



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume 37
Issue 918

Things I Misunderstood

Part 2

3 Things I Misunderstood about Salvation

Personal Reflections by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

What I knew about salvation was what I had been taught from childhood. It was, on one level or another, a system of human effort. At *minimum* it was an effort to produce faith. It produced great anxiety, for myself and for others.



This self-effort to produce faith gave me recurring doubt. Did I have enough faith? The right measure of faith? Did I have the right kind of faith? Was it “saving faith”? Was it in my head, or in my heart? Did I believe correctly? Was it repentant faith? Was it real faith, or counterfeit faith? Was I really just an “unbelieving believer”?

These are the struggles that I had as a young person, related to the faith that was required of me. When the next “evangelist” came through town for a “revival,” I would be back at the “altar” when the “invitation” was given, just trying to make sure that I had gotten faith right.

Then I had great worry for others, agony over lost family members and friends. This, too, was all on my shoulders: Would their “blood be on my hands”?

I want to share with you a completely different view of salvation that I have come to understand. A view that brings peace. Peace not only for myself, but peace for others as well.

#1 – I Misunderstood Salvation to be AN OFFER

I mistakenly thought that salvation was an *offer*. I grew up with “altar calls” being given at the end of every church meeting – an “invitation” for the “lost” to accept God’s gift of salvation – an “invitation” to make my own calling and election sure.

Instead of Paul’s gospel being “good news” – the announcement of an accomplished fact – it was somehow an advertisement for self-generated faith, self-effort and self-improvement.

I had been led to accept that my salvation was somehow really up to me – as some type of partnership between God and me, that it was a 50/50 deal, or at bear minimum a 1/99 deal. Yet, even if my part was only 1%, there would be no peace, for it really did, in the end, all rest on me, and my ability to properly meet the qualifications – however small they were – to accept the offer being made by God.

#2 – I Misunderstood Salvation to be LIMITED

I misunderstood salvation to be *limited* to only a few.

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And who were they? Those “fortunate” enough to believe.

I say, “fortunate” enough, because they had to hear of Christ, then to hear the gospel, and also to hear a correct presentation of the gospel. These requirements were quite a challenge for most of the world’s population. And the last one – to hear a proper presentation of the gospel – is no small challenge, because the answer to the question as to what is required to be saved is so greatly varied by the different proponents of Christianity. Is faith enough? Does it need to be a certain kind of faith? Does one also need to “repent?” And if so, what does that exactly mean? Does one also need to “confess,” be water baptized, say the “sinner’s prayer,” “ask Jesus into their hearts,” etc.?

But even more than that, not only did one have to be “fortunate” enough to hear of Christ, to hear the gospel, and also to hear a correct interpretation and presentation of the gospel, but they also had to be *smart enough* to respond. After all, I believed in something called *decisional regeneration*.

What about those born in parts of the world where Christ is never mentioned?

What about those who were born to unbelieving, agnostic or even atheistic parents? What about those drawn into the influence of atheistic teachers?

What about all of those who have cognitive disabilities?

Of all of the world’s population – past, present and future – this offer of salvation could in reality be only extremely limited. Sadly, I thought that the vast majority would never really have a “chance” at all of “being saved.”

Additionally, I misunderstood salvation as having an *expiration date*. I had been taught that it was limited to those who believed in their lifetime. I understood death to “seal one’s eternal destiny.”

Folks had an opportunity – up until they drew their last breath. Hopefully they would be fortunate enough to have a deathbed, affording them one last

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 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 “preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past” (Romans 16:25);
- 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 (Romans 6; Ephesians 2:6);
- adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of ordinary men 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).

This publication is not connected with any “church,” “denomination,” “movement,” “organization,” “mission,” “creed,” “meeting,” “school,” “conference” or “fellowship.”

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

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For definitions of abbreviations/acronyms, see the [online key](#).

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powerful opportunity to respond to the offer – a “deathbed repentance.” But many, who died suddenly, would never have such a “last opportunity.”

Not only that, but I was taught that an expiration of the salvation offer might even come earlier than death, as one could “sin away their day of grace.” God would offer, and offer, and offer, and one would reject, and reject, and reject – and then God would stop making the offer available. For some, even though being alive, they were already “hopeless,” for they were “reprobate,” and thus, “unsavable.”

