



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 75

Reigning in Life

The Present Effect of Super-Abundant Grace

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17).

Paul gloriously reveled in "the abundance of grace" that floods forth from our benevolent God. Remember, *abundant* is defined as "a greater quantity than is wanted."

The natural man (whose identity is still in Adam) does not want super-abundant grace. The Adamic flesh cringes at the very thought of it. Instead he would rather glory in his own self-righteousness, or wallow in his sinfulness. However, those who receive the overflow of abundant grace live in contrast to the descendants of Adam – glorying and basking in Christ-righteousness.

Adam's posterity live under the *reign of death*. Death rules their daily lives. It is not just that they will die one day, it is that death has dominion over their daily existence.

"... death reigned by one ..." (Romans 5:17).

"... sin hath reigned unto death ..." (Romans 5:21).

"... who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:15).

By sharp contrast, those who have presently

received God's grace *already* possess the reign of life. This grace is abundant. It is super-abundant.

*"That as sin hath reigned unto death, **even so might grace reign** through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 5:21).*

Solomon describes the state of daily Adamic life "under the sun" (a phrase found 29 times in Ecclesiastes).

*"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; **all is vanity**.*

"What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" (Ecclesiastes 1:2-3).

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Letters to the Editor

"Just received your wonderful article in the **BSN** [#73] on Hell! ... I am really beyond words when it comes to the truth of a 'Hell' and endless torment!..."
— **ME**

"We had a notary at our home yesterday... We got to talking after our business, and she's a sister in Christ... This lady is Pentecostal. It was so freeing talking to her and fellowshiping in the LORD and giving her biblical truth, without trying to persuade her to my doctrinal view. Steve and I were talking, and nine years ago, I was still trying to show people how to rightly divide, read only the King James, and 'looking down' on the organized church. It was so blessed to see this woman as my sister, where she's at in the Lord is His business, and it was mine to love her. Our conversation just flowed (like it does when HE opens a door of utterance) and I didn't pull out any 'evangelical skills' to convert her to my persuasion. When she left, I hugged her and said, 'we just had a little church meeting!' There was so much we shared, but what if I had gone for the jugular and focused on what she believed instead of just fellowshiping 'IN HIM?' I was able to speak my heart about HIM and HIS work in me and the preciousness

of the scriptures in our relationship with Him. Praise the Lord for His faithfulness to His children. Have a great day." — **NC**

"My family and I have been so blessed by your **BSN**. You have encouraged me to hold fast the truths that I have been taught about the one true Church, the Body of Christ." — **NC**

"Once again you have put together a very fine publication [**BSN** #60]. I especially liked 'Victory Is A Man.' I have been teaching this for years, but few ever really understand it. O, what a waste. Chip Brogden did a really fine job in putting this subject into words. Isn't it wonderful to know that Christ is our rest. Yet all the religious organizations of the world would have you work, laboring to earn a reward rather than just resting in and adoring Him. Doing your service in this manner [resting in and adoring Him!] will get you a reward.

"*Why This Waste?* was also very good. I have heard this of you as well as of my self. Yet, I rest assured that what God is dispensing in this age of Grace is what I want to be learning and doing.

"My dear Brother your articles on our relationship

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This biweekly publication (24 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 "Movement," "Organization," "Mission," or separate body of believers, but is sent forth to and for all "saints."

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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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(recompiled and edited)

Adamic life is simply vain. It is futile, dry, barren, and unsatisfying. It is utter emptiness and waste.

The next few verses go on to describe the seemingly endless cycle of human existence. I am reminded of the mouse running on the wheel in his cage every time that I read verses four through eight:

“One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing” (Ecclesiastes 1:4-8).

Solomon sums up man’s life and labor, saying that “*all is vanity.*” Consulting Paul, the apostle, however, will get us another view:

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (I Corinthians 15:58).

The contrasting “*all is vanity,*” and “*is not in vain,*” represent the difference between Adamic life and Christ life. Paul says, “*your labour is not in vain **in the Lord.***” Those of us who have received the “*abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness*” presently possess the *life of Christ* – a vibrant, divine reality – and “*shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*”

Paul encourages Timothy to take hold of this valuable possession.

