



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 30
Issue 749

A Few Words About Grace

by — William R. Newell (1868-1956)

THE NATURE OF GRACE

- Grace is God acting freely, according to His own nature as Love in view of the cross.
- Grace, therefore, is uncaused in the recipient, as its cause lies wholly in the Giver, in God.
- Grace cannot act where there is either desert or ability: Grace does not “help” – it is absolute, it does all.
- There being no cause in the creature why Grace should be shown, the creature is brought off from “trying,” giving way to God’s Grace.
- The discovery by the creature that he is truly the object of Divine grace works the utmost humility: for the receiver of Grace is brought to know his own unworthiness and his inability to attain worthiness: yet he finds himself blessed – on another principle, outside of himself!
- Therefore, flesh has no place in the plan of Grace. This is the great reason why Grace is hated by the proud natural mind of man. But for this very reason, the believer rejoices! For he knows that “*in him, that is, in his flesh, is no good thing*”; and yet he finds that God gladly received him, just as he is!



- Grace is not withdrawn: for God knew all the human exigencies beforehand: His action was independent of them, not dependent upon them.

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

THINGS DISCOVERED UNDER GRACE

- To hope to be better is to fail to see yourself in Christ only.
- To be disappointed with yourself is to have believed in yourself.
- To be discouraged is unbelief – as to God’s purpose and plan for you.
- To be proud, is to be blind! For we have no standing before God, in ourselves.
- Real devotion to God arises, not from man’s will to show it, but from the discovery that blessing has been received from God while we were yet unworthy.
- To proclaim devotion first, and blessing second, is to reverse God’s order and preach law, not Grace. The Law made man’s blessing depend on devotion; Grace confers undeserved, unconditional blessing; our devotion may follow but does not always do so in proper measure. **BSN**

OUR PLACE UNDER GRACE

- We are accepted in Christ, Who is our standing!
- We are not “on probation.”
- As to our “sin,” it does not exist before God: we died at the cross,¹ and Christ is our life.

1. [Editor:] I.e., “An upright stake or pale, without any crosspiece.”
– A.E. Knoch (*Concordant Keyword Concordance*, page 63). For more information, read:
– **THE “CROSS”:** *Was Christ Nailed to a “Cross” or a “Stake”?*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. [Bible Student’s Notebook #330](#);
– The “Cross” – An Explanation of its Use in the Concordant Ver-

(abridged & edited)

TOPICS:

Major: Grace; Identification; Sovereignty

Minor: Works

sion, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student’s Notebook #302](#).

A Few Words About Grace	6409
Some Polygynists of Scripture	6410
Editorial: Faces of the Abbey – Janet.....	6412



Some Polygynists

Name	Number of Wives & Known Names of Wives	References
Abdon, Judge of Israel Perhaps the same as 'Bedan'	Uncertain	Judges 12:14
Abijah, King of Judah Son & successor of Rehoboam	14	II Chronicles 13:21
Abraham, Faithful friend of God Father of the Hebrew nation, "Father of the faithful"	3 Sarah, Hagar and Keturah	Genesis 16:1, 3 Genesis 25:1
Ahab, King of Israel	Uncertain	I Kings 20:3
Ashur	2 Helah and Naarah	I Chronicles 4:5
Caleb	5 Azubah, Jerioth, Ephrath, Ephah, Maachah	I Chronicles 2:18-19, 46, 48
David, Youngest son of Jesse Second king of Israel, "after God's own heart"	Wives & Concubines Abigail, Ahinoam, Michal, Maacah, Rizpah, Bathsheba	I Samuel 25:39, 43-44 II Samuel 3:3, 7 II Samuel 5:13; I Chronicles 14:3 II Samuel 12:7-8, 24
Eliphaz	2 Timna	Genesis 36:11-12
Elkanah	2 Hannah, Peninnah	I Samuel 1:2
Esau	3 Judith, Bashemath, Mahalath	Genesis 26:34 Genesis 28:9
Ezra	2 Jehudijah	I Chronicles 4:17-18
Gideon, Fifth judge of Israel Led the Israelites against the Midianites	Uncertain Drumah, Shechem	Judges 8:30
Heman	Uncertain	I Chronicles 25:4
Hezron	3 Abiah	1 Chronicles 2:9, 21, 24
Hosea	2 Gomer	Hosea 1:3 Hosea 3:1
Ibzan	Uncertain	Judges 12:9
Tribe of Issachar	Uncertain	I Chronicles 7:4
Jair	Uncertain	Judges 10:4
Jerahmeel	2 Atarah	I Chronicles 2:26
Jeroboam	14 Michaiah	Flavius Josephus Jewish Antiquities 8.282 (Whiston)





