



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume 39  
Issue 964

# Who Is God?

## Bible Student's Courses

Course 1: GOD / Unit 1 - An Introduction / Lesson 1 - Who Is GOD?

by — Mark D. Vogt

### Key Points:

Everything is from God..... 8129      We are to be God-centered, not man-centered..... 8132  
We are simply actors on His great stage..... 8129

In Genesis 1:1 the Bible states that GOD created the Heavens and the Earth. The Scriptures do not try to directly prove the existence of GOD. There is the assumption that God exists and that HE does not try to “convince” anyone that HE is Who HE says HE is. What God *does* do is to demonstrate to all of creation that HE is the “All in All” (I Corinthians 15:28). Over and over the Bible tells of God’s love, power, mercy, grace, fidelity, dependability and a number of other traits probably too numerous to list in this short lesson. **We are His creation, and as such we are bound by the limitations He has placed upon us. Romans 9:14-24 gives us a clear picture of the reality that all is out of Him. Not some things or most things, but ALL things are out of Him.**



**comply His purposes even as we think that we are the god of our own lives.** Even our having faith, and how much faith we have, is determined by God (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 12:3).

In Romans 8 the Apostle Paul tells us that we are aware that God is working everything together for the good of all humanity, not just believers. It is just that very few know this fact. Those who are called know this fact. To clear up a common misconception, God does not call people to salvation (for all will be saved), but His callings are for service. In every era God has called out a small number of people to fulfill special roles in service to Him. In fact, God gives faith (Philippians 1:29) to those He chooses, and He blinds, yes blinds, the rest of humanity and locks them in stubbornness and in being unable to be persuaded about Him as well as locking them under sin (Romans 11:32; Galatians 3:22). All will have faith in due time, but this time is not that time.

God is the Placer and Subjector and nothing escapes His attention, for He created it all, and He created it for His purposes and for His pleasure (Isaiah 46:9-10). We as the created have no say in what He has done or what He is doing or will do, but we can be assured that what God has done, is doing and will do will all be for His glory and our benefit. He is not only the God of our performance, but also of His performance. It is what He does and not what we do or try to do. **We are simply the actors on His great stage, and He is the Master Director placing everyone where He wants them and directing them to ac-**

(see **GOD**, page 8132)

Who Is God? (Bible Student's Courses).....	8129
God Is Love (Bible Student's Courses).....	8131
God Is Light (Bible Student's Courses).....	8133
Reader's Question Box #74: "He Gave Gifts" .....	8134



## How to Access Our Resources

### Our Main Website:

[www.StudyShelf.com](http://www.StudyShelf.com)

### Daily Email Goodies Signup:

<http://www.pilkingtongandsons.com/emailgoodies.htm>

### Bible Student's Notebook Electronic Issues:

<http://www.biblestudentsnotebook.com/volumes.html>

### Bible Student's Notebook Bound Volumes:

<http://www.biblestudentsnotebook.com/volumes.html>

### Bible Student's Notebook Master Index:

<http://www.biblestudentsnotebook.com/bsnindex.html>

### Videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/1424241>

### Audios:

<http://www.biblestudentsradio.com/audios.html>

### Themed Blogs:

<http://pilkingtongandsons.com/ourblogs.htm>

### Bibles:

<http://www.studyshef.com/bibles.htm>

### Books by Clyde Pilkington:

<http://www.pilkingtongandsons.com/clp.htm>

### Books by Author:

<http://www.pilkingtongandsons.com/author.htm>

### Books by Subject:

<http://www.pilkingtongandsons.com/books.htm>

### Newest Book Releases:

<http://pilkingtongandsons.com/>

### Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/clyde.pilkington>

### Articles:

<http://www.studyshef.com/Articles.htm>

### Facsimile Project:

<http://www.studyshef.com/facsimile.htm>

### Donate:

<http://pilkingtongandsons.com/donate.htm>

### Bible Student's Resource Index:

<https://biblestudentsresourceindex.blogspot.com/>

A Directory of Multi-Media Biblical Resources.

