



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume 41
Issue 1007

The Mystery Hid from Ages and Generations

A Study of Colossians 1:25-27

Part 3¹

(Originally Published in 1939)

by — J. Eustace Mills

The Riches of the Glory of this Mystery.

Whereof I am made a minister, according to the Dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God; even the Mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this Mystery (Colossians 1:25-27).

Key Points:

It's important to examine the distinct descriptions of the "original covenant," "new covenant," and "the mystery" to fully appreciate the evolving nature of God's revelations and their

increasing depth and excellence, as highlighted in the Scriptures.....8477

... *what is the riches of the glory of this mystery*
... (Colossians 1:27).

The following are examples taken from Ephesians:

To the praise of the glory of His grace (1:6).

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory ... (1:17).

What is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe ... (1:19).

His great love wherewith He loved us (2:4).

(continued on page 8477)

WHAT IS GLORY? To give a comprehensive and satisfactory definition of God's usage of this word would indeed be difficult. What then shall be said of "the riches of the glory"? Or, again of "*what is the riches of the glory of this Mystery*"?

As these transcending terms are employed to qualify "*this Mystery*," we should certainly hesitate before any assertion is accepted which commences with such words as, "The Mystery is simply ..."!

Ephesians and Colossians are rich with superlative expressions; this is without question one of the reasons why these epistles are so especially precious.

1. Part 1, [Bible Student's Notebook 965](#); Part 2, [Bible Student's Notebook 969](#).

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume 41, No. 1007 – February 12, 2024

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 (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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He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus (2:7).

The superlative language is necessitated by reason of an excelling revelation. It is good to notice the glory of the language, but it is more precious to discern the revelation contained therein. Paul prayed that we “*may approve things that are excellent*” (Philippians 1:10); it is fitting, therefore, that we should endeavor to appreciate these superlatives.

The word translated “*approve*” is variously rendered “*discern*” (Luke 12:56), “*prove*” (Luke 14:19), “*try*” (I Corinthians 3:13), and “*examine*” (I Corinthians 11:28) in the KJV; while the word “*excellent*” is elsewhere “*differeth from*” (I Corinthians 15:41). The reason for the marginal readings can therefore be understood. The WORNT has “*That ye may try things that differ,*” and the YLT “*proving the things that differ.*” Only by trying or proving the things that differ is it possible to discern the things that are best. To “*try things that differ*” is the process, to “*approve things that are excellent*” is the result.

Any comparison between the things of God might at first thought appear improper and unjustified, for everything from Him must be excellent. We are not, however, left to our own surmising in this matter, for the Scriptures provide several comparisons that serve as examples of this principle.

In II Corinthians 3 the New Covenant is compared with, and found to be more excellent than, the Old Covenant. Both of these Covenants with Israel were of God, both were glorious; but the one which brought life and forgiveness of sin was *more* glorious:

For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness **exceed in glory**. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of **the glory that excelleth** (:9-10).

Thus, the work of the Lord Jesus as the minister of this New Covenant is set in contrast to that of Moses the minister of the Old Covenant.

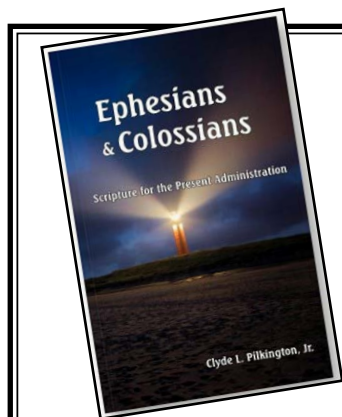
But now hath He obtained a **more excellent ministry**, by how much also He is the Mediator of a **better covenant**, which was established upon **better promises** (Hebrews 8:6).

The condition of the Old Covenant was the law, while the condition of the New was that of grace. Paul declared the law to be holy and just and good (Romans 7:12); but when the law and its associated things were used to dim the glory of grace, he had no compunction in calling them “*weak and beggarly elements*”! (Galatians 4:9). The law had its place in the purpose of God, but it was not the only hope given to Israel.

