



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Sample Issue

Paul's Gospel

by – William R. Newell (1868-1956)

“**T**his is a clear treatise on the truth of God for this age. The author was one of America's greatest Bible expositors. It glorifies the Savior as the author desired it to do. It should be distributed by hundreds of thousands.” – Lewis Sperry Chafer (1871-1952)

Paul's Gospel

There are two great revelators, or unfolders of Divine Truth in the Bible – Moses and Paul.

Someone may say, “Is not Christ the Great Teacher?” In a sense this is true; but in a real sense Christ is the Person taught about, rather than teaching. The law and the prophets pointed forward to Christ; the epistles point back to Him. Christ Himself, therefore, is the theme of the Bible. Moses reveals human sin, and the utter hopelessness and helplessness of man. Paul in his great epistles reveals Christ as our Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption, and All in All.

The twelve Apostles were to be the “witnesses” (Acts 1:22) of Christ's resurrection – that is, the fact of it. They were not to unfold fully the doctrine of it, as Paul was.

Just as God chose Moses to be the revelator to Israel of all connected with the Law dispensation; so God chose Saul of Tarsus to be the revelator and unfolders of the great body of doctrine for this age; those mighty truths connected with our Lord's death, burial, and resurrection, and His ascended Person. And all the “mysteries” or “secrets”

revealed to God's people in this dispensation by the Holy Ghost are revealed by Paul. Finally, Paul is the unfolders of the great company of God's elect, called the Church, the Body of Christ, the individuals of which body are called members of the Body of Christ – members of Christ Himself.

No other Apostle speaks of these things. Peter himself had to learn them from Paul (II Peter 3:15-16). It pleased God to choose Paul to be the great proclaimer and revealer of just what the Gospel is for this dispensation.

You can judge any man's preaching or teaching by this rule – Is he Pauline? Does his doctrine start and finish according to those statements of doctrine uttered by Paul, the apostle?

Paul is the declarer and revealer of the Gospel to us. Paul is the great divinely chosen opener to us of truth for this age.

The great doctrines that Paul reveals may be outlined as follows:

1. **The unrighteousness** before God of all men.
2. **The impossibility of justification by works** before God – that is, of any man's attaining a standing of righteousness before God, by anything done by him.
3. The fact and the scripturalness of **righteousness on the free gift principle**

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Dear Beloved of the Father.

Greetings in the glorious grace and the wonderful name of our precious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Welcome to this special sample issue of the *Bible Student's Notebook*™ (*BSN*). We count it a great joy to be able to serve you through these printed pages. It is our prayer that these small efforts will be used of God to strengthen His dear saints, and bring glory to Him.

We have been actively involved in publishing biblical periodicals for over 30 years. I was the editor of four publications prior to the *BSN* – *The Biblical Standard* (1976-1980), *The Old Paths* (1981-1985), *Forgotten Truths* (1986-1989), and *Grace Testimony* (1986-1995). I have been the editor of the *Bible Student's Notebook* since its first issue in 1989.

Sharing truth that we have learned from our personal studies has truly been a lifelong passion. Although the *BSN* began only as an occasional publication, it is now published weekly (52 times a year). This special *Sample Issue* contains a collection of past articles from the *BSN*. We trust that these will be especially helpful to you, as they are a few of our personal favorites.

The topics we deal with in the *BSN* are certainly not mainstream. It is always our desire to try to keep an open mind regarding truth. We encourage our readers to be like the Bereans, who “searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11), and to “prove all things” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). This spirit has led us through a lifetime of correcting and adjusting our doctrinal views.

We certainly do not claim infallibility for the contents of the *BSN*. It is simply a platform whereby we can share the things that we currently see with

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Bible Student's Notebook

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Sample

This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the “preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began” (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any “church,” “denomination,” “movement,” “organization” or “mission.”

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PATRIARCHS

Remember that it is our responsibility as husbands and fathers to take the truths we learn from God's Word, the truths that we hold dear, and impart them to our families.

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– that is, of a Divine righteousness, separate from all man’s doings, conferred upon man as a free gift from God.

4. **Propitiation:** That satisfaction of God’s Holy nature and law for man’s sins rendered by Christ’s blood.
5. **Reconciliation:** The removal, by Christ’s death for man of that obstacle to righteousness which man’s sin had set up between God and man.
6. **Justification:** The plan of the actual conferring of the gift of righteousness upon all who believe, without any distinction. The change of a sinner’s standing before God, from one of condemnation to one of righteousness.

Negatively, it is deliverance from guilt on account of Christ’s shed blood, and deliverance out of the old creation, by identification in death with Christ on the cross. Positively, it is a new standing in the risen Christ before God.