### Bible Student's Version:

<https://biblestudentsversion.wordpress.com/>

A Continuing, Composite Translation of Scripture.

### Standardized Scripture Terminology:

<https://standardizedscriptureterminology.wordpress.com/>

Clarifying Confusing Scripture Terms.

### Online Key:

<http://studyshef.com/abbreviation-key.pdf>

Definitions of abbreviations/acronyms.

### Online Order Form:

<http://studyshef.com/orderform-studyshef.pdf>

### Bible Student's Notebook™

*Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal*

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume 39, No. 964 – April 4, 2023

*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*

### Bible Student's Notebook™

PO Box 265, Windber, PA 15963

Office: (800) 784-6010 – Local: (814) 701-0063

[bsn@studyshef.com](mailto:bsn@studyshef.com)

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. – Editor-in-Chief

André Sneidar – Executive Editor

Associate Editors: J. Blake Botner, Steve Martin, Mark Peters, Mark Vogt

Assistant Editors: James Fine, Will Marshall

### Managers and Assistants

Clyde L. Pilkington, III, Nathan H. Pilkington, Stephen Hill

Copyright © 1989-2023 Bible Student's Press™

# God Is Love

## Bible Student's Courses

### Course 1: GOD / Unit 1 - An Introduction / Lesson 2 - God Is Love

by — Mark D. Vogt

#### Key Points:

God's love is the guiding principle in everything that he does.....8131

God's love is unconditional - unlike religion..... 8132  
Nothing will prevent God from saving everyone..... 8132

**W**hen talking about GOD and thinking about GOD, one has to separate and understand the difference between what His essence is and what His attributes are. There is a difference.

The attributes of GOD are many and will be discussed at some length in other lessons. In short, God's attributes describe what He is like and how He uses these attributes to manifest His essence. His essence, on the other hand, at His core, is Who He is. We can describe GOD as being just or omnipotent or merciful, and He is that, and He is a lot more. These are some of His attributes, but these are not what He is at His core. What He is at His core is LOVE. Love is God's essence. It is Who He is in His being. I John 4:8 says that "God IS love" and this assertion is repeated in :16.

To repeat this important truth, Love is the essence of GOD. It is Who He is. GOD is merciful and He is omnipotent, but that is not Who He is at His core being. His essence, or His love, is the guiding principle in everything that He does. Not some of the time or most of the time, but *all* of the time. Malachi

3:6 (KJV) says that the LORD changes not. This does not mean that He does not have different goals or different ways of dealing with humanity at different times. Those things change during different eons (or ages) or different dispensations (or administrations). What does *not* change is GOD'S love, demonstrated through the manifestation of His attributes and His son the Lord Jesus Christ, as He is dealing with mankind. This is consistently manifested throughout His plans concerning mankind and is the main reason that the almighty GOD can be trusted.

GOD has embedded within each human being the need to love and to be loved. By design GOD has marred, to one degree or another, the complete ability to love others and, by the same token, the complete ability to fully receive love. The heart yearns for this unmarred condition. In Job 14:15 Job longs for his resurrection because GOD will make Job complete – because GOD longs for the work of His hands. Even though most human beings (those whom GOD has enlightened being the exception) do not comprehend this love, nevertheless they sense this love somewhere deep in their heart.



70 pages

## God 101: Back to Basics

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Sadly, there are some who would teach of a god who somehow does not know all things, is not all powerful, is not sovereign, and is always changing his mind. This may be a god of religion, but it is not the God of Scripture. This work goes back to the basics, back to a scriptural foundation of the True and Living God.

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

In the movie *Love and Mercy* Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys goes through an emotional rollercoaster for decades, unable to deal with the pain and pressure of trying to be what others expected him to be, when all he wanted was for somebody just to love him for simply being who he was – a flawed human being needing that unconditional love. This is what our great GOD does: loves us and all humanity unconditionally.