However, after many years I came to see that *salvation is not by human choice or chance.*

#3 – I Misunderstood the NATURE of Salvation

Looking back, I now realize that I had misunderstood the very *nature* of salvation.

I came to see that salvation *includes all.*

Salvation was not just *individual*, it was *worldwide*. It was not just the salvation of a “fortunate” *few*, but was the *salvation of all* – without exception!¹

Christ came, not to merely *offer* salvation, but truly to take away the *world’s* sin!

The next day John sees Jesus coming to him, and says,

1. For more on this, see my book, [The Salvation of All](#), or its abridgment, [Nothing Will be Lost](#) (see [order form](#) under “Clyde Pilkington”).

“Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the WORLD” (John 1:29).

The declaration is that He is,

... Indeed the Christ, the Savior of the WORLD (John 4:42).

I would come to see that He was not just the *potential* “Savior of the world,” but the *ACTUAL* “Savior of the world,” for He could not be the Savior of the World if He did not in fact, save the world.

I came to see that salvation is on the basis of Christ’s Faith.

Because I had misunderstood salvation to be based on *self-generated faith*, I had missed the fact that faith was a *gift of God*.²

For to you it is given ... to believe on Him (Philippians 1:29).

... God has dealt to every man a measure of faith (Romans 12:3).

For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is the gift of God [or, His “*approach present*”³] (Ephesians 2:8).

2. For more information on faith, see my book: [The Divine Activation of Faith and the Myth of Free Will](#), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (See [order form](#) under “Clyde Pilkington”).

3. For more on this “*approach present*,” see my book, [The Undoing of Adam \(and the Approach Present of God\)](#) (see [order form](#) under “Clyde Pilkington”), or my video presentation “[The Approach Present](#)” on our Biblical Resources channel at YouTube.



624 pp, PB

See [order form](#) under “*Compilations.*”

Paul the Apostle: His Acts and Post-Acts Ministries

(A Comprehensive Compilation)

This ultimate dispensational collection of 97 works by 28 authors spans over 130 years. It is an extensive reference work that is essential for every library. Authors include: Sir Robert Anderson, Oscar Baker, A.E. Bishop, Robert C. Brock, E.W. Bullinger, J.J.B. Coles, E.H. Clayton, Vladimir Gelesnoff, Stephen Hill, Richard Holden, M. Jaegle, Win Johnson, A.E. Knoch, Adlai Loudy, William Mealand, D.L. McCroskey, William R. Newell, Alan Reid, Danny Russino, John D. LaVier, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Frank Neil Pohorlak, A.A. Sandoz, R.B. Shiflet and Charles H. Welch.

I would also come to see that salvation is not based on *my* faith – but instead on the “*faith of Christ*.”

The “*faith of Christ*” is a glorious truth veiled to many by erroneous translations. Thus, sadly, Christ’s “*faith*” is exchanged for *our faith in Him*.

... *The righteousness of God which is by Jesus Christ's faith ...* (Romans 3:22, CV).

... *A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ... that we might be justified by the faith of Christ...* (Galatians 2:16).

... *The promise of Jesus Christ's faith ...* (3:22)

... *Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith ...* (Philippians 3:9).

... *In Whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him* (Ephesians 3:12).

I came to see that salvation is on the basis of grace.

I would come to rejoice in grace – in *pure* grace: un-mixed, unfiltered, undeserved, unmerited, unsought and unrecompensed.⁴

4. See the important work: [The Absolute Despotism of Grace: A Compilation](#) (See the [order form](#) under “Compilations.”)

I would come to see that salvation is the work of God for man, not man's work for God.

For **in grace**, through faith, are you saved, and this is **not out of you**; it is the gift of God [or, His “*approach present*”] (Ephesians 2:8).

Who saves us ... **not according to our works** [or, actions], **but according to His own purpose and grace**, which was given us in Christ ... (II Timothy 1:9).

I came to see that salvation as an accomplished fact.

Paul declared God to be the

“*the Savior of all*” (I Timothy 4:10).

I had misunderstood that only believers would be saved.

I would come to see that believers are only the *first fruits* of a *full* harvest: beneficiaries of divinely granted realization. And that, in due course,

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:10).



84 pp., PB

See [order form](#) under “*Essex*.”

According to the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (1:11).