7. **Redemption:** the buying back of the soul through the blood of Christ from sin; from the curse of the law, even death, involving exclusion from God, under penalty; from the “power of death,” which involves the hand of the enemy; and from all iniquity.
8. **Forgiveness:** the going forth of Divine tenderness in remitting penalty for sin, in view of the blood of Christ trusted in; and in complacency and fellowship, to creatures who before were necessarily under Divine judgement.
9. **Remission of sins:** that is, the actual removing of transgression or trespass from the sinner, so that for all time and eternity his sin shall not again be upon him.
10. **Identification:** (see above, Justification – #6) the great fact that those who are in Christ

were united with Him at the cross, by God’s sovereign inscrutable act; were crucified with Christ and buried with Him; so that their history is now ended before God; and when Christ was raised up as the First-born of the new creation, they also were raised up with Him, and their history began as new creatures in God’s sight, in Christ, the Last Adam.

Of course, in the experience of the believer, there comes a time when he is actually made partaker of this new life – that point of time when he is, as we say, saved. Nevertheless, the life that is in every believer came up out of the tomb, and it is in Christ Jesus that a man is created anew.

11. **Incorporation:** This tremendous doctrine Paul alone mentions, and he makes it practically the foundation of all his exhortations to the saints with regard to their conduct and life. By “incorporation” we mean the fact that all those who are saved and are new creatures in Christ Jesus become members of one organism, which is more real than the very earth we tread upon, called “the Body of Christ” – Christ Himself in heaven being the Head of this Body, and every real believer a member of it. So that believers are thus members one of another here on earth. No wonder Paul is able to exhort the saints to love one another when they are members one of another! (Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4).
12. **Inhabitation:** The wonderful fact that the Body of Christ and each member of it individually is inhabited, indwelt, by the Holy Spirit.

This mystery is a great and marvelous one, the fact that we are saved, are partakers now of the life of the Lord in glory, and that the Holy Spirit indwells us.
13. **Divine Exhibition** – that is, that through the Church, in the ages to come, is to be made known that which God counts His “riches,”

even His Grace (Ephesians 2:7).

The failure or refusal to discern the Pauline Gospel as a separate and new revelation and not a “development from Judaism,” accounts for two-thirds of the confusion in many people’s minds today as regards just what the Gospel is. Paul’s Gospel will suffer no admixture with works on the one hand or religious pretensions and performances on the other. It is as simple and clear as the sunlight from heaven. The end of man is where God begins Romans 3, at what might be called the opening of the Pauline Revelation. Most unsaved people today believe in their hearts that the reason they are not saved is because of something they have not yet done, some step that remains for them to take before God will accept them. But this is absolutely untrue. When Christ said, “*It is finished,*” He meant that He had, then and there, paid the debt for the whole human race. “*He gave Himself a ransom for all*” (I Timothy 2:6).

Now Paul in his wonderful revelation declares that God hath reconciled the world to Himself; that God was in Christ (at the cross) reconciling the world unto Himself (II Corinthians 5:19). Men do not know this, but they conceive that something stands between them and God, before God will accept or forgive them. If you tell a man that God is demanding no good works of him whatsoever, no religious observances or church ordinances, that God is not asking him to undertake any duties at all, but that God invites him to believe a glad message that his sins have already been dealt with at the cross, and that God expects him to believe this good news and be exceedingly happy about it – if you tell an unsaved man such a story as this, he is astonished and overwhelmed – yet this is the Gospel!

(Available as a 4-page leaflet: 25-Pack (#8902) \$4.⁰⁰; 50-Pack (#8903) \$7.⁰⁰; 100-Pack (#8904) \$10.⁰⁰; 250-Pack (#8905) \$20.⁰⁰) ■

Why Paul?

Unveiling Practical Truth Veiled by Tradition

by – A.A. Sandoz (1888-1974)

PAULINE REVELATION ANSWERS ALL MAJOR QUESTIONS!

The risen Lord (II Corinthians 5:15;) committed to Paul, the apostle (Romans 16:25), the dispensation of grace, dealing with God’s Heavenly purpose “The Body of Christ” (Ephesians 3:2; Colossians 1:25; Ephesians 3:9; I Corinthians 9:17).

In contrast, the dispensation of law was committed to Moses, dealing with Israel and the Nations – God’s earthly purpose. The student of the Bible should not fail to recognize its two major divine purposes. Nothing but confusion can arise from reading into one dispensation that which relates to another (II Timothy 2:15).

