

GRACE FOCUS

WWW.FAITHALONE.ORG

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2019



SAVING FAITH AND INTELLECTUAL ASSENT

An Ongoing Debate

PLUS REMOVING SPIRITUAL CATARACTS / HOW CAN FAITH NOT PRODUCE GOOD WORKS? / GOD'S GRACE TO ISRAEL / NORMAN GEISLER / THE VIEW FROM ZIKLAG / EVANGELISM / AND MORE!

CONTENTS

- 3 From the Editor
- 4 Saving Faith and Intellectual Assent:
An Ongoing Debate
BY BOB WILKIN
- 8 Removing Spiritual Cataracts
(2 Corinthians 4:4)
BY KEN YATES
- 11 How Can Faith *Not* Produce Good
Works?
BY SHAWN LAZAR
- 12 In Memoriam: Dr. Norman Leo Geisler
(July 21, 1932—July 1, 2019)
BY DONNIE PRESLAR WITH BERNIE
HUNSUCKER
- 14 God's Grace to Israel (Acts 13:13-41)
BY ZANE HODGES
- 19 Watching Until He Comes
BY BILL FIESS
- 20 Once Saved, Rarely Saved?
BY BOB WILKIN
- 22 Top 5 Places to do Evangelism
BY SUMMER STEVENS
- 24 An Old Testament Illustration of the
Christian Life (2 Chronicles 12:8)
BY KEN YATES
- 25 The Bookstore
- 33 Divine Discipline on Disciples
BY JOHN O. HOSLER



- 36 The View from Ziklag
BY MARCIA HORNOK
- 40 Partners in Grace
- 42 We Chose To Follow Children
BY LUCAS KITCHEN
- 44 Invitations in the Evangelistic Ministries
of Jesus and His Apostles
BY BOB WILKIN
- 46 Jesus' Last Week in Light of Daniel
9:25-26
BY SHAWN LAZAR

GRACE IN FOCUS

Volume 34, Number 5
© 2019 by Grace
Evangelical Society

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert N. Wilkin, Ph.D.

EDITOR AND DESIGNER
Shawn Lazar

OFFICE MANAGER
Bethany Taylor

CIRCULATION
Mark "Muddy" Gray

GRACE IN FOCUS is a bimonthly magazine about the gospel, assurance, and related issues. For your free U.S. subscription sign up on our website or send your name and address to **P.O. Box 1308, Denton, TX 76202**. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to offset the costs of printing and postage, it would be greatly appreciated.



Address changes? Comments? Prayer requests? Testimonies?
Send them to ges@faithalone.org. Theological questions? Send them to questions@faithalone.org or write to *Grace in Focus*, P.O. Box 1308, Denton, TX 76202.

FROM THE EDITOR

School is back in session. If you have children between kindergarten and college, you hope they learn a lot this year and every year. Education has a great deal to do with future opportunities.

Let's say you want to be a doctor or a lawyer. Then you need a high school diploma, a bachelor's degree, and three or four years in graduate school. The same is true if you want to be a Ph.D. Having that education is a prerequisite to certain jobs.


The coming kingdom is like that. This life is kindergarten through college in our spiritual school. We are learning to become like Christ. As Dr. Earl Radmacher loved to say, "This life is training time for reigning time." We won't reign with Christ if we don't stay in spiritual school.

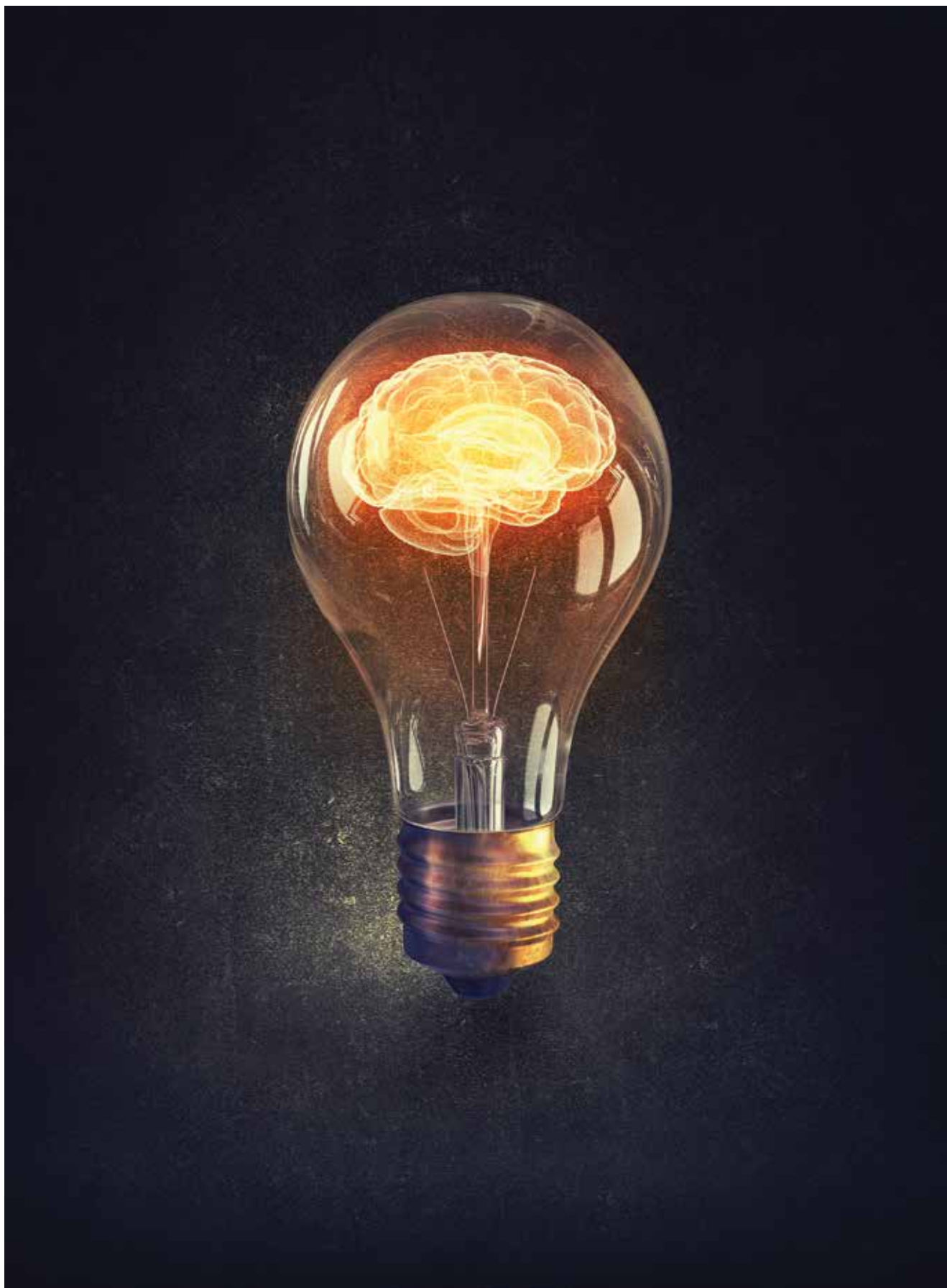
Paul said, "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim 2:12). The Lord Jesus said, "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations" (Rev 2:26). But to endure and overcome, we must abide in Christ and in His Word (1 John 2:28). The author of Hebrews warned Jewish believers that they would not be Christ's partners in the life to come unless they stayed in the faith. And he was greatly alarmed that they regressed spiritually: "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food" (Heb 5:12).



Back in Session

Bob Wilkin, **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Grace in Focus magazine is here to help. You get your regular spiritual food at your local church. But we can help supplement the teaching you receive there. We partner with local churches to help people not only believe in Jesus for everlasting life, but to also abide in Him for everlasting rewards. We hope you enjoy the Sept-Oct issue. 



123rf

Saving Faith and Intellectual Assent: An Ongoing Debate

BY BOB WILKIN

Did Zane Hodges believe that saving faith is intellectual assent? Dr. Dave Anderson argues in the book *A Defense of Free Grace Theology*¹ that Wayne Grudem's view that saving faith is *not* mental assent is essentially that of nearly all Free Grace advocates.² (Anderson does reject some aspects of Grudem's view of saving faith. But on the key issue of mental assent, he is in firm agreement. And in general, he finds much agreement, saying, "It saddens me that Grudem wants to pick a fight over these things when we agree," p. 85.)

Anderson writes,

The straw-man "mental assent" criticism of Free Grace theologians is an old one but a very inaccurate one...Before the book [Grudem's *Free Grace Theology: 5 Ways It Diminishes the Gospel*] was printed, [Joseph] Dillow strongly denied holding to the mental assent view through email

correspondence with Grudem (pp. 80-81).

After citing a portion of Dillow's email denial, Anderson added,

So why can't we put this false charge of "mental assent" to rest? Hodges didn't believe it; Dillow doesn't believe it; I don't believe it. The only Free Grace theologian that has written much on the subject and does believe in the "mental assent" view, as far as I know, is Bob Wilkin. To project one man's views on others that are in print disagreeing with his view is highly unprofessional, and frankly, dishonest (p. 81).

In this brief article I want to challenge the idea that Zane Hodges did not believe that faith is mental assent. I will cite the proofs that Anderson gave and show that a careful look at the evidence shows that Hodges indeed believed that faith is intellectual or mental assent.

MY MENTOR

Zane Hodges was my advisor on both my master's thesis and doctoral dissertation at Dallas Theological Seminary. He was on the original board of GES from 1987 to 1995. He was my mentor from the time I received my doctorate in 1985 until he died in November of 2008. I spoke with him all the time. We had thousands of conversations about the Scriptures. Many of those conversations were about faith and saving faith.

Hodges told me on many occasions that faith is assent. He did not like the designation *intellectual assent*, since he felt it showed an emotional detachment. He felt that most often when people come to faith in Christ, there is joy in knowing that they are guaranteed to spend eternity with the Lord and His people. But he agreed with Gordon Clark (*Faith and Saving Faith*, 1983) that all faith is being convinced that a proposition is true. Like Clark, he rejected Louis Berkhof's view that saving faith has three

components: *notitia* (understanding), *assensus* (assent), and *fiducia* (trust), saying that the third element is faith, not a part of faith.

After favorably citing Berkhof's three-aspects of saving faith, Anderson selectively quotes from Hodges's book *Absolutely Free*:

To describe faith that way [as mental assent] is to demean it as a trivial, academic exercise, when in fact it is no such thing. What faith really is...is the inward conviction that what God says to us in the gospel is true (p. 72, citing Hodges, *Absolutely Free*, first edition, p. 31).

He then goes on to say that "Hodges further defines faith as 'firm conviction,' 'childlike trust,' 'an act of appropriation' of the truth of the gospel, [and] an 'act of trust' (p. 72)." You may notice that those are snippets from four different places in *Absolutely Free* (pp. 28, 38-39, 40-41, 32).

Anderson was not quoting from the second edition. So I've gone back to the first edition to check his citations. Going to the source shows that Anderson has unintentionally misrepresented Hodges. I find six errors he made in his one full citation and many more in the four snippets.

SIX ERRORS

First, Anderson should have cited the title of Hodges's chapter on faith: "Faith Means Just That—Faith" (p. 25). The very title refutes Anderson's suggestion that Hodges believed faith

includes emotional and volitional components.

Second, in *Absolutely Free*, under the heading "Intellectual Assent" (p. 29), Hodges makes it clear that faith is intellectual assent (pp. 29-32). As I mentioned above, he does not like that expression because it typically implies "detachment and personal disinterest" (p. 30). But Hodges clearly affirms that faith is assent or intellectual assent, contra Anderson.

Third, Anderson fails to point out that Hodges specifically rejects Berkhof's position: "It is an unproductive waste of time to employ the popular categories—intellect, emotion, or will—as a way of analyzing the mechanics of faith. Such discussions lie far outside the boundaries of biblical thought. People know whether they believe something or not, and that is the real issue where God is concerned" (p. 31).

Fourth, the example Hodges gives of faith contradicts Anderson's position. "Do you believe the President will do what he has promised?" (p. 27).

Fifth, Hodges cites his agreement with Gordon Clark and his book *Faith and Saving Faith* (p. 28, endnote 3, found on page 207). Yet Anderson, just before he cited Hodges, had favorably discussed Berkhof's view. He clearly gives the reader the impression that Hodges agrees with Berkhof.

Sixth, Anderson inadvertently distorted what Hodges was saying in the only full citation (and that only two sentences)

which he gave. Anderson cited Hodges as writing:

To describe faith that way [as mental assent] is to demean it as a trivial, academic exercise, when in fact it is no such thing. What faith really is...is the inward conviction that what God says to us in the gospel is true (p. 72, citing Hodges on p. 31).

But here is what Hodges actually wrote:

Does [faith] involve the intellect? Of course! But is it *mere* intellectual assent? Of course *not*! To describe faith that way is to demean it as a trivial, academic exercise, when in fact it is no such thing.

What faith really is, in biblical language, is receiving the testimony of God. It is the *inward conviction* that what God says to us in the gospel is true (*Absolutely Free*, p. 31, *italics his*).

Notice that Anderson changed "*mere* intellectual assent" into "mental assent." He left off the word *mere*, which Hodges emphasized, and he changed intellectual assent to mental assent. (He also for some reason failed to italicize *inward conviction* as Hodges did.)

Worse still, notice the words that were left out after the ellipses (...): "What faith really is, in biblical language, is receiving the testimony of God." Receiving the testimony of God is being convinced it is true. It has no emotional or volitional aspect. Leaving that out radically distorts what Hodges was saying.

I also found errors in all four of the snippet citations.

“Firm conviction” indeed occurs on p. 28. However, the entire context shows that Hodges did not mean that faith is more than assent. Hodges was discussing if someone believes the President will do what he said he would do. He then discussed whether you could believe that and yet “go out and break a law.” He said that whether a person broke the law had no bearing on whether he believed. “What has my breaking a law got to do with my firm conviction that I can trust the President in anything he says?”