**GOD is love and His love is unconditional, unlike religion which puts conditions on people so that they might receive GOD’S love (by conforming to their religious requirements). GOD is not bound by man’s religion or its expectations.** Any love that we have toward and for GOD is because He first loved us (I John 4:19). GOD’S love is so powerful it is like a burning passion that can’t be quenched. He will do everything

in His power (and He is powerful) to claim every human being for His own. He will not let one person be lost but will seek and save everyone because of this passionate love that He has for us. **There is not one being, celestial or terrestrial, that can prevent Him from completing His mission to save everyone.**

Now, is this the kind of GOD that you would want to trust and worship? To lay your heart bare to Him, to let Him take all of your troubles and burdens and place them upon Himself? This is the kind of love that can’t be measured and can’t be fathomed. It is the truest and deepest kind of love that is possible, for it is the love of GOD and it can’t be surpassed (I John 4:9, 16). **BSN**

**TOPICS:**

**Major:** God; Love

**Minor:** Sovereignty

**GOD** (continued from front page)

God has no beginning and will have no end. Nothing existed before God, and whatever does exist now exists because God called it forth from within Himself. He is the first cause and the only cause, and nothing came about without Him. He did not create out of nothing but all that He created came out of Himself. Romans 11:36 states, “*out of Him and through Him and for Him is all*” (CV).

If we are going to understand God and His Word, we must start out with GOD first and understand as much as we can about God and His ways, and then proceed to man and what God has for humanity. **This is being GOD centered.** Religion has it backwards. Religion starts with man and then proceeds to God. In religion, man is centered on what he can

do for God and how he can perform for his deity in hopes that his deity will reward him. The emphasis is on man’s performance and on man himself, as if God was dependent on man for anything. This leads to a man-centered universe where God is not needed. Eventually man becomes his own god, the arbitrator of what is right and wrong, and begins to believe that he can solve his own problems and hence, there is no need of the God of the universe. Yet it is GOD alone Who is “*operating all in accord with the counsel of His will*” (Ephesians 1:11) **BSN** GOD said it and it is so.

**TOPICS:**

**Major:** God; Sovereignty

**Minor:** Calling; Faith; Religion; Salvation of All



## *The Witness of the Stars*

by — E.W. Bullinger

An in-depth study of the constellations and principle stars as they pertain to prophetic truth. More than forty charts and diagrams are included.

205 pages

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

# God Is Light

## Bible Student's Courses

### Course 1: GOD / Unit 1 - An Introduction / Lesson 3 - God Is Light

by — Mark D. Vogt

#### Key Points:

GOD is the one Who gives spiritual light..... 8136

God illuminates our mind to comprehend His love..... 8136

With GOD's essence being Love, we must consider another verse in I John which declares that GOD is something else, and that it is His essence also. As you study and ponder this declaration from GOD you will realize that it is just the other side of the same coin. I John 1:5 declares that GOD is Light, and there is no darkness in Him.

We are surrounded on all four corners with the stark reality that there is not only physical darkness in the nighttime, but there is crushing spiritual darkness around us all the time as well. While we certainly can appreciate things about the physical darkness (stars, shooting stars, comets and the planets and more), nevertheless, much evil occurs under the cover of physical darkness.

In Acts 17:16 while the Apostle Paul was waiting in Athens his spirit was stirred within him as he saw that the city was "wholly given to idolatry." Idolatry is the worst form of spiritual darkness, for it is that form of spiritual darkness in which people knowingly and enthusiastically give to some entity that which rightfully belongs to GOD. That which they give is

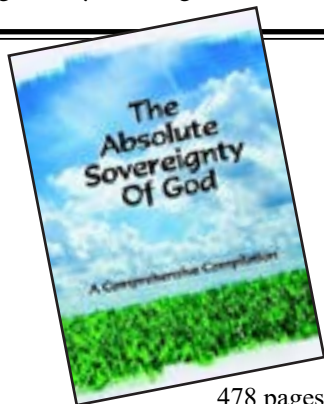
their worship. John 3:19-21 tells us that the light has come into the world, and that light is His Christ. It further states that men love darkness rather than the light. The light shines into the darkness and exposes the things of evil.

