



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* mature in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 43
Issue 1069

Success Isn't Yours to Define – It's God's Alone

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Based on the Freedom Journey Podcast
by — Steve Martin and André Sneidar



Key Points:

Success is not something we create. It's something that God determines.8973
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[God's success is measured by His plans](#)

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[Stop chasing human definitions of success.....8980](#)

The world tells us that success is something that we **achieve** – a goal we reach, a legacy we build, a purpose we fulfill. Even in Christian circles, success is often tied to **what we do for God** – winning souls, growing ministries, making an impact.

Yet here's the truth: *Success is not something we create. It's something that God determines.* And, since **He alone** is sovereign, the only success that matters is the fulfillment of *His plans* – *not ours*.

GOD'S PLANS STAND – OURS DO NOT

We like to think that we have control. We make plans, set goals, map out the future; but the reality is,

God alone writes the story.

The Lord foils the plans of the nations; He thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of His heart through all generations (Psalm 33:10-11).

It doesn't matter how much effort we put in, how strategic we are, or how much we want something –

if it's not part of God's plans, it will not happen.

At the same time, **nothing** can stop His plans from unfolding exactly as He intended.

- Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, but God positioned him to save nations.
- Pharaoh hardened his heart, but God used him to display His power.
- Judas betrayed Jesus, but God had already planned redemption through the cross.

Every detail – good, bad, or devastating – serves **His** purpose, not ours.

SUCCESS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU

We've been trained to believe that success is about
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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume 43, No. 1069 – May 5, 2025

Scripture education in a weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3-4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- 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 freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - union in His death, burial and resurrection and ascended seated position among the celestials (Ephesians 2:6);
 - adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of saints intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneider

Bible Student's Notebook™

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Mark Vogt, Dean Wilkinson

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our choices, actions and faithfulness – as if we have the power to alter the course of God's sovereign plans – but **we don't**.

I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9-10).

God isn't waiting for us to get it right so that His plans can move forward. His will is unfolding perfectly – through us, despite us, beyond us.

That means:

- ✓ Your failures do *not* derail His plans.
- ✓ Your successes do *not* guarantee anything outside of His will.
- ✓ Your obedience is *not* what makes His plans work – it's what aligns you with the peace of trusting it.

We don't build success. **God defines it, controls it and fulfills it.**

WHAT IF YOUR "FAILURE" IS GOD'S SUCCESS?

Humanly speaking, success is about **results** – what we accomplish, how much impact we have, what we leave behind – but what if God's definition looks nothing like ours?

- Noah spent 100 years building an ark while people mocked him. *Was that failure?*

- Jeremiah preached for decades, and no one listened. *Was that failure?*
- John the Baptist was imprisoned and executed. *Was that failure?*
- Jesus was rejected, crucified and abandoned by His closest followers. *Was that failure?*

No. Because **God's success is measured by His plans being fulfilled, not by human expectations.**

What looks like failure to us may be *the exact success that God ordained.*

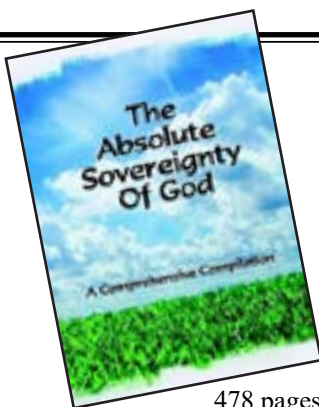
LIVING IN THE REALITY OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

If success is *only* about the fulfillment of God's plans, then there is no pressure to "get it right."

You are not in charge.

1. **Let go of the illusion of control.** You don't make or break God's plans. You don't carry the weight of success – *He does.*
2. **Stop measuring life by human standards.** The world defines success by influence, growth and achievement. God defines it by *His will being done.*
3. **Trust that what happens is exactly what was MEANT to happen.** There are no accidents, no detours, no "Plan B" with God. *Everything unfolds* as He intended.
4. **Rest in the freedom of His sovereignty.** If He

(see [SUCCESS, last page](#))



478 pages

See [order form](#) under
"Compilations."

