



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Joy!

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

Volume 45
Issue 1123

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



Reader's Question Box #86

Remembering Our Earthly Lives

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

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

Q: Do you believe we will remember our old earth lives and the bonds we had? These bonds are so special to me and so distinct. I hope we remember how much loved ones meant to us and don't forget. ... And do you think some of the earthly joys: sports, learning instruments, music, hiking, skiing, etc., will be in the resurrection?

A: Yes, we will remember our old earth lives and the bonds we've had. When we are immortal, we can't be less intelligent than we are now. And life is all about contrasts, and we will need those to further appreciate what we will have in Father's glorious future.

The verse that is most often cited to suggest that we will have a *memory wipe* in resurrection, is Isaiah 65:17.

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

This seems plain enough, right?

Yet, the context of what is forgotten refers specifically to the "*former troubles*" mentioned in the preceding verse (:16). "*Former troubles*" suggests that the pain, sin, and trauma of earthly will be so completely healed that they will no longer cause grief. The idea is that the coming glory will be so spectacular and filled with joy that the trials of this life will simply never enter our minds to produce grief, much in the

same way that a mother "forgets" the pain of labor once she holds her child.

Additionally, Revelation 21:4 clearly echoes this sentiment, stating that "*the former things have passed away,*" and specifically in the context, God is wiping away every tear and ending death, mourning and pain.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away (KJV).

And He will be brushing away every tear from their eyes. And death will be no more, nor mourning, nor clamor, nor misery; they will be no more, for the former things passed away (CV).

And yes, the bonds of this life are invaluable, and we will cherish and develop them in the resurrection. And whatever we enjoy now – sports, learning instruments, music, hiking, skiing, etc., as you suggest – are simply in place now, as a mere beginning point
[\(see REMEMBERING, page 9414\)](#)

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume 45, No. 1123 – June 1, 2026

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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Why I Don't Vote

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

by — Steve Martin

This is not a posture I've held my entire life. It is not something I settled years ago. And it is not a conclusion I reached lightly.

In fact, this journey – for me – has begun only recently.

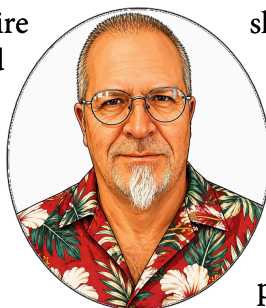
Over time, I started noticing that my engagement with national politics was producing more anxiety than clarity, more distraction than love, and more reaction than peace. What once felt like responsibility slowly became noise, and eventually, I had to ask a different question – not, “What should I believe politically?” but, “Where does my confidence actually live?”

What follows is not a rule for others. It is simply an explanation of where I am now, and why.

WHAT I MEAN – AND WHAT I DON'T

When I say I am becoming apolitical in national politics, I want to be clear about what that means.

It does not mean that I don't care about people. It does not mean that I deny suffering, injustice or hard-



ship. It does not mean that I believe God is absent from history.

It does mean that I no longer participate in national political systems in the ways I once did. I do not belong to a political party. I do not align myself with partisan platforms, and I do not vote.

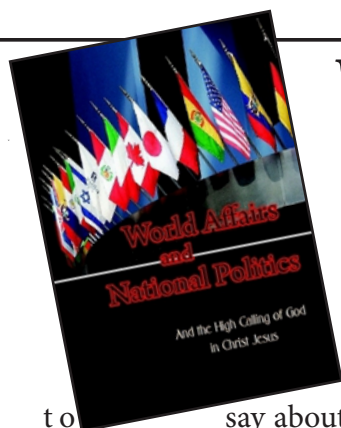
That choice is not rooted in cynicism or protest. It is rooted in a growing scriptural realization – one that is still forming, still settling, and still reshaping how I live.

CHOOSING TO BE UNINFORMED – ON PURPOSE

Alongside this shift I have also become intentionally uninformed about daily political developments, both in the United States and globally.