“Childlike trust” is not found on pp. 38 through 39 as Anderson said. It is found on pp. 38 and 60. In both contexts, Hodges is speaking of saving faith as simple faith. It is “simple faith in Christ” (p. 38) and “saving faith is a simple and uncomplicated issue” (p. 60). No emotional or volitional component. No commitment. Just being persuaded.

The words “act of appropriation” do not occur on pp. 40-41 as Anderson says. Those words are found on p. 42. Anderson reported that Hodges spoke of “‘an act of appropriation’ of the truth of the gospel.” The words *of the truth of the gospel* are not in quotation marks in Anderson. Nor are they in the context when Hodges talks about an act of appropriation. What Hodges was talking about was the woman at the well believing that Jesus is the Messiah who guarantees everlasting

life to all who believe in Him (p. 42). “Her faith was her act of appropriation,” Hodges wrote. He was speaking of her drinking, or appropriating, the living water.

The words *act of appropriation* also occur on pp. 85, 106, and 212 (endnote 1, going back to p. 41). None of them refer to anything more than assent.

The final snippet, “act of

“What faith really is, in biblical language, is receiving the testimony of God.”

trust,” is found on p. 32. There Hodges was discussing how a single look of faith to the uplifted serpent (John 3:14-15) or a single drink of the living water (John 4:10-14) resulted in everlasting life. Nothing about any emotional or volitional component.

That same expression, *act of trust*, was used by Hodges on pp. 29, 62, and 149 (endnote 1). In all those uses Hodges is simply referring to being persuaded.

It should be noted that Hodges wrote *Absolutely Free!* in 1989. At that time he still frequently used *trust* as a synonym for *faith*. As time went on, he did that less and less, because as he once told me in his office in the mid to late 90s, he was convinced that while *trust* did have some overlap in meaning with

belief, people could become confused by it.

None of these snippets show that Hodges believed that faith is more than assent, agreement, being convinced, being persuaded, or acceptance of a truth of a proposition.

I urge everyone to read what Hodges actually wrote. Hodges was *contradicting* the Lordship Salvation view of saving faith. That is, Hodges was contradicting, not supporting, Wayne Grudem’s view that saving faith is more than intellectual assent. Anderson has unintentionally distorted what Hodges believed and taught. ■



Bob Wilkin
is Executive
Director
of Grace
Evangelical
Society.
He lives in
Highland
Village, TX,
with his wife
of 43 years,

Sharon. His latest book is *Turn and Live: The Power of Repentance*.

1. Fred Chay, editor, *In Defense of Free Grace Theology: With Respect to Saving Faith, Perseverance, and Assurance* (NP: Grace Theology Press, 2017).

2. This article is a revision of a blog I wrote on July 11, 2018.

Removing Spiritual Cataracts (2 Corinthians 4:4)

By Ken Yates

Recently, my daughter Kathryn and I traveled to Zambia to teach at a Bible college. We taught two classes: one on the Book of Romans, and one on the doctrine of salvation. We had a total of 45 students who all spoke and understood English. We thoroughly enjoyed our time there and the lively discussions we had in class.

But we also enjoyed another part of the trip. The school has a medical clinic on the campus. There is a full-time doctor from America who provides treatment free of charge to the local population. This includes, for example, delivering babies. But during the time we were there, two ophthalmologists from the US volunteered their skills and removed cataracts from 61 people. Some of these people were completely blind. As a result of these surgeries, the blind literally regained their sight.

PHYSICAL CATARACTS

As I watched these surgeries take place, I was amazed. Without these free surgeries, the people treated would have had no hope. Such surgeries cost around three years of the average worker's

wages in Zambia. What these doctors provided was priceless.

I remember one man in particular. Because of his cataracts, he had been blind for seven years. Previously he had been a seamster, and through this work, he earned enough to feed his family, including two children. When he went blind, his wife had to take over as the breadwinner for the family. After the surgery, they asked what he was going to do now that he could see. He said he was going to go back home to sew so that he could feed his children.

I have a confession to make. Envy is a sin, but I have to admit that I was very jealous of the two doctors who were able to accomplish these things for these people. I found myself wishing I had the skills to perform cataract surgery. Imagine being able to make a blind person see. Imagine being responsible for the feeding of a family for years to come. I know that ophthalmologists have to put in years of training. But when you observe the things that happened on that campus, you can easily see why one would conclude that such sacrifice is worth the time, effort, and money.

Even though I was jealous, it didn't take me long to see what was happening in a different



light. Right down the road from that medical clinic there was another kind of eye surgery going on. Fortunately, we don't have to be ophthalmologists to be a part of that work.

SPIRITUAL CATARACTS

Like most countries around the world, Zambia is a place where Free Grace theology is not very prominent. That is what I found with the students Kathryn and I taught. When they spoke about the gospel that saves a person from hell, invariably they would add works to it. Either they believed you had to do works to *keep* your salvation or you had to do good works to *prove* you are saved. There is no assurance of eternal life possible in this world. In that sense, it is very much like the United States. What this means is that spiritual blindness is a problem. It is common to encounter people who have spiritual cataracts. They do not see that eternal life is given to a person as a free gift by God's grace through faith in Christ alone and that such a life can never be lost.

In 2 Cor 4:4, Paul speaks of the problem of this blindness. Satan, the god of this age, has blinded

the mind of unbelievers so that they cannot see the offer of eternal life by faith alone. Unfortunately, there are even believers, people who have believed the message of grace, who later have their vision clouded and lose sight of this wonderful message and the assurance that goes with it.

SPIRITUAL SURGERY

While teaching the classes, Kathryn and I were able to give a clear message of the gospel of grace. We were then able to show how the Bible supports that message. The students were very open to what was being said. In addition, thanks to certain donors, we were able to give Free Grace books to each student. They were also able to go onto the GES website and read articles, blogs, and journal articles they never knew existed.

And what was the result? At the end of the class, 44 out of 45 students said that they now knew that eternal life was something they were assured of, they could never lose it, and it was all by God's grace through believing in the promise of Christ.

On the first day of classes, two former students spoke in the school chapel during a worship



Pray for these Zambian students.


service. We had taught them two years ago, and they were now seniors. One started the service with a call to worship. He said, “As we start this worship service, we must remember one thing above all else. Eternal life is given to us as a free gift by faith in Christ alone. It is a gift we can never lose.”

The other student was chosen to give the student devotion. He spoke on Mark 8:34-38. He said that the most important thing to understand about this passage is that it is not telling us how to go to heaven. He went on to say that when Jesus speaks of the cost of following Him, it involves works. If a passage is talking about works in any way, it is not talking about salvation from hell.

These two former students, as well as almost all the new students, clearly saw the message of grace. They had had their spiritual cataracts removed. How did this “surgery” take place? Was it the discussions in class? Was it the books they received from GES? Was it from the website? Did any of these things compel them to search the Scriptures on their own? Maybe all of these things happened. The Holy Spirit could use any of them to perform the surgery that needed to take place.

EXCITING WORK

Perhaps you are like me. When you heard about the exciting work the ophthalmologists in Zambia did this past July, you wished you could be a part of that. The great news is you can. All of us who proclaim the message of eternal life by God’s grace through faith alone can be used by the Spirit of God to give sight to people who don’t see it.

We can all be spiritual ophthalmologists. And we don’t even have to go to Zambia to perform such work. As great as the work in the medical clinic in Zambia was, one day those same patients will lose their sight again. Either they will die, or maybe their cataracts will return. By contrast, the surgical work we can do results in sight that will last forever. That is exciting work indeed! 



Ken Yates is the pastor of Little River Baptist Church in Jenkinsville, SC. He teaches at Bible institutes all over the world on behalf of GES.

How Can Faith *Not* Produce Good Works?

By Shawn Lazar

I was recently asked, “I am a little confused as to the relationship between faith and works in the Free Grace understanding. My own understanding is that faith naturally has a corresponding action. It’s not that the action proves or adds anything to salvation, but that grace-born trust in Jesus could not fail to be accompanied by some corresponding activity emerging from the trusting heart. Doesn’t faith necessarily produce good works? And if not, why not?”

The answer is fairly simple: in between faith and good works there is a little thing called *the will*.

THE CONNECTION

Just because you believe something is true, doesn’t mean you will *necessarily* choose to act on that truth. In that case, your failure to act is not a failure of *faith*, but of *the will*.

For example, take James 2. Imagine being faced with a brother or sister in Christ who is hungry, needs a job, or needs a place to stay. You believe a number of things about his or her situation—e.g., that God has commanded you to love your neighbors, that your neighbors need



123RF

help, and that it would be good to help them. You may even believe that God will reward you for helping.

And yet, despite these beliefs, you choose to ignore the needy brother and spend your money eating out at a restaurant.

Why did your faith not produce good works? It was not a failure of *faith*, but of *choosing*. You didn’t do, because you chose not to act on those beliefs.

Faith and works *are* connected. But they are connected by the will.

Of course, you *should* choose to act on your faith and apply Bible doctrine to your life. You *should* choose to live consistently with your beliefs. You should do things like love your neighbor. But that is a moral imperative, not a causal necessity. In other words, it is a choice you must make. As Joshua challenged the Israelites, “choose for yourselves today whom you will serve” (Josh 24:15). ■



Shawn Lazar lives in Denton, TX, with his wife Abby and their three children.

In Memoriam: Dr. Norman Leo Geisler (July 21, 1932—July 1, 2019)

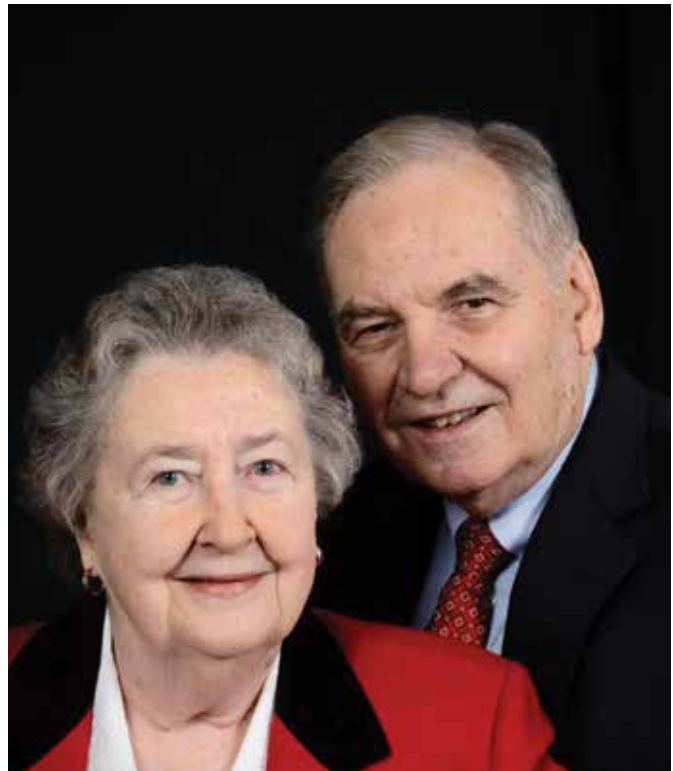
By Donnie Preslar with Bernie
Hunsucker

Author's note: Bernie Hunsucker and I are elders at Grace Bible Church in Charlotte, NC, where I am the senior pastor. We graduated from Florida Bible College together in the seventies and founded GBC. Both of us attended Dr. Geisler's funeral service and took notes. I will incorporate some of Bernie's notes into this article, but I won't try to indicate which comments are mine and which are Bernie's. This is a collaborative effort.

On July 1, 2019, Dr. Norman Geisler went to be home with the Lord. When he was a teenager, he believed in Jesus for everlasting life and spent the remainder of his long earthly life studying, teaching, and defending the Bible as the inerrant, inspired, and trustworthy Word of God.

Shortly after he came to faith in Christ, Dr. Geisler began to evangelize others with the good news. During one encounter, a drunk challenged him with a question for which Norman had no answer. That led to Norm's enrollment at Detroit Bible College and his search for adequate answers to Bible questions, a pursuit which would characterize his life's ministry. In June of 1955, he married Barbara Jean Cate; they had met at a Youth for Christ rally.

His earned degrees included a Th.B. from William Tyndale College, a B.A. and M.A. from Wheaton College, and a Ph.D. from Loyola University. He taught at Trinity Evangelical Divinity



School and later taught systematic theology at Dallas Theological Seminary. Dr. Geisler served on the International Council of Biblical Inerrancy and became well known as an unwavering defender of the faith and a committed advocate of Biblical inerrancy.

In 1992, he and Dr. Ross Rhoads founded Southern Evangelical Seminary, and in 2007, he co-founded Veritas International University.

Dr. Ravi Zacharias gave the message at Dr. Geisler's funeral. He reminded everyone that Norm's middle name, Leo, means "lion." Dr. Geisler lived up to his middle name. Bob Wilkin, who, like me, was a student of Dr. Geisler at DTS, remembers attending the 1998 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society. Dr. Geisler delivered the presidential address that year. Present were about 2,000 Biblical scholars. His topic was "Beware of Philosophy." Dr. Geisler pointed out that many of the younger NT and OT professors had bought into liberal philosophical views—they no longer studied the Bible objectively as the inerrant Word of God. Many in the audience took great umbrage at his remarks; he was bold and courageous to have addressed such a topic. That day, as on many days, Dr. Geisler roared, and he roared loudly.

Though he had at one time been president of ETS and had attended their meetings for over four decades, he later withdrew his membership when ETS did not expel Clark Pinnock for espousing open theism.