Light illuminates or makes known what was previously hidden. The Greek-English Keyword Concordance of the *Concordant New Testament* defines light as,

that band of radiant energy which affects the retina of the eye, and renders visible the objects from which it proceeds or is reflected. Figuratively, that which enables spiritual sight.

GOD possesses these two types of light. More correctly, He *is* these two types of light. The physical glory of GOD would blind if not kill mortal human beings if they were in the presence of GOD. This light or glory will be on full display long into the future when GOD tabernacles with man during the fifth eon as the city, the New Jerusalem, the holy city, descends out of Heaven and having the glory from

(see **LIGHT**, last page)



478 pages

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

## The Absolute Sovereignty of God (A Comprehensive Compilation)

This quintessential book victoriously celebrates and convincingly proclaims the absolute sovereignty of God. Sadly, religion has veiled the truth of the God of the Bible, making Him either an aloof deity, indifferent to the condition of the creation, or one who is at the worst cruel or at the least unloving and uncaring. Yet the loving Deity of Sacred Scripture always has had and will have sole and complete control over His entire creation. This ultimate collection of 100 works by 34 authors spans nearly 175 years. It is an extensive reference work that is essential for every library.



# Reader's Question Box #74

## "He Gave Gifts"

by — André Sneidar

**Q:** My understanding is that you hold the position that the gifts in Ephesians 4:11 are not relevant to the Body today? If so, what is the rationale for this since it is included in an epistle for the current "secret administration?"

I could see that if one was interpreting "apostle" and "prophet" in a narrow sense (*i.e.*, an apostle of Christ or one who prophesied about Paul's ministry.) But it seems to me that evangelism and shepherding and teaching are still necessary. Otherwise, how will the Body continue to be adjusted and grow as described in that passage? For example, without the evangelistic and teaching ministry you operate, I would not have learned the truth about the Body (at least speaking from a relative human perspective).

A follow up question/objection when you have the chance: In 4:7-8 it says, "to each one of us was given grace ... ascending on high ... [Christ] gives gifts to mankind" (CV). Then it goes on to say, "And the same One gives these, indeed, as apostles, prophets," etc. (:11). It translates the verb as "gives" both times (an interesting choice since the Greek is in the aorist tense).

So would not "each one of us" simply mean a universal bestowing of gifts, with some having gifts suited for the "adjusting of the saints"? Or is there a case to be made to assume there are no longer such gifts given? – L.S.

**A:** The short answer is, "Yes, there is a case to be made that these gifts are no longer given today." Let's first deal with the "aorist" tense of the Greek verb "give." Collins Dictionary defines it thus:

a past tense of Greek verbs, denoting an action without indicating whether completed, continued, or repeated.

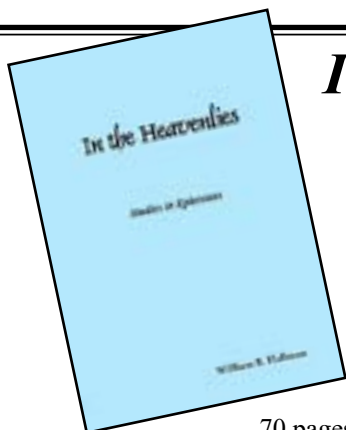
The problem in accurately, or literally, translating aorist tenses of Greek verbs is that there is no such verb tense in the English language.

Most of the Bible versions to which I have access give the past tense rendering of the word "give" as "gave," "has given," etc.

