



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Joy!

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

Volume 45
Issue III2

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

"I Came to Realize"

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

by — Steve Martin

There's a phrase I find myself returning to again and again: "I came to realize ..."

It's the way many of us describe those moments when a truth suddenly shines brighter than it ever has before – when something clicks, when a Scripture opens up, when a mystery becomes clear. But if we're honest, those realizations often arrive in ways we can't quite explain.

Did I stumble onto it by accident? Did I finally study hard enough? Did I suddenly become smarter overnight? Paul gives us the real answer – and it's far better than any of those.

REALIZATION COMES FROM THE FATHER OF GLORY

In Ephesians 1:17-18, Paul prays that God would give believers "a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him," and that "the eyes of your heart may be enlightened."

Realization isn't something that we manufacture. It isn't earned through intelligence, effort or academic skill. It isn't the reward for mastering Greek verbs or theological systems.

Realization is a gift. It comes from "the Father of glory."

He is the One Who gives light. He is the One Who opens the eyes. He is the One Who fills our hearts with understanding.



This means that, every time you've ever said, "I came to realize," you were actually describing God's gentle work within you. And that is an incredible relief.

BECAUSE WE DON'T HAVE TO BE THE SMARTEST PERSON IN THE ROOM

Some of us – maybe most of us – don't feel like natural scholars. Deep study doesn't always come easily. Theological puzzles can feel overwhelming. We read books and wonder how others see things which we've missed for years.

But God never asked us to be brilliant. He never demanded academic muscle. He never required intellectual confidence. Rather, He gives realization as a gift of grace.

Often that realization comes through the writings or insights of others – teachers, friends, authors long gone, or conversations we didn't expect to have. That doesn't make the realization any less ours. God uses people the way sunlight uses a window. The light is still from Him.

And when that light hits your heart – when suddenly you see – you know it. You feel it. It's undeniable.

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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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HOW WE KNOW A REALIZATION IS TRUE

We've all heard ideas that sounded clever but didn't bring life. We've encountered teachings that were sharp, heavy or fear-driven. We've listened to arguments that produced confusion instead of freedom.

But when God gives realization, it carries a signature – something unmistakable.

True realization always expands:

- the Father's love;
- the Father's joy;
- the Father's peace;
- the Father's freedom.

It widens the horizon, not the burden. It brings rest, not anxiety. It makes God kinder, not harsher. It causes everything to fit – not through force, but through clarity.

The Father never enlightens you in a way that shrinks Him. Light from God always increases the warmth. That's how you know that the realization is real.

REALIZATION IS PART OF THE RELATIONSHIP

In the end, realization is not an academic achieve-

ment – it's intimacy. It's the Father sharing His heart with His children. It's Him lifting the veil, little by little, revealing Who He is and what He has always been doing.

These moments of realization aren't just educational. They're relational. They are the Father saying,

- "Here, child ... see this.
- See Me more clearly.
- See My love more deeply.
- See My purpose more beautifully."

No wonder our hearts overflow with gratitude when these moments come.

They remind us that we are not walking toward God through our cleverness – we're being led by Him through His kindness.

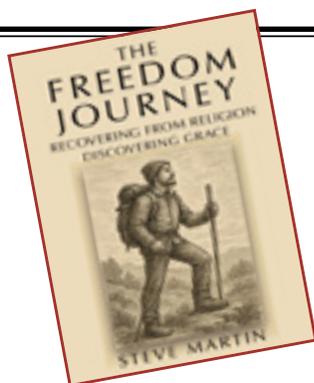
And the more we realize, the more we rest. Because every true insight is simply another reminder that the Father of glory is also the Father of light – and He delights to open our eyes.

BSN

TOPICS:

Major: Father; God; Realization; Truth

Minor: Grace; Love; Study



Freedom Journey:

Recovering from Religion ~ Discovering Grace

by — Steve Martin

This book is for every soul who's felt the crushing weight of religion and wondered if walking away meant walking out on God. It doesn't. In fact, leaving might be the first truly faithful thing you've ever done.

Steve Martin dismantles the myths that keep people trapped in church systems built on guilt, control, and the fear of hell. With clarity, compassion, and bold honesty, he exposes how religion hijacked grace and twisted God's love into a performance-based nightmare. You'll discover:

- Why obedience doesn't earn you anything;
- How the threat of hell was a lie from the start;
- The truth about God's unstoppable, unconditioned love;
- How to trust a sovereign God Who doesn't need your help;
- And what real spiritual freedom looks like – outside the church walls.

If you're burned out, beaten down, or just barely hanging on to your faith, The Freedom Journey will help you breathe again. Because you were never meant to follow a system. You were meant to be free.