of Scripture

Name	Number of Wives & Known Names of Wives	References
Joash	2	II Chronicles 24:3
Joseph	Uncertain	George Lamsa, in Gospel Light, Harper & Row, p. 5-7, his commentary.
Judah	2 Tamar, Daughter of Shua the Canaanitess	I Chronicles 2:3-4
Lamech	2 Adah, Zillah	Genesis 4:19
Machir	2 Maachah, Zelophehad	I Chronicles 7:15-16
Manasseh	2 The Aramitess	I Chronicles 7:14
Mered	4 Jehudijah, Bithiah, Hodiah	I Chronicles 4:17-19
Moses	2 Zipporah, Ethiopian Woman	Exodus 2:21 Numbers 12:1
Nahor	2 Milcah, Reumah	Genesis 22:20-24
Rehoboam	78 Mahalath, Abihail, Maachah	II Chronicles 11:18-23
Saul	2 Ahinoam, Rizpah	I Samuel 14:50 II Samuel 3:7
Shaharaim	2 Hushim, Baara	I Chronicles 8:8
Shimei	Uncertain	I Chronicles 4:27
Simeon	2 Canaanitish Woman	Genesis 46:10, Exodus 6:15
Solomon	1,000 Sidontans, Tyrians, Ammonites, Edomites	I Kings 11:3
Terah	2	Genesis 20:12
Zedekiah	Uncertain	Jeremiah 38:23
Ziba	Uncertain	II Samuel 9:10
Unnamed	Uncertain	I Corinthians 5:1
Jesus	5	Analogy - Parable Matthew 25:1-13
God	2 Aholah/Samaria, Aholibah/Jerusalem	Analogy Ezekiel 23:4 Jeremiah 3:6-14; 31:31-34

Source: BiblicalFamilies.org (abridged) (see *Patriarch's Journal* #004, 2013)

BSN

TOPICS:

Major: Charts; Polygamy; Polygyny

Minor: Marriage; Wife





Editor's Desk

Faces of the Abbey: Janet IN A MOMENT OF TIME

He looked at her. She looked at him. Suddenly life awoke. – Robert Browning (1812-1889)



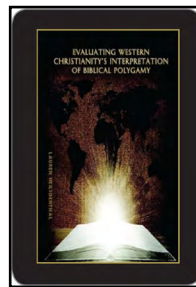
(2009)

I first met my wife Janet in July of 1990 in an aisle of the JFK auditorium of *Saint Francis University* in Loretto, Pennsylvania, only 30 minutes from where we now live in Paint Borough. What transpired at that moment in time would be hard for me ever to fully explain to anyone, but it would change my life forever.

At the very moment I met her I knew for certain she would be my wife. I knew it intrinsically, and it was all quite unexpected, to say the least. First, it went against everything I thought I knew about the process of obtaining a wife. So, on the one hand it was confusing, but on the other it was sure. It was as if, in one sweeping instant, God created an expansive gorge in my innermost being – a gap that before then had not existed, one that would one day be filled by her.

It was “love at first sight.” It was just who I was; it was just who she was. It was on one hand extremely complex, and on the other innately simple and comforting.

Did I need to learn about her, to have this love for her?



Evaluating Western Christianity's Interpretation of Biblical Polygamy

by — Lauren Heiligenthal

88 pp, PB (*see order form*)

This book demonstrates that the popular Western worldview regarding marriage affects biblical interpretation. While most Western societies uphold monogamy as God's ideal form of marriage, a number of other cultures practice polygamy. Western Christianity often perceives polygamy as a threat to the monogamist ideal; therefore, this book evaluates whether the Bible clearly advocates that polygamous men should become monogamous through divorce.

After interpreting Scripture through the lens of the biblical audience, this book then applies the interpretations from the five biblical texts to a modern situation involving polygamy. Since there is no biblical text that explicitly prohibits polygamy or promotes monogamy, this book argues that the interpretation of the monogamist ideal tends to derive from one's worldview rather than the Bible.