That word – uninformed – can sound irresponsible. But for me, it is a matter of stewardship.

I do not follow the constant churn of headlines. I do not track political commentary or election cycles. Instead, I am choosing to stay present – present with my family, my friends, and my neighbors. Present



World Affairs and National Politics: and the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

When did nationalism begin? What is God's purpose for nationalism? Is the United States a Christian nation? Does any government have Favored Nation Status with God today? Should believers support Israel? What did Paul have to say about our citizenship? What is our role in relation to nations? Is our job to rid the world of evil? What should the believer's attitude be toward earthly authority? Should all obedience to earthly magistrates be absolute? Are believers to pay their taxes? Where does voting and jury duty fit in? Why was the apostle Paul executed? These and many other questions are addressed in this groundbreaking work! Third Edition (2024), 292 pages.

with the people whose lives I can actually touch.

I have found that constant political awareness was pulling my attention away from real relationships and into abstract fear. Stepping back has made me less reactive and more available. Less consumed and more grounded.

TWO VERY DIFFERENT ARENAS

One of the most clarifying realizations for me has been learning to distinguish between human governance and divine administration.

Scripture never treats nations as ultimate. Governments rise and fall. Kings are installed and removed. Empires appear permanent – until they aren't. This pattern is consistent throughout history and throughout Scripture.¹ (*see endnotes*)

By contrast, God is not responding to events as they unfold. He is operating all according to the counsel of His will.²

Not some things; not spiritual things only – *All* things.

Rulers, authorities, eras, resistance and even failure are not interruptions to God's purpose. They are encompassed within it.

GOD SETS UP WHOM HE WILLS

This realization has deeply affected how I view political power.

Scripture repeatedly affirms that God sets up rulers and removes them. Authority is not seized independently of Him, nor does it persist beyond His intention.³ Whatever one believes about the mechanics of elections, Scripture is clear about authorship.

God is not scrambling to retain control. He is not waiting to see how history turns out. He is not dependent on human participation to secure His purpose.

Paul tells us that God has made known the secret of His will, purposed in Himself, leading to an administration designed to head up all in the Christ – both that in the Heavens and that on the Earth.⁴

An administration does not suggest uncertainty. It suggests intention, direction and completion.

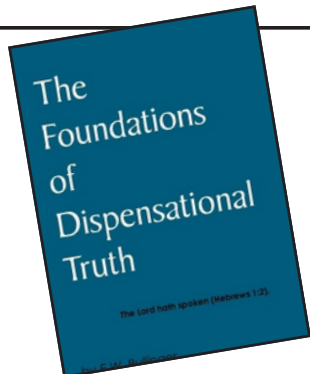
WHY I DON'T VOTE

Because of this, I no longer believe that my vote carries ultimate weight.

That statement can sound shocking, but it is not meant to be dismissive. It is simply honest.

If God truly sets up whom He wills – if history is genuinely authored rather than negotiated – then my confidence cannot rest in a ballot. Voting began to feel like a symbolic act I was being told mattered more than Scripture said it did.

For me, continuing to vote required holding two conflicting beliefs at once: that God is sovereign, and that outcomes ultimately depend on human inter-



The Foundations of Dispensational Truth

Originally published in 1913, this was Bullinger's last book. It serves to help cut the tether of tradition with which Christians have been bound for so long. It does so by showing the absolute necessity of observing the great duty of "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

This definitive work recognizes the clear distinctions between the Body of Christ and Israel. Controversial in the eyes of traditional Christianity, this extraordinary work will prove invaluable to the serious student of Scripture. 260 pages.

vention. I could no longer sustain that tension with integrity.

So, I stepped back – not in anger; not in protest – but in *trust*.

A SHIFT IN CITIZENSHIP

This has also reshaped how I understand identity.