*“Fight the good fight of faith, **lay hold on eternal life,** whereunto thou art also called ...” (I Timothy 6:12).*

The life of God already belonged to Timothy. All he needed to do was walk in it richly as his daily life. The divine answer to a life of vanity is that “*they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness **shall reign in life** by one, Jesus Christ.*”

This abundance of grace literally opens the floodgate of abundance from God. Look at some of the abundant things from God that are shown in the following verses:

*“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may **abound in hope,** through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:13).*

*“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always **abounding in the work of the Lord,** forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (I Corinthians 15:58).*

*“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more **exceeding and eternal weight of glory**” (II Corinthians 4:17).*

*“Wherein He hath **abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence**” (Ephesians 1:8).*

*“And what is the **exceeding greatness of His power** to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power” (Ephesians 1:19).*

*“Now unto Him that is able to do **exceeding abundantly above** all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Ephesians 3:20).*

*“And this I pray, that your **love may abound yet more and more** in knowledge and in all judgment” (Philippians 1:9).*

*“Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, **abound-***

ing therein with thanksgiving” (Colossians 2:7).

“... According to His mercy ... which He **shed on us abundantly** through Jesus Christ our Saviour” (Titus 3:5-6).

The present effect of God’s super-abundant grace is clear. Those who have “receive abundance of grace” shall “reign in life.” We have divine life now! We do not have to wait for the resurrection to enjoy it. We can presently live under the reign of divine purpose. The reason? Because this divine life in which we reign is the very life of our dear Saviour.

“... Christ, Who is our life” (Colossians 3:4).

We, who presently have His life, are the only ones who really live. We are alive in abundant fullness.

Is it any wonder that our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ said:

“... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

To which Paul would add the voice of praise:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ ... To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.” (Ephesians 1:3-6).

Do not allow Adamic bondage to reign over your life. Live as whom God has made you to be! Live in the divine fullness of freedom in grace’s reign – the reign of life in Christ Jesus! ■

God’s Attention

by – Arthur P. Adams

“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:29-31).

“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Luke 12:6-7).

Do you realize friend reader, the stupendous character of this statement? How many millions of sparrows think you are there in the world? And of course it is not sparrows alone that God cares for, but all creatures, not one of them is forgotten, and even the very hairs of your head are numbered. The great men of the earth manifest their greatness by their close attention to so called great things; the affairs of state, national interests, business ventures involving the risk of millions,

vast philanthropic schemes, and such like matters of world-wide importance. These men generally have very little care, and pay very little attention to the common every-day affairs of life: But God, between whom and the greatest of all earth’s great ones there is an infinite disparity, displays His greatness by caring for what would seem to be the most trivial interests of his creatures, like the numbering of the hairs of their heads, and taking notice of apparently the most unimportant events, like the falling of a single sparrow. Well may we exclaim with Faber, in view of such greatness,

O, God? Thy loving greatness ever lies
Outside us like a boundless sea;
We cannot lose ourselves where all is home,
Nor drift away from thee.
Thus doth thy grandeur make us grand
ourselves,
Thy goodness quells our fear;
Thy greatness makes us brave as children are
When those they love are near. ■

The Beauty of Holiness

God's True Character Revealed

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

"And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for His mercy endureth for ever" (II Chronicles 20:21).

Christendom misrepresents God to mankind. It does so as a harsh, stern, angry god, full of wrath. This is the byproduct of the religious system's faulty estimation of God's holiness. We have been seriously misled as to the true nature of our Creator.

When the choir of Israel sang the praises of God, it is quite interesting to note what they specifically magnified about Him:

*"... He appointed singers unto the LORD, and that they should **praise the beauty of holiness** ..." (II Chronicles 20:21).*

To demonstrate *the beauty of His holiness*, here is what they actually sang:

*"... Praise the LORD; **for His mercy endureth for ever**" (II Chronicles 20:21).*

The religious system would lead us to believe that the holiness of God overflows with sternest severity, anger, and wrath. But when the choir of Israel sang the praises of God's holiness, they specifically sang about His mercy enduring for ever. This is contrary to religious thinking.