As the law of Moses was authoritative over Israel, so Pauline revelation is equally authoritative over

the church, the Body of Christ.

1. **Paul the Chosen Vessel: Why Paul?** Permit Scripture to answer this most crucial question (Acts 9:15-16; 22:14-15, 21; Galatians 1:15-16; Ephesians 3:2, 8-9) – the “*unsearchable riches*” are restricted to Paul’s Gospel.
2. **Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles:** Romans 11:13; 15:16; Acts 22:18-21; I Timothy 2:5-7; II Timothy 1:10-12; I Corinthians 9:1-2; II Timothy 4:16-17. Notice the definite article in the first reference, not merely another of Jesus’ helpers, as taught in many Sunday School curriculums. Paul’s office should not be confused with that of the twelve disciples.

3. **The Gospel of the Grace of God Committed to Paul:** Acts 20:24; Galatians 1:11-12; 2:7; I Timothy 1:11; Titus 1:2-3; I Thessalonians 2:4; I Corinthians 1:18, 23-24; II Corinthians 4:6-7; Colossians 1:28; Ephesians 3:8.
4. **Paul Presents the Gospel of Salvation (by Grace) for the Dispensation of Grace:** Romans 1:16-17; 3:10, 23; 4:4-5; 5:15-19; 6:23; I Timothy 1:15 (c.f. Luke 19:10 – salvation under law, for the Jews); I Corinthians 15:1-4; 1:17-24; II Corinthians 4:3-4; 5:19; 11:3; Ephesians 1:13; 2:8-10; Titus 3:5-8; 2:11-15. Note that all this stands in vivid contrast to the gospel preached by John the Baptist, the Lord Himself on earth, the twelve, Peter at Pentecost of Acts 2, and in the house of Cornelius in Acts 10.
5. **The Mystery (Sacred Secret) God’s Eternal Heavenly Purpose,** revealed to and through Paul the Apostle: Ephesians 3:1-11; 1:4-9; Colossians 1:24-27; Romans 8:28-30; 16:25; II Timothy 1:8-9; I Corinthians 2:6-10. Prophecy and the Mystery are not to be confused, nor the Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 13:11) with the above.
6. **Paul’s “My Gospel”:** Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8. Embracing the Gospel of God’s Grace and the Mystery; God’s secret heavenly purpose, which was kept secret since the world began, was committed to Paul. A glorious message distinct from that of the twelve. Note, in contrast the Gospel of the Kingdom preached by Peter and the eleven (Matthew 9:35; 10:5-10; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 2:36-47; 3:19-21). The heavenly and the earthly are sharply contrasted in the Word of God. If our gospel is not Pauline, it is not the Gospel of the Grace of God.
7. **Paul’s Imprisonment for Proclaiming the Mystery:** Ephesians 6:19-20; Colossians 4:3; II Timothy 2:9.
8. **Paul’s Prayer for All Believers Concerning the Mystery:** which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God; “BUT NOW” – “IN DUE TIME” revealed to and through Paul the apostle: Ephesians 2:1-22; 1:15-23; 3:14-21; Colossians 1:3-6, 9-14; 2:1-3; Philippians 1:3-11; I Thessalonians 1:2-10. All this is in sharp contrast to the “Thy Kingdom Come” prayer of Matthew 6 related to the Legal Dispensation.
9. **Paul’s Unique Ministry, Excerpts:** Acts 22:12-22 (note that Paul was saved under the Law); 26:9-19 (note whom and where persecuted); Romans 5:1-10; 3:21-28; 8:1-17, 31-39; I Corinthians 13; 12:15-19; II Corinthians 3:1 - 4:7; 12:1-10; Galatians 3:1-3; Ephesians 2:4-7; 4:1-6; Philippians 2:5-11; 3:1-9; Colossians 2:1-23; I Timothy 3:1-16. By way of contrast, compare Romans 15:16 with 15:8. Also please observe carefully the dispensational aspects of verses 8-12: the Jews in their future earthly kingdom with the Gentile Nations (c.f. Isaiah 56:8; John 10:16; Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:17-18; Matthew 25:34).
10. **Paul Employs the Term “Begotten” in Connection with Salvation:** I Corinthians 4:14-15; Philemon 10; Galatians 4:19. It should be noted that Paul does not use the term “Born Again,” in harmony with a nation born in a day (Isaiah 66:8).
11. **Paul, the Pattern:** I Timothy 1:15-16; Acts 9:16; Colossians 1:24; Philippians 2:16-18 – c.f. Romans 8:2; 15:16; Philippians 1:21; 3:8-9; Galatians 2:20; 6:14, 17; II Timothy 2:19-22. Note: This is a sharp contrast with that which is set forth in the first chapters of Acts, belonging to another dispensation. The church which is His Body was founded upon Pauline revelation, not a continuation of the kingdom program. Yes, a new divine purpose.
12. **Paul the Wise Master-Builder:** I Corinthians 3:9-11, 16; 6:19; Ephesians

2:20; I Timothy 3:15; Acts 17:24-25. The believers constitute the house of God in the dispensation of Grace, not the meeting place.