For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a **better hope** did: by the which we draw nigh unto God (Hebrews 7:19).

The ministration of the New Covenant (II Corinthians 3) was accompanied by confirmatory gifts of the spirit, manifest in tongues, hearings, etc., the proper control and order of which is outlined in I Corinthians 12.

Great and wonderful as these gifts in their various manifestations were, yet the apostle Paul sought that the believers should not be hindered by esteeming

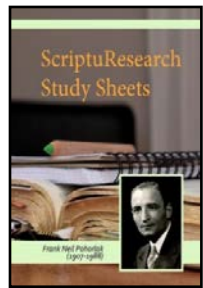


Ephesians & Colossians ***Scripture for the Present Administration***

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by — Frank Neil Pohorlak (1907-1988)
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This is a wonderful collection of valuable study handouts from Dr. Pohorlak’s Bible classes.

these as the most excellent things. The best of the gifts were those that made for edification, but even these gifts were not the excelling truth. They were not the end of all things. Thus, Paul did not exhort the believers to clamor after them, but rather pointed to “a **more excellent way**” – a way that was bound up in the purposes of love.

*But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a **more excellent way*** (I Corinthians 13:31).

For,

*Charity (love) never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophecy in part. But **when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*** (I Corinthians 13:8-10).

When God’s Kingdom purpose is fully come, to which these gifts bore confirmatory witness, then they will be done away, no longer being necessary.

Yet, instead of this anticipated purpose coming, something else came instead, even that Mystery which completed the Word of God (Colossians 1:25). With this new revelation came in a different order of things, not being seen in outward demonstrations of power; and until the purpose of this new revelation is finished there is no reason for the return of such gifts to occur. The obvious absence in our day of these gifts makes evident the necessity of the inquiry into that new revelation which caused their temporary suspension.

The New Covenant, its conditions and its ministry, are all therefore shown to be “*more excellent*” than the Old Covenant. Thus, this illustration of the principle “*try things that differ;*” and in consequence “*approve things that are excellent;*” should prepare and encourage us to apply it elsewhere.

The Lord Jesus Christ in resurrection received many titles, all of them glorious, all of them exalting Him; yet some by their very nature are “*more excellent*” than others. To appreciate in any measure His most excellent titles must certainly be honoring to Him.


Intimately connected with these different titles and positions of the Lord are the hopes of His redeemed. All hopes are centered and secure in Him; all will be received from Him and all will be glorious. But while this is so, it does not follow that all are identical. What is the difference between them? And in consequence, which is to be approved as the *most excellent*?

Christ being given “*the throne of His father David*” (Luke 1:32) points to Him as King, and to the Kingdom given to David, even that which was in the mind of the disciples when they asked,

Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the Kingdom of Israel? (Acts 1:6).

The description of this time was the burden of Israel’s prophets. Yet, what title and position are ascribed to

(see **MYSTERY**, last page)



ALL in All: The Goal of the Universe
by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)
(#6269) 219 pages
(See [order form](#) under “Knoch.”)
This publication is a compilation of the writings of A.E. Knoch on human destiny. The author examines three major theories on this topic current among students of Scripture. The striking phrase “All in all,” which pertains to the vivification of all mankind in I Corinthians 15:28 and relates to the reconciliation of the entire intelligent creation in Ephesians 1:23, is discussed at length. Two extensive appendices are included, exploring the usage of the terms “eon” and “eonian” in the Scriptures.

The Origin of the Trinity

Bible Student's Courses

Course 1: GOD / Unit 4: God as Father / Lesson 2: The Origin of the Trinity

by — Mark D. Vogt

Invalidating the word of God by your tradition (Mark 7:13, CV).

Key Points:

The false doctrine of the trinity came down to us through Roman Catholicism..... 8479

God is one and has no equals..... 8480

The doctrine of the trinity is one of the three pivotal doctrines of Christianity, the other two being eternal conscious torment of the unbeliever and the free will of the individual. All three are unscriptural.