Dr. Geisler was well known for his high view of Scripture. He held firm to the belief that the Bible is in fact the very Word of God. He did not, like many others, view feelings and experiences as arbiters of truth. He once told an apologetics class that after we sing, “You ask me how I know He lives,” we should not sing, “He lives within my heart.” Instead, we should sing, “You ask me how I know He lives; *the Bible tells me so.*” He said that everyone has experiences. Mormons have their burning in the bosom. Buddhists have their feelings and experiences.

Dr. Geisler was adamant that truth is found in the Bible, not in our experiences. One is objective; the other is subjective. Rely on the objective.

Dr. Geisler was a noble ambassador for Christ. He was known to freely and cheerfully help others financially. He and his wife Barbara had the gift of hospitality and opened their home to visiting pastors, teachers, and missionaries. Dr. Geisler was a real mensch—what he taught as a professor, he lived as a father, a husband, and a man. At Norm’s funeral the Geisler children attested to how deeply he loved their mother Barbara, whose sacrifices made it possible for Norm to do what he did, and the high priority he placed on love for his family. Dr. Geisler emphasized by the way he lived the importance of the local church and was an active member of the church they attended. The world knew Norm Geisler as a great intellect, a great writer, and a great defender of the faith. His children knew him first and most importantly as a great dad who loved them.

As mentioned above, Dr. Ravi Zacharias delivered the message at Dr. Geisler’s funeral;

this was Dr. Geisler’s personal request. Ravi had been a student of Dr. Geisler and later became his friend. Ravi was in Asia when he heard about Dr. Geisler’s passing and put forth a Herculean effort to make it back to the States in time to speak at the funeral which began at 3 pm. Ravi arrived at 2:55 pm!

He told the audience there that he learned two very important truths from Dr. Geisler: 1)

our cause is greater than ourselves, and 2) our goal is never to vanquish an opponent but to lead him to Christ. Dr. Zacharias pointed out that Dr. Geisler gave dignity to reason and faith; he was God’s bulldog for Biblical inerrancy and had the heart of an evangelist. Norm was a master teacher who loved his craft.

Norman Geisler lived out 2 Timothy 4, the Apostle Paul’s valediction to Timo-

thy. Dr. Geisler preached the Word; he was ready in season and out. He convinced, rebuked, and exhorted. He fought the good fight, finished the race well, and kept the faith. As a giant of a warrior, a cheerful and dutiful one in the battle for ideas, he used the Sword of the Lord in an effort to win his adversaries to Christ, not to trounce them. The legacy he leaves behind includes his family, his students, his writings (he wrote or co-wrote 100 books), and the countless lives he touched and improved through his faithful ministry. His life and ministry are summed up in Phil 1:17, “...I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.”

Hail and farewell, Norman Leo Geisler. ■

“Norman Geisler lived out 2 Timothy 4, the Apostle Paul’s valediction to Timothy...He convinced, rebuked, and exhorted. He fought the good fight, finished the race well, and kept the faith.”



Donnie Preslar is pastor of Grace Bible Church in Charlotte, NC. Bernie Hunsucker is an elder at Grace Bible Church and a Board Member for Grace Evangelical Society.

God's Grace to Israel (Acts 13:13-41)

By Zane Hodges



**“Eight is the number
of new life, new
beginnings, and
resurrection.”**

Just as Paul became prominent in *works* in vv 4-12, so now he becomes prominent in *word* in vv 13-41. The risen Christ continues to do and teach through Paul.

PAUL'S SERMON

Paul's sermon in Antioch of Pisidia falls naturally into a threefold division:

Andres Israēlitai kai hoi phoboumenoi ton Theon (vv 16-25). God's grace to Israel in the past.

Andres adelphoi huioi genous Abraam kai hoi...phoboumenoi ton Theon (vv 26-27). God's salvation for Israel in the present.

Andres adelphoi (vv 38-41). God's judgment (potentially) upon Israel in the future.

Note the words betokening God's grace to Israel:

1. Election (v 17)
2. Elevation (v 17)
3. Deliverance (v 17)
4. Forbearance (v 18)
5. Inheritance (v 19)
6. Generosity (vv 20-21)
7. Provision (v 22)
8. Salvation (v 23)

Eight is the number of new life, new beginnings, and resurrection.

In bringing to Israel salvation through Christ, (v 23) God, as it were, renews His grace to His ancient people. A new era of His grace is now opened *if* the nation will accept Him. In Christ, the Old Covenant terminates and the New Covenant begins. (For more on the New Covenant cf. Isa 55:3 quoted in v 34.)

The salvation of God for Israel in the present is now stressed. The theme of the section is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (the gospel, cf. 1 Corinthians 15. Note *euangelizometha*, v 32). They are addressed in v 26 as *huioi Abraam*, i.e., the legitimate heirs of the gracious dealings with Israel outlined in vv 17-25.

The *for* (*gar*) of v 27 perhaps implies the movement of the message *to them* is somehow causally related to the rejection of Messiah *by those at Jerusalem*. It is as though God would now put the issue *to them*—will they endorse or reject the action of their brethren? “God sends the word to you now (note the emphatic *hēmin* of v 26), for your fellow countrymen have crucified this Messiah. Will you act as true sons of Abraham, and as true God-fearers? Or will you bring divine judgment upon yourselves?” (cf. v 41).

Note the appeal to OT prophecy in vv 27-29 and the implied appeal to these synagogue gatherers to heed the voices of the prophets which they read and heard every Sabbath day.

IGNORANCE ABOUT THE MESSIAH

Verses 27-29 crystallize three facts regarding the death of Messiah:

1. Men were ignorant
2. Christ was innocent
3. Prophecy was inevitable

Verses 30-31 record God’s triumph over man’s ignorance and the proof of this in the form of witnesses. From this triumph proceeds the application of vv 32-37.

The Twelve have their witness to the people (*ton laon* is probably to be understood as a reference to the nation in Palestine). “And we you evangelize...” (v 32). The emphatic pronouns provide the contrast with the last clause of v 31:

The Twelve—to—the people

We—to—you

Hence, Paul already senses his special mission abroad as distinct from the ministry of the Twelve to Israel in the land (cf. Galatians). This is the larger work whereunto he is called. Doubtless, Paul conceived this as obedience to his commission received at conversion (cf. 9:15-16; 26:16-18). This missional self-consciousness doubtless accounts for Paul’s emergence into the foreground at this point.

The term *promise* in v 32 is surely most naturally construed as the promise of Messianic salvation (cf. v 26). The events mentioned in vv 27-31 do not nullify the promise, but by the resurrection, actually completely fulfill it. The decree of Ps 2:7 is now unalterably fixed and, as in the Psalm, judgment is sure for those who reject Him (Ps 2:12 and v 41), but those who trust Him are blessed (Ps 2:12 and v 34ff). And the new covenant with its “sure mercies” becomes a viable offer in Him who saw no corruption.

A key to what follows is found in the intensive *ekpeplērōke*, i.e., “completely fulfilled” (v 33). The resurrection (v 33) brings the promise made to the fathers to complete fulfillment and certitude. The quotation from Psalm 2 is against the background of rebellious rejection (cf. Acts 4:25-28) and over this, complete triumph is seen in God’s rising of Messiah. His Sonship is pre-eminently affirmed in the resurrection (cf. Romans 1) and enriched in meaning. This is the good news of the promise that Paul proclaims to them—complete fulfillment thereof.

THE MESSIAH WAS RAISED UP

The change of verb from *raised* (*ēgeiren*) in v 30 to *having raised up* (*anastēsas*) in v 33 may be due to a broadened concept of the resurrection such as is implied in Psalm 2.

The Messianic Sonship begins in earnest at the resurrection. “This day have I begotten thee” (cf. Rom 1:4). Not that it was not true before, but now God has truly “raised up” a Messiah who is all that Messiah was ever prophesied to be. Hence, He can now give the sure mercies of David (v 34). *Anastēsas* is thus somewhat of a



wordplay on the idea of “raising up” since it is not in meaning confined to the strictly literal sense of this.

In v 34, the *hoti* is causal. Because of the resurrection, irrevocable in its effect on Messiah, God offers the “holy things” (*ta hosia*) of David. *Ta hosia* refers to the benefits of salvation (cf. v 26), such as forgiveness of sins (v 38). Note the plural [*Dōsō hymin*], and compare the context back in Isa 55:3—it is an offer by God to the people “of salvation.”

Note that throughout, David is the prototype of Messiah. Though these are the *holy things* [*ta hosia*] of David, they are administered through *Your Holy One* [*ton hosion sou*] who saw no corruption, i.e., David’s Son.

Dia kai (v 35)—“for this reason too,” i.e., “this too is the reason why in another place he says...” The resurrection accounts for the offer quoted from Isaiah 55 as well as for the statement of Psalm 16. The Apostle wishes to place the two Scriptures side by side, the connection being latent in the *ta hosia* and *ton hosion*, to bring out their application to Messiah. Such statements cannot be applied to David since he served only his own generation. But the resurrection of Christ makes the *ta hosia* absolutely sure (note *ta pista* in v 34) to all generations. (They are Davidic *hosia* because Messiah is Davidic in lineage.)

Note, whereas David’s service was confined to his generation, Christ’s service is for all generations to come (v 34, cf. Isa 55:3 for an everlasting covenant). David’s falling asleep was by the plan of God, while Christ’s death was a violent one

by the sin and ignorance of man (vv 27, 28). Of course, it, too, was part of God’s plan, but the contrast is what is important here.

Messiah’s body was, for a brief period, *mel-lonta hupostrephein eis diaphthoran*, but actually never saw that corruption. It was no longer a possibility for Him because of the resurrection. Thus, Messiah can guarantee to Israel what David could not, because David saw corruption.

THE SECOND SERMON SECTION

Here is a synthesis of the structure of Section II of the sermon:

ho logos tēs sōtērias tautēs (v 26)

The facts of the *logos*:

1. Christ’s death and burial (vv 27-29)
2. Christ’s resurrection (vv 30-31)

The application of the *logos*

1. The promise (utterly) fulfilled by the resurrection (vv 32-33)
2. The promise proffered because of the resurrection (vv 34-37)

This is the final appeal. Among the *ta hosia* now offered to Israel are:

1. forgiveness (v 38)
2. justification (v 39)

Yet the conclusion of the sermon in vv 40-41 seems to indicate a prescience of rejection. Note especially the *you will by no means believe* (*ou mē pisteusēte*) of v 41. Even in the expression

Gnōston oun estō (v 38) there is something of an implication that the message must at least be made known to them, whether or not they will hear. Hence the *gar* of v 27. Even the Jews of the diaspora must be allowed to ratify the rejection and sin of Jerusalem. A judgment is clearly implied in the word *perish* (*aphanisthēte*, v 41), but not until the despisers have looked (*idete*) and marveled (*thaumasate*).

Thus, the conclusion, while containing a true offer of salvation to any individual who believes (v 39), is freighted with implications of imminent rejection and divine judgment. The section prepares for a concrete realization of the typology in Sergius Paulus and Elymas.

THE SEQUEL

There is a threefold division to the sermon's sequel in Antioch:

1. The immediate sequel to Paul's sermon (vv 42-43).
2. The evangelization of the Gentiles the following Sabbath and subsequently (vv 44-49).
3. The persecution and expulsion of Paul and Barnabas (vv 50-52).

First, the sermon aroused Gentile hunger and Jewish faith—excellent results for any message. There was follow-up in terms of exhortation to continue in God's grace—not to continue in His salvation, which was certain, but in the sphere of His grace (cf. Gal 5:4). Especially needed for Jewish converts, but also for all. How soon after salvation by grace do we often instinctively drift into living by law! (Cf. v 39. Also, Galatians was written to this area.)

Second, the Jews had never had such success and were "evangelistically" jealous (cf. v 45). At once they become Elymases in their opposition to Gentile faith. They are just as ineffectual (cf. vv 48-49).


Verses 46-47 set forth, at the very outset of Paul's missionary career, the principles upon which it moves:

1. Jewish privilege entitles them to a first hearing of the gospel.
2. But God's purposes according to Scripture include Gentile salvation.

The soul that thrusts away so gracious a word of God only passes judgment on his own deserts. He is unfit for life eternal (v 46). Man's response to this light is his judgment (cf. John 3).

Note that the verse quoted from Isa 49:6 is spoken to the Servant of Jehovah. Yet Paul applies it as a command for himself and Barnabas. How can that be? In Acts the glorified Servant continues to do and teach *through His earthly servants*—members of His Body.

Third, men and women are sinners. Religious women, and socially prominent ones, are often duped into worthless causes. Their sensibilities are exploited. They may, in turn, influence men in prominent places (observe that *tous prōtous* is last in v 50). Women have often been readily deceived in religious matters (cf. 1 Tim 2:11-15).

Men can often be full of wickedness. The Jews were filled with envy (v 45). However, after that envy was vented, it did not prevent the filling of the disciples with joy and the Spirit (v 52). A disciple need know nothing of emptiness. But it is *disciples*, not merely *believers*, who experience such fullness. 



Zane Hodges was a Bible teacher and Professor of Greek at Dallas Theological Seminary. He passed in 2008.

Watching Until He Comes

By Bill Fiess


This morning I was really struck by the presence of a single Greek participle *elthōn* (= coming or when He comes) in connection with Jesus Christ's imminent return:

Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes [elthōn], will find so doing (Matt 24:46).

Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming [erchetai]... lest, coming [elthōn] suddenly, he find you sleeping (Mark 13:35-36).

Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes [elthōn], will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them (Luke 12:37).



We are told to keep watching and working till the point that He comes, otherwise we will lose rewards and perhaps even the opportunity to rule with Christ (Matt 24:48-51; Luke 12:45-46). This certainly fits Rev 2:25-28. 



Bill Fiess teaches math in Virginia and Logos Bible Software to anyone who is interested!