The Absolute Sovereignty of God (A Comprehensive Compilation)

This quintessential book victoriously celebrates and convincingly proclaims the absolute sovereignty of God. Sadly, religion has veiled the truth of the God of the Bible, making Him either an aloof deity, indifferent to the condition of the creation, or one who is at the worst cruel or at the least unloving and uncaring. Yet the loving Deity of Sacred Scripture always has had and will have sole and complete control over His entire creation. This ultimate collection of 100 works by 34 authors spans nearly 175 years. It is an extensive reference work that is essential for every library.

Gripping the Wheel. Going Nowhere: The Myth of Control

by — Steve Martin

[Click here to listen to this article](#)

Key Point:

We live with the illusion that we're in control. 8976
We resist this truth because it wrecks our ego. 8977
God is sovereign. That means your life isn't random. Your

[struggles aren't meaningless. Your future isn't uncertain to Him. 8977](#)

I was talking with Chris Carnahan about God's sovereignty the other day, and we hit on something – how we *think* we're in control of our lives, but the truth is, what we want and what actually happens aren't even connected. We make plans, we push, we strive ... and then life just does its own thing.

Ever seen a kid in one of those toy cars at an amusement park? He's gripping the wheel, spinning it left and right, convinced he's the one steering. He thinks he's in control, but the car is locked onto a track. No matter what he does with that wheel, the ride is going exactly where it was designed to go.

That's us.

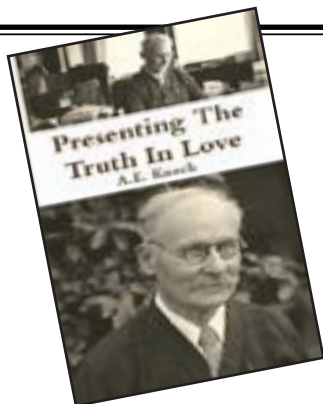
We live with the illusion that we're in control. We make plans, chase dreams, fight to stay on top, and act like we're the ones charting our own course. But the reality? That steering wheel in our hands isn't connected to anything. The track beneath us – God's sovereign will – is the only thing determining where we're actually going.

THE GOD WHO ACTUALLY STEERS

Scripture makes it clear: we aren't the ones running the show.

- **Proverbs 16:9** – “The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.” You can turn your little wheel all you want, but God is the one laying down the track.
- **Joseph's Story (Genesis 50:20)** – His brothers thought that they were ruining his life when they sold him into slavery. Turns out, they were just pawns in God's bigger plan to save an entire nation.
- **The Crucifixion of Jesus (Acts 2:23)** – The people who sentenced Jesus to death thought that they were making their own choice, but that moment had been written into history before the disruption of the world.

If God can use betrayal, suffering, and even murder



50 pages

See [order form](#) under “Knoch.”

Presenting the Truth in Love In Memoriam of A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

This book consists of seven short chapters: (1) *Presenting the Truth in Love* – A.E. Knoch; (2) *My Father – As I Remember Him* – Ernest O. Knoch; (3) *Knoch and His Work: A Biographical Sketch by a Close Friend and Long Time Associate* – Edward H. Clayton; (4) *My Brethren Background* – A.E. Knoch; (5) *Musings On Mount Olivet* – A.E. Knoch; (6) *Be Confirmed in the Faith* – A.E. Knoch; (7) *The Funeral Message* – Herman H. Rocke.



to accomplish His perfect plan, do we really think our little course corrections are going to make or break His design?

WHY WE FIGHT IT

We resist this truth because it wrecks our ego. We like the idea that we're in charge. That our grit, smarts and hustle are what shape our destiny. That if we just work harder, think smarter and plan better, we can control the outcome.

But deep down, we know better.

Ever had life knock you flat? Ever made what seemed like the “right” decision, only for everything to go sideways? Ever looked back and realized that the thing you fought so hard to achieve was actually leading you somewhere that you never expected?

That's because you weren't steering. You never were. You were just spinning the wheel on a ride that was already set in motion.

SO WHAT DO WE DO?

