



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume 26
Issue 642

Acts 28: The Dispensational Crisis

by — Charles H. Welch (1880-1967)

If it were not that God is over all, and is sovereignly working out His purposes of grace using the very master stroke of the enemy as a means of revealing yet greater grace, this subject would be a sad one.



The Book of Acts opens with the burning question:

... wilt Thou at this time restore again the Kingdom¹ to Israel? (1:6).

It closes with Israel and its hope set aside.² The story is contained in the last fifteen verses of the Book of Acts. These verses record the two critical meetings which the apostle had with the elders of the Jews in Rome.

The first meeting, with its results, occupies Acts 28:17-22. The second, with its results, occupies Acts 28:23-31. It is important to notice that the Book of Acts is not constructed like an epistle, which ordinarily has three members:

- (1) Introduction and Greeting;
- (2) Epistle; and
- (3) Conclusion and Benediction.

1. [Editor:] For more information on the "Kingdom of Heaven" see,
 - *God's Holy Nation: Israel and Her Earthly Purpose*, by Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., specifically chapter 3 (Israel's Earthly Destiny), chapter 13 (Israel's Prophetic Program), appendix 20 (The Kingdom of Heaven and its Relationship to the Kingdom of God) (see order form).
 - *God's Eonian Purpose*, by Adlai Loudy, specifically chapter 5 (The Kingdom of the Scriptures) and chapter 17 (The Millennial Kingdom – Israel's Hope) (see order form).
2. [Editor:] For an in-depth look at Israel and her place in God's plan, read:
 - *God's Holy Nation: Israel and Her Earthly Purpose* (Contrasted with the Body of Christ and Its Heavenly Purpose), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (see order form).

The Book of Acts has no conclusion in any sense parallel with that of an epistle. Indeed, many commentators have speculated upon the abruptness of its close. Therefore Acts 28:30-31 must not be severed from the remainder and called "Conclusion"; it forms an integral part of the closing portion and is the Spirit's corresponding feature to the all-day conference among the Jews (Acts 28:23).

Before we turn to this final section of the Book of Acts we must notice how it is introduced. When Paul reached Rome, "the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard" (Acts 28:16). A difference was made in Paul's case apparently.

But Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with a soldier that guarded him (Acts 28:16, author's translation).

It is highly probable that the good report which would be made of Paul's conduct on the voyage and during the storm and wreck, together with the findings of Festus, Felix and Agrippa, influenced those in authority. After three days the apostle called together the chief of the Jews and expressly told them that he had called them together to speak to them,

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... because that for **THE HOPE OF ISRAEL** I am bound with this chain (Acts 28:20).

Isaiah 6:10
Dispensational boundary

*The Hope of Israel*³ is voiced in Acts 1:6; it is pledged in Acts 2:1-21; it is conditional upon Israel's repentance (Acts 3:19-26); it is possible only in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth (Acts 4:10-12); and it is attested by miracle and signs (Acts 2-28). Will that *Hope of Israel* be attained? Yes, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.


Blindness in part hath happened unto Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved (Romans 11:25, author's translation).

Was it attained by Israel at the end of the Acts? No: the representatives of Israel among the dispersion manifested the same spirit as had been shown by the rulers of Israel in the land. They fulfilled Isaiah 6:10, of which more presently. A day was appointed when the chief Jews were to assemble and hear what the apostle had to say.

Acts 28:23-31
The Dispensational Crisis

- A (a) 28:23. Chief Jews come to Paul's lodging.
- (b) 28:23. Paul expounds the kingdom of God.
- (c) 28:23. Concerning "Jesus," out of Moses and Prophets.
- B 28:24-27. Israel. They heard not.

3. [Editor:] For more information on the hope of Israel, see: – "The Hope of Israel" vs. "That Blessed Hope," Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #485](#).



These Are God's Sons
by — Warren Young Kimball
(1909-2002)

134 pages, PB
(See order form.)

This book was the product of an intense desire of more than thirty years to tell the story of the Evangel of Christ, and more particularly the "Secret of the Calling on High in Christ Jesus."

- B 28:28. Gentiles. They will hear.
- A (a) 28:30. All come to Paul's hired house.
- (b) 28:31. Paul preaches the kingdom of God.
- (c) 28:31. Concerning "the Lord Jesus Christ."

The black line in the above structure divides the text into two distinct halves. It is the dispensational landmark or boundary. Until this point is reached Israel is looked upon as a nation, and the *Hope of Israel* was the hope of the church and of the apostle to the Gentiles.