God is the captain of the ship of the universe; all of His creatures are its passengers. He is guiding the vessel across the ocean of time from the port that is called “*All in God*” to the haven that is termed “*God in all*.”

The Deity of God

by – John Henry Essex (1907-1991)

Nottingham, England

Creation cannot help itself that all of its achievements are futile because of the slavery of corruption, but we take immense comfort from the fact that, in spite of all of its present “groaning and travailing,” it was subjected to vanity in expectation of the eventual realization of that glorious freedom which is now already being enjoyed by the children of God.

It is in the prison epistle of Paul to the Ephesians that we find the most absolute expression of the Deity of God in relation to the points we have been considering. Here we find the phrase which puts all other Scriptures into their perspective:



I had somehow viewed this confession as “crying uncle” – a declaration forced on an exhausted enemy. But I would come to see things quite differently.

First of all, this confession was clearly declared to be “to the glory of God the Father.” So, what kind of twisted glory could such a confession produced by “divine bullying” (as I had perceived it) actually bring to “God the **Father**”?

What kind of “God” did I think that He was? What kind of “Father”?

Second, this confession was “that Jesus Christ is Lord.” And Paul had previously proclaimed that such a confession could be the work only of God’s Spirit!

... No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12:3).

Thus, I was seeing the larger picture, realizing that God was, in full truth,

the Savior of all (I Timothy 4:10).

Paul did not say that He was “*potentially the Savior of all*,” but boldly that, “*He is the Savior of all*.”

If words mean anything, He could not be their Savior if He did not save them. Yet Paul taught clearly that He is “*the Savior of all*,” because He *will* save all men.

Paul declared,

... We rely on the living God, Who is the Savior of all mankind, **especially** of believers (I Timothy 4:10, CV)

Yet, this phrase, “*especially of believers*,” would be my way to deny the actuality of what was said. However, Paul did not say “*exclusively of believers*.”

I would come to see that this was not a cause of exclusivity, but as a *specialty clause*. It is not “*exclusively of those that believe*,” but “*especially*.”

This specialty clause is found also in a number of other passages written by Paul. Yet it is interesting

to me now that I did not miss the point of these specialty clauses anywhere else Paul used them.

*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all, **especially** [NOT exclusively!] for the family of faith* (Galatians 6:10).

*But if any provide not for his own, and **especially** [NOT exclusively!] for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever* (I Timothy 5:8).

*Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, **especially** [NOT exclusively!] those who labor in the word and doctrine* (I Timothy 5:17).

*The coat that I left at Troas with Carpus, when you come, bring with you, and the books, but **especially** [NOT exclusively!] the papers* (II Timothy 4:13).

*For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, **especially** [NOT exclusively!] those of the circumcision* (Titus 1:10).

*Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, **especially** [NOT exclusively!] to me ...* (Philemon 1:16).

Those of us who believe early, here in this life, have the added benefit of being saved from a life of emptiness, vanity, hopelessness and despair. We are saved to Divine life and realization at *this present time* – a **SPECIAL** [but NOT exclusive] salvation!

I would then come to see that salvation was for all of God’s creation – but as Paul says of resurrection, its realization was for *each in their own order* (I Corinthians 15:23). **BSN**

NOTE: For the video version of this study, [Things I Misunderstood about Salvation](#), go to our Biblical Resources channel on YouTube.

TOPICS:

Major: Christ’s Faith; Salvation; Salvation of All
Minor: Blindness; Christendom; Faith





Tidbits of Truth #38

“Tidbits” is a column dedicated to short comments, thoughts, studies and excerpts.

“Tidbits of Truth” are Pieces of the Puzzle

We view *Tidbits of Truth* as pieces of the puzzle, as it were. While at times, in the *Bible Student's Notebook*, we present “big picture” portraits of truth, we often write, or come across smaller pieces of the picture that need to be indexed for future use (1) in revising, or enlarging a previous presentation, or (2) perhaps in the future development of material. In either case, these “tidbits,” for your editors, are invaluable resources, and we trust that they are to our readers as well.

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Cheated of the Good News

“... *God is love*” (I John 4:8).

[*Excerpt:*] If we are not very much on our guard, we shall be cheated of the Good News. The inestimable comfort of knowing that “*God is love*” will be whisked away and we shall be given instead something so poor, unbending and relentless, that, instead of being reassured, we will be repulsed and frightened.