Paul consistently locates the believer's calling beyond national frameworks. Our blessings are in the Super-Heavens. Our identity is in Christ. Our expectation is not anchored to borders, parties or policies.⁵

Earthly citizenship exists, but it is no longer central. When national identity becomes primary, fear inevitably follows – the fear that everything depends on us. But when identity is rooted in God's administration, that urgency dissolves.

Peace replaces pressure.

POLITICS FEEDS URGENCY; GRACE (JOY) CULTIVATES PEACE

Political systems thrive on urgency. There must always be a looming crisis, an approaching disaster, or an existential threat. Awareness becomes a moral obligation. Anxiety becomes a virtue.

Grace speaks differently.

Grace announces that God is not anxious.; that the future is not fragile; that history is not teetering on

the edge of collapse, waiting for us to rescue it.⁶

Choosing peace is not avoidance. It is confidence in authorship.

THE GOSPEL IS NOT A POLITICAL INSTRUMENT

Another reason for this shift is what happens when the evangel becomes entangled with political movements.

The good news was never designed to prop up nations or sanctify policies. It announces reconciliation already accomplished, not outcomes dependent on legislation.⁷ When the gospel is drafted into political service, it begins to sound like pressure rather than grace.

That is not good news.

LOVING WITHOUT LABELS

Stepping away from partisan identity has also changed how I relate to people.

Without political labels, conversations open. Listening deepens. Love flows more freely. I am less tempted to sort people quickly and more able to meet them where they are.

I find that love works best when it is not tethered to ideology.

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



The Administration of the Secret (A Comprehensive Compilation)

The Secret Administration, revealed through Ephesians and Colossians, is characterized and empowered by the dispensation of transcendent grace (Ephesians 1:7; 2:7; 3:2). Now, believing Gentiles are “no longer guests and sojourners” as they were in the Pentecostal and Readjustment Administrations, but are “fellow-citizens of the saints and members of God’s family” (Ephesians 2:19). This outstanding work includes 45 chapters, by 17 authors, spanning nearly 200 years. Author’s include: Oscar M. Baker, Tom L. Ballinger, J.R. Caldwell, E.H. Clayton, J.J.B. Coles, John Essex, J.H. Evans, H.W. Fry, Vladimir Gelesnoff, William B. Hallman, Richard Holden, John H. Kessler, A.E. Knoch, Adlai Loudy, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., and Charles H. Welch. 308 pages.

Right Division

(An Overview of Dispensational Truth)

Part 19

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

by — Mark D. Vogt

A Brief Survey of the Greek Scriptures: PAUL'S PLACE IN GOD'S PLAN Paul's Twofold Ministry

The Apostle Paul occupies a unique and distinguished place in God's purpose. His apostleship was **twofold**, corresponding to two distinct administrations of God's dealings with humanity. The first part of his ministry took place during the *Acts period*; the second began after his imprisonment in Rome, marking the beginning of a new and secret administration revealed through him alone.



Israel's covenant position. This arrangement was not a secret; it was consistent with the prophetic revelation that Gentiles would one day be blessed through Israel.

An early example of this principle is found in Acts 10, when Peter was directed by a divine vision to a member of the Nations, Cornelius, "a devout man and one who feared God." Peter declared, "In every nation, he who fears Him and does righteousness is acceptable to Him" (Acts 10:34–35). Likewise, Paul's mission during this period functioned under this same framework: blessing to members of the Nations was extended **through Israel's channel**, not apart from it.

To truly *rightly divide the Word of Truth* (II Timothy 2:15), one must discern not only the difference between Paul's writings and those of the Circumcision apostles, but also the internal distinctions within Paul's own epistles. These differences are essential to a clear understanding of what God is doing in His present purpose.