There are some great contrasts here, and these contrasts express the character of the dispensational crisis. When Paul seeks to persuade the chief Jews, he speaks of "Jesus." To the student of the New Testament, the usage of the names of the Lord will be no new theme. Throughout the Gospels the name "Jesus" is frequent, but in the Epistles the name occurs but rarely; the fuller title "Jesus Christ," "Christ Jesus" or "the Lord Jesus Christ" is used.

This marks one important distinction in the teaching of Paul⁴ to the Jews and to the Gentiles. He still had the one grand theme, the Kingdom of God, to unfold; but that Kingdom is all-embracing, including within its mighty sovereignty Jew, Gentile, church and creation, heaven, earth and the super-heavens, past, present and future.

That which was associated with the *Hope of Israel* was associated with "Jesus," but that section which was connected with the Gentile dispensation was associated with "the Lord Jesus Christ."

A further contrast is seen in that when Paul is speaking to the chief Jews he founds his argument upon the Old Testament Scriptures;⁵ but when he minis-

4. [Editor:] Paul had an early ministry (*diakonia*; G1248) to the members of the nations (Romans 11:13, cf. Galatians 2:7; II Corinthians 4:1) which purpose was to provoke Israel to emulation (Romans 11:14). It was a ministry of grace (Acts 20:24), spirit (over against death; II Corinthians 3:8), righteousness (over against condemnation: 9), and conciliation (5:18).

5. [Editor:] For a look at the subject of Paul's priestly ministry, see: – *Paul's Priestly Ministry*, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook #532](#);

ters the salvation of God which was sent to the Gentiles, the old Testament Scriptures do not contain the revelation of the section of the Kingdom of God which he then opens up. This section is spoken of as a "Mystery" that had been hidden by God since the ages, and therefore is not revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures. The absence of quotation from Old Testament in the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and II Timothy is both explained and reflected here.

The crisis is reached and culminates in the "one word" of Isaiah 6:10 quoted by the apostle before Israel as a nation was "dismissed" ("departed," Acts 28:25). This passage from Isaiah had been quoted by the Lord in Matthew 13 when the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven were for the first time revealed. These parables of the mysteries were not uttered until it became evident that Israel would not repent (see Matthew 13:20-27) and that Christ would be rejected (see Matthew 12:6, 41-42). It is here, too, that the wider ministry of Christ among the Gentiles is described (see Matthew 12:16-21). Now, in Acts 28, Israel of the dispersion adopts the same attitude. When this is manifest, the words quoted by the Lord in Matthew 13 are again quoted by Paul and for the same reason.

The mysteries that follow this quotation in Acts 28 are not the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but the added revelation of "the mystery of Christ," as well as the altogether unknown mystery of the favor of God to the Gentiles under the terms of the "One Body" and "Heavenly Places."

The first thing said of Israel has to do with "hearing." In contrast, the apostle places the Gentiles as follows:

Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it (Acts 28:28).

When Peter spoke to Cornelius, the Gentile, he said,

The word which God sent unto the children of Israel ... was published throughout all Judaea ... the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem ... commanded us to preach unto the people (Acts 10:36-42).

Paul, however, does not tell the Gentiles that Word which God sent to Israel, but he declares that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and thereby indicates a new development in the purpose of the ages.

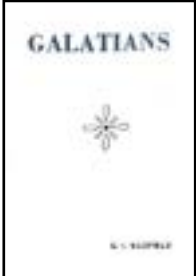
The prison ministry of the apostle Paul is a blessed one. The epistles written from prison form a distinct group by themselves.⁷ In them is revealed grace be-

- *The Priestly Ministry of Paul*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #532](#);
- *Paul's Previous Ministries*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #567](#);
- *Onward and Upward: Paul's Priestly Ministry Transitioning Toward His Celestial*, Vladimir Gelesnoff, [Bible Student's Notebook #509](#);
- *The Administrations*, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook #497](#);
- *The Readjustment Administration*, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook #492](#);
- *The Divine Calendar*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #434](#);
- *A New Administration at the Close of Acts – Part 1*, Adlai Loudy (Part 1: [Bible Student's Notebook #562](#); Part 2: [Bible Student's Notebook #563](#)).

6. [Editor:] For more information about "the Mystery" and its "Secret Administration," see:
- *What Is the Mystery?* A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #516](#);
 - *The Present Secret Administration*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #575](#);
 - *A New Administration at the Close of Acts*, Adlai Loudy: Part 1, [Bible Student's Notebook #562](#); Part 2, [Bible Student's Notebook #563](#);
 - *The Pentecost, Readjustment & Secret Administrations*, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook #497](#);
 - *Acts 28: The Dispensational Boundary*, Charles H. Welch, [Bible Student's Notebook #550](#);
 - *The Ranking Revelation of the Prison Epistles*, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #524](#).