— J.B. Phillips (1906-1982)
For This Day (1975)

Not 100% “Eye-to-Eye”

Our learning and growth are really a result of gleaning from many authors, as well as our own personal reading and studying.

I don't think that there are many authors that I've read that I can 100% agree with today, especially in light of what I know today compared to what I used to think I knew. Authors such as Knoch, Bullinger, etc. have wonderful insights into various doctrines that I cherish, but I don't see “eye-to-eye” with them on other issues – and that's o.k. Even some teachings that I

agreed with years ago, today I have changed my conviction because of further light from other authors.

As I have read and studied, I have tried to keep in mind that we are reading material from other flawed humans. This is Dad's perfect work in His imperfect vessels.

Meanwhile, we continue to “*search out a matter*” (Proverbs 25:2).

Continue gleaning, my dear brethren!

— André Sneidar

The Right of Redemption and the Jubilee

Leviticus 25 is about the right of redemption and the year of Jubilee. As with so many other passages, looking back at it, now that Christ has finished His work, makes for a really beautiful view.

When I have become impoverished and have sold away a part of my value, my Redeemer – my closest brother – comes and buys back my lost value, so that the family is made full again.

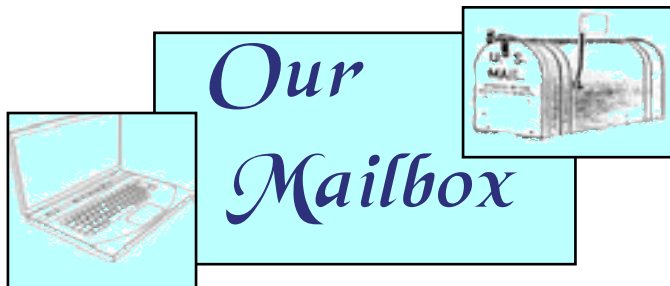
So many times, I have felt my poverty and have been so grateful to God that He has provided a Redeemer – closest brother. What better sight is there than the restoration of the family? Definitely cause for a Jubilee!

— Aaron Locker

BSN

TOPICS:

Major: [*“Tidbits of Truth” are Pieces of the Puzzle:*] Tidbits of Truth, Purpose of [*Cheated of the Good News:*] Love, Gospel [Not 100% “Eye-to-Eye”] Adjustable, Advancement, Attitude, Gleanings, Growth, Resources, Study [The Right of Redemption and the Jubilee] Kinsman Redeemer; Jubilee



I have my “daily bread” whenever the [Daily Email Goodies](#) come my way, Thanks for all the preparation you do to make it possible. – **OH**

Thanks for the *BSN*. Even though I may not agree with everything that is printed, there is still a lot to be gleaned and certainly common ground. – **AR**

Keep working Clyde! – **OR**

I just watched you and Stephen talk about prophetic distractions. It was like a lightning bolt. ... Paul's description in I Thessalonians 4:16-17, and also 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, are themselves prophetic of the Second Coming. Since we live during the Secret Administration, all prophesy has ceased, therefore this cannot be about the Body. I have been that same immature believer looking unto the sky for an event meant not for me. ... Thank you, guys, for sharing these truths with the Body. Love you all! – **IN**

Thank you for your faithful diligence in heralding the truth these many years. You have brought many to the truth and will shine like a star for the eons. – **FL**

What I loved about *Dispensational Continuity of Major Bible Events* by Ray I. Psalmonds ([BSN #894](#)) is it basically breaks down the administrations into two basic *Households*. Also, it says that what we are a part of today is a continuation of the Household *before* the rebellion in the Celestials. – **TN**

Getting great books into circulation is such an important part of sharing the evangel. And your regular emails and newsletters are also such an important part. You are so faithful in sharing the evangel in different ways. – **KY**

I thank you for your book [The Salvation of All](#). It was a blessing and encouragement in the Lord. ... The stories in the back, along with the testimonies and quotes will be something I refer to often to encourage me and help me grow.