The trinity has been a staple of Christianity for centuries. It's ingrained in the religious mindset as much as any other doctrine that Christianity has espoused. Yet, the question has to be asked, is this doctrine one that the Scriptures teach, or is it one that has crept in through tradition?

The doctrine of the trinity came down to us through Roman Catholicism's Athanasian Creed, named after Athanasius of Alexandria who lived A.D. c. 293-373.¹ Although he did not write the creed, since he was such champion of its doctrine, it was attributed to him.

According to the creed, if one does not believe in its tenets, then the only suitable destination is eternal hell. If one takes the time to read this creed² they will

1. Athanasius of Alexandria was the 20th pope of Alexandria.
2. Text of the Athanasian Creed:

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith. Which faith unless every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Essence. For there is one Person of the Father; another of the Son; and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,

is all one; the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal. Such as the Father is; such is the Son; and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreated; the Son uncreated; and the Holy Ghost uncreated. The Father unlimited; the Son unlimited; and the Holy Ghost unlimited. The Father eternal; the Son eternal; and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three eternals; but one eternal. As also there are not three uncreated; nor three infinities, but one uncreated; and one infinite. So likewise the Father is Almighty; the Son Almighty; and the Holy Ghost Almighty. And yet they are not three Almighties; but one Almighty. So the Father is God; the Son is God; and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods; but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord; the Son Lord; and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords; but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity; to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord; So are we forbidden by the Catholic religion; to say, There are three Gods, or three Lords. The Father is made of none; neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created; but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten; but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is before, or after another; none is greater, or less than another. But the whole three Persons are coeternal, and coequal. So that in all things, as aforesaid; the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved, let him thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation; that he also believe faithfully the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess; that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God, of the Substance [Essence] of the Father; begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the Substance [Essence] of his Mother, born in the world. Perfect God; and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father as touching his Manhood. Who although he is God and Man; yet he is not two, but one Christ. One; not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh; but by assumption of the Manhood into God. One altogether; not by confusion of Substance [Essence]; but by unity of Person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man; so God and Man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation; descended into hell; rose again the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence he will come to judge the living and the dead. At whose coming all men will rise again with their bodies; And shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall

find a morass of double speaking, interestingly wild logic, and dire warnings for the one who refuses to believe it's assertions. Unfortunately, Protestantism has followed lockstep after Catholicism as far as the belief in a trinity is concerned.

Disagreement with any of the tenets of religious tradition will bring, at minimum, ridicule and distaste from its adherents. Religion does not allow room for one to question any of its beliefs, let alone for someone to study and think for themselves.

The goal of these lessons, as always, is to give the student a place to begin a more serious look at the various "Christian" doctrines that supposedly come from Scripture. Christianity has plundered so many doctrines from pagan religions that, in doing so, it is in turn just as pagan. The followers of Christianity are often actively discouraged from any questioning, or of independent study, concerning what their clergy or denominations state as their doctrine or creed.

As noted in the previous lesson, a belief in the trinity leads to many difficult conclusions that are drawn from its teaching. Yet, the Scriptures remain abundantly clear on this matter: there is only one God, and He alone is the only true God. He is even

go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire. This is the Catholic faith; which except a man believe truly and firmly, he cannot be saved.

Christ's Father and God as well.

... *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* ... (Ephesians 1:3).

... *the God of our Lord Jesus Christ* ... (:17).

Let's not make it more difficult than it is. God is one and has no equals.

Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears (II Samuel 7:22).

O LORD, there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears (I Chronicles 17:20).

"To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal?" saith the Holy One (Isaiah 40:25).

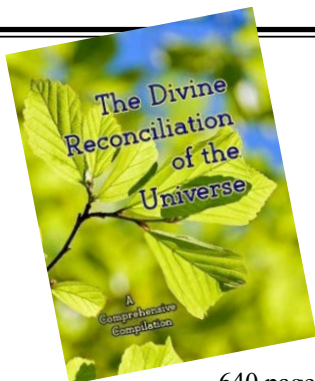
Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me (Isaiah 46:9).