HOW TO SUBTLY BACK-LOAD THE GOSPEL BY MISUSING JAMES

“We are not saved by good works; we are saved by grace alone on God’s part, and faith alone on ours; yet neither can we be saved *without* good works, for as James 2:17 says, “Faith, if it hath not works is dead”—and a dead faith is *no* faith.”

~Sidlow Baxter, *Awake My Heart*, 23.

Once Saved, Rarely Saved?

By Bob Wilkin

Someone sent me a link to a rather extreme Arminian preacher. Most who believe you can lose everlasting life think that people who believe you can't lose your salvation still have a good chance of making it to heaven by persevering. However, this preacher thinks that the preaching of eternal security makes it very unlikely that the person believing that will persevere and make it to heaven.

The message is entitled, "Five Marks of the False-Grace Doctrine."¹

This statement got my attention:

The false grace or semi-universalist position is one that would adhere to the "once saved, always saved" position... My belief is actually quite the opposite. My belief is "once saved, rarely saved." I believe the Bible is clear that the road is very narrow. It is not wide. And there are people who choose not to walk that narrow road. If we don't conquer and if we don't work out our salvation with fear and trembling, then certainly our salvation is at risk (29:02-29:40).

He went on to cite Gal 5:16-21 and said that "This is good news because these are the sins that can keep us from heaven. Wouldn't it be cruel if Paul or God did not reveal to us the sins that can keep us from heaven?" (29:58-30:10).

Such messages now strike me as extreme. But from ages 6 to 20, I was in a cult which taught

that *any sin can keep us from heaven*. Not just the mortal sins of Catholicism and of the preacher in this video. *Any* sin. And not plural sins, either. In the group I was in, *one sin* committed after being saved resulted in loss of salvation, and *you can never get it back*. The group I was in would have said that *this* preacher holds to the "false grace or semi-universalist position."

But the message of John 3:16 is whoever believes in Him has everlasting life. Jesus promised that the believer will never perish. He also said the believer will never again hunger or thirst for everlasting life (John 6:35) and that the believer will never die spiritually (John 11:26).

While this preacher probably has great intentions, he is preaching a false gospel, an accursed message (Gal 1:6-9). If he in the past believed the promise of everlasting life, then he has everlasting life. But he is under God's temporal judgment in any case. And if he has not yet believed the






promise of life, then he himself is on the broad way that leads to destruction. The broad way is not the way of sinful indulgence. The broad way is the works salvation way so prevalent in all the world's religions, including, unfortunately, many within Christianity itself.

We who believe in OSAS (once saved, always saved) do not promote semi-universalism. Far fewer people believe the Free Grace message than the message of this preacher.

We who believe in OSAS do not promote licentiousness either. While I realize that there is a small number of Free Grace people who think believers today are under no laws and no commandments, that is not true of most Free Grace people. Instead, we call people to holiness. We are motivated out of gratitude to please God. We are motivated by a desire to have God's blessings for us and our families and to avoid the curses that come for those walking out of fellowship

with God (Luke 15:11-32). We are motivated by a desire to have the Lord's approval at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:9-10). We want to be a blessing to others.

Once saved, rarely saved? Hardly. Once a person has everlasting life, he has it forever. After all, as one of my seminary professors, Dr. Charles Ryrie, liked to say, "If everlasting life could be lost, then it has the wrong name." 



Bob Wilkin is Executive Director of Grace Evangelical Society. He lives in Highland Village, TX, with his wife of 43 years, Sharon. His latest book is Turn and Live: The Power of Repentance.

1. See <https://www.xpmedia.com/video/6856/5-marks-of-false-grace>

Top 5 Places to Do Evangelism

By Summer Stevens

I remember listening to a guest speaker in my evangelism class in seminary talk about the thousands of times through the years he had personally shared the gospel. He drew a line on the board that represented both *time* and *intensity*. Basically, with your next-door neighbor, you take your time and let him or her see your lifestyle of kindness and share the Good News when the right opportunity arises. However, if you are trying to share the gospel with someone on a ski lift, you have a high intensity mission to “get it out as quickly as possible,” and then, of course, ask if they are ready to place their faith in Jesus before whisking down the hill.

Perhaps that worked a few decades ago. I certainly was inspired by his boldness and indeed tried a few “airplane seatmate” conversions myself (which resulted in some interesting and rather awkward conversations).

Today’s generation is different. A smooth and polished spiel is not convincing for young people. They want to see that you are *legitimate*, that your faith means the same to you at home as it does at church on Sunday morning. They are quietly watching the way you talk to your children, if you gossip, what you do when you’re angry—basically, if your faith makes any difference at all in the way you live or how you treat people.

If you want to do effective evangelism, it’s time to stock your fridge and clean your bathroom. Why? Because evangelism today looks like *opening your home* so people can see the real you.

Here are the top 5 places to do evangelism.



1. Your front porch. Brynn Hoffman said that air conditioning ruined American culture. People used to sit outside in the warm evenings and visit with neighbors and people walking by. They built relationships and formed friendships. With the invention of AC, people plugged in their new units and lost their connection with their neighbors. At my house, we are front porch sitters and street basketball players and razor scooter riders. We know the name of the man who walks down our street every evening with four fluffy white dogs, and we know our mailman so well that he helped move furniture into our house. Simply *going outside* will open the door to relationships in your neighborhood.

2. Your living room. My husband is a pastor, so I’ve been a “pastor’s wife” for over a decade. There is something that happens when people cross your threshold—they relax, they open up, and they tell you their stories. Fifteen minutes inside your house will do exponentially more than the compulsory fifteen minutes of after-Sunday-service chitchat. The church is an avenue for

relationships to be built, but *we* are the church, not the building, and one of the best ways to have an authentic relationship with someone that will lead to sharing your faith is to have him or her in your home. Stop and think about the people in your church (or not) that you really *know*. Chances are they are people who have been in your home, or you've been in theirs. To have a relationship with someone that is significant enough that he's willing to listen to what you have to say about Jesus, you need to be willing to let him in, literally.

3. Your dining room. Early in our marriage, my husband and I had a funny little conversation where I shared that I didn't really like chicken. "It has no flavor," I said. Astounded (because his mother was a gourmet cook), he said, "How can you not like chicken?! You can do everything with chicken." I responded, "When I was growing up, all my mom ever did with chicken was boil it and add salt and pepper." He was horrified, but I think it gave him a good lens for my cooking experience, and I learned not to take offense when he added ranch dressing and hot sauce to every dinner I made. If I can come from a salt and pepper boiled chicken background and learn to be a great host, so can you. Because the whole atmosphere in a room changes when people sit down to eat together, especially if it is in someone's home. Jesus knew this. All throughout the Gospels, we see Jesus eating, drinking, and spending time in homes. The early church seemed to exist primarily in people's homes, often around a dinner table.


Making a meal for someone is a way to care for him or her. The younger generation wants to see your faith in action. Your words are not enough to convince that person that Jesus actually makes a difference in your life. So make a fancy meal if you want, or microwave some hot dogs and baked beans—it doesn't really matter. It's the gathering together around your dining room table that fosters meaningful conversations about life and faith.

4. Your backyard. Despite being the most connected generation in history, Americans are

lonelier than they've ever been. A 2018 Cigna study reported that 40 percent of adults feel alone, and 47 percent feel left out. One of the ways we can share our faith and love other people is to be a gatherer of people.

Host an Easter egg hunt for young families and their friends; throw a Fourth of July BBQ and invite the outliers in your circle of friends, or host a pumpkin carving party for the junior high youth group. Your home is an integral part of your ministry. If you feel like home is your personal retreat and you don't like having other people over, I urge you to bring this to the Lord and ask for a new attitude. We are stewards over every single thing God gives us, and a primary part of this is our dwelling. Your home does not need to be large or nicely furnished; it just needs to be available to God for His use.

5. Your garage. Do you like to work on old cars, restore furniture, paint on canvas, or make wreaths? It doesn't really matter what your hobbies are—invite someone to join you! Young people want to be invited into your life. They crave genuine connection and face-to-face interaction, even if they act like they don't. Jesus is the most important person in your life. The honest, believable response, then, is that you share Him. Use your garage or craft room as an avenue for relationship building and evangelism.

Today's evangelism takes more effort—it takes more time and personal investment into the lives of people around you. The duty to evangelize will never change, but the method of effective communication will shift with culture. Be willing to go outside of your comfort zone for the sake of sharing Jesus' promise of everlasting life. 



Summer lives outside of Pittsburg with her husband Nathanael and their five children. She has a Masters in Biblical Studies from Dallas Theological Seminary and enjoys running (but mostly talking) with friends and reading good books to her kids.

An Old Testament Illustration of the Christian Life (2 Chronicles 12:8)

By Ken Yates

In Romans 6–8, Paul has a lengthy discussion on the Christian life. The believer can walk by the flesh (in his own power) or by the Spirit. The former results in the wrath of God and the deadly consequences of sin. The latter results in life and peace. Paul compares the way a believer lives to slavery. The believer can be a slave of sin or of obedience (Rom 6:16).

Recently I found a great illustration of this principle in the OT Book of 2 Chronicles. After the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam ruled the southern kingdom of Judah. It says in 2 Chronicles 11 that at first Rehoboam followed the Lord. He obeyed the Lord when the Lord told him not to attack the northern kingdom of Israel (2 Chron 11:4). He acted wisely (v 23). The nation worshiped the Lord through sacrifices at the Temple (v 16). It became a refuge for people who wanted to flee the idolatrous nation of Israel in the north.

And what was the result of these things? Judah had security. They were able to build cities for protection and were able to place weapons of war in every city (vv 5-12). They had an abundance of food (v 23) and enjoyed peace with the surrounding nations.

But all that changed. In 2 Chron 12:1 it says that Rehoboam forsook the law of the Lord. In v 14 it says that he did not seek the Lord. In chap. 11 we get a glimpse of his rejection of the Lord. Like his father Solomon, he had taken to himself many wives and concubines (11:21). We can assume that these pagan wives played a role in leading him away from the Lord.


And what was the result of these things? Egypt attacked them. Egypt subjected them. Their fortified cities were captured. It says in 2 Chron 12:5, 7 that Judah experienced the wrath of God through the Egyptian Pharaoh. The Egyptians



took the golden shields (weapons of war) and other treasures found in Rehoboam's palace (2 Chron 12:9).

In 12:8 we are given a great summary of what was happening with Judah and Rehoboam. Through a prophet, God tells them what they are experiencing by means of Pharaoh. God has allowed them to become his slaves. This allows them to see the difference between being the servants of God and the servants of Egypt. In talking about the differences between serving Pharaoh and God, the prophet says: “Nevertheless they will be his servants, that they may distinguish My service from the service of the kingdoms of the nations.”

When they served God, they experienced peace and prosperity. When they disobeyed Him, they became slaves to one who gave them war and robbed them of their blessings from God. They could see the difference right before their eyes.

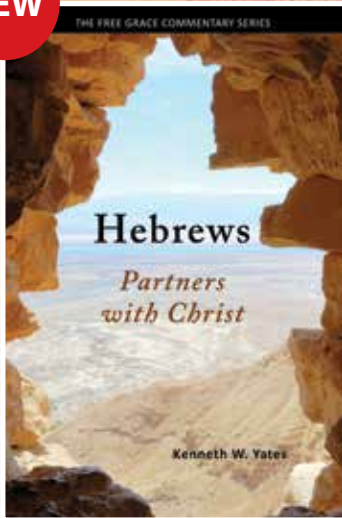
Isn't it the same way for Christians today? When we walk with the Lord through the power of the Spirit, we can see the blessings of God in our lives. When we choose to disobey God, we will see the negative consequences in our lives. Whom would the Jews living in Judah want to serve—God or Pharaoh? Whom would we want to serve—the Lord or sin? The people of God have always had the choice. 



Ken Yates is the pastor of Little River Baptist Church in Jenkinsville, SC. Read his new book, Hebrews: Partners with Christ.

THE BOOKSTORE

NEW



Hebrews: Partners with Christ

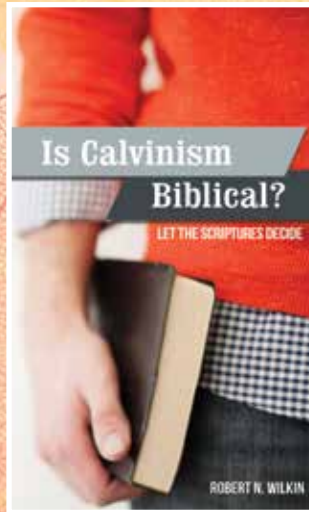
Kenneth W. Yates

This verse-by-verse commentary explains how Hebrews encourages believers to persevere so they will rule with Christ in His kingdom. It also warns against the deadly consequences of falling away from Christ.

USD \$22.00

Softcover • 244 pages

Code: hpwc



Is Calvinism Biblical? Let the Scriptures Decide

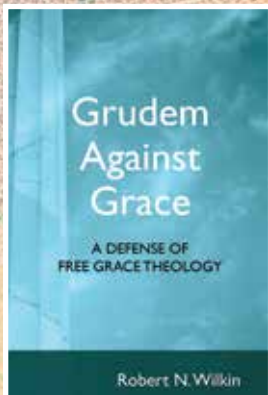
Robert N. Wilkin

Wilkin compares the five points of Calvinism against twelve key verses.

USD \$15.00

Softcover • 166 pages

Code: icb



Grudem Against Grace: A Defense of Free Grace Theology

Robert N. Wilkin

Wilkin responds to Grudem's critique of Free Grace.

USD \$15.00

Softcover • 144 pages

Code: gag



Chosen to Serve: Why Divine Election Is to Service, Not to Eternal Life

Shawn Lazar

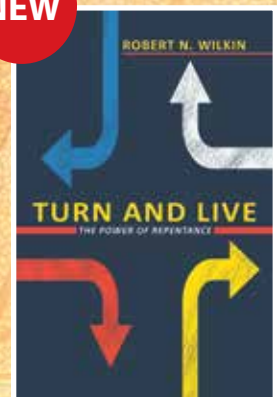
Is Biblical election about eternal life or service to God?