7. [Editor:] For a foundational study of "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth" see:

- *God's Eonian Purpose*, Adlai Loudy (see order form);
- *The Foundations of Dispensational Truth*, Dr. E.W. Bullinger (see order form);
- the continuing series *Right Division (An Overview of Dispensational Truth)*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.,
 - Part 1, [Bible Student's Notebook #551](#);
 - Part 2, [Bible Student's Notebook #552](#);

	<p><i>The Epistle to the Galatians</i></p> <p>by — C.I. Scofield (1843-1921)</p> <p>48 pages, PB (<i>See order form.</i>)</p> <p>An address delivered at Sea Cliff Bible Conference, July, 1903.</p>
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yond thought to those who by nature were aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel.

The closing words of the epistle to the Romans, the last words of the dispensation which ended with Acts 28:28, lead us to the higher ground reached by that revelation given to the apostle Paul before the prison ministry began.

Now to Him Who is able to establish you according to my gospel, and the proclamation of

- Part 3, [Bible Student's Notebook #553](#);
- Part 4, [Bible Student's Notebook #554](#);
- Part 5, [Bible Student's Notebook #555](#);
- Part 6, [Bible Student's Notebook #556](#);
- Part 7, [Bible Student's Notebook #557](#);
- Part 8, [Bible Student's Notebook #558](#);
- Part 9, [Bible Student's Notebook #559](#);
- Part 10, [Bible Student's Notebook #570](#).

Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery, which has been hushed in aiōnion times, but now has been made manifest; and through prophetic writings, according to the appointment of the aiōnion God, has been made known to all nations, in order to the obedience of faith; to God only wise, through Jesus Christ, to Him be glory for the ages [aiōn]. Amen (Romans 16:25-27, author's translation).

— *The Apostle of the Reconciliation*, Chapter 15

(edited & abridged)

TOPICS:

Major: Acts, the Book of; Administrations; Israel; Paul; Right Division
Minor: Hope (of Israel); Kingdom of Heaven; Mystery

A New Elect Agency

God's sacred surprise is the Church, which is the Body of Christ. This is the new unprophesied elect agency for the continued execution of the plan of God (Ephesians 3:1-11). This new agency is exclusively related to "the Mystery" (Ephesians 3:3) or the "Dispensation of the Grace of God" (:2).

— S. Lee Homoki
Have You Made the Transition? (1976)

WITHOUT

**Without Racial Priorities...
Without Miracles...
Without
Ceremonies**

Paul's prison epistles show that, after Israel is set aside, the gospel is preached to the nations without racial priorities (Ephesians 2:11-22; 3:6); without miracles, signs and wonders (I Timothy 5:23; II Timothy 4:20; Philippians 2:25-29); without legal ceremonies (Philippians 3:8-14).

— S. Lee Homoki
Have You Made the Transition? (1976)

The Sabbath in Scripture

by — John Butler

34 pages, PB

(See order form.)

An enlightening study by an associate of A.E. Knoch.

The Second Death: An Enquiry into Its Meaning and Operation

by — A.E. Saxby (1873-1960)

34 pages, PB *(See order form.)*

A God Worthy of the Name

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

What a relief to point to a God worthy of the name! A God Who has a purpose in pain¹ and a design in death. A God Who will use every groan for His glory and His creature's gain, and will turn every torment into ecstasy and the exaltation of His great name.



ing a horrid hell. It concerns His Son, and the universal reconciliation is but the gospel ultimate, for it, too, concerns His Son and His eventual triumph. It is the popular orthodox "gospel" which is driving men into various by-paths.

God's glad message² does not consist in herald-

1. [Editor:] For more information on *Suffering*, see:
 - *Suffering: God's Forgotten Gift*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (book, see order form), also available in *Bible Student's Notebooks* #203, #204, #205, #206 under the same title.
2. [Editor:] For more information on grace, see:
 - The Nature of Grace, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., *Bible Student's Notebook* #274; or see *Daily Goodies*, January 18, same title (book; see order form);
 - Divine Justice and Grace, Steve McVey, *Bible Student's Notebook* #290;
 - God will Judge in Grace, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., *Bible Student's Notebook* #505;

— *Unsearchable Riches*
Volume 9 (1918)

Topics:

Major: God; Purpose

Minor: Death and Dying; Suffering

– *Reigning in Life: The Present Effect of Super-Abundant Grace*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., *Bible Student's Notebook* #75.

