



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Joy!

Showcasing all humanity finished in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 45  
Issue 1109

There is still much light to break forth from the Scriptures. A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

# Why You Shouldn't Go to Church

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

by – Steve Martin

There. I said it. You shouldn't go to church. Now, before you quote Hebrews 10:25, understand what I mean. I'm not suggesting that believers abandon one another. I'm saying we must stop going to a building to find what we already possess – Christ Himself, dwelling within us.



the revelation of the present secret economy of Grace (*Ephesians 3:2-9*).

In that earlier program, there were local assemblies with elders, deacons, prophets, and evangelists (*Ephesians 4:11*). Those were necessary when God was still dealing with Israel as a nation, and when the believers' hope and calling were earthly in character.

### GOD DOESN'T LIVE IN BUILDINGS

When Paul preached to the Athenians, he said plainly,

*The God Who makes the world and all that is in it ... is not dwelling in temples made with hands (Acts 17:24).*

Currently, God no longer dwells in sacred structures. He dwells in people.

You are the temple (*I Corinthians 3:16*). You are the meeting place. You are the church.

The great illusion of religion is that God is "over there," and we must go find Him. The truth of this administration is that He is already "in here." He never left.

### THE CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION

Most of what passes for "church" today belongs to a previous administration – one that operated before

But everything changed when the risen Christ revealed the secret of a new *Body* – one that was a joint Body of Jew and Gentile, with a celestial destiny, of which He was the Head.

*He is the Head of the Body, the ecclesia (Colossians 1:18).*

In this current Administration of Grace, there are no local churches, no local pastors, and no ruling elders. The Body today is universal – global – and its *only* Head is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ alone directs His members individually and collectively by His Spirit. There is no earthly hierar-

(see "[CHURCH](#)", page 9301)

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### Bible Student's Notebook™

*Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal*

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*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 joy (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 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).

*We're just presenters, not persuaders.* – Steve Martin

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

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# “The Second Death – The Lake of Fire” (Revelation 20:14, CV)

## Identifying Figures of Speech

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

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Whenever possible we always take the Scriptures literally. Figures of speech are relatively easy to identify, since by their nature they are not intended to be taken literally.

Let's illustrate. If someone said to you that they were “hungry *as* a bear,” you would not think that they *were* a bear, rather, you would understand this to be an idiom, meaning that they were extremely hungry, **LIKE** a bear, with a massive appetite. The statement is a simile, used to emphasize a strong sense of hunger.

Thus, in this example, we can see that one way to identify a figure of speech is the usage of the words “*like*” and “*as*.” If something is “*like*” or “*as*” something else, then we know that it is an illustration. When one thing is “*like*” or “*as*” another, they are clearly not the exact same thing, but a figure used to illustrate a point of consideration.

For example, in I Peter 5:8 when we are told that “*the Adversary, is walking about AS a roaring lion,*” we know that he is not a *literal* lion. We know this by the word “*as*.”



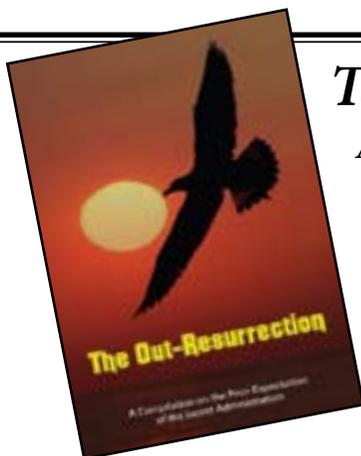
Likewise, in Revelation 4:7 when we are told concerning the four beasts, that “*the first beast was LIKE a lion, and the second beast LIKE a calf, and the third beast had a face AS a man, and the fourth beast was Like a flying eagle,*” we know that these four beasts were not a literal lion, calf, man and eagle, but “*like*” or “*as*” them in appearance.

So, also, the phrase “*saved yet AS through fire*” found in I Corinthians 3:15 (CV) is clearly a figure, demonstrated by the insertion of the word “*as*.”

Context can also be a means of identifying figures of speech. For instance, the “*lake of fire*” and the “*fire and brimstone*” of the book of Revelation are figures of speech, because “*death and the unseen*” are said to be “*cast into the lake of fire*” (Revelation 20:14). Both “*death and the unseen*” are intangible and could not physically be “*cast*” anywhere.