USD \$18.00

Softcover • 284 pages

Code: cts

NEW



Turn and Live: The Power of Repentance

Robert N. Wilkin

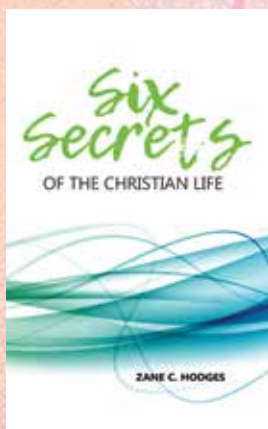
What is the nature and purpose of repentance?

USD \$15.00

Softcover • 158 pages

Code: tal

GO TO WWW.FAITHALONE.ORG TO SIGN UP FOR FLASH SALES!



Six Secrets of the Christian Life

Zane C. Hodges

Hodges sets forth some basic principles for growing in Christ. Second Edition, with study questions.

USD \$12.00
Softcover • 100 pages
Code: ssl2

SALE

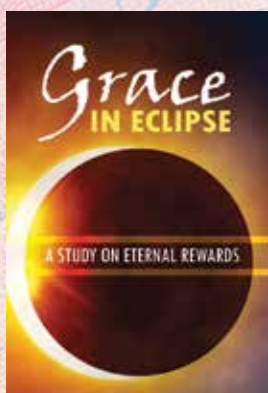


The Gospel Under Siege: Faith and Works in Tension

Zane C. Hodges

What is the relationship between faith and works?

USD ~~\$16.00~~ **\$8.00**
Softcover • 266 pages
Code: gus2

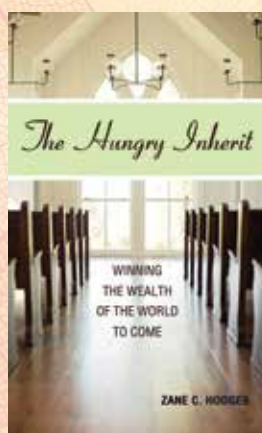


Grace in Eclipse: A Study on Eternal Rewards

Zane C. Hodges

How does the doctrine of rewards relate to the saving message?

USD \$15.00
Softcover • 168 pages
Code: gie2



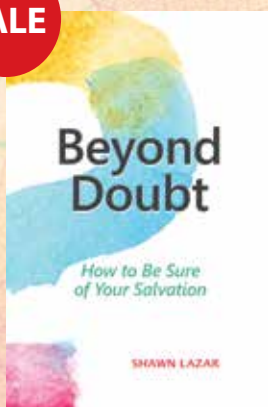
The Hungry Inherit

Zane C. Hodges

The burden of this work is to clearly distinguish between salvation and discipleship.

USD \$15.00
Softcover • 160 pages
Code: thi

SALE

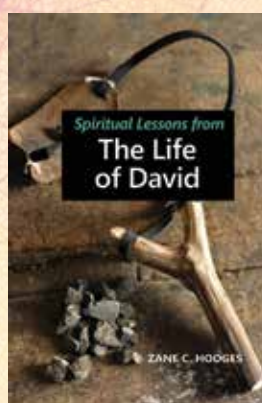


Beyond Doubt: How to Be Sure of Your Salvation

Shawn Lazar

What are the most common errors that lead to a lack of assurance?

USD ~~\$15.00~~ **\$7.50**
Softcover • 154 pages
Code: bd

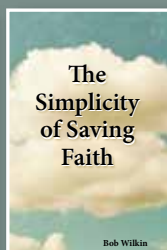
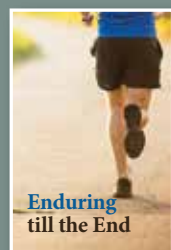


Spiritual Lessons from the Life of David

Zane C. Hodges

What can you learn about the spiritual life from David and Saul?

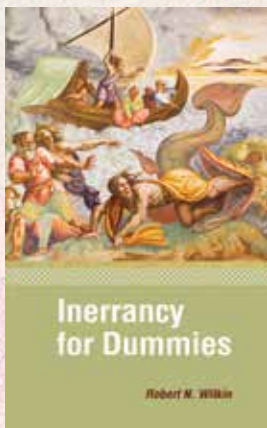
USD \$10.00
Softcover • 94 pages
Code: lod



Booklets

- Enduring till the End / Code: ete
- His Promise Is Certain / Code: hpc
- Saving Faith in Focus / Code: focus1
- The Simplicity of Saving Faith / Code: ssf
- What Is Free Grace Theology? / Code: fgt
- You Can Be Eternally Secure / Code: ycbs
- You Can Be Sure! / Code: ycbs
- Puedes Estar Seguro / Code: ycbs-sp

Quantity:	Price Each
1-24	\$.25
Pack of 25	\$5.00

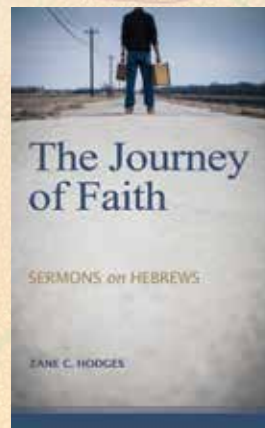


Inerrancy for Dummies

Robert N. Wilkin

Wilkin explains “true inerrancy,” and how to resolve alleged discrepancies in the Bible.

USD \$7.95
Softcover • 75 pages
Code: ifd

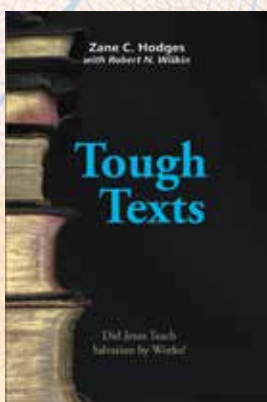


The Journey of Faith: Sermons on Hebrews

Zane C. Hodges

The Epistle to the Hebrews is about the incredible journey of faith.

USD \$15.00
Softcover • 212 pages
Code: jof



Tough Texts: Did Jesus Teach Salvation by Works?

Hodges & Wilkin

Zane and Bob discuss passages in the Synoptic Gospels that seem to teach salvation by works.

USD \$18.00
Softcover • 174 pages
Code: tt



Power to Stand: An Exposition of Jude

Zane C. Hodges

God gives every believer the power to stand, so as not to fall away.

USD \$9.00
Softcover • 76 pages
Code: pts

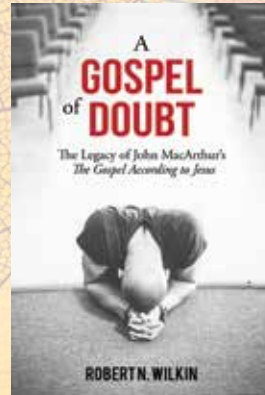


What Is the Outer Darkness?

Zane C. Hodges with Robert N. Wilkin

Zane and Bob discuss all three occurrences of the phrase “the outer darkness” in Matthew.

USD \$14.00
Softcover • 112 pages
Code: wod

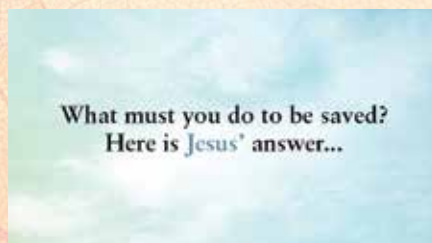


A Gospel of Doubt: The Legacy of John MacArthur's The Gospel According to Jesus

Robert N. Wilkin

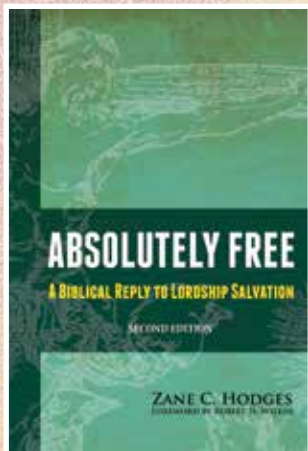
Wilkin shows how to move from a gospel of doubt, to a gospel of assurance.

USD \$22.00
Softcover • 305 pages
Code: agd



Evangelism Business Cards

USD \$15.00
Box of 200 cards
Code: ebc



Absolutely Free: A Biblical Reply to Lordship Salvation (Second Edition)

Zane C. Hodges

This book clearly explains the gospel of God's free grace, and how popular theologies tend to confuse faith and works, salvation and discipleship, eternal life and eternal rewards.

USD \$20.00

Softcover • 272 pages

Code: af2

The Atonement and Other Writings

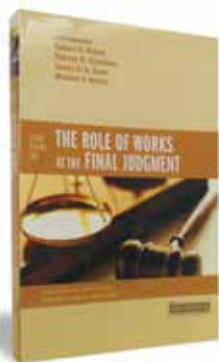
Zane C. Hodges

This book collects three hard-to-find shorter works by Hodges: *The Atonement*; *Jesus, God's Prophet*; and *Did Paul Preach Eternal Life?* Every student of the Bible will have his understanding enriched by these studies.

USD \$15.95

Softcover • 116 pages

Code: atm



Four Views on the Role of Works at the Final Judgment

Robert N. Wilkin, Thomas R. Schreiner, James D. G. Dunn, Michael P. Barber

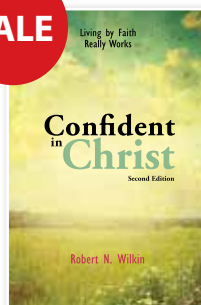
Through a discussion of Biblical texts, this book presents four perspectives on the role of works at the final judgment including: Robert N. Wilkin, works will determine rewards but not salvation, and Thomas R. Schreiner, works will provide evidence that one actually has been saved.

USD \$17.00

Softcover • 240 pages

Code: fj

SALE



Confident in Christ (Second Edition)

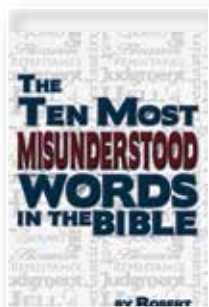
Robert N. Wilkin

This book examines sixteen "tough texts" from the NT that are often used to teach salvation by works.

USD ~~\$22.00~~ **\$10.00**

Softcover • 278 pages

Code: cic2



The Ten Most Misunderstood Words in the Bible

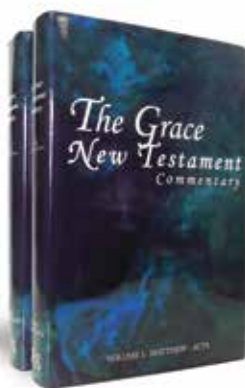
Robert N. Wilkin

An exploration of Biblical terms everyone knows, and yet few understand.

USD \$9.95

Softcover • 221 pages

Code: ten



The Grace New Testament Commentary

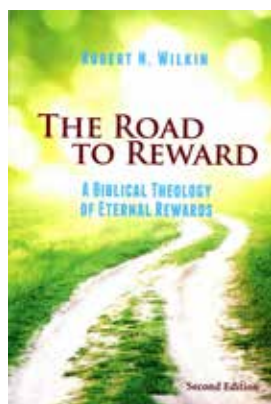
Authors include: Zane C. Hodges, Robert N. Wilkin, Hal M. Haller, Dwight L. Hunt, René A. López, J. B. Bond, and J. Paul Tanner, among others.

Written from a conservative, Dispensational, Free Grace perspective. These two volumes explain all the difficult verses that seem to deny eternal security, eternal rewards, justification by faith alone, and that make perseverance a condition of kingdom entrance.

USD \$29.95

Hardcover • Two Volumes • 1,334 pages

Out of stock/Coming soon.



The Road to Reward (Second Edition)

Robert N. Wilkin

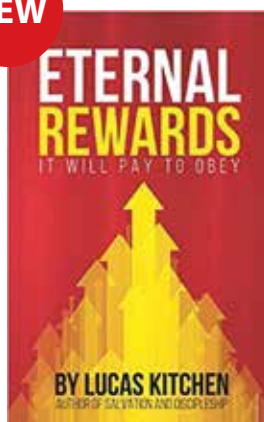
Robert N. Wilkin takes us through the Biblical doctrine of eternal rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

USD \$20.00

Softcover • 200 pages

Code: rr2

NEW



Eternal Rewards: It Will Pay to Obey

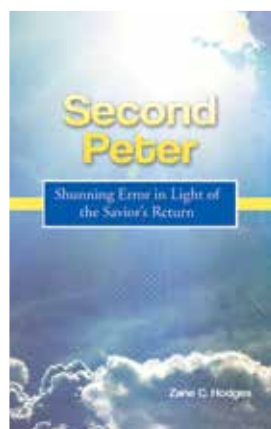
Lucas Kitchen

Whether you're new to the concept, or a long-time student of the Bible, you will enjoy this graphical exploration of rewards in Heaven.

USD \$15.00

Softcover • 280 pages

Code: er



Second Peter: Shunning Error in Light of the Savior's Return

Zane C. Hodges

Second Peter is about growing in holiness in light of the Second Coming. Through this commentary, you will long for the Savior's soon return!

USD \$15.00

Softcover • 142 pages

Code: 2pet



First Peter: The Salvation of the Soul

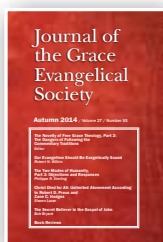
Zane C. Hodges

As you read through First Peter, you will better understand God's desire to save your soul.

USD \$10.00

Softcover • 106 pages

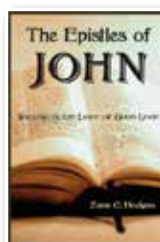
Code: 1pet



Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society

100+ pages. Two issues each year. Scholarly yet practical articles and reviews.

USD \$18.50 / \$9.25 for new or gift subscriptions.
Code: jotges
View website for other special deals.