BSN

TOPICS:

Major: Athanasian Creed; God; Trinity

Minor: Christianity; Religion; Tradition



640 pages

The Divine Reconciliation of the Universe: A Comprehensive Compilation

This work does not contend for a mere doctrine; its authors are championing the revealed character of God. The gloomy cloud of theology has obscured Him from us for far too long. Tradition's chilling mists have cooled our enjoyment of His power, wisdom and grace. Religions have libeled His name, repelling the instinctive responses of our heart. Christianity has left us unable to defend His honor in the presence of His enemies. Now all of this is gone and we are able to vindicate Him in

all His ways before all His creatures! – *Adapted from the Preface*

This ultimate collection of 110 works by 46 authors spans nearly 200 years. It is an extensive compilation that is essential for every library. Authors include: Arthur P. Adams, Thomas Allin, Alan Burns, E.H. Clayton, Bob Evely, Phillip Garrison, Vladimir Gelesnoff, J.W. Hanson, Joseph E. Kirk, A.E. Knoch, Arthur C. Lamb, Aaron Locker, Adlai Loudy, Andrew Maclarty, R.B. Macnab, Erasmus Manford, H.W. Martin, Robert McLaurine, Robert McMahon, William Mealand, André Piet, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Frank Neil Pohorlak, George W. Quinby, William C. Rebmann, F.H. Robison, A.E. Saxby, Hannah Whitall Smith, André Sneider, James Strahan, E.F. Stroeter, Thomas Talbott, Ray Van Dyke, and Peter Woodhouse.

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Bible Student's Primer

(A Reference Resource)

From the Editors of the *Bible Student's Notebook*

The Consummation

God's creation is being restored in stages throughout the ages, and will find its complete culmination at the "Consummation" of the ages (*"the Day of God,"* II Peter 3:12-13; cf. Revelation 21:1-22:7). At that time all death will be abolished, as well as all illusory human "sovereignty," "authority" and "free will."

In the "Consummation" (I Corinthians 15:24, CV) we find the Ultimate Sphere of Glory, a place where God Himself is "All in all." God created the entire universe out of Himself. There once was nothing but God, and everything came forth out of Him. Of a surety, "out of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are ALL things" (Romans 11:36). God is the beginning of "all," and He will be the consummation of "all." This is the divine goal: "that God will be All in all" (I Corinthians 15:28, DT). In other words, God will be "Everything *in* everything" and "Everything *to* everyone." His entire creation – without exception – will be gloriously complete and in perfect harmony with Himself; all that there is, ever was, and ever will be, coming out of, operating through, and returning to Him. What a grand conclusion! **ESN**

For articles on the consummation, see:

- The Consummation, Bob Evelyn, [Bible Student's Notebook 603](#);
- The Consummation of the Eons, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook 656](#);

- The Consummation & Christ's Consummate Rule (I Corinthians 15:24-28) (with table), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook 957](#);
- God in Consummation, A.E. Saxby, [Bible Student's Notebook 221](#);
- God ALL in All, Leon Albert Bynoe, [Bible Student's Notebook 601](#)

For books on this theme, see,

- [The Salvation of ALL: Creation's Final Destination \(A Biblical Look at Universal Reconciliation\)](#), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Bible Student's Press (on the [order form](#) under "Pilkington");
- [Nothing Will Be Lost! The Truth About God's Good News](#), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Bible Student's Press (on the [order form](#) under "Pilkington."). This is an abridgement of the above listed work, *The Salvation of All*;
- [The Divine Reconciliation of the Universe: A Comprehensive Compilation](#), Bible Student's Press (on the [order form](#) under "Compilations");
- [All in All: The Goal of the Universe](#), A. E. Knoch, (on the [order form](#) under "Knoch");
- [At the End of the Ages: The Abolition of Hell](#), Bob Evelyn (on the [order form](#) under "Other Authors").