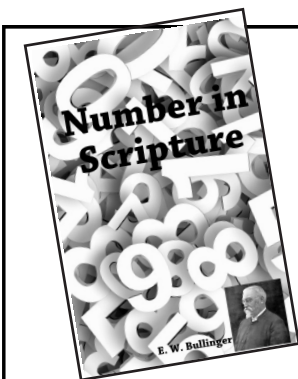
Throughout this time, **the Barrier Wall (Middle Wall of Partition)** remained intact. Israel still held the place of covenant privilege; all spiritual blessings were dispensed through her position as God's chosen nation.

THE CHARACTER OF PAUL'S MINISTRY DURING THE ACTS PERIOD

Paul's earlier ministry – recorded throughout the Book of Acts – was characterized as a **priestly ministry to the nations** (Romans 15:16). Though Israel as a nation was in unbelief, God in His forbearance permitted believing members of the Nations to share in the blessings flowing through

Yet, within that framework, Paul progressively announced Israel's increasing rejection of their Messiah. Three times during Acts, he publicly turned from the Jews to the Gentiles:

1. **Acts 13:46-47** – *It was necessary that the Word of*



Number in Scripture: Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance

by — E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

A complete synopsis of every significant number found in the Bible; one of the most famous and helpful reference books on numerics ever written. 320 pages.

God should first be spoken to you; but seeing you put it from you ... lo, we turn to the Nations.

2. Acts 18:6 – From now on I shall go to the Nations.

3. Acts 28:28 – Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Nations, and they will hear it.

Each statement marks a deepening of Israel's rejection and the gradual unfolding of inclusion among the Nations. By Acts 28:28, Israel's national privilege had ended. The prophetic declaration of Hosea 1:9 – "You are not My people" – was fulfilled, and the barrier between Israel and the Nations was removed.

From this point onward, "the Hope of Israel" ceased to be Paul's message. God was now ready to reveal something entirely new – something that had been "hidden in Himself" from ages and generations.

THE CHARACTER OF PAUL'S MINISTRY AFTER ACTS

Paul's post-Acts ministry began while he was imprisoned in Rome. It was during this period that God granted him the revelation of "the Administration of the Secret" (Ephesians 3:9, CV). This truth had been "hidden in God" from before "the disruption of the world" – not merely undiscovered, but unrevealed.

In this newly revealed administration, God no longer deals through National Israel. Instead, He's calling out a joint-body – the Ecclesia which is His Body – composed from among all nations, with no distinction. This Body is blessed with every spiritual blessing in the Super-Heavens (Ephesians 1:3), possessing a Celestial calling, hope and allotment entirely apart from Israel's earthly promises.

This is an administration of **pure grace**. Works, rituals and priestly intermediaries have no place in it. The believer stands complete in Christ and destined for Super-Heavenly glory. The revelation of this secret marks the pinnacle of divine revelation – the fullest display of God's heart in reconciling all creation through Christ.

SUMMARY

Paul's twofold ministry stands as a key to understanding all of God's progressive revelation. During the Acts period, he functioned as a priest to the nations under Israel's superiority, proclaiming the Hope of Israel. After Israel's setting aside at Acts 28:28, he became the sole herald of a **new, Secret Administration** – the calling of a Body separate from Israel's covenants and earthly Kingdom.

If these distinctions are not recognized, confusion and contradiction inevitably follow – as seen throughout Christendom today.

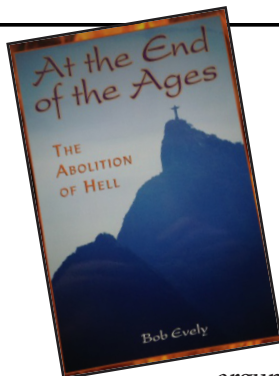
Ephesians and Colossians belong fully to this new revelation, while **Philippians** serves as a bridge between his two ministries. Together, they unveil God's present purpose and reveal our exalted position in Christ.