This difficulty in translation is apparent when we look at Strong's and Thayer's definitions for the Greek word *didōmi* (G1325), and see the many ways it has been rendered:

### Strong

A prolonged form of a primary verb (which is used as an alternate in most of the tenses); to give (used in a very wide application, properly or by implication, literally or figuratively; greatly modified by the connection): - adventure, bestow, bring forth, commit, deliver (up), give, grant, hinder, make, minister, number, offer, have power, put, receive, set, shew, smite (+



## *In the Heavens: Studies in Ephesians*

by — William B. Hallman (1903-1973)

The key to this book of Ephesians is the phrase which occurs five times, namely, "in the Heavens" (*en tois epouraniois*). It is found in 1:3; 1:20; 2:6; 3:10 and 6:12. It is the dative plural, and in this grammatical construction always means a locality. It is correctly rendered in 1:20, "in the heavenly places" or "in the heavens," and should so have been translated in all five occurrences. This phrase is found nowhere else in the Scriptures.

70 pages

See [order form](#) under "Hallman."

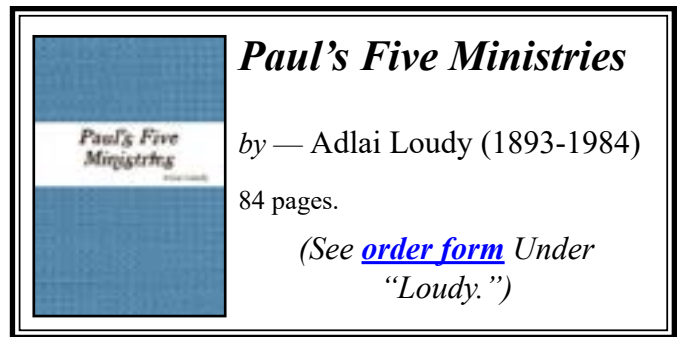
with the hand), strike (+ with the palm of the hand), suffer, take, utter, yield.

### Thayer

- 1) to give
- 2) to give something to someone
  - 2a) of one's own accord to give one something, to his advantage
    - 2a1) to bestow a gift
  - 2b) to grant, give to one asking, let have
  - 2c) to supply, furnish, necessary things
  - 2d) to give over, deliver
    - 2d1) to reach out, extend, present
    - 2d2) of a writing
    - 2d3) to give over to one's care, intrust, commit
    - 2d3a) something to be administered
    - 2d3b) to give or commit to some one something to be religiously observed
  - 2e) to give what is due or obligatory, to pay: wages or reward
  - 2f) to furnish, endue
- 3) to give
  - 3a) to cause, profuse, give forth from one's self
    - 3a1) to give, hand out lots
  - 3b) to appoint to an office
  - 3c) to cause to come forth, *i.e.*, as the sea, death and Hell are said to give up the dead who have been engulfed or received by them
  - 3c) to give one to someone as his own
    - 3c1) as an object of his saving care
    - 3c2) to give one to someone, to follow him as a leader and master
    - 3c3) to give one to someone to care for his interests
    - 3c4) to give one to someone to whom he already belonged, to return
- 4) to grant or permit one
  - 4a) to commission

Clyde Pilkington points out the obvious problem with rendering the aorist tense as present or infinitive tense in the following verses (CV):

*For thus God LOVES the world, so that He GIVES His only-begotten Son (John 3:16); Surely, He Who SPARES not His own Son, but GIVES Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32); Who GIVES Himself for our sins (Galatians 1:4);*



*the patriarch Abraham GIVES a tithe (Hebrew 7:4:).*

It is consistent with the Greek, but a poor English translation. Abraham, for example, is still not GIVING tithes.

I find these renderings interesting:

*Christ chose some of us to be apostles, prophets, missionaries, pastors, and teachers (Contemporary English Version).*

*And He Himself appointed some to be Apostles, some to be Prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors and teachers (Weymouth).*

The key is the past tense “gave”: it was those gifts given during the Acts (Pentecostal) time to bring about the purpose of the following verses – the edification (building up) of the believers.