The Epistles of John

Zane C. Hodges

First John is all about fellowship with God, not tests of life. Second and Third John are also explained in this valuable commentary.

USD \$8.95
Softcover • 312 pages
Code: 1-3john

SALE



Best of Zane Hodges DVD

Over 10 hours of Zane Hodges's messages on two DVDs utilizing a combination of video, when available, or audio with transcription.

USD ~~\$40.00~~ **\$15.00**
2 DVDs
Code: bozhdvd



The Epistle of James

Zane C. Hodges

This is the best commentary available on James. The section on James 2:14-26 has helped thousands understand this pivotal passage.

USD \$15.00
Softcover • 128 pages
Code: jas



Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism

C. Gordon Olson

Defends a middle view of salvation between Calvin and Arminius.

USD \$20.00
Softcover • 467 pages
Code: bca

SALE



Secure and Sure

Robert N. Wilkin

Assurance of eternal life is one of the most important, and for many, elusive truths. You can be secure and sure.

USD ~~\$9.95~~ **\$4.00**
Softcover • 252 pages
Code: sas



A Free Grace Primer

Zane C. Hodges

Collects three of Hodges's books, *The Hungry Inherit*, *The Gospel Under Siege*, and *Grace in Eclipse*.

USD \$20.00
Softcover • 571 pages
Code: fgp2

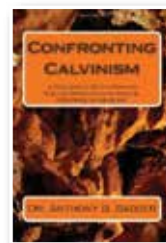


Romans: Deliverance from Wrath

Zane C. Hodges

Romans teaches us about deliverance from temporal wrath and slavery to sin.

USD \$24.99
Softcover • 488 pages
Code: rom

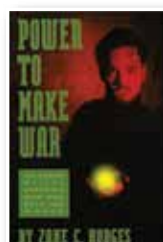


Confronting Calvinism

Anthony B. Badger

A detailed refutation of the Five Points of Calvinism from a Free Grace perspective.

USD \$24.95
Softcover • 397 pages
Code: cc



Power to Make War

Zane C. Hodges

This book traces the career of the man, called in the Bible, the "Beast," who will establish a new world order.

USD \$8.95
Softcover • 135 pages
Code: pow

SALE



Harmony with God

Zane C. Hodges

Repentance is one of the most misunderstood doctrines in the church today. If you have questions about repentance, read this book.

USD ~~\$9.95~~ **\$4.00**
Softcover • 133 pages
Code: hwg



Free Grace Theology on Trial

Anthony B. Badger

This book presents a careful, point-for-point defense against the charges made by Wayne Grudem in "Free Grace" Theology: 5 Ways it Diminishes the Gospel and D.A. Carson's *Exegetical Fallacies*.

USD \$24.95
Softcover • 375 pages
Code: fggt

The Master List

Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society

- \$18.50 (renewal) / \$9.25 (new or gift subscription)** Other options available on website.

The Grace New Testament Commentary (2 Volumes)

- Out of Print**

Anthony B. Badger

- Confronting Calvinism*, **\$24.95**
- Free Grace Theology on Trial*, **\$24.95**

Harlan Betz

- Setting the Stage for Eternity*, **\$14.00**

Steve Elkins

- The Roman Road Revisited: New Vistas on the Road to Resurrection Living*, **\$11.95**
- Keys to Kingdom Greatness: An Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount*, **\$19.95**

Zane Hodges

- Absolutely Free (2nd ed.)*, **\$20.00**
- The Atonement and Other Writings*, **\$15.95**
- The Epistle of James*, **\$15.00**
- The Epistles of John*, **\$8.95**
- Faith in His Name: Listening to the Gospel of John*, **\$15.00**
- First Peter: The Salvation of the Soul*, **\$10.00**
- A Free Grace Primer*, **\$20.00**
- Grace in Eclipse*, **\$15.00**
- The Gospel Under Siege*, ~~\$16.00~~ **\$8.00**
- Harmony with God*, ~~\$9.95~~ **\$4.00**
- Here Walks My Enemy: The Story of Luis*, **\$5.00 (hardcover), \$3.00 (paperback)**
- The Hungry Inherit*, **\$15.00**
- Jesus, God's Prophet*, **\$5.95**
- The Journey of Faith: Sermons on Hebrews*, **\$15.00**
- Luke (Vol 1)*, **\$8.95**
- Luke (Vol 2)*, **\$8.95**
- Power to Make War*, **\$8.95**
- Power to Stand: An Exposition of Jude*, **\$9.00**
- Romans: Deliverance from Wrath*, **\$24.99**
- Second Peter: Shunning Error in Light of the Savior's Soon Return*, **\$15.00**
- Six Secrets of the Christian Life (Second Edition)*, **\$12.00**
- Spiritual Lessons from the Life of David*, **\$10.00**

- Tough Texts: Did Jesus Teach Salvation by Works?*, **\$18.00**

- Zane Hodges JOTGES Memorial Issue*, **\$7.50**

- What Is the Outer Darkness?*, **\$14.00**

Lucas Kitchen

- Eternal Rewards: It Will Pay to Obey*, **\$15.00**

Shawn C. Lazar

- Beyond Doubt: How to Be Sure of Your Salvation*, ~~\$15.00~~ **\$7.50**
- Chosen to Serve: Why Divine Election Is to Service, Not to Eternal Life*, **\$18.00**

Bill Lee

- Grace Recovered*, **\$9.95**

C. Gordon Olson

- Beyond Calvinism and Arminianism*, **\$20.00**

Lawrence Vance

- The Other Side of Calvinism*, **\$29.95**

Bob Wilkin

- Confident in Christ (2nd ed.)*, ~~\$22.00~~ **\$10.00**
- Four Views on the Role of Works at the Final Judgment*, **\$17.00**
- A Gospel of Doubt: The Legacy of John MacArthur's The Gospel According to Jesus*, **\$22.00**
- Gruden Against Grace: A Defense of Free Grace Theology*, **\$15.00**
- Inerrancy for Dummies*, **\$7.95**
- Is Calvinism Biblical? Let the Scriptures Decide*, **\$15.00**
- The Road to Reward (2nd ed.)*, **\$20.00**
- Secure and Sure*, ~~\$9.95~~ **\$4.00**
- The Ten Most Misunderstood Words in the Bible*, **\$9.95**
- Turn and Live: The Power of Repentance*, **\$15.00**

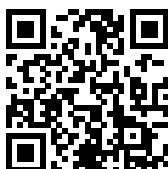
Kenneth W. Yates

- Hebrews: Partners with Christ*, **\$22.00**

For more titles and exclusive online sales go to www.faithalone.org

3 WAYS TO ORDER

1. BY PHONE (940-270-8827)
2. ONLINE AT FAITHALONE.ORG/BOOKSTORE.HTML
3. OR COMPLETE THE ORDER FORM BELOW



ORDER FORM

Prices effective until November 15, 2019
Refunds / Exchanges only within 60 days of purchase date.

SHIPPING ADDRESS

(NO PO BOXES IF ORDER IS OVER \$30)

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL

ACCT.# (IF YOU KNOW IT)

BILLING ADDRESS

(IF DIFFERENT FROM SHIPPING ADDRESS)

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL

ACCT.# (IF YOU KNOW IT)

METHOD OF PAYMENT (CIRCLE ONE)

CASH

CHECK

MONEY ORDER

CREDIT CARD

SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER TO:

GRACE EVANGELICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 1308
DENTON, TX 76202

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION:

VISA

MASTERCARD

CREDIT CARD #

EXP. DATE

CSC# (3 DIGIT CODE)

NAME ON CARD

CODE

TITLE

QTY

PRICE

AMOUNT

EXTRAS

Extra copies of this magazine are available for \$1/ea, while supplies last. Call for cost of shipping and handling. Foreign subscription prices are \$28 per year to Canada, and \$48 per year for all other countries.

SHIPPING

All personal orders \$150 and over will receive free shipping. Bookstores and institutions will be charged regular UPS shipping rates.

SHIPPING CHARGES

Media Mail:
\$4.00 first item
\$2.50 for each additional item
\$150+ FREE

UPS:

\$0-\$20	\$12.75
\$21-\$50	\$16.75
\$51+	30%

SUBTOTAL

SHIPPING

DONATION

TOTAL

Divine Discipline on Disciples

By John O. Hosler

I have been a prayer warrior for GES since its foundation. The promise of eternal life, made possible by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28), is the only gospel that can provide redemption for the sinner who trusts Christ alone for salvation from eternal condemnation. I have served as a Free Grace pastor for fifty years with my beloved wife, Susan, by my side as a partner in ministry. During many of those years, I served as a Bible college instructor and as a secular university professor. I have served on mission boards, in Bible youth camps, radio programs, and as a Lt. Colonel chaplain in the U.S.A.F. auxiliary. My favorite thing is winning souls to Christ and preaching the Word of God.

This was all disrupted when I began to have unpredictable seizures—in the pulpit and elsewhere—which necessitated my regretful retirement from the pastorate.

I have counseled hundreds of Christians to analyze why negative things like this happen to born-again saints. Now it is my turn to analyze why and to trust God with what is happening in my life.

The following are some things that should be considered.

INNOCENT AFFLICTION

Though none of us are worthy of our salvation (Rom 3:10, 23), we should hope our current



LIGHTSTOCK

demise is an example set by Job. Jehovah asked Satan if he had considered His servant, Job—his upright fear of God and his shunning of evil (Job 1:8). Satan argued that this was true because Jehovah was so good to Job. So God told Satan that he could touch anything Job had, but not Job himself. Job went so far as to express that even if he were slain, he would trust God (Job 13:15). What a testimony! We should ask God to give us a similar strength of faith to trust Him in our affliction.

AFFLICTION AND FORGIVENESS

Furthermore, I have counseled afflicted saints that their difficulties do not mean that God did not forgive them when they took their sins to His throne of grace in sincere confession. Sometimes saints have to learn hard lessons that can also serve as a warning to other believers.

For example, Israel left Egypt eternally redeemed after the first Passover (Heb 11:29). However, when they rebelled against God in the wilderness, God forgave them (Num 14:20). Nevertheless, those twenty years old and older would die in the wilderness and never enter the promised land of Canaan. This does not mean that they were unforgiven, but it serves as a warning to saints to not show contempt to God over their difficult circumstances (Num 14:23-33).

Another example is Moses, who appeared with Christ on the mount of transfiguration and who is in heaven today. Because of his disobedience as a saint, his life's goal to take Israel into the promised land was taken from him. He was only able to watch it from Mt. Nebo as Joshua led them (Deut 32:48-52). This does not mean that he was unforgiven, yet it is instructional for saints today.

King David was a saved man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22) whose throne would be established forever (2 Sam 7:12-16), yet, because he counted the fighting men of Israel against God's will (1 Chron 21:1ff), he was told that he would not build a temple in Jerusalem. Instead, his son Solomon would (1 Kgs 8:17-19). This does not mean that God rejected David's confession of sin. This teaches us that, even though our sins are confessed and forgiven, Christians can trust God to use temporal on-going consequences for instructional purposes.

AFFLICTION AND DISCIPLINE

However, the unfortunate truth is that there are some eternally saved saints who are openly or secretly living in sin and provoking God to ordain punitive catastrophe in their lives. This was the case of some saved Corinthians who were pretending to be in fellowship with Jesus while living in willful sin, thus bringing judgment upon themselves (1 Cor 11:26-29). For this reason, God ordained literal death on some of these saints (1 Cor 11:30). Paul made it clear that this is discipline, not damnation (1 Cor 11:32).

In 1 Cor 5:5, Christians were to deliver a brother in Christ to Satan for the destruction of his sinful nature (i.e. death) but this man's spirit would be saved in the day of the Lord. Thus, this was not eternal damnation, but it was punitive discipline.

If self-examination and Spirit conviction through the Word leads a saint to conclude that this applies to him/her, this person should confess his sin and turn to living for the glory of Christ and trust Him in whatever circumstances might follow.


Negative difficulties in a Christian life can be positively instructional and educational. Thus, and very importantly, a saint, who still has his

fleshly nature, can trust God to ordain difficulties in life in order to prevent future sin and self-exaltation. The Apostle Paul was an excellent example of this in (2 Cor 12:7-10). Dear Christian, God can be trusted with such difficulties in your life.

PROOF OF LOVE

Christians should realize that God's hand of discipline is proof of His love (Rev 3:19). We have a right to confess our sins and ask God to withhold His hand of discipline (Ps 38:1-2), confessing to Him that we are under conviction, and yet trust Him if He does not withhold negative and unpleasant consequences for our sinfulness. Let Him know that you are deeply regretful for your sin (Ps 32:4-7). We should further take note that many Christians who have ignored the Lord's rebuke and advice have forfeited their privilege to effectively pray to him whenever they desire (Prov 1:25-30; see 29:1).

EXAMINE YOURSELF

So, Christian, I will not judge the cause of the difficulties in your life. Nonetheless, it is your duty to examine yourself, make sure your sins are confessed, and to unconditionally trust God with whatever circumstances He ordains in your life. Remember, nothing can last any longer than the rest of your life, which is but a fleeting moment compared to the eternity you will enjoy with Him. 



John O. Hosler is a retired pastor and chaplain.



Are You Reading the *Grace in Focus* Blog?

We blog five days a week, and your response has been wonderful. People contact us regularly to talk about the blog for that day.

Many people have told us—and completely surprised us—that they start their day with our blog. It gives you a daily dose of Free Grace teaching.


We do Bible studies, answer questions, give ministry updates, reflect on Bible doctrine, explore Church history, and offer practical advice for Christian sanctification.