To *rightly divide* Paul's epistles, then, is to unlock the key to what God is doing **today**, what He has done **in the past**, and what He will yet do **in the ages to come**. **BSN**

TOPICS:

Major: Calling; Paul; Paul's Early Epistles; Paul's Later Epistles; Right Division; Secret Administration

Minor: Colossians; Ecclesia; Ephesians; Philippians



At the End of the Ages: The Abolition of Hell

by — Bob Evely

Is hell forever? Most say that the righteous go to heaven, and the wicked to hell, forever! Is this what the Bible teaches? This book presents evidence that the Bible, in the original languages, reveals that one day ALL mankind will be saved. Through time our Bible translations have become biased through the official teachings of "The Church." The author argues that teaching about an eternal hell slanders God, and it prevents many from having faith because the

arguments in support of an eternal torment are illogical. Would a God of love keep many souls alive forever just to torment them because they failed to "accept Jesus Christ" in this lifetime? The author shows that the Bible does not teach this. The purpose of "the eons" (*i.e.*, "the ages," often mistranslated "eternity") is to bring ALL mankind to the point where every knee bows before Him. This work is written with the average reader in mind. 171 pages.

VOTE ([continued from page 9411](#))

WHERE I AM NOW

This posture is new for me. It is still forming. I am not offering it as a standard for others or a test of faithfulness. I am simply describing a realization that has begun to reshape how I live.

I am less informed – but more present. Less invested in systems – but more confident in God. Less reactive – but more at peace.

My hope does not rise or fall with nations. It rests in a God Who is already heading up all in Christ.⁸

And for now, that is where I stand. **BSN**

TOPICS:

Major: Government; Grace (Joy); Labels; Love; Nationalism; Peace; Politics; Voting
Minor: Sovereignty

Scripture Endnotes

1. *And He is changing eras and stated times; He is removing kings and setting up kings; He is giving wisdom to the wise*

REMEMBERING ([continued from front page](#))

of all of the pleasure and joy that we will experience in resurrection.

As C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) so wisely and beautifully stated,

We can only hope for what we desire.

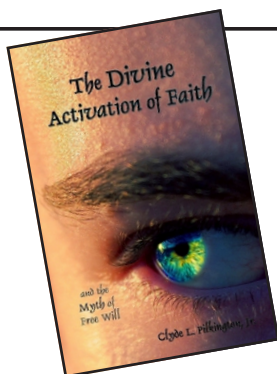
TOPICS:

Major: Contrast; Life; Resurrection
Minor: Death; Sorrow; Trials

and knowledge to those knowing understanding (Daniel 2:21).

2. ... in Whom our lot was cast also, being designated beforehand according to the purpose of Him Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11).
3. ... for there is no authority except by God, and those existing have been arranged by God (Romans 13:1).
4. ... making known to us the secret of His will (in accord with His delight, which He purposed in Him), to have an administration of the complement of the eras, to head up all in the Christ – both that in the heavens and that on the earth – in Him (Ephesians 1:9-10).
5. For our citizenship is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are also awaiting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (Philippians 3:20).
6. Telling from the beginning the hereafter, and from aforesaid what has not yet been done, saying, “My counsel shall stand, and all My delight will I do” (Isaiah 46:10).
7. ... yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving to us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them ... (II Corinthians 5:18-19).
8. For in Him is all created ... 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 (Colossians 1:16-17).

THE GOD I WORSHIP
IS NOT ONLY CAPABLE OF
REDEEMING ALL MANKIND,
BUT HE ALREADY DID!
ACCORDING TO THE APOSTLE
PAUL, OUR GOD TRANSFERRED THE
LINEAGE OF ADAM TWO THOUSAND
YEARS AGO INTO THE LINEAGE OF
THE LAST ADAM, JESUS CHRIST.
– MIKE OWENS



The Divine Activation of Faith and the Myth of Free Will

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

What is faith? Who is a believer? Is faith a matter of human choice, or is it a gift from God? Do those who have faith understand and believe everything correctly? Or, do they experience areas or degrees of unbelief? Can one be weak or strong in faith? Is there room in faith for growth? These are among the important questions that are considered in this work. 72 pages.