A major consideration in “*rightly diving the Word of Truth*” is that we must remember that this includes Paul's epistles as well. Paul's Acts ministry was dealing with Israel and their program. “Signs” and “gifts” were part of those things that were active during the Acts time while the law was still in effect, while Israel was still God's nation/people, because “*the Jews require a sign*” (I Corinthians 1:22, *cf.* Hebrews 2:4) – they were the confirmation of God's promise to redeem/reconcile them; but these were terminated after Israel rejected God, His Son, and the ministry of the spirit at Acts 28, and they have no place in the Mystery Dispensation.

A glaring question comes to mind: If these divine gifts were still in effect today, why is there so much difference in doctrines? Clyde Pilkington makes a salient point about this:

If the gifts of Ephesians 4 are still being given, ALL of them are, including Apostles and Prophets. How is it that we can have “prophets” in the Secret Administration?

During the Acts period these supernatural gifts were essential. Without the completed written revelation “gifts” were needed to evangelize, teach and adjust. Now with the completed Word (Colossians 1:25), no one needs such supernatural “gifts,” but a diligence and dedication to the Scriptures themselves.

It becomes clear, then, that “correctly cutting” (CV) the

Word of Truth is the key to knowing what God is doing, and when He is doing it. Since God is not dealing with Israel during the current Mystery Dispensation, then *none* of Israel's things have any place in either our teaching or our walk. **BSN**

[NOTE:] For more on this, see:

– “Pastors” – [The Ascension Gifts, the Higher Powers of Romans 13, and the Secret Administration](#), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (see [order form](#) under “Pilkington”)

**Topics:**

**Major:** Gifts; Pastors

**Minor:** Apostles; Right Division; Translation

**LIGHT** (continued from page 8133)

GOD. Revelation 21:11 describes this glory as Her luminosity being like a stone most precious. Revelation 21:22-23 says that the city has no need of the sun or moon because the glory of GOD illuminates it.

Likewise, GOD is the one Who gives spiritual light for He illuminates the heart of man. Not all people receive the same measure of faith (Romans 12:3). Some receive illumination to a varying degree while on Earth, while all will receive the full impact in resurrection. Romans 1:19-21 pointedly drives home the reality that all mankind has implanted within them a GOD consciousness put there by GOD.

As GOD gives physical light and it will be demonstrated to humanity in the 5<sup>th</sup> eon (age), so does GOD give us spiritual light in the form of His son the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave this light to GOD'S people, Is-

rael. This light walked among His people revealing GOD to them. John 14:9 tells us that, if you have seen Jesus Christ, then you have seen the Father. We were not alive at that time, but GOD has not left us without a witness. That witness is in the Scriptures, and those Scriptures tell us of the love that GOD has toward all mankind as well as His Logos or His plan. The Scriptures tell us what GOD has done in the past, what He is doing now and what He will be doing in the future. The apostle Paul tells us in Colossians 1:25 that God commissioned him to complete the Word of GOD. We have everything that GOD wants us to have so that we not only get to know things about GOD but that we would be able to get to KNOW GOD. GOD is light, and GOD is love, and GOD is so very good. He illuminates our mind to comprehend His love. **BSN**

**TOPICS:**

**Major:** Christ; God; Light

**Minor:** Illumination; Love



2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
91 pages

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

**“Pastors” – The Ascension Gifts, the Higher Powers of Romans 13, and the Secret Administration**

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

The modern role of “pastor” is not founded on Scripture, but instead is an institutional fabrication of Protestantism. The Ascension Gifts of Ephesians 4 were prophetically a part of Israel's Old Testament promises. The “higher powers” of Romans 13 were not a reference to civil authorities, but rather the spiritual rulers over the Acts-period churches. Since Acts 28 (the dispensational boundary line) the “powers that be” have been withdrawn. Under the current Secret Administration, all of these “gifts” are inoperative. The One Body has no flesh-and-blood rulers. We are to be submissive only to our Head: the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him alone do we owe our allegiance.