13. **Paul Exclusively Refers to the church of God** (in the dispensation of Grace) as the **One Body** and the **Body of Christ**: Romans 12:4; I Corinthians 12:12-13, 27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4, 12; Colossians 1:18, 24. This was the Mystery hidden in God, not hidden in the Scriptures. The Body of Christ should not be confused with the Holy City of Ezekiel 48 and Revelation 21 (*i.e.*, the bride). For Bible doctrine concerning the Church which is His Body we must turn to Pauline revelation alone. As the Scofield Reference Bible (page 1252) so aptly puts it, "In his (Paul's) writings alone we find the doctrine, position, walk, and destiny of the church."

14. **Paul Affirms How Believing Sinners Become Members of the "One Body"**: I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:5; 5:30 (No reference to membership in some human organization. Membership in a church is foreign to Scripture. Pauline truth is opposed to religion: Galatians 3:3; 4:9-11; Colossians 2:6-23; Philippians 3:2-9; II Corinthians 11:3). It is the Holy Spirit who does the baptizing, individually, in response to faith in Christ. In contrast see Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16, and note that in each instance it is the Lord Jesus Himself who is the baptizer, addressed to Israel under another dispensation. The careful student of the Bible will readily observe these distinctions, and not read I Corinthians 12:13 (later revelation) into Acts 2:38. *c.f.* Ephesians 1:4; II Timothy 1:9.

15. **Believer's Identification or Union with Christ**: Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:11-12; Colossians 2:9-10. Note carefully, HIS DEATH BAPTISM, not water baptism. By way of a parallel see I Corinthians 10:1-2. The word baptism does not always imply water baptism. The

believers identification with Christ is the most glorious truth in the Bible and should not be reduced to a mere ritual. Indeed, to do so is to minimize the work of the Cross. All who are thus identified with Christ can say with Paul: "I am crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20); Buried with Christ (Romans 6:4); Raised with Christ (Colossians 2:12); Quickened together with Christ (Colossians 2:13); Seated in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). *c.f.* Ephesians 2:4-7.

16. **Paul's Epistles Alone Reveal the Blessed Hope** of the Redeemed of the Dispensation of Grace: I Corinthians 15:51-52; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Colossians 3:4; Titus 2:13.

17. **Paul says "Follow Me"**: I Corinthians 4:15-17; 11:1; Philippians 3:17; II Timothy 3:10-14; Note carefully these are not merely Paul's words, but God's inspired word directed to us through Paul (I Corinthians 14:37).

18. **Paul's Exhortation "I beseech you"**: Romans 12:1-2; 15:30; 16:17-18; I Corinthians 1:10; 4:16; II Corinthians 6:1; 10:1-2; Ephesians 4:1-6; I Thessalonians 4:1, 9-10; 5:12, 14; Philippians 4:1-2; Philemon 9-10. Surely, there is a great need of getting back to the Pauline concept of exhortation.

19. **The Gospel of the Grace of God Sent to the Gentiles through Paul**, at Israel's Fall: (When? Acts 13:46; 18:5, 6; 28:25-28 – Period of Transition). Israel's fall sent salvation to the Gentiles (Romans 11:11, 15, 30-32). See also Israel's blindness (Isaiah 6:8-10; Jeremiah 5:21; Ezekiel 12:2; Acts 28:26-27; Romans 11:8, 25-27). Notice also the dispensational aspects of Romans 9-11, dealing primarily with the nation of Israel and the Gentile Nations.

20. **Paul's Heavenly Commission, Our Commission**: II Timothy 2:2; II Corinthians 5:14-21; Ephesians 3:9; I Corinthians 1:17).

Compare verse 19 of the II Corinthians passage with Peter's message (under the Kingdom Commission) to the House of Israel in Acts 2:22-23, 36-38; 3:19-26), and note carefully Acts 2:16; 3:18, 24. PROPHETIC, not MYSTERY. The clock of PROPHECY was still ticking at that time.