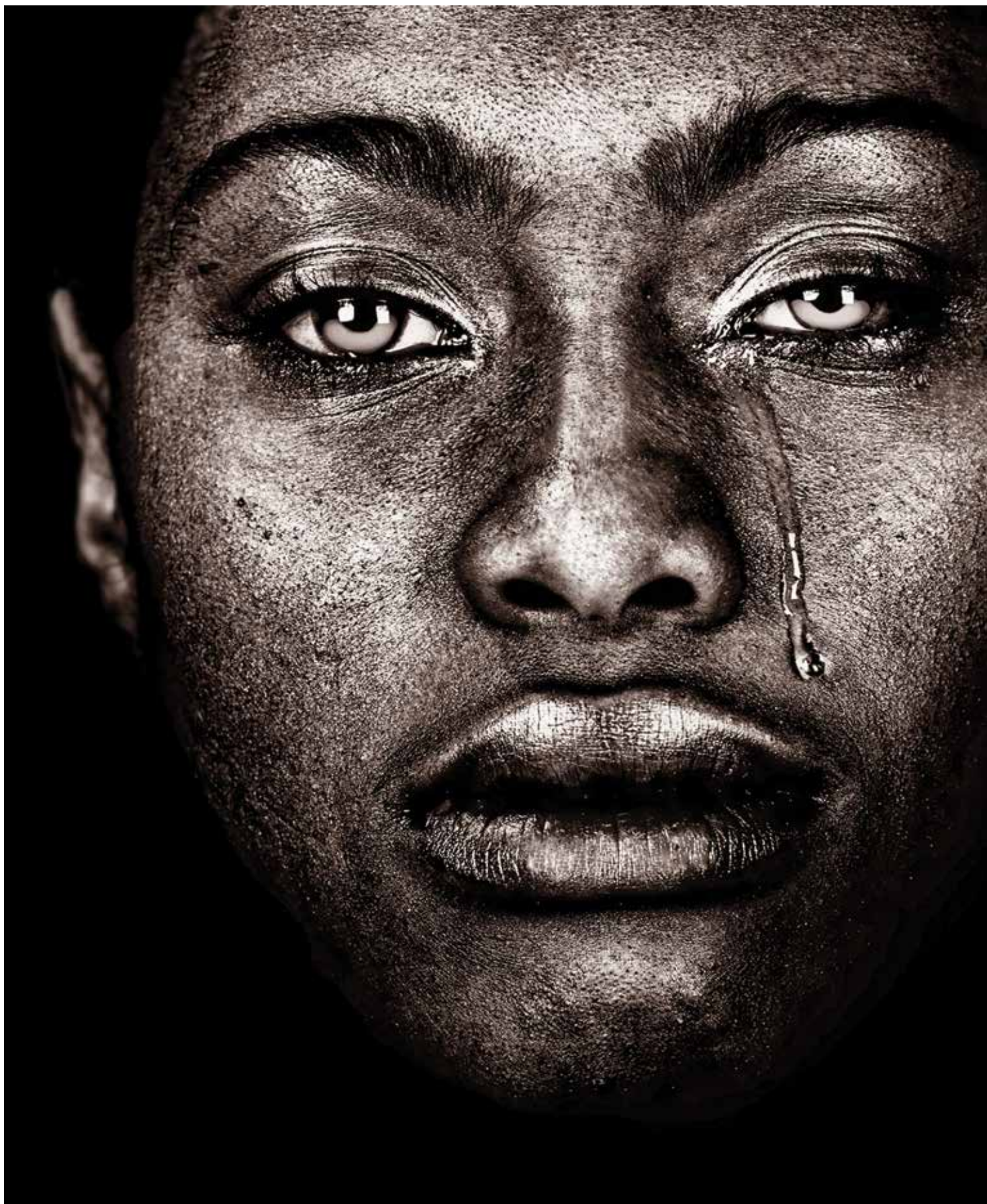
If you aren't reading our blog, you're missing out on our most productive source of communicating truth.

These blogs are short—around 500 words.

If you go to our website at www.faithalone.org/blog/ you will see our most recent post.

You can also see them on our Facebook page.

There is a sign-up button at the end of each blog if you'd like to receive them by email. Sign up today! 





The View from Ziklag

By Marcia Hornok

The shortest verse in the English Bible gives solace to us when life turns sad. “Jesus wept,” connecting Him to a number of people whom the Bible recorded as weeping. Can you guess how many? Would the number 60 surprise you? On nearly 80 occasions, 42 different individuals or groups of people in the OT and 18 in the NT shed tears.¹

One of the most intense was David and his warriors trying to avoid death by King Saul. David had spared Saul’s life twice because Saul was God’s anointed. Humanly speaking, how did God “repay” him? By taking away everything he had at Ziklag.

So David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive. Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep” (1 Sam 30:3-4).

Know that feeling? What has sent you to Ziklag? And just when you think things can’t get worse, they do, as David learned when his grief-stricken band of brothers talked of stoning him. Jesus knew Ziklag as well.

THREE RECORDED TIMES JESUS WEPT

According to Heb 5:7, He “offered prayers and appeals with loud cries and tears,” probably in Gethsemane, where He admitted, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death” (Matt 26:38a). “His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground,” even after “an angel came from heaven to strengthen Him” (Luke 22:43-44).

A few days before that, “the whole multitude of disciples” had honored Him during what we call His Triumphal Entry.



But He had looked out over Jerusalem and wept because the nation of Israel had rejected Him (Luke 19:37-44).

But why did He weep at Lazarus' tomb? He knew in a few moments Lazarus would be alive again. Twice in the passage, Jesus was "angry in His spirit and deeply moved" (John 11:33 and 38). We can only conjecture about why Jesus had such an intense emotional response.

POSSIBLE REASONS JESUS WEPT

First, John 11:33-35 presents a tender picture of Jesus being grieved by others' grief. "When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who had come with her crying," He was moved to tears. Hebrews 4:14-15 personalizes this for us—we have a Great High Priest who sympathizes with our weaknesses and has been tested in every way we experience, yet without sin. "We don't stand alone in the midst of helpless rage at life's injustice. We don't grieve privately. Jesus shares our grief, weeping with us."² Because Jesus understands our humanness, we are never alone or hopeless.

Second, perhaps Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb because He "was angry at the tyranny of Satan who had brought sorrow and death to people through sin."³

My husband says, "Life is a series of struggles, punctuated by periods of peace."

At graves, we grieve deeply over unfulfilled longings and separation from loved ones. Jesus knew this. The world He created is broken, and the people He loves are in pain. Jesus wept because He loves (John 11:36).

Third, another possibility centers on v 37 where some of the people questioned His credibility. *If He could heal strangers, why didn't He do something for his friend Lazarus?* In v 42 He prayed that "the crowd standing here" would believe in Him. How it must sadden Him when people persist in unbelief. Even though Lazarus' resurrection resulted in many Jews believing (John 12:11), the religious leaders did not. They became more determined to kill Him and (ironically) Lazarus too.

Fourth, could it be that Jesus wept because He knew He would clutch Lazarus from heaven's glory to dwell on sinful earth a little longer? Jesus alone knew how devastating that could be. C. S. Lewis said, "There are far better things ahead than we leave behind."

Bob Wilkin summarized it well: "Perhaps Jesus wept because He was touched by the pain of the mourners, or because He grieved the reality of death, or because He was sorry to be bringing Lazarus back to this fallen world. The simplest explanation is the first one: He was upset, so He wept."⁴

BENEFIT OF TEARS

God responds to our tears. Songwriter Gordon Jensen said, "Tears are a language God understands."⁵

Richard Rood is a hospital chaplain in Dallas, who cared for his wife Polly for 19 years before she died of Huntington's Disease. He said:

"In some sense God Himself is moved by our tears. When Hezekiah prayed for his life

to be extended, the Lord said, “I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears” (2 Kgs 20:5). David wrote, “Put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in Your book?” (Ps 56:8). Maybe we’ve got it backwards. Maybe tears are actually a sign of strength. A sign that we’re not too proud to be seen as “weak” by our peers. A sign that the people we’re weeping over really mean something to us. When Jesus wept at Lazarus’ tomb, those looking on didn’t interpret his tears as a sign of weakness, but of love.⁶

In this life, weeping is natural but unwelcome. Crying makes us feel embarrassed and inadequate. Our faces grimace, our noses redden and run, and what if we don’t have a tissue? But tears are therapeutic. They express grief in a healthy way, relieving stress, cleansing clogged emotions, and anointing the wounded heart. Spiritually, they help us give up self-sufficiency and become God-dependent. Elisabeth Elliot said, “The will is surrendered through the tear ducts.” Although painful, tears teach lessons we cannot learn any other way.

My first Ziklag involved a cemetery. Surrender seemed like my only option, but I realized it also was my best option. With Jason W. Van DeVenter’s hymn in mind, I wrote:

“I surrender all...” Not because I’m backed against a wall, nor because my options are depleted and my wand’ring will at last defeated.

“I surrender all...” Not due to forceful pressure from above, nor as a rote response to sovereign love. Not seeking some reward for good behavior.

“All to Thee, my blessed Savior...” No other plan has merit—Life’s too hard to bear it apart from Your control. So take me: body, mind, and soul. On You I fall.


“I surrender all.”

Another Ziklag for me involved a hospital bed, cancer, and three surgeries. I struggled until I prayed what Jesus prayed, “Not my will, but Yours be done.” In our Ziklag devastations, we can also follow David’s example. He “strengthened himself in the Lord His God” (1 Sam 30:6). Then he inquired of the Lord, obeyed God, and fought to recover his losses. Tears can increase our intimacy with Christ as we experience “the

fellowship of His sufferings” (Phil 3:10). How do you strengthen yourself in the Lord?

WILL THERE BE TEARS IN HEAVEN?

If that is where the Bema (Judgment Seat of Christ) takes place, then—yes. In speaking about the Parable of the Talents, Zane Hodges stated, “The weeping and gnashing of teeth is an expression of extreme remorse on the part of the servant who now realizes what he has lost by not being diligent in serving his Master.”⁷ Not until God replaces the old heaven and earth, will He eliminate death, grief, crying, and pain, and wipe away every tear (Rev 21:1-4). See also Isa 25:8; Rev 7:17.

When Ecclesiastes says there is “a time to weep...a time to mourn,” it doesn’t stop there. There is also “a time to laugh...a time to dance.” Psalm 116:8 expresses praise for God who “rescued me from death [eternal security], my eyes from tears [emotional security], and my feet from stumbling” [external security]. The next time you find yourself experiencing the oxymoron of a good cry, remember to identify with Jesus, who not only shed tears but also wipes them away. 



Marcia Hornok writes from Salt Lake City, where her husband Ken pastored Midvalley Bible Church for 39 years.

¹ For a list of Bible people who wept, email the author at kenmarh@comcast.net.

² <https://faithalone.org/grace-in-focus-articles/jesus-weep-beside-our-tombs/>.

³ Edwin A. Blum, “John,” *Bible Knowledge*

Commentary, New Testament (Victor Books, 1983), 314.

⁴ Robert N. Wilkin, *The Grace New Testament Commentary*, Vol. 1, Robert N. Wilkin, ed. (Denton, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 2010), 428.

⁵ Gordon Jensen ©1971.

⁶ Rick Rood, “What Tears Teach,” *CHERA Fellowship*, Spring 2009, Vol 17, No 2.

⁷ Zane C. Hodges, “The Parable of the Talents,” *Grace in Focus*, May/June 2017, p. 8, excerpted from Chapter 9 of *Tough Texts: Did Jesus Teach Salvation by Works?*



Some great fellowship in Chicago!

GES Chicago Regional Conference June 28-29

GES conducted a regional conference at Cornerstone Community Church in Brookfield, IL, on June 28-29. The conference was over the Epistles of John. There were four speakers: Gary Karwoski (pastor of the church), John Niemelä, Lucas Kitchen, and Ken Yates. The attendance was great, around 55 for each day. Each speaker spoke on three different passages and there was a question and answer period at the conclusion.

The main emphasis of the conference was on how the majority of evangelicals have been taught that 1 John contains tests to see if a person is “truly” a believer or not. All the speakers clearly pointed out that the book is about fellowship. The “tests” are to determine if a believer is in *fellowship with God*.

The facilities were outstanding. Special thanks go out to Gary and the church for sponsoring the conference as well as providing a Chicago style lunch for the speakers

and their wives. There was a discussion about having another conference in the Chicago area in the future. That would be a great idea!

There were many positive comments during the conference. The most common was how refreshing it was to be around like-minded Free Grace people.

The audio from the conference should be available soon.

Bayside Community Church Tampa, FL June 8-9

I (Bob) always enjoy speaking at this church. I’ve been coming here for twenty years.

In the first service I spoke on “The Transformed Life” from Rom 12:1-21. In the second service I spoke on “We Should All Be Church Builders” from 1 Cor 3:5-17. Both messages were well received.

You can listen to, or even watch, both messages at the Bayside Community Church website.



Be sure to visit Bayside Community.



Dinner with friends.

Website Traffic

We revamped the website a few years ago. Since we started doing daily blogs and podcasts, website traffic has jumped. Last June we were averaging about 21k unique users a month. This June we've been averaging 58k users a month and the numbers are growing. [Edit. It has since gone up to 70k!]

Please pray for the grace message to reach new people.

And pray that Bob, Shawn, and Ken have the mental energy to keep producing Biblically faithful materials on a daily basis that will reach people who have never heard of God's Free Grace before.

International Speaking

Did you know your donations support international missions?

Ken Yates will be teaching at International Bible College in Zambia, from July 15-24. And then he'll be teaching at Belize Bible College from Aug 26-Sep 6.



Pray for more opportunities to teach abroad.
Pray the students will understand and believe the Free Grace message.

Pray for international conferences. We are in the beginning stages of a Costa Rica conference. We are looking for input on whether or not to make it purely for outreach to local Costa Ricans, or whether we should make it a destination conference for people who may want to vacation and study the Word.

New Books

We are reprinting the *Grace New Testament Commentary*. Instead of a two-volume edition, we are doing a one-volume edition. It should be back in print by Christmas.