TOPICS:

Major: Consummation; Day of God; Salvation of All
Minor: Creation; Death

* [Editor:] This refers to the way people pray to God, thinking that they can get Him to "do things" for them, or change situations, etc., not realizing that it is God's love that provides all things. God's love always acts in the best interest of His creatures. This is why suffering is a gift (Philippians 1:29; cf. Romans 5:3-5; 8:17-18; II Corinthians 12:9-10).



558 pages

The Twentieth Century New Testament

Though not always consistent (concordant) in its translation, this 1904 edition is a "non-hell" New Testament. It translates *hadēs* as "Grave" and "Place of Death," *gehenna* as "Pit," and *tartaros* as "caverns." It uses the word "aeonian" at times: "These last will go away into aeonian punishment, but the righteous into aeonian life" (Matthew 25:46).

See order form under "Bibles."

MYSTERY (continued from page 8478)

Christ Jesus in Ephesians and Colossians? Of all of the excellent things revealed in these epistles, none should awaken our expectation more than that which speaks of His transcendent glory.

*He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be **Head** over all things to the church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:20-23).*

There can be no higher place than “far above all.” With this exaltation is associated the title “Head,” a title uniquely connected with His present preeminence in the heavenlies, in contrast with other places that are not yet put under Him (Hebrews 2:8).

And He is the Head of the Body, the church: Who is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence (Colossians 1:18).

(abridged & edited)

(to be continued)

- [**Editor:**] See Mills’ other material in the *Bible Student’s Notebook*:
- “The Mystery of this Dispensation,” BSN 62;
 - “The New Covenant,” part 1: [BSN 701](#); part 2: [BSN 725](#); part 3: [BSN 726](#);
 - “Acts 28:28, Before and After,” [BSN 916](#);
 - “The Only Source of Truth,” (Excerpt) Tidbits of Truth #43, [BSN 931](#).

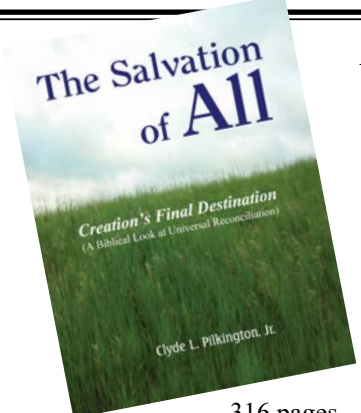
Topics:

Major: Christ Jesus; Colossians; Colossians 1:25-27; Ephesians; Glory; Grace; Headship; Mystery
Minor: Covenants Dispensational; Law; Philippians 1:10; Right Division

...**BE**

PACIFIC, LENIENT,
DISPLAYING ALL
MEEKNESS TOWARD
ALL HUMANITY ...
LET YOUR LENIENCE BE
KNOWN TO ALL MEN.

Paul (Titus 3:2; Philippians 4:5)



The Salvation of ALL: Creation’s Final Destination

(A Biblical Look at Universal Reconciliation)

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

The Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus is truly better “Good News” than we could ever have imagined. It is far more glorious than religion would ever have us believe. *The Salvation of All* is a book about a “Good News” that will reach its final goal in the *salvation of all* mankind.

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316 pages

“*The Salvation of All*” – An excellent book. – **MI**

The Salvation of All is the most clearly written testimony to God’s ultimate grace and mercy towards man that I’ve seen in print. – **VA**

I’m sure I’ll be referring back to *The Salvation of All* for years to come. The issues you addressed in the book need to be discussed among believers. – **IL**

The Salvation of All is worthy reading for people on both sides of the doctrinal fence. Regardless of whether or not those who read it will agree with you, I believe they will respect you for not serving up the regurgitated fodder that fills the shelves of religious bookstores. Very thought provoking! I’ll be recommending it to many people! – **FL**

The Salvation of All, what an amazing book. I feel the veil has been lifted and finally I see clearly the glory of our Lord and Savior. What a joy to know the truth and understand just how amazing our God truly is to all. You are a sincere man of God whom I trust and respect. – **VA**