If God is sovereign, does that mean we just sit back, do nothing and let life happen? Nope. We still make choices. We still take action. But we do it with the understanding that the results are up to Him.

Here's how that changes everything:

- **Stop Stressing Over Outcomes** – If God is in control, you don't have to live in fear of messing up everything. Do your best, make wise choices,

but know that no mistake of yours can derail His plan.

- **Let Go of the Illusion** – Stop gripping the wheel like your life depends on it. You're not steering this thing. The sooner you accept that, the freer you'll be.
- **Trust the Track** – Even when life doesn't make sense, even when it feels like you're heading in the wrong direction, trust that God knows exactly where He's taking you.
- **Get Over Yourself** – If the universe isn't actually dependent on your ability to “figure it all out,” you can stop acting like it is. Relax. He's got it.

THE BOTTOM LINE

We love the illusion of control. It makes us feel safe. But real safety isn't found in gripping a disconnected steering wheel – it's found in trusting the One who built the track.

God is sovereign. That means your life isn't random. Your struggles aren't meaningless. Your future isn't uncertain to Him. So stop white-knuckling that plastic wheel and let Him take you where He's already planned.

Because no matter how hard you spin that thing, you're not the one doing the driving. **BSN**

TOPICS:

Major: Relax; Sovereignty

Minor: Will



The Acts Dispensation

by — Otis Q. Sellers (1901-1992)

A study of the unique dispensation that covered the Acts Period.

62 pages

See [order form](#) under “Sellers.”



We Continue to Need Your Help

We continue to need your help with our [Facsimile Project](#). Do you have *any* old, out of print Bible study books, booklets, leaflets, or periodicals? If they meet our criteria would you be willing to loan those to us so that we can scan them for republication? We will gladly return them back to you as soon as we are done with them. This is a serious work of preservation, and we ask that you please take our request to co-labor with us in the same way.

There are some materials for which we have been searching for years. We desire and request your assist in helping us to preserve valuable literature. If you do have any materials please contact us to see if it is what we are looking for, and we'll discuss how to proceed. You can send me an email at clyde@studyshef.com.

Even if you don't have any of these materials, would you *please* assist us in putting out the word to other saints? We know that there are many valuable resources out there in the homes of believers that may be lost as they later fall into the hands of those who do not appreciate their value.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

The materials that we are looking for are those that are:

1. rich in Scripture research,
2. out of print and,
3. in public domain,¹ or for which permission to reprint is available.

What follows here is a list of some of the authors, titles and publishers we are specifically seeking. We regularly add to this list. We appreciate others who would join us in being on the lookout for as many valuable materials, old and out of print, as possible. No doubt there are many grand treasures of which we are not yet aware, and we would gladly welcome being introduced to these as well.

Authors & Titles

Though there are specific titles that we are looking for in this section of the list, we are also interested in any other titles that these authors may have written.

NOTE: Consult our order form to see any titles that we already have by a certain author or publisher.

Author

George Aldridge

Elder A. Benta

D. Buchanan

T.A. DeSilva

M.L. Dodds

H.W. Fry

Arthur Charles Lamb

Kenneth McKay

William Mealand

R. Roe

W.B. Screws

T.J. Silva

Dansey Smith

Stewart Speers

Agnes A. Sterling

Martin Stuckrath

W.H. Griffith Thomas

Thomas Whittemore

J.W. Williams

J.F. Witherell

George H. Wulfken

Title

Spiritualism Tested by Revelation; Theosophy: Its Theories vs. Bible Truths

The New Approach to the Study of the Sacred Scripture

Love's Triumph

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit ...

The Wider Gospel

God's Plan of the Bible

The Glory of the Happy God

Various²

Christ and God; This Era of Grace

A Short Help and Incentive to an Un-biased Inquiry into the Scripture Truth of Universalism or the Final Restoration of All Things

Handbook for Beginners

God's Perfect Plan

The Eons and the Reconciliation

Follow After Divine Love

A Personal Witness to the Truth

The Lord was Really Roused

Notes from Romans 5

Modern History of Universalism, VOLUME 2

A Primer of Predestination

Partialism Shaken and Removed

Let There Be Light!