21. Paul's Healing Power During His Early Ministry:

Acts 14:8-10; 19:11-12; 20:9-12; 28:7-9. After having received God's complete revelation (which completed the Word of God – Colossians 1:25; I Thessalonians 2:13 – the cap-stone of divine revelation), it is evident that he no longer possessed this power (I Timothy 5:23; II Timothy 4:20; Philippians 2:25-27; II Corinthians 4:16-18; 12:8-10). Observe also that James was addressed to the "twelve tribes" (James 1:1) and not to the members of the "Body of Christ." This would eliminate the healers of our day.

22. Paul's Epistles Are Addressed Directly to the Members of the Body of Christ:

I Corinthians 10:11; 14:37; II Timothy 1:13; Galatians 1:20; Romans 15:4. Paul's letters were written for our obedience (Romans 16:25-26). Whereas, "*whatsoever things were written afortime were written for our learning*" (Romans 15:4). Should we not recognize the distinctiveness and authoritativeness of the Pauline revelation?

23. Paul Says "For God is My Witness:"

Acts 22:15; 23:11; Romans 1:9; 9:1; II Corinthians 1:23; 11:31; 12:19; Galatians 1:20; Philippians 1:8; I Thessalonians 2:5, 10; I Timothy 2:7. Should we reject God's Word TO US through His chosen vessel Paul? [As William R. Newell said "To reject Paul's words is to reject Christ. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me' (John 13:20)."]

24. The Popular Expression (as used by many today) "The Great Commission"

found in Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-18; Acts 1:8 has reference to the gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 3:1-2; 4:17, 23; 9:35; 10:5-10). The good news concerning God's purpose (with the nation of Israel and the Gentile Nations); the establishment of a righteous Messianic kingdom on earth in fulfillment of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants (Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1-8; II Samuel 7:8-16; Psalm 89:20-37; Jeremiah 33:17-26; Luke 1:32-33; Acts 15:13-18; Matthew 25:34; Romans 15:8-12). The Kingdom of Heaven is the theme of O.T. prophets (but silent concerning the Mystery); announced, and proclaimed by John the Baptist, by the Lord Himself while on earth, by the twelve, Peter using the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 16:19; 19:28); admitting Israel on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38); and the Gentiles (Acts 10:34-48). Note carefully the terms of salvation in both these instances under the Kingdom commission: repentance and water baptism were requisites for the remission of sins, and water baptism was commanded in connection with Gentile salvation. The Kingdom of Heaven is now in abeyance and the Kingdom gospel suspended, because of Israel's fall. To practice and apply these passages to the dispensation of Grace denies the revelation given to Paul the apostle. Bear in mind that the "*kingdom of heaven*" and the "*body of Christ*" are two distinct divine purposes, and to merge them only veils the truth.

Should this study come into the hands of someone who is in doubt of personal salvation, please read carefully the scriptures in item number four and realize that salvation is a FREE GIFT FROM GOD to anyone who will trust Christ, without works of any kind.

(Available as an 8-page leaflet: 25-Pack (#8802) \$8.⁰⁰; 50-Pack (#8803) \$14.⁰⁰; 100-Pack (#8804) \$20.⁰⁰) ■

The Pauline Epistles

by – W. Leon Tucker (1871-1934)

The Pauline Epistles must be approached and studied as a distinctive body of writings – as distinctive as the dispensation to which they were given. Their matter, their message and their mission determine their distinctive character.

The book of Holy Scripture is an unfolding of the purpose, plan and program of God, from Genesis to Revelation, each book or books equally inspired of God (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21), but each succeeding part adding to the progressive unfolding of God's purpose in the process of revelation.

We insist at once and always that the subject matter of the Scriptures has to do with three classes, *i.e.*, the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God. These are not identical, never have been, and never will be. Kingdom and Church have not a single letter in common. There is no way, logically, etymologically, or theologically to induce them to mean the same thing. The epistles of Paul are addressed to the Church of God, and are as distinct from the other writings as the Church is in her calling and character, conduct and destiny, from Israel and the nations.

The student must face this fact or fail to grasp the meaning of the Book! The saddest fact in the history of the Church is the ignoring of the Church epistles. They are looked upon as but an appendage to the Gospels and Acts as having about as much significance as a footnote to a book and about the same relation incidental when they are fundamental.

In many pulpits there is raised the cry, "back to Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount," while the Spirit expressly directs us to the Epistles until we see "this Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ," risen, glorified, ascended, seated and coming again!

Because of this ignorance, many delusive doctrines have made inroads upon the life and spirituality of the Church.

The International Sunday School Lesson Committee have for years avoided the Epistles, and as a result, have a conception of the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, but little above that of an Emerson or an Eddy! There is a famine for the Word of God, especially for the Epistles.