The fact is, I really knew nothing about her. So, how could I love her without knowing her? I loved her simply because I *did know* who she was or at least *would be* to me. How can a man not love his wife, or future wife? Similarly, I loved all my children before getting to know any of them, simply because I knew who I was and who they were. I was their dad, and they were my children. I loved them before they were even mine, before they were even born. I loved her too, simply because I knew in my heart my future relationship to her: an entire range and rush of knowledge-experience-emotion all crowded into the confines of that brief moment of time and space. Among other experiences, there was an overriding, fervent, profound *need* to be her husband. This was more than just a knowing that I *would be*, but that I *needed* to be. It was *providence*; it was *premonition*;¹ it was divine *passion*.

How can I even begin to express, as well as impress on you, how this all transpired within the boundaries of such a short encounter? “Epiphany” might be

1. Premonition is defined as: “intense anticipation” (Strong's), “persistent expectation” (Thayer), “intuitive opinion” (Knoch), “waiting in suspense” (Vincent), “an imagination of a future happening that has not been grasped in thinking” (Dahbar).

summoned to describe what happen to me that day. I had no other experiences in my life with which to compare it.

To make matters most bewildering, I was not even looking for a wife. The thought could not have possibly been any further from my mind. After all, I was *already* a happily married man of 12 years, with four children, ages 4 through 9. If not for this significant fact, perhaps the initial experience that I had would not have been so exceptional. “Love at first sight” is apparently not all that rare, even though I had often attempted to debunk such ideas in my past. Nonetheless, we hear the accounts of men, upon first meeting a woman, telling others, “I’m gonna marry that woman someday!” and *vice versa*. Now, perhaps such a statement was merely their expression of optimism, or determination. Or, for some, was it actually something more? Was it intuition, or premonition?

I had always credited such accounts of “falling in love” to pure desire and attraction rather than some innate realization. Of course, desire and attraction were certainly not missing from my own experience; but as strong as they were, they were secondary to the instinctive recognition of exactly who she was (or would be) to me.

As a result, my next, my immediate emotions, oddly enough, were that of fear and grief. They too would accompany my experience that day. They overwhelmed my mind nearly as much as my awareness of who she was and my passion for her. A dreadful sense came in, as the only rationale of my mind was that I would soon be widowed and that God was graciously prepar-

ing my heart for that most tragic event. Someone was being provided beforehand to help transition the tragedy. This was the only context into which I could frame this experience and knowledge. Still, the very thought of losing my wife Cindy was grievous – so much so that, in that moment of time, I was experiencing two extreme counterpoints of thought and emotions.

Following closely on the heels of this entire deluge, another possibility entered my mind: perhaps my heart had just gone “bad” – in an instant. I had spent my entire life consumed with a passion for God: to know, to honor and to serve Him. Now, perhaps in that brief moment, my heart had become “evil”; perhaps I had even become “immoral.” It was a very conflicting possibility, though, because my heart appeared unchanged toward Him. The same love and hunger for Him was constant, as was my new love and hunger for her.


Over the next days, weeks, months and years, I would vacillate between what I knew and what I felt; between awareness and emotion; between life and death; between spirit and flesh. I knew who she was to me – this was without question – and, on the other hand, was my wife going to die, or had my heart simply gone bad? These were all things that I would constantly talk to God about in the next few years. I would ask Him not to take my wife and the mother of my children from me, and, on other occasions, I would ask Him to take away my “evil” heart. At times these seemed to me to be my only possibilities.

WHY LORETTO?

What was I doing in Loretto, Pennsylvania, in the summer of 1990? Why were Janet and I both in a Catholic university auditorium that day? How did a woman and a man born and raised 350 miles apart “happen” to meet at such an unlikely place? How had God orchestrated such a meeting?

The auditorium had been rented for the purpose of hosting a week-long dispensational Bible conference. I was there to teach the Scriptures; she was there to learn. Over the next half-dozen years, I would repeatedly return to teach in the area. Her hunger for God and His Word would continue, time and again, bringing her there as well. Unwaveringly, my heart was firmly drawn to her, the one who I strangely knew would be my wife.





After Polygamy Was Made a Sin
The Social History of Christian Polygamy
by — John Cairncross
260 pp., PB (*see order form*)

Cairncross contends in this fascinating historical analysis that it was when the Church became centered in Rome that “polygamy” became a “sin.” Based on rigorous research he demonstrates however that there is a strong underground polygamous Christian tradition, including support from such prominent figures as Milton, Newton, Spinoza and others.