God's Creative Original

Part 2 of 3

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

by — Deverlain L. Trefethen

And to the messenger of the ecclesia in Laodicea write: "Now this is saying the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, and God's Creative Original" (Revelation 3:14, CV throughout, unless otherwise noted).

THE FIRSTBORN AND FIRSTFRUITS

The Firstborn

Who is the Image of the invisible God, Firstborn of every creature, for in Him is all created, that in the Heavens and that on the Earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, or lordships, or sovereignties, or authorities, all is created through Him and for Him, and He is before all, and all has its cohesion in Him. And He is the Head of the Body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming First, for in Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the Earth or those in the Heavens (Colossians 1:15-20).

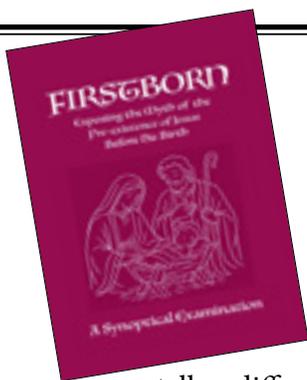


Colossians 1:15-20, for there we learn that Jesus is "the Image of the invisible God." He is "the Firstborn of every creature." In Him is all created. All is created through Him. All is created for Him. He is before all. He is the Head of the Body. He is "the Firstborn from among the dead," so that "in all He may be coming First."

When we read of Jesus as "the Firstborn of every creature," and that He was "the Firstborn from among the dead," His status of Firstborn is not in accord with Him being first in the sense that He was the first of God's creation. If we will allow Scripture to teach us, we will find no reference of His existence prior to Him coming in the flesh, born of Mary in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king (Matthew 2:1).

Again, many people interpret the term "firstborn" to mean that the Father created His Son before creating anything else, suggesting that Jesus Christ existed

It's important that we give close attention to Colos-



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.

before His birth. However, a deeper understanding reveals that Christ is not the “*firstborn*” in the sense of being created first, but rather the “*first-in-kind*” of a new creation – the *first-in-kind* of a new humanity.

Remember, in the old humanity (flesh) ALL are appointed unto death in Adam, but in the new humanity (spirit) ALL are appointed unto Life Immortal in Christ (I Corinthians 15:22).

I submit that the firstborn passages are not about Jesus existing with the Father “*in the beginning*,” nor even about Jesus being born of Mary. Rather, these firstborn Scriptures speak of Who Jesus Christ is – God’s Firstborn Son – *in resurrection*: “*Firstborn from among the dead*.”

The term “*firstborn*” gives expression to what Jesus accomplished for all God’s creatures through His death, burial, resurrection, vivification, and ascension to the right hand of the Father – each, in relationship to *sonship*. The relationship of the Son to all of God’s created – may be realize in this very term – “*Firstborn*.”

The Greek word rendered “*Firstborn*” is *prōtokos*.¹ When I see the Greek spelling, what comes to mind is the term “*prototype*.” Don’t you suppose Father had something to do with that spelling? The word origin of *prōtokos* is from *πρῶτος* (*prōtos*, meaning “*first*”) and *τίκτω* (*tiktō*, meaning “*to bring forth*”). That is to say, *prōtokos* means “*first to bring forth*.” Jesus was the FIRST to bring forth that which is to follow. Jesus is “*the Firstborn of every creature*.”

1. (SEC, G4416).

Jesus is the *pattern* in that, vivification accompanied His resurrection. Jesus was “*the Firstborn from among the dead*.” Jesus was the Firstborn to be vivified unto Life Immortal. We could rightly say that Jesus is the prototype of resurrection from among the dead, accompanied with instant vivification, unto Life Immortal.

A prototype is that from which other forms are developed or copied. Jesus Christ is the Prototype of all to come after Him in death, resurrection and vivification: the *Prōtokos* – the first brought forth. The term definitely speaks of a prototype, a first, an original, as in “*God’s Creative Original*,” as in the first-in-kind to be followed by the rest – in their class and order.²

The Colossians passage is chock-full of what Jesus, as the Firstborn Son, paved way for all of God’s creatures. It speaks volumes of the *reconciliation of all*. It does, in fact, exude the sweet-smelling savor of truth regarding the reconciliation of all.

The term “*pre-existence*” of Christ is NOT a biblical term, but it has been used to make a point, pro or con. So, for the sake of that term, let us remember that according to Scripture all of us “*pre-existed*,” in the sense that each of us were purposed in God beforehand (in His “*Logos*”).

There has been much made of this next passage to prove that Jesus existed before He was born a baby boy.

2. For more on Christ the Divine Prototype, see:

“*Participation in Divine Life*,” Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student’s Notebook 176](#).