Bob is writing a *Faith Alone in One Hundred Verses* book.

Ken Yates is writing on a commentary on Mark.

NOTES AND LETTERS

"Love the radio show!" ~B.H., Auburn, WA

"Been receiving this magazine for a long time. Really enjoy reading it. Thank you!" ~D.L., Tampa, FL

"I love these podcasts. Bob and Shawn speak with such clarity and professionalism. I believe these shows are a great asset to the Christian community for discipleship. Through the years GES has been my go-to ministry and I thank our Lord for you." ~C.L., email

"Thank you for the work you do to provide the daily podcast. You are doing an excellent job." ~B.R., email

We Chose To Follow Children

By Lucas Kitchen

Marty Sampson and Josh Harris, two huge Christian influencers who have publically announced that they have left the faith, share an interesting similarity. I'll get to that in a moment, but let me first explain what these guys have done.

Josh Harris wrote *I Kissed Dating Goodbye*, along with loads of other Christian books. He's sold millions and influenced so many people with his writing.

Marty Sampson has written and performed worship songs as a Hillsong leader. You've certainly heard his songs *Mighty To Save*, *Tell The World*, and about a billion more.

Both of these guys became very famous. What occurred to me today, and I double-checked to make sure, was kind of startling, and it connects to something I can relate to.

Marty was 19 and Josh was 21 when they got their "big break."

Both Josh and Marty became famous at a young age. They then were ushered into the mega-machine of world-wide publishing (both literature publishing and music publishing). In both cases, they were given a huge platform. They became mega-movement leaders at a time in their lives when most young men are still trying to figure out how to pass freshman algebra.

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER

I'm thinking back to when I was between 19 and 21. I badly wanted to be a Christian



celebrity. I wanted to become a well-known Christian speaker. I spent my weekends speaking at regional youth events. I was also in a worship band that had a measure of regional success. I dreamed of us rising to the highest heights in our music career. With each invitation, whether to speak or play with the band, I wanted more, more, more.

I recall being frustrated that God did not allow me to have the kind of success that I wanted at the time. I now know it would have ruined me. It would have forced me to set my thoughts in concrete before they were ready.

The point: I wasn't ready at 21, and certainly not at 19. Heck, I wasn't ready to do what I'm doing now until I was in my early 30s.

That's because, when I was nearing my thirties, I began to question a lot of things. I removed myself from ministry and had frustrations and bitterness I needed to wrestle with. I was irritated every time I sat in a church service. Maybe it was jealousy or bitterness, or possibly I hadn't eaten breakfast and the sermon was going too long. I even questioned the fundamentals of my faith.

Fortunately, I was able to do all of this in private and among close friends. I can't imagine the

“The modern church puts the pretty faces and the angelic voices in front of the crowd and calls them leaders. All the while, ignoring the elders’ leadership.”

LIGHTSTOCK

pressure of having to wrestle with these kinds of questions as a public figure.

I’m so glad that I had not found fame, because it would have made that wrestling match a point of public shame.

This is especially true for guys like Josh and Marty, who both have an entire “industry” relying on them continuing to think, write, and teach what they became famous for.

It’s hard to imagine the intensity of what they are facing. There is a host of issues all have to deal with when they hit their mid to late twenties. I’m convinced that anyone who is thrust into roles of mega-leadership before he’s dealt with those issues is in danger of this same phenomenon.

LED BY ELDERS

I’m convinced that this is why God (through Paul) explained that the church should be led by elders (1 Pet 5:5). Though there may be disagreement on how old an elder should be, hardly anyone would argue that a 19 or a 21-year-old kid could be an elder. Sampson and Harris, along with many others, were put into roles of leadership because of their talent. It’s regretful they

never got the privacy to wrestle with the big questions. Though I think the blame doesn’t really fall on them for this, it falls on us, the church.

We chose to follow children!

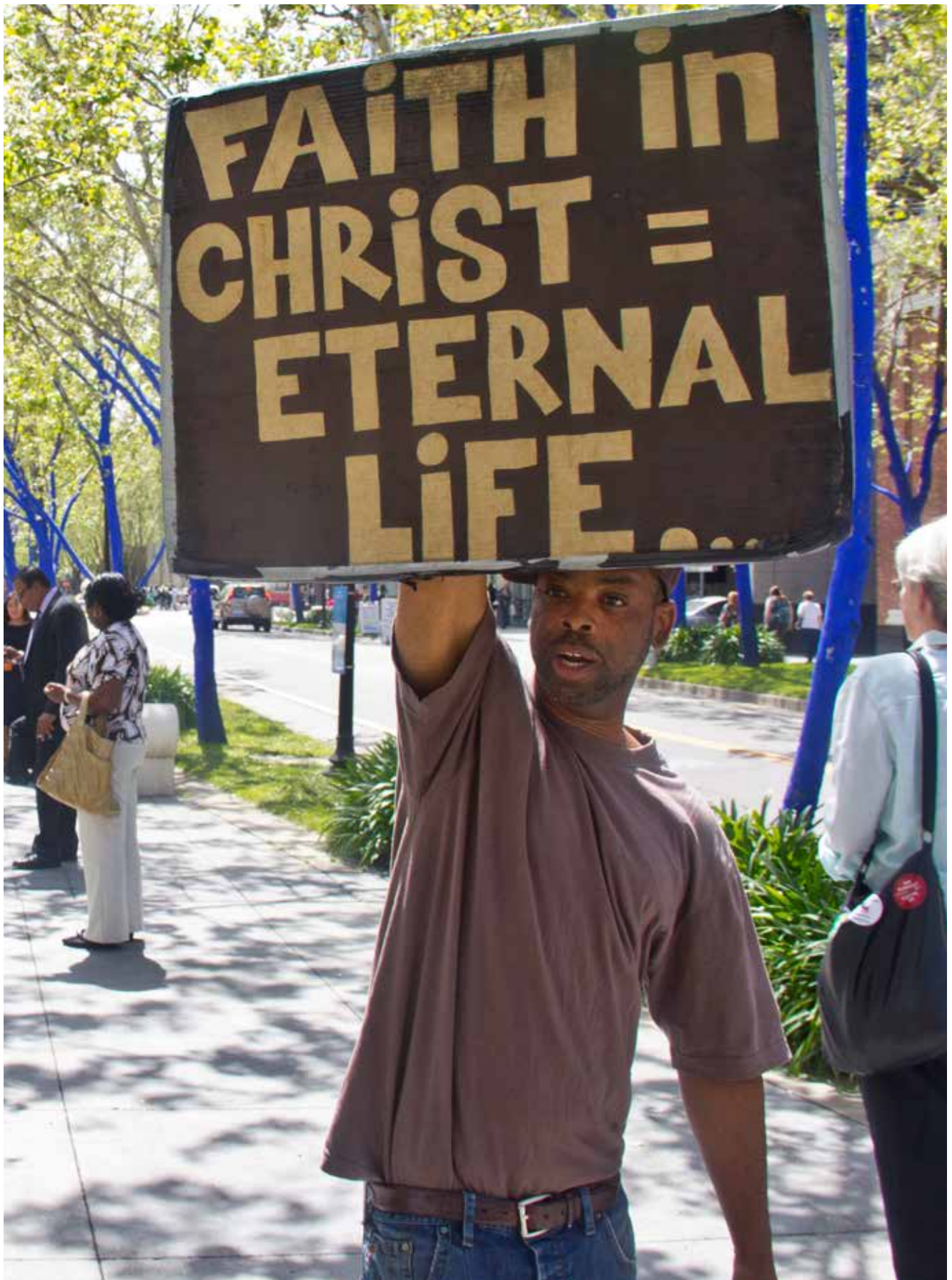
We are still doing it. The modern church puts the pretty faces and the angelic voices in front of the crowd and calls them leaders. All the while, ignoring the elders’ leadership. The church has become like:

Rehoboam [who] rejected the advice the elders gave him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him (1 Kgs 12:8).

It’s our fault; we chose to follow children. ■



Lucas Kitchen is the author of 16 books, and a pastor at Shreveport Bible Church. He lives in Longview, TX with his wife, two kids, and his arrogant cat.



Invitations in the Evangelistic Ministries of Jesus and His Apostles

By Bob Wilkin

When I was on staff with Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC), I was required to file weekly reports on how many students I evangelized, what their response was, and how many students I disciplined.

I was told if I did not get to the invitation prayer in the Four Spiritual Laws, then I could not count a conversation as evangelistic. There were lots of people that I shared the promise of life with, and yet because they left or stopped the conversation before the prayer, I did not report those conversations.

No invitation, no evangelism.

Decades later, long after I graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS), I recall hearing a fellow DTS graduate, a guy who never was on staff with CCC, who said in a sermon that he gave an invitation whenever he preaches to or speaks with unbelievers, because if he did not, then he had not evangelized. He said that all evangelism must include an invitation. He never told us the prayer that he asked people to pray. But he did say that his invitation included asking people to pray a prayer.

While I was on staff with CCC, I did not question that thinking. I never even thought about how Jesus and the Apostles evangelized.

But when I got to DTS, I began to study the issue and think about how the Lord and His apostles evangelized.

The Lord *never once gave an invitation*. Not once. The words, “Do you believe this?” (John 11:26b) are as close as He ever got. And that is not an invitation. John 11:25-26a is evangelism. John 3:14-18 is evangelism.

There are many evangelistic messages in Acts too (e.g., Acts 8:4-13, 30-36; 10:34-44; 13:16-41, 44-47; 16:30-31ff.; compare Acts 15:7-11). The Apostles never gave an invitation either. Not once. No salvation prayer was ever mentioned in the NT. No opportunity to confess, commit, pray, or anything of the kind was ever given. Not even an invitation to believe in Christ! Instead, the Apostles, like the Lord, preached that whoever believes in Jesus has everlasting life (or is justified before God). No invitations.

The idea that you must give an invitation in order to evangelize is widespread. I have a collection of evangelistic tracks. I think I have over 100. In well over 90% of them, there is a sinner’s prayer, a salvation prayer, a prayer of commitment for salvation, and so forth. Almost all have invitations.

Of course, in many denominations they have invitations which are called altar calls. Charles Finney, Billy Sunday, Billy Graham, and others popularized altar calls and the sawdust trail. “Come on down, the buses will wait. Come forward so that you can be saved.”

That is man-made evangelism.

I think the opposite is true. If you offer an invitation, then you have *not* evangelized, at least not clearly, not in the way our Lord and His Apostles did.

Let’s do what Jesus did. Don’t you think that makes sense? ■



Bob Wilkin is Executive Director of Grace Evangelical Society. He lives in Highland Village, TX, with his wife of 43 years, Sharon. His latest book is *Turn and Live: The Power of Repentance*.

Jesus' Last Week in Light of Daniel 9:25-26

By Shawn Lazar

After centuries of promising to send a Messiah, God finally gave a concrete timeline in Daniel 9:24-27 for when He would come. And vv 25-26 give us specific information about what would happen to Messiah at that time:

*“Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;
The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times.
And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it shall be with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined” (Daniel 9:25-26).*

The Messiah would come 69 “weeks” (7 + 62) after the command to rebuild Jerusalem was given.



These are weeks of *years*, where every day in the week represents one year. That gives us a total of 483 years.

Alva J. McClain, following the work of Sir Robert Anderson, calculated that the timeline began with the command to rebuild Jerusalem as recorded in Neh 2:1-8. Interestingly, 483 years later would bring us to Jesus' Triumphal Entry.

Matthew tells us that Jesus' *riding on a donkey* was a fulfillment of prophecy (Matt 21:4-5), but *the very day* of His entry was a fulfillment, too!

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people recognized the kingly act, shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David” (Matt 21:9b).

And notice what would happen *after* Messiah came. According to Daniel, would the kingdom be restored to Israel at that time? No. Instead, after the end of the 69th week and before the beginning of the 70th, three terrible things would happen:




- “Messiah shall be cut off.”
- “shall destroy the city.”
- “shall destroy...the sanctuary.”

In sum, Messiah would arrive, be killed, and Jerusalem and the Temple would both be destroyed. Then the 70th week would begin sometime after those events.

Knowing Daniel’s prophecy gives new meaning to Jesus’ actions in the last week of His life. Instead of setting up the kingdom, Jesus acted in highly deliberate and symbolic ways that reflect Daniel’s prophecy. Consider the following examples from Matthew 21-24, and see how Jesus’ words and actions foreshadow either His death, the destruction of Jerusalem, or the destruction of the Temple, as predicted by Daniel:

- Jesus cleansed the Temple for a second time (Matt 21:12-17).
- Jesus cursed the fig tree (Matt 21:18-19).
- Jesus told the parable of the vineyard owner (Matt 21:33-41).

- Jesus pronounced eight woes on the religious leaders (Matt 23:13-36).
- Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Matt 23:37).
- Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple (Matt 24:2).

Read Matthew 21-24 in light of Daniel 9:25-26. It will build your faith. What Jesus says and does during that last week takes on a whole new meaning in light of Daniel’s prophecy. You will see there are no accidents here—Jesus was perfectly fulfilling God’s plans. What an encouragement to students of prophecy! 



Shawn Lazar lives in Denton, TX, with his wife Abby and their three children.

NONPROFIT
US POSTAGE

PAID

ABERDEEN, SD
PERMIT #200

Grace Evangelical Society
P.O. Box 1308
Denton, TX 76202

Believe in Him for Life

Change Service Requested

GES NATIONAL BIBLE CONFERENCE
THE HOPE CENTER
PLANO, TX, MAY 18-21, 2020

Great Doctrines of the Bible

NEXT REGIONAL: NJ/PA, NOVEMBER 22-23. TO REGISTER VISIT WWW.FAITHALONE.ORG/EVENTS. REGIONALS ARE FREE. FIRST TIMERS ARE FREE AT THE NATIONAL. SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE.