was used to reveal to me the claims of Christ and God brought me to Himself. About 10 years ago another friend was used to encourage me to rightly divide the Word of God, and through your ministry and prayer, God opened my eyes and provided an understanding of Paul’s Gospel. What a difference it makes when we approach the Scriptures from a dispensational perspective. To God be the glory. Thank you for standing fast.”

### **From Florida:**

“I just recently started doing some studying on grace and dispensationalism, and I am amazed at what the Lord is teaching me. Now after rightly dividing the Word of truth as II Timothy 2:15 says, I find myself learning and understanding things I never knew or heard about. I am writing you because I received this address from a book called *Things That Differ*. I would like to receive any information or teachings you may have concerning this subject to help me in any way.”

### **From Pennsylvania:**

“I have enclosed my check for...I wish I could afford to send you much more. Your literature is such a blessing to me!”

“These [Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” —Acts 17:11

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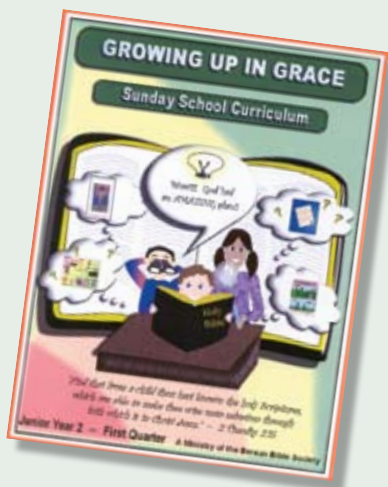
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# Growing Up in Grace Sunday School Curriculum

“And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation...” (II Timothy 3:15).



## What is Growing Up in Grace?

First introduced in September of 2004, *Growing Up in Grace* is a Sunday School Curriculum that is being used of God to instruct our young ones in the Grace message in both church and home settings. The targeted age group of the first three-year series is 9-11.

## What do I receive?

For **\$60.00 for churches** or **\$48.00 for single families (plus \$4.00 shipping)**, you receive a complete teacher's manual for 13 lessons (one quarter). Each individual lesson contains the following: a main lesson, outline, suggested memory verse, visual aids, object lessons, learning and review activities, a continuing story, master activity sheet, gospel presentation, and application.



## What is different about this curriculum?

*Growing Up in Grace* **does not mix law and grace.** We *first* seek to learn the commandments and promises of our Lord in today's dispensation of Grace, and *then* understand and apply all Scripture in this light.

## What are the topics in the three-year series?

Year One is a birds-eye view focusing on 39 of the major *events* of the Bible. Year Two focuses on 39 main *characters* of the different dispensations in Scripture, creating a simple time-line. And Year Three explores the differences and similarities in *doctrines* taught between the Prophetic and Mystery programs. Stand-alone summer quarters are also currently being developed.

## What do I need to do to place an order?

You may place an order by writing us at: *Berean Bible Society*, PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022, or by calling: (262) 255-4750, or through our website: [www.growingupingrace.com](http://www.growingupingrace.com).

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# NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**December's Acrostics and Puzzles Answer:** "Manger."

**New Pastor:** BBI student Matt Ritchey has accepted a call to the ministry from *Grace Bible Church* of Beloit, Wisconsin. Matt is already hard at work in the ministry, but plans to finish his last remaining semester at *Berean Bible Institute* before graduating and moving to the Beloit area with his wife Jennifer, and their three children, Isaac, Noah and Jonas. See the *Spotlight on Grace Churches* on Page 20 for more information about *Grace Bible Church*.

**New Bible Study:** Captain Fred Bates of the ROTC teaches a Bible study that meets in his home on Mondays at 7:00 p.m. Captain Bates is also an assistant instructor at Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky. Although this new study group consists mostly of students, all are welcome. For more information, contact Brother Fred at [fred.bates@murraystate.edu](mailto:fred.bates@murraystate.edu).

**New Couple:** Paul Craesmeyer and Mariana Deolinda were married October 1st in their hometown of Tijucas, Brazil. Paul is a recent graduate of *Berean Bible Institute*, and is presently concluding his internship from BBI in Araraquara under Pastor Claudio. The groom's parents, Missionaries Bernardo and Carol, parents of seven boys, now have a daughter in Mariana, and Paul's grandparents, Missionaries Warren and Shirley Keiper, have a legacy for which they are exceedingly thankful.

**New Baby:** Peter and Jessica Fries welcomed their firstborn into the world on November 12th. The Fries live in Black River Falls, Wisconsin, and little Priscilla Rose is their delight, and the darling of new grandparents Joel and Linda Finck. Joel trained Peter for the ministry, and he is now serving as the pastor of *Grace Bible Church* in Black River Falls.

**New Twins:** Pastor Paul Turner and his wife Rebecca were doubly blessed recently with the arrival of Elizabeth Faith and Lydia Grace on September 20th. Paul is currently pastoring *Grace Bible Church* in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and will graduate from *Berean Bible Institute* in May.

**Our cover this month** features a photo taken by Ken and Barb Wardius, a couple who travel extensively throughout the state of Wisconsin in search of unique photo opportunities. You can view some of their impressive gallery of photographs on various themes and you can e-mail them with any questions at their website: [www.crestwoodcreek.com](http://www.crestwoodcreek.com).

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\*Our cover lighthouse photo was taken by Ken & Barb Wardius. The *Sherwood Point Lighthouse* in Door County, WI was built in 1883 and automated in 1983. It was the last manned light on the Great Lakes.

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who does not clearly recognize the grand distinction between  
Israel and the Church of God.”

—C. H. Mackintosh

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