Was Jesus Christ Alive Before His Life on Earth Began? A Critical Look at the Supposed Preexistence of Christ

by — Aaron Welch

Paul was exact in his statement that “*there is one God, the Father ... and one Lord, Jesus Christ*” (I Corinthians 8:6, *Concordant*). The only absolute God is the Father, and He has no equals. The Lord Jesus Christ is a part of His creation; the Spirit is an expression meaning God’s spirit.

This exceptional work embraces the truth of “*the man Christ Jesus*” (I Timothy 2:5), exposing the traditional orthodox position known as the “*pre-existence of Christ*,” a creed vitally connected with Christendom’s teaching of the Trinity. The “*pre-existence of Christ*” does great dishonor to both the Father and His Son, diminishing the true glory that belong uniquely to each.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was toward God, and God was the Word. This was in the beginning toward God. All came into being through it, and apart from it not even one thing came into being which has come into being (John 1:1-3).

With all that has already been detailed, may we realize that this passage in John is not talking about Jesus existing before He was a being on the Earth.

Greek “Logos,” English “Word”

The value of this term “Word” (*Logos*) is to be sought out, and in doing so we can ascertain the proper understanding and import of the term “word” in this passage to be,

- God’s Divine Order,
- God’s Calculated Plan,
- God’s Directive (purpose) by which He Decrees All.

The term “Word” as we read above from John 1 may be understood thus: All will be, *down to* the strict and exact detail, as God has Planned and Purposed after the Counsel of His Own Will.

We could easily say that God “made up His mind” in the beginning about exactly how everything regarding His creation would be played out. To illustrate from a playwright’s viewpoint, Dad wrote a Divine Script; from a builder’s perspective, Papa designed a Divine Blueprint.³

3. For more on the Logos, see,
The Logos, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [BSN 574](#);
The Logos (Bible Basics #2), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.; [BSN 840](#).

By the Word of the LORD were the Heavens made – All the host of them were made by the breath of His mouth – He spake, and it was done – He commanded, and it stood fast – His counsel stands for the eon – the thoughts of His heart are to all generations. ... (Psalm 33:6, 9, 11, author’s paraphrase).

Everything created – everything, be it good or evil – came to be by God’s Divine Design, His Order, His Plan and His Purpose. Because we know this, we can also be assured that we were included in His Divine Blueprint (the Script), before we were ever a being.

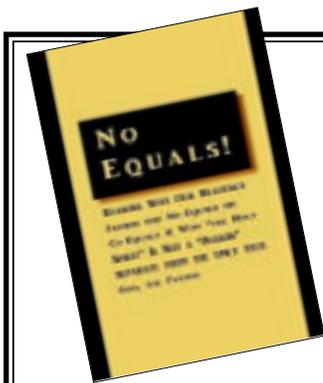
And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground [body], and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life [spirit]; and man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7, MKJV).

... then the dust [body] shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit [breath of life] shall return to God Who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7, MKJV).

... according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son for Him through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:4-5).

Jesus said to them, “Verily, verily, I am saying to you, Ere Abraham came into being, I am” (John 8:58).

Just as Jesus was the most significant part of God’s Plan in fulfilling His *Logos* – long before Abraham was born – so, too, ALL of the rest of Father’s creatures were purposed and planned before Abraham



No Equals!

Reasons Why Our Heavenly Father Has NO Equals or Co-Equals, & Why “the Holy Spirit” Is Not a “Person” Separate from the Only True God, the Father

by — Christian Educational Services

Two powerful titles in one book, both exposing the critical error of the traditional orthodox position of the Trinity. This very simple and clear presentation is a must-read.

came into being. Abraham, in this instance is just a reference point *per se*.

“FIRSTFRUITS”

Next let us consider the term “*Firsrfruits*.” We will see how “*Firstborn*” and “*Firstfruits*” each open to us understanding wherein we shall more fully realize what has been accomplished through God’s Son, Who is God’s *Creative Original*.

Yet now Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit[s] of those who are reposing. For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified. Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ; thereupon those who are Christ’s in His presence; thereafter the Consummation, whenever He may be giving up the Kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power (I Corinthians 15:20-24).

Let’s look at a few Greek words found in this passage.

Aparchē,⁴ meaning: the “*firstfruits*,” the earliest crop of the year. Firstfruits is an impetus for the rest, *i.e.*, this term found in the Old Testament sets a premise for the rest. God builds upon said term. The word origin of *aparchē* is from ἀπό (*apo*, meaning “from”) and ἀρχή (*archō*, meaning “beginning” or “first”).

Epeita,⁵ meaning: then, thereafter, afterwards. The word origin is derived from the Greek words ἐπί (*epi*, meaning “upon” or “after”) and εἶτα (*eita*,

meaning “then” or “next”).

Koimaō,⁶ meaning: I fall asleep, am asleep, sometimes of the sleep of death. The word origin is derived from the Greek word κείμμαι (*keimai*, G2749), meaning “to lie down” or “to be laid.”