Periodicals

The Babblers³

The Bible Gazette⁴

The Christian Fundamentals

Magazine⁵

The Differentiator⁶

Echoes of Grace⁷

Freedom⁸

The Investigator⁹

Grace and Glory¹⁰

Grace and Truth¹¹

The Lantern¹²

The Messenger of Grace¹³

Our Faith¹⁴

The Pilgrim's Messenger¹⁵

The Promise¹⁶

Reconciliation¹⁷

The Religious Iconoclast¹⁸

The Revelator¹⁹

The Roundtable²⁰

The Saint's Messenger²¹

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Study-Prove-Teach²³

The Torch²⁴

Treasures of Truth²⁵

The Word of Truth²⁶



Authors

The authors we are looking for are dealing solely with scripturally related topics. We have found that there may be authors with the same names, but their books are on other topics.

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A. (Arthur) P. Adams	Donald G. Hayter
George Addair	G. (Gustavus) E. Hiller Loyal F.
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Anthony M. Bruno	Victor E. Jacobson
E.W. Bullinger	Melvin E. Johnson
Howard N. Bunce	John H. Kessler
Alan Burns	Joseph E. Kirk
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Leon A. Bynoe	E.A. Larsen
John J.R. Caldwell	Adlai Loudy
Eugene Charles Callaway	Erasmus Manford
Charles Chauncy	Guy Marks
E.H. (Edward Henry) Clayton	C.E. McLain
Edgar Lewis Clementson	Robert McMahon
L.H. Cracknell	J. Eustace Mills
E. Lynwood Crystal	Harold P. Morgan
Bernard Davies	Frank Neil Pohorlak
Gordon K. Edgar ²⁷	William Rebmann
John H. Essex	F.H. Robison
Louis Finley	William E. Root
A.D. Foster	W.F. Salter
Glennard Gartong	Otis Q. Sellers
Robert M. Giles	J. Clyde Sellion
Victor Vernon Gager	G.T. Stevenson
Robert A. Hadden	Alexander Thomson
William B. Hallman	James A. Webb
J.W. (John Wesley) Hanson	Thomas Whittemore
G.R. Hawtin	Elhanan Winchester

Publishers

Bethabab	Philadelphia Bible Testimony
Bible Truth Press ²⁸	Pittsburgh Bible Institute
Biblical Information Bureau	Saviour of All Fellowship
Buffalo Bible Institute	School of Dispensational Bible
California Scriptures	Study
Publications	Scripture Research Society
Colton Bible Press	Scripture Studies Concern
Concordant Publishing	Scripture Study Ecclesia
Concern	Sacred Literature Concern
Evangel Publishers ²⁹	Truth Research Fellowship
Faith Fellowship ³⁰	Universalist Publishing House
Morgan & Wallace	

(Endnotes)

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- Copyrighted 1977 or earlier and printed without a copyright notice;
 - Copyrighted between 1978-1989 without copyright and not re-printed with copyright notice within 5 years.
- Here are titles that we are aware of by this author:
 - Grace, Glorious Grace, for the Present;
 - Universal Reconciliation at the Consummation;
 - Justification – the Assurance of It
 - Conciliation – the Enjoyment of It
 - Is Annihilation the Teaching of Scriptures?
 - Is Everlasting Punishment a Truth of Scripture?
 - Published by H.A. Harrop.
 - Published by James Webb from Augusta, GA.
 - Published from Los Angeles, CA.
 - Published by E.A. Larsen (Tacoma, WA), Alexander Thomson (England).
 - Published by George Addair, Phoenix AZ. We have issue #4 and #5.
 - Published by L.H. Cracknell in England.
 - Published by H.L. Carver, Kissimmee, FL.
 - Published by Alan Burns.
 - First published in New York, NY (by Leon A. Bynoe), then in England (by John H. Essex).
 - Published by R.H. Bigg and S.V.E. Clark from London.
 - By William Rebmann from Zion, IL.
 - Published in Rock Island, IL, later in Seffner, FL, by Harold L. Carver.
 - Published by W. B. Screws from Glennville GA.
 - Published by G. (Gustavus) E. Hiller.
 - By Joseph E. Kirk. We have Volume 1, Number 1 through 10. We are looking for any other issues.
 - Published from Grand Rapids, MI.
 - Published by Louis Finley in Kansas City, MO.
 - By Wesley J. Ladwig in Milwaukee, WI.
 - Published by Victor Vernon Gager in Hopkins, MN.
 - Published by A. P. Adams. We have Volume 1 (1886). We are seeking the remaining 20+ volumes.
 - Published in A.J. Borrello in Fredonia, NY.
 - By Frank Neil Pohorlak from Waxahachie, later Fort Worth, TX.
 - Published by Cecil J. Blay and Melvin E. Johnson. We have a complete set of the years 1971-1974 (Installments 1-12). We have a handful of other random ones. We are looking for a complete set.
 - By Otis Q. Sellers. We are unsure of how many volumes and issues there were of this periodical. We have a complete set of Volume 12. We are looking for the other volumes.
 - President, *The Institute of Dispensational Theology*.
 - From New York City.
 - From Boise, ID.
 - From Kalamazoo, MI.