Paul's Acts Ministry

PAUL HAD A MINISTRY OF CONFIRMATION

Paul preached to the Jews confirming Jesus, the promised Messiah (Acts 13:14-41; 18:5; 26:22; 28:23). Hence, Paul went to the Jew first (Romans 1:16 with Acts 13:5, 14, 46). Hence, in Paul's Acts ministry and his first six epistles he performed many miracles, signs and wonders (Acts 19:12), and legal ceremonies (Acts 16:3-4), "because of the Jews" (Acts 16:3; cf. I Corinthians 9:20-23; 10:32). ... PAUL HAD A MINISTRY OF CONDEMNATION (Acts 13:46; 18:6; 28:26-28).

— S. Lee Homoki
Have You Made the Transition? (1976)

The Temporary Setting Aside of Israel

Israel progressively rejected the offer of the King and the Kingdom, beginning with the stoning of Stephen in the Jewish capital city of Jerusalem in 33 A.D. (Acts 7:51, 59); then in Antioch in 45 A.D. (Acts 13:46); then in Corinth in 54 A.D. (Acts 18:6); and finally in the Gentile capital city of Rome in 63 A.D. (Acts 28:27-28). This was in accordance with Isaiah 6:9-10; 29:10-12. ... Israel, God's elect agency, is temporarily set aside near the closing of the book of Acts and miracles, signs and wonders ceased. ...

Israel, in judgment, is dispersed, and Jerusalem is destroyed in 70 A.D.

— S. Lee Homoki
Have You Made the Transition? (1976)



Editor's Desk

Archiving God's Achievement in Past Generations

For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them (Ephesians 2:10, Concordant).

A FAITHFUL TESTIMONY

Throughout the course of this dispensation, God's truth has never been "lost" to the Ecclesia.¹ God indeed has had His testimony in every generation – those who have proclaimed the richest aspects of His present truth.

"Church History" is not our story. It's a record of organized religion, from which the Ecclesia has been "called out." We should not then be surprised that it provides so little record even of our existence. When mentioned, we're often relegated to mere footnotes citing our many "heresies."² Christendom has

1. The Greek word often translated as "church" in most English versions is εκκλησια (ekklesia, or ecclesia). The word is a compound word meaning "called-out" (ek = "out"; kaleō = "called"). The ecclesia is God's "called-out" ones. The ecclesia is not a building or denomination; not a meeting, or doctrinal creed; it is not somewhere we go, or something we do, it is who we as believers are. For more information see:
 - *The Outsiders*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (see order form);
 - *The "Ecclesias" (Churches) of the Scriptures*, Adlai Loudy (see order form).
2. For a closer look at "Church History" see:

endeavored to ignore us, writing their histories so as to promote their error and remove our testimony altogether.


DOUBLE HONOR

Let [them] ... be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who are toiling in word and teaching (I Timothy 5:17, Concordant).

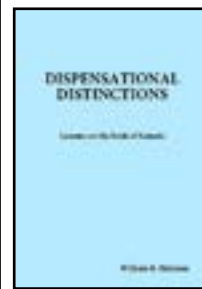
We know much concerning the people and details of national heritage, yet very little of our spiritual ancestry. Our children are well educated concerning the names, dates and details of those advocated by our society as supposed "great men." However, this is NOT our society or country, "for our citizenship is in the heavens" (Philippians 3:20, Young). Earth is NOT our realm, "for our realm is inherent in the heavens" (Concordant).

How sad it is that we and our children know so little about those who had leading roles in HIStory. While the nations routinely honor the birthdays and highlights of their men of reputation and memorialize those who sacrificed so much for their causes, our abundant heritage for the most part remains unknown to us and our children. We of all people should celebrate "His achievement" from past generations.³

- *Three Groups in Church History: To Which Do We Belong?* Gene Edwards, *Bible Student's Notebook* #24;
 - *Brief Notes on Church History*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Part 1, *Bible Student's Notebook* #28; Part 2, *Bible Student's Notebook* #29; Part 3, *Bible Student's Notebook* #55; Part 4, *Bible Student's Notebook* #56;
 - *The Paulicians – Additional Historical Information*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., *Bible Student's Notebook* #77;
 - *The Torch of His Testimony*, John W. Kennedy, *Bible Student's Notebook* #78;
 - *The Church in Ruins*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., (book, see order form).
3. By example, God instructed the fathers in Israel to instruct their children concerning, among other things, their spiritual heritage. Those of us who know the sovereignty of God should not fail to



The Lake of Fire & The Consummation
by — Warren Young Kimball
(1909-2002)
52 pages, PB
(See order form.)