The Epistles of Paul call us from Jewish ground to heavenly places in Christ Jesus, from the Gospel of the kingdom to the Gospel of the "Grace of God" and the "Glory of God."

With these epistles, the believer finds both his calling and his hope. Of this, multitudes are ignorant. We find we are called to be a heavenly people, and our hope is a heavenly Savior (Philippians 3:20-21; Ephesians 1:18).

If such a revelation came into the consciousness of the children of God everywhere, who could estimate the spiritual results?

There are many dear children of God living "*under the sun*" with every plan and purpose of life going up and out in vanity, vexation and vapor. They know nothing better than Ecclesiastes, and have come to its mournful and melancholy conclusion (Ecclesiastes 12: 13, 14).

Yes, know nothing better than Ecclesiastes, when Ephesians reveals the remedy for an earthbound life in One Who has the purpose and the power to lift out of earthly places "*under the sun*" into heavenly places in Himself! Oh, that we may know the righteousness of Romans, the order of Corinthians, the liberty of Galatians, the calling of Ephesians, the joy of Philippians, the Head of Colossians, the Coming One of Thessalonians, the precious deposit of Timothy, and the glorious appearing of Titus.

(From a lecture given at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles in 1923. *Truth Aflame*, March/April 1991)



The Details of Life

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (I Corinthians 10:31).

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ” (Colossians 3:17-24).

Spirituality, by the design of God, manifests itself in the normal details of life. It is the living out of the details of our life to the honor of the Lord.

We are often led to confuse spirituality with the exciting, unusual, exhilarating, moving, touching, powerful, extraordinary, and amazing events of life.

Yet worship, service, and ministry are to be found in the basic, even “mundane” things of life, such as providing for our families, washing dishes, changing diapers, changing oil, etc., and even in our rest. God rested (Genesis 2:2)! Jesus Christ took leisure (Mark 6:31).

Religious individuals divide the world into two parts: the sacred and the secular. To them it is the difference between the “spiritual” and the “physical.” But the distinction between these two is not so much actions as it is the heart and the spirit in which they are done.

Spirituality involves living out the details of life with purpose (*i.e.*, “intention”), to the honor and glory of God, not just mindless activities (Romans 12:1-2). Faithfulness in the small things of life is vitally important (Luke 16:10).

The religious system attempts to instill in us the drive to “minister” in its own domain. The idea is that we

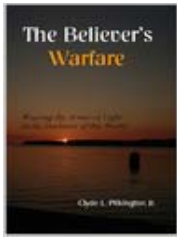
get the other “stuff” out of the way (the “carnal”), so that we can do the really important “things” (the “spiritual”). Instead of spirituality, this is really a system of extreme bondage.

For example, a husband and father, on top of his responsibilities (which are great), is expected to “do the work of the ministry” taking much (if not all) of his valuable “free” time at nights and on weekends for supposed “spiritual life” which is centered in endless religious make-work. Then on top of all this religious busy-ness he is supposed to be the spiritual leader of his home – to personally study and teach his family. When is he to accomplish this? What about spending time resting, and continuing to build bonds with his wife, and playing with the children? Are these “carnal” activities?

The same is true of a wife and mother. The bulk of her work for husband and family is seen as “trivial” and “carnal,” instead of “godly” and “spiritual,” but these too can be done in the spirit of worship and glory to God.

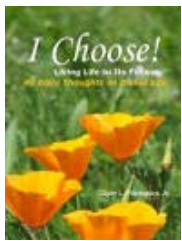
Sometimes we hear statements like, “Funny how life gets in the way of living;” but it is in the details of life that we are able to bring the most glory to God. Spirituality manifests itself in the normal details of life. It is the living out of the details of our life to the honor of the Lord. ■

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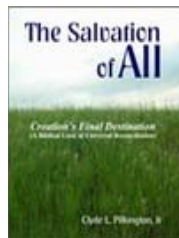
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The Loss and Recovery of Truth

by – E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

When Paul the Apostle preached the good news concerning Christ and His Church at Ephesus, his ministry continued in Asia for the space of two years (Acts 19:10). We read that the Word of God grew mightily and prevailed and that “all they which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus.” And yet, at the close of his ministry and of his life, he writes his last epistle to Timothy. He says, “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand” (II Timothy 4:6). “This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me...” (II Timothy 1:15).

We are told on every hand today that we must go back to the first three centuries to find the purity of faith and worship of the primitive Church!

But it is clear from this comparison of Acts 19:10 and II Timothy 1:15 that we cannot go back to the first century. No, not even to the Apostle’s own lifetime!