To further confirm the figure, “*the lake of fire*” is clearly identified as “*the second death.*” So, the

[\(see FIGURES, last page\)](#)



## The Out-Resurrection

*A Compilation on the Prior-Expectation of the Secret Administration*

Ours is a prior, pre-expectant resurrection, not revealed before the Secret Administration. When Christ, Who is our life, is manifested on His throne (Colossians 3:4) at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:20) in Glory, far above all Heavens (Ephesians 4:10; 1:21, *i.e.*, in the Super-Heavens), then we, too, will be manifested (appear) with Him there. This work includes four authors: Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., G.J. Pauptit (1889-1962), Tom L. Ballinger (1931-2022), Stanislas Van Mierlo (1888-1962).

# Creation and Evolution

## Bible Student's Courses

Course 2: Creation / Unit 2: Creation Repudiates Satanic Philosophies / Lesson 7: Creation and Evolution

by — Mark D. Vogt

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

*In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth (Genesis 1:1).*

When it comes to human philosophies that challenge the truth of Scripture, **evolution** has likely done more perceived “damage” than any other.

More than just a scientific theory, evolution is a **worldview** – one that starts with **man** and tries to explain everything **without God**.

Let's examine where it comes from, how it spreads, and why it fails.

### THE ORIGINS OF EVOLUTION

The theory of evolution is most often associated with **Charles Darwin** (1809-1882), though he wasn't the only thinker involved.

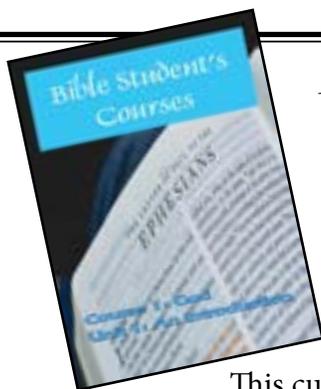


Darwin's idea – **natural selection** – teaches that:

- The strongest survive;
- The weakest die off;
- Gradual changes produce new and better species;
- All life descended from a single common ancestor.

This is presented today as **settled science**, even though it remains a **theory**, filled with assumptions, gaps and contradictions.

Evolution has become a **sacred cow** of modern education, unquestioned in textbooks and preached in classrooms.



## Bible Student's Courses

TRAINING TODAY'S ECCLESIA  
FOR TOMORROW'S CELESTIAL ASSIGNMENTS.

A concise, progressive curriculum, designed to address the many gaps in Scripture education, assisting believers in acquiring the necessary comprehension to transition from old religious paradigms toward a true biblical framework of understanding.

This curriculum is available through eBook courses, or as print material. Each course is divided into units containing detailed multimedia resources, with each individual lesson providing quizzes, allowing students to test their knowledge as well as providing documentation for recognition of completion.

### Course 1, God: Units 1-5

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Unit 1, An Introduction

Unit 3, The Love of God

Unit 5, The Attributes of God.

Unit 2, The Sovereignty of God

Unit 4, God as Father

## WHY EVOLUTION FITS THE WORLD'S AGENDA

In our last lesson, we talked about how most human philosophies begin with **man** and try to work their way up to **God**. Evolution is a perfect example of this.

According to evolution:

- Man is the highest product of nature;
- He is the **pinnacle** of progress;
- He is not made in God's image, but in **his own**.

This man-centered thinking has consequences. If man is his own creator, then man becomes his own god.

It's no wonder that modern education systems are turning out students who can't think critically. They're not taught how to weigh truth. They're taught only how to accept the **approved narrative**.

### THE INDOCTRINATION OF A GENERATION

Education today has become **indoctrination**.

- Evidence that challenges evolution is suppressed;
- Scientists who question it are silenced;
- Teachers who offer alternatives are fired;
- Students who disagree are mocked.

Sound extreme? It is – but it works.

Like the frog in slowly warming water, many have no idea that they're being boiled alive. But this too is part of God's plan.

### GOD USES BLINDNESS

God uses blindness to accomplish His purposes.

Just like Pharaoh's heart was hardened, just like Israel's eyes were shut – so, too, **many today are blind** to the truth of creation.

God uses the Adversary to accomplish the present purpose of blindness.

*The god of this eon (age) blinds the minds of the unbelieving ... (II Corinthians 4:4).*

Yes, even unbelief serves His purpose.

*All is of God (Romans 11:36).*

Yet, God is the One Who opens eyes. God is the One who grants faith.