Twenty years ago, I was introduced to ultimate reconciliation and read a few articles and rejected them. Then I went on my merry way, and five years ago I was reintroduced to it and I was immediately drawn to the message. – **KS**

Your teachings and materials have played a major role in growth these past few years. Thank you for everything. – **MO**

What an encouraging read! Thanks so much for your faithful work! Tom Ballinger's article on the “*Four Great Days*” ([BSN #901](#)) was so very encouraging. He hits all of the points so clearly and writes



Concordant Greek Text with English Sublinear

This text allows the reader to see every passage just as it was penned in the ancient uncial alphabet. An ultra-literal and consistent English sublinear is provided which uniformly expresses the Greek grammar with English standards. Wherever possible the first letter of the English standard in the sublinear stands directly under the first letter of the corresponding Greek word. With a format uniform throughout to facilitate reference, there are 20 Greek letters to the line and 50 to the column, giving 1000 to the page. Readings variant from the basic text are given in the superlinear. 735 pages. (See [order form](#) under “Bibles”)



in an easy-to-read style ... just wonderful insight.
– *IN*

My new understanding about our purpose in view of [John H. Essex](#)' writings really make you feel both small and awed by what God's plans were and are. It is mind blowing. It makes me feel much less arrogant. We are a tool. A tool that will be glorified, but a tool nonetheless. Humbles you. – *TN*

[*Editor:*] The work of grace and realization in one's life fosters humiliation. Arrogance is hard to hide. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness ..." (Colossians 3:12); "with all lowliness and meekness" (Ephesians 4:2). – *CLP*

[*BSN #909*] is particularly helpful in clarifying the premillennial Kingdom of Heaven rule of Christ ... several articles and thoughts identifying timeframes and then the logical debate of unspecified times of commencement, and where certain periods from history might fit. Always encouraging, and particularly in this issue, enlightening for me to consider the 33 plus years of the book of Acts, the 490 years coupled with the Jubilee years, and the consideration that 666 marks the end of the short reign of the anti-Christ. Just great stuff. I am re-reading this one ... I need to think some more about the preparation years that may commence before the building

of the Temple in Jerusalem. – *IN*

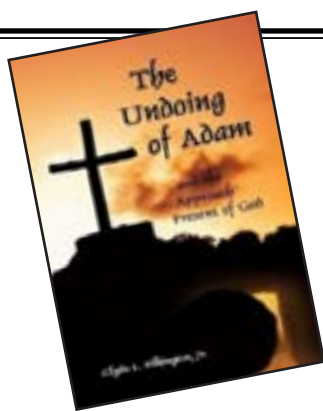
Your love and acceptance and teachings of Father's ways have been invaluable to my spiritual growth and eventual maturity, all of course predestined by Father's will and intentions for His (and our) perpetual glory. – *SD*

Your recent *BSN* articles about the Pre-Millennial Kingdom have been very good. I am starting to see some cracks of light on the subject. I wish someone would take all the different articles by all those who taught it and write a whole book which would step-by-step walk a reader through it. But it is like lots of different learnings I have come to believe. Here a little, there a little. – *TN*

[*Editor:*] It is interesting that you should say that. Producing compilation books from *BSN* articles is our method for all of our compilation books. For example, our recent [Pleroma](#)¹ book is such a compilation of *BSN* articles. It has been our long-standing practice, when we find a neglected subject, slowly to search out, edit and release material on the subject in the *BSN*, storing them there, as it were, for collecting into an orderly book presentation. And as you say, a little here, and a little there. – *CLP*

BSN

1. See [order form](#) under "Compilations."



The Undoing of Adam and the Approach Present of God

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Christ is greater than Adam, undoing what Adam did. In fact, Christ's work at Calvary is greater than Adam's fall. All of God's creation will be gloriously saved by the successful work of "the Savior of the world" (John 4:42). Salvation is not dependent on us at all; it is all about Christ and His work alone. Paul taught that the exact same "all" who are condemned in Adam are the exact same "all" who are justified in Christ (Romans 5:18), and that the exact same "all" who die in Adam are the exact same

"all" who are "made alive" in Christ (I Corinthians 15:22). Christianity has an Adam who is greater than Christ; however, it is Christ Who is greater than Adam.

A note concerning the cover: We wanted a cover that would immediately convey the theme of the book's content, choosing to go with a traditional "cross" scene to express the work of Christ at Calvary. Yet Christ did not die on a "cross" but was nailed to a simple "stake." An explanation is provided in the appendix.

98 pp., PB

See [order form](#) under "Clyde Pilkington."