This turning away could not have been merely from him personally, but must have included his teaching also. For in chapter 2:18 he speaks of those “Who concerning the truth have erred...” In chapter 3:8 he speaks of those who “resist the truth.” In chapter 4:4 he speaks of those who “turn away their ears from the truth” and are “turned unto fables.”

It was Pauline truth and teaching from which all had “turned away.”

It was this turning away from the truth as

taught by the Holy Spirit through Paul, especially as contained in the epistles to the Ephesians, that led necessarily:

(1) to the loss of the teaching concerning the mystery: that truth concerning the one Body of Christ. The effect of this was at once to put everything wrong ecclesiastically and to make room for all the various and different “bodies,” so-called, with all the consequent divisions and schisms of the church.

Instead of recognizing “the one body” which God had made, men set about making their own “bodies” and sects! With this ecclesiastical confusion came the loss of the truth as to the believer’s perfect standing in Christ as having died and risen in Him.

(2) Next, after this, went the truth of the Lord’s promised return from Heaven and of the resurrection as the one great and blessed hope of the Church. Other hopes, or rather fears, came in their place; and “death and judgment” took the place of those lost hopes. Having lost the truth of what God had made Christ to be unto us, and the joy as to our standing thus given, in looking for that blessed hope, preparation for death and judgment was the necessary result. Therefore,

(3) the next thing to go was the truth as to what God had made us to be in Christ; and “justified by faith” and by grace was lost. The way was now open for the full tide of error to come in; and it came in like a flood, with all the corruption and

superstition that ended in centuries which have the significant description, “the dark ages.”

Everyone is familiar with the term. But what were the dark ages? How did they come? They were not brought on suddenly by some untoward event. There must have been some cause, something that made them possible. The corruption is historical. The Eastern churches today are in similar darkness; and the Western churches, where the Reformation has not removed it, are in the same darkness.

The Reformation itself – what was it but the beginning of a recovery of these great truths? The remarkable fact is that the recovery of these truths has taken place in the inverse order to that in which they were lost.

Justification by grace through faith was the first great truth recovered at the Reformation. This was the truth over which the great battle was fought and won, though the victory was far from complete. For not until the nineteenth century had well begun did the Lord’s return from Heaven begin to become again the blessed hope of His Church. In later years the subject has become more and more precious to increasing numbers. But this great and “blessed hope” is not yet really learned because it ought to be the natural outcome of truth received and held, instead of being treated as an independent subject artificially produced. It must come from the heart into the life, and not be merely held and retained in the head if it is to be productive of the blessed results seen in the Thessalonian church. It must be learned experimentally as a vital and essential part of our standing as believers, and not be studied as if it were an extra subject, in order to produce Thessalonian fruit. Hence, it is that we more often see prophecy taken up as a study, rather than as the result of a waiting for God’s Son from Heaven.

The last of the three truths to be recovered is the truth taught in Ephesians; and it is only in our own day that we see any real sense of the loss, with any real effort to recover it.

The truth of the Mystery, as it was the first to go, so it seems, is the last to be recovered. The cause is that thousands of those who profess to be Christians know little or nothing of the Church Epistles. There is no other profession which they could enter without being able to pass a satisfactory examination in the textbooks set forth for that purpose. There is no position in life that any one could apply for without being asked how much one knew of its duties and responsibilities. But the Christian “profession” is treated in quite a different manner and as quite a different matter. Anyone may undertake that, and all the while be totally ignorant of the Church Epistles “The Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments” are considered as sufficient for Christian position and profession; hence there is the almost total neglect of these Epistles. The four Gospels and the Sermon on the Mount are taken as the essence of Christianity, instead of the Epistles specially addressed to the church. Hence there is the great ignorance of Christians as to all that God has made Christ to be unto His people, and to their standing in Christ, and their completeness and perfection in Him; they are easily led into error concerning their state and their walk. Many know they are justified by grace, yet seek to be sanctified by works.

Nothing but full knowledge of what is revealed for our instruction in the Church Epistles will effectually deliver us from all the new doctrines and schools of thought which find an entrance into our midst.

Church Epistles (1905)

(Excerpts from his book *The Church Epistles*, 261 page hardback book available: Item #4101 [\$23.70, postage paid] 1-800-784-6010)



God's Present Purpose

by – Otis Q. Sellers (1901-1992)

THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE

With the one exception of knowing from the Word that he is a child of God through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, there is no truth that is more important to the believer than to know the present purpose of God. If we are to walk worthily of this position in which God has placed us, we must not be ignorant of this great truth. Many, indeed, are working at counter purposes with Him because they do not know it. There is no experience in knowing, that will bring tranquility of mind, courage of heart, and inward peace like that which comes from realizing and living harmoniously with God's present purpose. Every professing believer needs to ask, and then seek the answers to, these pertinent questions: What is God's present purpose? What is God doing now? Is He failing or succeeding?