*... God parts to each the measure of faith (Romans 12:3).*

### SCIENCE ISN'T THE ENEMY – FALSE SCIENCE IS

It's important to say this clearly:

**True science does not contradict the Bible.**



## Biblical Resources

Training today's ecclesia for tomorrow's celestial assignments.  
**Highlighting important video playlists for the edification of the saints.**

Biblical Resources is a dedicated space for the co-laborers of Bible Student's Press to share our current collective journey. It is intended to be a place of education and edification in an atmosphere of freedom, love, joy and peace.

### Bible Basics

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXXxM1xuIaqvRRk1NYDZihOdTtZ8jPUO->

The natural world is full of evidence for design, order, complexity, beauty and purpose. But that evidence is filtered through the lens of fallen man – and twisted. Too often, even Christians get pulled into **scientific debates** that miss the point entirely.

- They bring their data;
- Evolutionists bring theirs;
- They argue endlessly about carbon dating, fossils and the age of rocks.

But as Paul warned,

*Avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called ... (I Timothy 6:20-21, KJV).*

As André Sneidar has wisely put it:

**Any science leading to a conclusion away from God is false science.**

And he's right.

### THE FOLLY OF TRYING TO PROVE GOD

When Christians try to prove God through data, they make the same mistake as the world – they start with **man**. God is not a puzzle to be solved. He is a **Father to be believed**.

As Sneidar also wrote:

**Christianity's folly is that they try to figure out God, instead of just believing Him.**

What if we took God at His Word? What if we stopped trying to win debates and started resting in truth? What if we let **God speak for Himself**?

### CLOSING THOUGHT: GOD'S WORD OR MAN'S THEORY?

Here are the contrasts before us:

<u>Evolution</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
You are a cosmic accident	You are fearfully and wonderfully made
Life has no purpose	All is for God's purpose
Death is natural and final	Death is the last enemy – and will be destroyed
There is no plan	God is operating all according to His plan
Man is supreme	God is absolutely sovereign

Evolution may be the world's story, but **God's story** is better – and He's already written it to completion!

**BSN**

**TOPICS:**

**Major:** Creation; Evolution; God; Philosophy; Science; Truth  
**Minor:** Natural Selection; Sovereignty



## ***Firstborn: Exposing the Myth of Pre-existence*** (A Synoptical Examination)

by — Steve Martin

Did Jesus exist before Bethlehem – or did His story truly begin in Mary's womb? For centuries, Christianity has assumed that Jesus lived eternally in heaven before becoming human. That belief is rarely questioned. But what if Scripture tells a different story?

In *Firstborn: Exposing the Myth of Pre-existence*, Steve Martin invites readers to take a fresh, careful look at the Bible's testimony about Jesus' origin. Examining the Gospels, Paul's letters, and key Old Testament passages, this book reconsiders the verses most often used to support pre-existence and asks whether tradition has spoken louder than Scripture.

If you're ready to examine what Scripture actually says – and to see Jesus not as a divine impersonator, but as the faithful Man Whom God exalted – this book will both challenge and encourage you.

**“CHURCH”** ([continued from front page](#))

chy, no human headship, and no sacred building to maintain.

### THE INDUSTRY OF GUILT

Institutional religion depends on guilt. Miss a Sunday and you're “backsliding.” Miss a tithe and you're “robbing God.” Ask too many questions and you're “out of order.”

But when you step outside that system, something wonderful happens. You don't lose faith – you lose fear.

You stop performing and start resting. You stop trying to earn favor and begin living from the favor you already have – “*accepted in the Beloved*” (Ephesians 1:6).

### FREEDOM TO STAY HOME

Leaving the institutional church doesn't mean leaving God. It often means leaving the illusion that He's somewhere you're not.

The same God Who once called people *into* temples now calls them *out* of them – into rest, simplicity and freedom.

You don't need to “go to church” to find God.

You need to stop going to church to realize He's already found you.

**Note:**

This understanding comes from the light given through Paul's *Epistles – Ephesians* and *Colossians* – which unveil the present *Administration of Grace*.

In these writings, the apostle reveals the celestial character of His new Body and the truth that Christ Himself is the only Head of the ecclesia today.