The holiness of God actually overflows with kindness, compassion, love, gentleness, and mercy! We learn this from the pages of the Scriptures themselves. We see this clearly within the context of our passage. God's holiness is associated with divine mercy.

Let's look at a few other passages, where we can

clearly see the relationship between God's holiness and His mercy.

*"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, **whose name is Holy** ... I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth ..." (Isaiah 57:15-16).*

*"I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: **for** I am God, and not man; **the Holy One** in the midst of thee ..." (Hosea 11:9).*

Why would God not execute the fierceness of His anger? The verse tells us why. Because He is not man, He is *"the Holy One"*!

We can also see the connection between the holiness of God and His mercy in the earthly life of the Lord Jesus Christ. The one *"Who is holy"* and *"separate from sinners"* was here on earth as *"a friend of Publican and sinners"* (c.f. Hebrews 7:26; Matthew 11:19).

One telling passage about the true nature of holiness can be seen in the admonition of Paul, the apostle:

*"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up **holy hands, without wrath and doubting**" (I Timothy 2:8).*

Ultimately, wrath and holiness are not compatible in the mind of Paul (nor the mind of God!).

Here is another passage that sheds great light on

the true character of holiness:

*“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the **spirit of meekness** ... (Galatians 6:1).*

Genuine spirituality and true holiness produce gentleness, kindness, love, compassion, and mercy. The absence of these characteristics is a result of the lack of the holiness of God appropriated to the life of the believer. It is the false holiness of self-righteousness that produces the arrogance and conceit of haughtiness better-than-thou.

*“The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be **gentle unto all men**, apt to teach, pa-*

tient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves ...” (II Timothy 2:24-25).

In closing, we will recall that God’s holiness is predominantly connected with His Saviorhood! He is the compassionate and loving Saviour because of His holiness ... not in spite of it!

“For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour ...” (Isaiah 43:3).

This is the Biblical view of the true and living God!

Rejoice in Him! He is a wonderful God! His holiness is beautiful! ■

Grace!

by – William R. Newell

“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work” (Romans 11:6).

Grace is God acting freely, according to His own nature as Love; with no promises or obligations to fulfill; and acting of course, righteously – in view of the Cross.

Grace, therefore, is uncaused in the recipient: its cause lies wholly in the GIVER, in GOD.

The discovery by the creature that he is truly the object of Divine grace, works the utmost humility: for the receiver of grace is brought to know his own absolute unworthiness, and his complete inability to attain worthiness: yet he finds himself blessed, on another principle, outside of himself!

The Place of Man under Grace

Grace, once bestowed, is not withdrawn: for God knew all the human exigencies beforehand: His action was independent of them, not dependent upon them.

The failure of devotion does not cause the withdrawal of bestowed grace (as it would under law).

He has been accepted in Christ, who is his standing!

As to his life past, it does not exist before God: he died at the Cross, and Christ is his life.

Things Which Gracious Souls Discover

To “hope to be better” is to fail to see yourself in Christ only.

To be disappointed with yourself, is to have believed in yourself.

To be discouraged is unbelief, as to God’s purpose and plan of blessing for you.

To be proud, is to be blind! For we have no standing before God, in ourselves.

Real devotion to God arises, not from man’s will to show it; but from the discovery that blessing has been received from God while we were yet unworthy and undevoted.

To preach devotion first, and blessing second, is to reverse God’s order, and preach law, not grace. The Law made man’s blessing depend on devotion; Grace confers undeserved, unconditional blessing: our devotion may follow, but does not always do so, in proper measure. ■

Romans, Verse by Verse

Wife Loving

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOME Part XXXIII

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25).

In Ephesians chapter five, a husband’s love toward his wife is namely expressed four times.