Without any further words of introduction to this subject, permit me to say decisively and emphatically that God's present purpose is to write into the history of His long dealings with the human race a complete record of the grace that is inherent in His character.

By contrast we can say that God is not now demonstrating His power, majesty, justice or judgment. He is demonstrating His grace. This is His present purpose.

That there would be a dispensation of grace, a long period during which God would do nothing but show His favor to the wicked, had been a secret purpose of God, hid within Himself, never revealed in any previous revelation of truth (Ephesians 3:3). It was not

part of any previous prediction, and the sole revelator was Paul, the apostle (Ephesians 3:8).

Much confusion has been created due to failure to distinguish between the grace of God as being part of His character, and the dispensation of grace as an absolute method of dealing [with man]. He, being the God of every grace, was always showing grace to men from the time He provided coats of skin to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve. We read that Noah, along with seven others, found grace in the sight of the Lord (Genesis 6:8), but it was not an absolute method of dealing with him or the rest of mankind. These were dealt with in strict justice, resulting in God's bringing the flood upon the world of the ungodly (II Peter 2:5).

The militant atheist of former years, Robert G. Ingersoll, during the course of his lectures, would shake his fist toward the heavens and cry out, "If there be a God, let Him strike me dead." When nothing happened, it was considered by many to be positive proof of the nonexistence of God. Yet, all that it demonstrated was that God is the God of grace, Who continues to be gracious in view of wicked challenges.

During the present dispensation, every act of God is an act of grace; so much so, that if He cannot act in grace, He will not act at all. During this time all judgment and punishment is in abeyance. Grace is His present method of dealing with mankind; and in the course of displaying His grace, believers have found themselves caught up in the flow of it, and

have been carried into the very fullness of forgiveness and salvation. God's purpose is to display His grace, and the present day believer is a by-product of this purpose (Ephesians 2:7; 3:9-11; II Timothy 1:9).

God has now committed Himself to act in grace. He has declared this through His chosen apostle, Paul; and we will do well to take Him at His word and think accordingly. This is the great truth revealed in Paul's epistles, especially Ephesians (Note Ephesians 3:2).

God is now creating within the history of mankind a total and complete record of the graciousness of His character. He is doing this in the administration (dispensation) of grace under which all His government or kingdom purposes are in abeyance.

(continued from page 2)

those who have an interest. A close look at the past issues of the **BSN** will reveal many changes in understanding over the years.

It is important for the reader to know our attitude in sharing our understandings in the **BSN**. In our very first issue of the **BSN** we wrote in the editorial a section called *Attitude*, which still reflects our heart:

"We have no corner on truth, nor does anyone else. None possesses 'all truth' infallibly. Therefore we seek to fellowship with all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ and take pleasure in His precious word. We agree with the words of George Whitefield when he said, 'I truly love all that love the glorious Emmanuel, and though I cannot depart from the principles which I believe are clearly revealed in the Book of God, yet I can cheerfully associate with those that differ from me, if I have reason to think that they are united to our common Head.'

"We desire to avoid destructive 'uniformity' and allow for differences of opinion. We don't expect our readers to agree with everything that will appear

God's present purpose is succeeding every day and in every way. He is not failing in anything that He purposes to do. Every passing day on the calendar adds one more page to the record of His grace.

The explanation of God's long toleration of evil, His present silence in the face of multiple and manifest wrongs, and His toleration of the works of Satan can be explained only when we realize that God is fulfilling another purpose.

God is now doing all that is necessary to forever establish beyond all question that He is the God of all grace. This is what He is now doing. This is His present purpose.

(edited & abridged)

within the pages of this publication. But we do trust that you will study out the information and that it will stimulate further Bible study. As one editor has so well said, 'I hope anyone following after me will go farther than I have gone in the search for truth, will see more of the word of God than I have seen, and will explore where I never dreamt treasures were to be found.'

"And do not be surprised if, from time to time, you read articles which reflect *change* from previous things which we have said or written. This is *progress*.

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Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.



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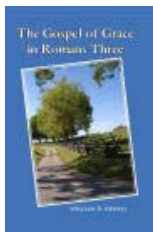
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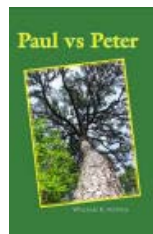
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