**BSN**

**TOPICS:**

**Major:** Administration; Church; Ecclesia; Christianity; Freedom

**Minor:** Grace; Realization; Religion; Temple



## 2026 Annual Bible Conference

Friday, March 20–Sunday, March 22, 2026

**Location (Pittsburgh, PA area)**

Microtel Inn & Suites by Wyndham Beaver Falls  
2801 Darlington Road  
Beaver Falls, PA 15010

Special Lodging Rate for the Conference: \$95 each night

**Reserve Discounted Room Now:** (Darla Butcher, 724-581-5273)

**Schedule:** [Click here](#) for meeting agenda

Friday

6:00 PM - Dinner and Fellowship

Saturday

6:00 Free continental breakfast (hotel)

9:00 - 11:00 Teaching Sessions

11:30 - 1:30 Lunch

1:30 - 4:15 Teaching Sessions

6:00 Dinner and Fellowship

Sunday

6:00 Free continental breakfast (hotel)

9:00 - 11:45 Testimonies and Teaching Sessions

11:45 - Closing and goodbye

**PLEASE RSVP your attendance** (seating is limited – even if you made room reservations)

For more information, contact Steve Martin at 610-909-9285 or [biblestudentsnotebook@gmail.com](mailto:biblestudentsnotebook@gmail.com)

**FIGURES** (continued from page 9297)

FIRST “death” is cast into the SECOND. Thus, this speaks symbolically (“signified,” G4591, σημαίνω, *sēmainō*, Revelation 1:1) of the death of death. And Paul plainly taught that the only way to “destroy” death is by resurrection (I Corinthians 15:26).

Additionally, “brimstone” is the Greek word *theion* (G2303/4), which means “divine,” and accordingly it is used to identify the source or character of the fire. “Fire and brimstone” is a divine-fire.

Thus, the “lake of fire” is a blazing symbology of the transition from death to life, from the unseen to realization. It is the figurative manifestation of the love of God – of His purifying, all-consuming love – “for our God is also a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:29).

**NOTE:**

For more information on the “Lake of Fire,” see:

- The Lake of Fire and Brimstone, Charles H. Pridgeon  
*Bible Student’s Notebook* 531  
<https://studysshelf.com/BSN/Issues/bsn531.pdf>
- The Second Death, Arthur P. Adams  
*Bible Student’s Notebook* 530  
<https://studysshelf.com/BSN/Issues/bsn530.pdf>

– A Touchstone, Aaron Locker

*Bible Student’s Notebook* 531

<http://studysshelf.com/BSN/Issues/bsn531.pdf>

– The Lake of Fire, Bob Evelyn

*Bible Student’s Notebook* 820

<https://studysshelf.com/BSN/Issues/bsn820.pdf>

– “The Lake of Fire – the Second Death” Is Symbolic (i.e., Not Literal), De L. Trefethen

*Bible Student’s Notebook* 1012

<https://studysshelf.com/BSN/Issues/bsn1012.pdf>

**BSN**

**TOPICS:**

**Major:** Brimstone; Figures of Speech; Fire; Lake of Fire; Second Death; “Like” and “As”; σημαίνω; *Sēmainō*; Symbology; *Theion*

IT IS COMMON  
– IT IS ALMOST  
USUAL – FOR PEOPLE  
TO USE THE BIBLE AS AN  
ARSENAL OF PROOF TEXTS  
TO PROVE THINGS ABOUT  
WHICH THEY HAVE ALREADY  
MADE UP THEIR MINDS.  
– WILLIAM BARCLAY (1907-1978)



## The Myth of Easter

“The Christian Mythology” Series

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

There are many myths in Christendom. They have managed to master their own form of mythology. Easter is an example of such a religious fable.

If Easter is the celebration of the historical fact of our Lord Jesus Christ’s resurrection, then why does its date change every year? Historical dates do not fluctuate; but Easter Sunday can fall anywhere between March 22 and April 25. Have you ever wondered why?

It is one of the glaring clues that something is seriously wrong with Christendom. The Western Christian religion can’t seem to get anything right when it comes to even the simplest of Scriptural truths.

Have you ever really considered if there is any scriptural basis of Good Friday or Easter Sunrise Services that are so commonly observed by the religious community? Additionally, have you ever considered what Easter Rabbits and Easter Eggs have to do with the resurrection of Christ or teachings of God’s Word?

Although millions of people are of the opinion that Easter and all of its customs are Christian and originated as a result of Christ’s resurrection, it is a historical fact that the observance of Easter long antedates Christianity by centuries.