Janet, her name of Hebrew origin (יָנֵי) meaning *God's gracious gift*, did not know of any of what had transpired that summer in 1990. In fact, she would not have the slightest hint of my great, God-given love for her for another 14 years. If not for the reassurance of God's absolute sovereignty, I could easily have painful regrets that such a large amount of time would pass without her knowing or me acting upon my love for her. However, He would use the next near decade and a half to accomplish His steady, sure work in both of us for what He ultimately had in store.

In the meantime I would be steadily pressed to reinvestigate many key doctrines that I once held. Not the least of these studies concerned marriage and family: in particular polygamy. I read meticulously through the Scriptures, journaling and then studying in detail every reference I could locate on the subject. I found that the truth of God's Word ran at a cross-current with society, and these studies proved to bring clarity and strength to my conflicted heart and mind. These years of study would eventually result in two of my most significant and controversial works being written: *Due Benevolence* and *The Great Omission*.²

OUR MARRIAGE

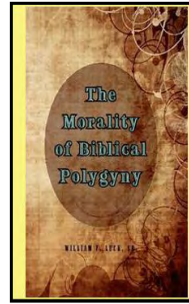


The day of my proposal to Janet (2004)

In July of 2004 I moved my multigenerational family, along with our business and ministry, from Amherst/Gladstone, Virginia (situated between Charlottesville and Lynchburg³), to Paint Borough (east of Johnstown). Although Janet had lived her entire life in Johnstown, only a few short minutes from Paint, God used an entirely unrelated set of elaborate cir-

2. See the order form under Clyde Pilkington.

3. Named after a distant relative of mine, John Lynch, founder of the city.



The Morality of Biblical Polygyny

by — William F. Luck, Sr.

28 pp., PB (*see order form*)

This is an amazing, courageous, contemporary work. William Luck is the son of Moody Bible Institute's Dr. G. Coleman Luck, Sr, Chairman of the Department of Theology, and a capable biblical scholar in his own right.

"God didn't ask me my opinion about the issue. He expected me to represent His. I've tried. If you can prove I'm mistaken, I'll be the first to thank you. But I'm not holding my breath in the meanwhile." – the Author, from the Introduction

"To date [over twenty years after its original publication], I find the arguments 'pro' quite superior to those 'con.'" – the Author, from the Conclusion

- The Background
- Laws That Imply the Moral Propriety of Polygyny
- Passages That Appear To Prohibit Polygyny
- The Association of Polygyny with Other Evils
- Alleged Prohibitions of Polygyny
- The Implications of "Adultery" in the "Vice Lists"
- Questions Concerning the Possibility of Moral Polygyny

cumstances to providentially bring me here. It was my mother's close friend in Virginia, who had been born and raised in next-door Windber, who would introduce and encourage us to consider what are now our current homes. God's continued purpose would become unmistakably manifest in all of this.

When I arrived in Pennsylvania, Janet had no idea that I loved her. My wife Cindy, however, had become increasingly insistent about my need to tell Janet *right away*. Cindy has always been my most faithful encourager and ardent supporter in my love for Janet. She has selflessly wanted Janet to have the opportunity to be loved and cared for just as she has been.⁴ How else

4. The compassion of married women for non-married women is a vital attribute of love and compassion. It is the significant perspective dealt with the notable work written by Patricia Dixon, Ph.D. in her outstanding book, *We Want for Our Sisters What We Want for Ourselves*. Dr. Dixon is the Assistant Professor, Department of African-American Studies, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA. According to her, the monogamy-only marriage model created an

could it be? How else could I ever have moved forward? Against all “odds” and convention, most amazingly, within two months of my arrival here, Janet and I were married. God had remarkably set the stage. The story that He had written for those two short months is among the most significant of my life. They are quite an account to recall. Perhaps someday I will share the details of those profound days with you. This year, September 23rd marked our 14th anniversary.

Janet not only has been fully and graciously embraced by Cindy for her remarkable place in our family, but was also by my mother, who for the last seven years of her life loved and embraced her as her daughter-in-law, and has precious been embraced by our children and grandchildren, who affectionately call her “Janma.”

Now, it must be clearly understood that, in all of this, I have not described to you the dramatic circumstances that brought Janet and me together for the purpose of making them a standard for anyone else’s life. To be candid, I almost refrained from sharing them for fear of any such possible misperception. However, looking back, I realized that without such a dramatic encounter with Janet, I likely *never* would have come to know so many things that I now proclaim and live with such certainty and passion. I never would have been able to teach and assist others in this wonderful, divine expansion of family life that has been discarded and disgraced by our society. The old idiom “drastic times call for drastic measures” might well apply here – and drastic measures are exactly what sovereignly characterize my marriage with Janet.