Ktisma,⁷ meaning: a created thing, a creature. The word origin is derived from the Greek verb κτίζω (*ktizō*), meaning “to create” or “to form.”

As we can see, there are layers to be examined and understood regarding the term “*firstfruits*,” especially as we examine the relationship of Jesus Christ to the term.

My first introduction to “*firstfruits*” was with regard to Israel’s celebrated feast days. They were to observe the festivals yearly – the harvest of the firstfruits was the first of their yield from what they had sown. They were to bring the first of the harvest to the house of Yahweh their Elohim.

At His first advent, Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of the celebrated spring feasts of the Lord. The feast of Firstfruits was fulfilled when Jesus was resurrected – He is, in fact the Firstfruits of the harvest to follow. The terms Firstfruits and Firstborn are each revealing.

Compare – “*Yet now Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit[s] of those who are reposing*” with – “*He [Christ Jesus] is the Head of the Body, the ecclesia, Who is Sovereign, Firstborn from among the dead, that in all He may be becoming first.*”

Dad’s *Creative Original* (Jesus Christ) – having been

4. G536 (SEC).
5. G1899 (SEC).

6. G2837 (SEC).
7. G2938 (SEC).



Growing in the Realization of God

by — Robert McMahon

This work, firmly rooted in the sovereignty of God, shows the vital importance of acquaintance with the Almighty God leading to a realization that He is our Father and will be “ALL in All.”

established as the “*Firstborn*” from among the dead – the “*Firstfruits*” of those reposing – has guaranteed that ALL of God’s creatures will follow Him in the consummate success of the ONE New Humanity.

- Adam (old humanity), the head of the carnal dying flesh being.
- Jesus Christ (new humanity), the Head of the vivified living spirit being).

These truths bring to me full-on giddiness. I trust you are experiencing this same FULLness of joy.

(to be continued)

TOPICS:

Major: *Aparchē*, (G536); Creative Original; Firstborn; Firstfruits; Immortality; Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ (Pre-Existence of); *Logos*; Prototype; *Prōtotokos* (G4416); Vivification; Preeminence;
Minor: Adam; New Humanity; Old Humanity

NOTE: For more exposés on the supposed “Pre-Existence” of Jesus Christ, see:

The book:

- [Was Jesus Christ Alive Before His Life on Earth Began? \(A Critical Look at the Supposed Preexistence of Christ\)](#), by Aaron Welch, Bible Student’s Press.
- [Firstborn: Exposing the Myth of Pre-existence \(A Synoptical Examination\)](#), Steve Martin, Compilation Editor

Bible Student’s Notebook articles:

- *The Genesis of Jesus Christ* (Editor’s Desk), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [BSN 707](#);
- *When God Became the Father of His Son (with 10 Common Objections Considered)*, Aaron Welch, [BSN 818](#);
- *The Worship of Christ* (Reader’s Question Box #23), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [BSN 710](#);
- *The Kenosis of Christ* (Reader’s Question Box #35), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [BSN 806](#);
- *The Dishonoring Effect of the Teaching of the “Pre-Existence” of Christ* (Reader’s Question Box #27), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [BSN 759](#);
- *Who Is on the Throne in Isaiah 6?* (Reader’s Question Box #62), Aaron Welch, [BSN 871](#);
- *Alpha and Omega – Beginning and End – First and Last*, Johann Grobler, [BSN 901](#).

God's Sovereignty

by — Darson Buckner

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

If you don't recognize God's sovereignty,
And you control your own morality,

Answer me these questions the best you can,
And tell me all about your lifetime plan.



Have you ever disappointed yourself?
Where are you storing all your self-made wealth?

Why did you choose this life for to be born?
How long will you live this life to be torn?

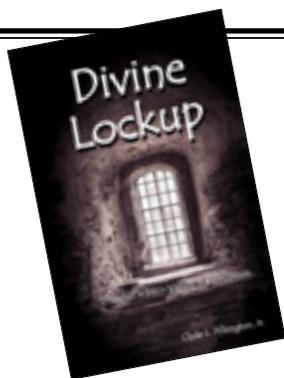
Your father fought wars, yet he did survive.
Your mother had fever when she was five.

Did you deliver them, or was it chance?
How did you do it from God's vast expanse?

God planned your life before your unplanned birth.
His mercy He planned for you on this Earth. **BSN**

THERE IS
STILL MUCH LIGHT
TO BREAK FORTH FROM
THE SCRIPTURES.

– A. E. KNOCH (1874-1965)



Divine Lockup

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

This work deals scripturally with God’s sovereignty in the midst of humanity’s current condition of, and future deliverance from, unbelief, sin, vanity and corruption. Without question, for all creation, the best is yet to come.