Dispensational Distinctions: Lessons on the Book of Genesis
by — William B. Hallman
(1903-1973)
246 pages, PB (See order form.)

GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Though he is dead, he still speaks (Hebrews 11:4, Weymouth).

We believe that, for both historical and edificational reasons, it is important to preserve the broad, rich heritage of those members of Christ's Body who, with great sacrifice and opposition, devoted their lives to searching tirelessly for and diligently conveying even some portion of the truth that we now hold dear.

We also believe it to be an important part of our ministry, here at the *Abbey*, to seek, acquire, archive and preserve the treasured diversity of paths (from their beginning to end) of those whose steps God has led to "recover" and "advance" some glorious aspect of His truth that, at least for them, had been "hidden" beneath the veils of religious tradition.

The Body of Christ is not made up of a mere handful of saints, nor is God's truth relegated to a single man in any generation. God's ways are far more multifaceted than our imagined limitations. As the *called-out ones*, we have a vast and glorious history

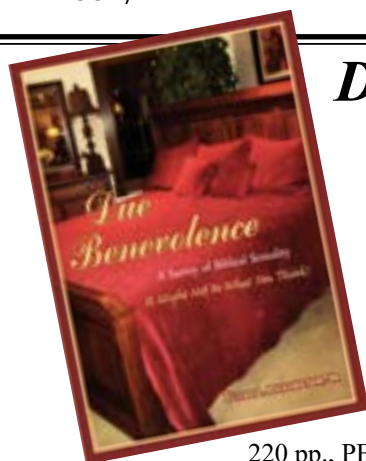
appreciate that the circumstances which lead us to where we are currently are divine events.

For He established a testimony in Jacob ... which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children (Psalm 78:5-7).

that, humanly speaking, would be all but completely forgotten if it were not for a commitment by some to advance such a spiritual legacy forward to future generations.

Till I come, give heed to reading, to entreaty, to teaching (I Timothy 4:13, *Concordant*).

A part of our life's passion has been the conservancy of a broad cross-section of God's dear and valued, loyal and faithful servants of past generations who have paid the costly price for truth's procurement and distribution. Over the years we have managed to spend an enormous amount of time and what is for us a small fortune collecting the written works of such saints so that they would not fall into further obscurity. It is our desire not only to preserve these in our own private library, but to the extent that we are able, to make them accessible to others. We have sought to honor the sacrifice of these saints, preserve their memory, and thereby provide a measure of instruction and encouragement for believers today. We have endeavored to do so through the pages of the *Bible Student's Notebook*, in the *Daily Email Goodies*, and through *Bible Student's Press*. Over the past few months we have significantly augmented this ministry through Nathan Pilkington's ardent labors with our *Facsimile Project*.



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 ...

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"A Revelation on every page!" — Martin Zender
"An incredible book." — WA
"Truly liberating." — PA

OUR ARCHIVES

*The coat which I did not take from Troas and which is with Carpus, get when you come, and the **books**, specially the **papers** (II Timothy 4:13, Bible in Basic English).*

Now, another undertaking is presently underway – the management of the scriptural and historical archives in our possession. At this point we have bookcases, boxes and filling cabinets filled with priceless materials that belong to Christ's Body. We have begun the active process of organizing our collection so that they can be better preserved for the future, as well as be better utilized by visitors who come to the *Fellowship Inn* for fellowship and study.

These resources are our heritage; we view ourselves as trustees of these treasures and are continually seeking to expand these archives, and *we could use your help*. Undoubtedly, there are those of you who have in your possession great scriptural treasures that assist in telling God's story of our legacy (books, booklets, leaflets, flyers, tracts, magazines, newsletters, periodicals, conference schedules, recordings, pictures, correspondence, etc.). Some of you may have found yourselves "finished" with them,

and may have wondered what you could do with them that would in turn benefit others.

We ask that if you have *any* material that concerns scriptural themes which we hold dear, which you no longer require, that you consider donating them to our archive collection. Before long we hope to begin providing online access to a catalog of our resources so you can see what we have and what we don't have, to better assist you in your donation of materials.

Thank you for co-laboring with us financially as well as materially in this work.

Your Servant,



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.
Pilkington Abbey

TOPICS:

Major: Body of Christ; Church History; Editor's Desk
Minor: Testimonies

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a semi-weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- 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 mankind 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 (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 1:1-3);
- 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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