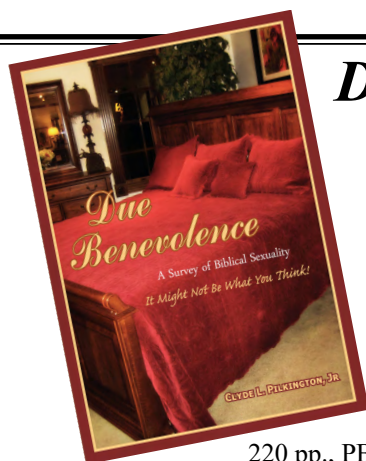


The Scripture declares,

Whoso finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor of the Lord (Proverbs 18:22).

I can fully attest to this divine ideal of marriage and humbly confess that in Janet I have found “a good thing” and richly obtained the “favor of the Lord.” Her enlargement⁵ of my life is abundantly above all that I ever could have asked or imagined. Her love, care, thoughtfulness and compassion have enriched me beyond my ability to measure. She has encouraged me to engage in experiences I would have otherwise missed in life, and her ability to stimulate depth of conversation in others has greatly expanded the breadth of relationships I’m honored to have experienced. Only God Himself fully knows how He has used her significantly to make me

5. See, Divine Sustainer, *Bible Student’s Notebook* #93; also found in *Heaven’s Embassy*, chapter 29 (see order form listing under Clyde Pilkington).



220 pp., PB

See order form.

Due Benevolence: A Study of Biblical Sexuality

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

(#3775) Think you have read all that there is on the subject of sexuality from the Bible? Think again! Religious moralists have taken the wonderful gift of human beauty and sexuality and made it something dirty and sinful. Much is at stake regarding truth, as well as the nature and character of God Himself. A groundbreaking work providing ...

- A refreshingly honest and uninhibited look at sexuality.
- A breath of fresh air from the religious and Victorian mentality.
- A daring and valuable glimpse at the wonderful light just outside sexuality’s prison-cell door.

“When I began reading *Due Benevolence* it was so radical I felt ill at first; which is, as I’ve come to know, a perfectly normal reaction when your entire foundation shifts. I stuck with it, and am glad I did so.” – Canada

“A Revelation on every page!” — Martin Zender

“An incredible book.” – WA

“Truly liberating.” – PA



the man that I am. Much of what I have passionately taught during the past fourteen years of marriage to Janet has been uniquely borne out of our relationship. It is my prayer that I have contributed to her life in equal measure.

A WOMAN'S WONDER

C.S. Lewis (1898-1963), in his work *The Four Loves*, wrote,

Need-love says of a woman "I cannot live without her;" Gift-love longs to give her happiness, comfort, protection – if possible, wealth; Appreciative-love gazes and holds its breath and is silent, rejoices that such a wonder should exist.

Concerning the true nature of committed love William Shakespeare wrote,

Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Which alters when it finds
an alteration in circumstances,
Or bends from its firm stand ...

unrealistic and romanticized notion of marriage that leaves many women, especially African-American women, unfulfilled and unsupported. She offers many reasons to support polygyny, most importantly the shortage of available men. Through extensive interviews, she provides an insider's look at polygynous marriages as well as the cultural challenges that must be overcome in order to make polygynous marriage possible within American society.

O no! It is an ever-fixed mark
That sees storms but is never shaken;
Love is the guiding star to every lost ship,
Whose value cannot be calculated ...
Love does not alter with hours and weeks,
But, rather, it endures until the last day of life ...⁶

"He for God only, she for God in him." – John Milton (1608-1674)

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.
Pilkington Abbey
Paint, PA

PS: I would be remiss, at this time, not to acknowledge my heartfelt thankfulness for those many teachers and students of Scripture who have been a true source of acceptance and encouragement to Janet and me in our marriage. Thank you for your courageous stand for the truth, as well as for standing by us and for being our friends.

TOPICS:

Major: Biography (Janet); Editor's Desk; Polygamy
Minor: Ministry

6. Sonnet 116, paraphrased by Amanda Mabillard.

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 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 "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the Body of Christ (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 (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication. 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."

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For definitions of abbreviations/acronyms, see index after the order form.

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