*“Husbands, **love** your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25).*

*“So ought men to **love** their wives as their own bodies. He that **loveth** his wife loveth himself” (Ephesians 5:28).*

*“Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so **love** his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband” (Ephesians 5:33).*

The paramount statement regarding this love is found in its first usage in the passage.

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25).

Christ’s love for the church becomes the pattern of a husband’s love toward his wife.

Christ loves the church.

Husbands are to make their wives the objects of their love. We can have the kind of wives God desires for us to have, if we will love them they way God has designed for us to.

Just how does Christ love the church?

Christ gave Himself ...

“Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father” (Galatians 1:4).

*“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, **Who loved me, and gave Himself for me**” (Galatians 2:20).*

“Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (I Timothy 2:6).

“Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14).

Following the Lord Jesus Christ, husbands are to give *themselves* for their wives.

At the Judgment Seat of Christ, He will not be interested how much money we have made, how successful we were in business, how many close friends we had, etc. He will want to know first and foremost how well we have done at the primary task He has given to us – *Wife Loving*. It is our divine ministry. *“Husbands love your wives.”*

He will want to know, *“How well have you loved your wife? Did you learn from Me, to love her by giving up your life for her?”*



Selected Readings on *The Great Commission*

JOHN NELSON DARBY

The commission to the twelve was not from heaven, nor consequently immediately connected with heaven, but from Galilee, and a commission to baptize the nations into connection with an accepted remnant of Jews on earth – not to bring Jew and Gentile into the Body in an ascended Christ, which was Paul's commission especially, preaching with reconciliation from heaven to every creature under it.

J.N. Darby
Letters of J. N. Darby Vol. II

ARNO C. GAEBELEIN*

This is the Kingdom Commission ... A time is coming when this great commission here will be carried out by a remnant of Jewish disciples, who are expressed by the eleven. It is the same remnant as in Matthew 24.

A.C. Gaebelein
Gospel of Matthew, Vol. 2

WILLIAM L. PETTINGILL*

Mark's Gospel, like Matthew's and Luke's, is primarily a Kingdom book and I am satisfied that none of them contains the church's marching orders – not even the so-called "Great Commission" of Matthew 28:18-20 ...

(continued from page 798)

to the government have been a real eye opener. They have caused me to go and search the scriptures to see wither theses things are so. I was pleased to concur with you." – **MI**

"Thank you for your helping us to further be persuaded to stand against the pagan holiday called 'Christmas' [BSN #6]. We need more people willing to take a stand. Romans 1:16." – **GA**

"The study [Jesus Loves Me This I Know! - BSN #43] closed the issue for me on God loving the world. Please stay in touch. . . . In Christ we only trust." – **OH**

This we would call the "Kingdom Commission." Of course, we are well aware that it is often spoken of as the "Great Commission" of the Church, but we are convinced that this is an error. It would be a strange thing to find the church's commission in the Kingdom Gospel ...

The commission on Matthew 28:19-20 instructs the eleven to teach them "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Not some things, but all things. The things that Jesus commanded were given while He was a minister of the circumcision. The apostles chosen by the descended Christ had a ministry which differed from the apostles of the ascended Christ.

William L. Pettingill
Bible Questions Answered

JAMES M. GRAY*

This is the Kingdom Commission, as another expresses it and not the Christian Commission ... It points to the close of the age when the commission will be carried out by the faithful remnant of the Jews so often spoken about. It has not yet been carried out. The story of the Acts is not its fulfillment.

James M. Gray
Christian Workers' Commentary

* One of the editors of the original Scofield Reference Bible.

"I am convinced that the 'Church' is the Adversary's instrument to try and destroy the faithful. The first thing all religious people want to build is a strong 'church' B that is, they want to organize and form a hierarchy. They are looking for prestige and position rather than seeking humbly for what=s best for all concerned, even if it means that they themselves must be abased...

"When we err from the faith, we pierce ourselves through with many sorrows (I Timothy 6:10). Most often the errors didn't originate in us, but are the religious sludge of many generations of traditional thought passed down to us."
– **HI**