Companion Bible

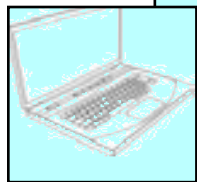
New Testament (Enlarged Type)
with notes

by — E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

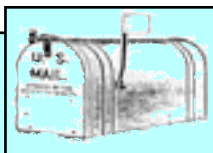
This is only the New Testament
without the Appendixes.

624 pages. (See [order form](#) under “Bibles.”)





Our Mailbox



My wife and I have been enjoying reading several books we ordered, and we are learning a great deal; e.g. that we are Christian unitarians and biblical universalists. It is so refreshing to learn that there are others, since the Bible is crystal clear about those. – AR

I oftentimes go to bed with my headphones in listening to this extremely passionate guy out in PA. His passion and excitement are unmatched! ... Simply put, this guy is a great inspiration to me! – WI

Clyde, thank you so very much for your passion, not only for the Scriptures, but your passion for ALL to come into a realization of the truth concerning the sovereignty of Father and the completed work of His Son for ALL mankind. I have been blessed greatly by ALL that you share and your kind heart. – CO

... I do believe it [*Bible Student's Notebook*] is the most accurate depository of the truth of the Bible being published today! – TN

SUCCESS (continued from page 8975)

controls all things, then there is *no pressure, no striving, no fear of failure* – just **TRUST**.

THE ONLY SUCCESS THAT MATTERS

At the end of it all, **only one thing matters**: Did God's plans come to pass? And since He is **absolutely sovereign**, the answer is *always*, "**YES**."

So, **stop chasing human definitions of success**. Stop trying to force results. Stop fearing failure. You are not writing the story: **God is** – and that means, *success is already guaranteed, because His plans NEVER FAIL.* **BSN**

TOPICS:

Major: Relax; Sovereignty; Success

Minor: Failure; Faith

IF GOD WERE
PROUD, HE WOULD
HARDLY HAVE US ON
SUCH TERMS; BUT HE IS
NOT PROUD: HE STOOPS TO
CONQUER, HE WILL HAVE US
EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE SHOWN THAT
WE PREFER EVERYTHING ELSE TO HIM,
AND COME TO HIM
BECAUSE THERE IS "NOTHING
BETTER" NOW TO BE HAD.

C. S. Lewis (1898-1963)



185 pages

See [order form](#) under
"Clyde Pilkington."

I Choose! Living Life to Its Fullest

Forty-Eight Daily Thoughts on Divine Life

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

You are alive! Yet not just alive, but alive with the very life of God! Don't allow your "What if ..." imaginations of the past or the future to lay claim to the present that God has given you. Allow the objective, unchanging truth of who God has made you in the Lord Jesus Christ to transform your mind and life as you take this spiritual journey of "*I Choose*."

These "choices" are not to be confused with so-called "free will." At the close of the book the author will reveal that our "choices" are nothing short of God's sovereign decree in our lives.