

About This Book...

Since the first issue in January, 1963, the monthly Bible study/devotional booklet "Amazing Grace" has been consistent. Edited by Pastor Win Johnson until he went Home in 1993, it was his conviction that the way Saints could become established and increase their 'devotion' to the Lord was to spend time studying the Word every day.

The monthly booklet has been unique in that the writers have been committed to the preaching and teaching of "Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery" [Romans 16:25]. We are grateful for their faithfulness to God and His Word as they have shared their insight with all of us.

In looking back through forty-eight years of articles, we have been encouraged, inspired and blessed again and again.

Now as we present a one-year book with 366 'favorites', it is our prayer that the Lord will use it to bring blessing to *your* life in a special way.

Ron Achtyes

"Study
to show thyself
approved unto God,
a workman that
needeth
not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing
the word of
truth."

II Timothy 2:15

SO MAKING PEACE*Scripture Reading: Ephesians 2:14-16*

The humanist teaches that man, in his own strength and by his own determination, can do anything he desires to do—even to the extent of accomplishing a “do-it-yourself” salvation. Yet the Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples, “With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26). The Apostle Paul declared, “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not” (Romans 7:18).

Man has always failed God. In all ages and generations, God has provided explicit instructions and requirements whereby unity may be restored between Himself and the wayward sons of Adam. The flesh, however, has resisted; and God’s gracious pleas have failed to pierce its hardened shield. Always, man has been without excuse in his refusal to yield to the terms of peace with His Creator. But today, in this marvelous Dispensation of the Grace of God, this is more true than ever. Jew and Gentile alike are invited to enter into glory by one simple avenue: “For BY GRACE are ye saved THROUGH FAITH; and that not of yourselves: IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD; NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

“For [Christ] is our peace, Who hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us (Jew and Gentiles); having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace.”

*REH**Notes:***THE BELIEVER’S ROLE***Scripture Reading: II Corinthians 5:19-20*

In this present age of grace we, as members of His Body, are appointed emissaries of Jesus Christ. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ” (II Corinthians 5:19-20).

The apostle Paul charged his son in the faith Timothy, “Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season....Do the work of an evangelist” (II Timothy 4:2, 5). We Body members today are the believing remnant in this dispensation of His grace; thus, these instructions are automatically passed on to us as the only voice of the Savior in the world. Paul pleads with us, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

The word that we are to preach is The Gospel of the Grace of God—Paul’s gospel. Lest there be any doubt of this, the apostle minces no words: “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8). Paul is our apostle; his gospel is our gospel; his ministry is our ministry. He has these words of admonition for us as laborers for Christ: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report...think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do” (Philippians 4:8-9).

*REH**Notes:*

PAID IN FULL

Scripture Reading: Colossians 2:13

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us....For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:12, 24). "And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself" (Colossians 1:18-20). Past tense! The job is done.

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption....Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:30, 32). "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Colossians 2:13).

An old familiar hymn declares, "Jesus paid it all; all to Him I owe." What a precious truth! There is nothing one can do to attain salvation; it cannot be earned by works of righteousness. "For He [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, [He] who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 5:21). Sadly, all too many (both believers and nonbelievers) are laboring under the illusion that salvation requires keeping the law of commandments; but "ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

REH

Notes:

TRAVAIL BY TRANSGRESSION

Scripture Reading: II Samuel 12:7b-10

If ever a mortal was blessed of God, it was King David. He sat upon the very throne which will one day be occupied by the Lord of glory Himself. David was God's good man, beloved and privileged above all others, the greatest of all of God's chosen vessels surely. No other human soul has ever enjoyed a relationship with God to equal David's. David praised and adored his Lord, proved his great faith by word and deed, graced his throne as did none other.

But the nature of father Adam, we have always with us! The great king of Israel lusted after another man's wife, satisfied that lust, murdered her husband and took the widow (who already carried his child) to the marriage bed. Thus, David betrayed a unity more precious to him than all his worldly possessions; he foolishly bartered the purity of that relationship for a temporary self-gratification in the flesh.

At what price? His reward was a tortured soul filled with shame and regret. The Lord's own words pronounced David's guilt to his face. "WHEREFORE HAST THOU DESPISED THE COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD, TO DO EVIL IN HIS SIGHT? THOU HAST KILLED URIAH THE HITTITE WITH THE SWORD, AND HAST TAKEN HIS WIFE TO BE THY WIFE." David had deliberately sinned against God, and now he must pay the price in agony and remorse. "HAVE MERCY UPON ME, O GOD...FOR I ACKNOWLEDGE MY TRANSGRESSIONS: AND MY SIN IS EVER BEFORE ME" (Psalms 51:1a, 3).

Once again, the shades of Eden had darkened the glow of unity. "BEHOLD, I WAS SHAPEN IN INIQUITY; AND IN SIN DID MY MOTHER CONCEIVE ME" (Psalms 51:5).

REH

Notes:

CHASTISEMENT BY CHOICE

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 11:26-28

From the beginning, God has offered to man a clear choice between obedience and disobedience, reward and punishment, faithfulness and faithlessness. As He instructed, through Moses, the children of Israel regarding their promised land and its acquisition through willing submission to His stipulations, He spoke thus: "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known."

Plain enough! But God adds to the clarity of His exhortations with warnings against temptation to sin. "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not know, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams" (Deuteronomy 13:1-3a).

We need not be led astray. Our safeguard is the Word of God. If Eve had not heeded the voice of the tempter but had faithfully obeyed the command of her Creator, what painful consequences would have been avoided! Someone has said of our society, "All we ever learn from history, is that we never learn from history." How true is this of the man-God relationship! But we have the answer: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee" (Isaiah 26:3).

REH

Notes:

LEGACY OF LIES

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 19:5

The Lord Jesus Christ spoke of Satan thus: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: For he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44b). And of Himself He said, "I am the way, THE TRUTH, and the life" (John 14:6). The Apostle Paul writes in his epistle to Titus, "In hope of eternal life, which GOD, WHO CANNOT LIE, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2). The truth versus the lie: God versus Satan.

If we are desirous of maintaining a pure relationship with God, the last thing in the world to be considered is lying to Him. In the list of seven things that are an abomination to God, (see Proverbs 6:16-19), the second is "a lying tongue." Under the economy of the Pentecostal church, "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common....Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need" (Acts 4:32, 34,35).

This beautiful circle of unity was broken when two members held back a portion of their receipts and compounded the offense with a lie. "Peter said, Ananias, WHY HATH SATAN FILLED THINE HEART TO LIE TO THE HOLY GHOST, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" (Acts 5:3). "He that speaketh lies!"

REH

Notes:

AN APOSTOLIC APPEAL

Scripture Reading: Romans 16:17

There is a constant threat, within the church, that fractures may develop in the fabric of sound fellowship which the pure truth engenders. This was of constant concern to the Apostle Paul as he ministered to the congregations of believers. The Corinthian church was particularly vulnerable to the influence of erratic and negative distraction. Their lack of spiritual maturity prompted the apostle to deliver firm warnings and admonitions.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment....For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (I Corinthians 1:10, 3:3).

What an entirely different condition existed in the church at Thessalonica, to whom Paul wrote these words of joyful confidence: "Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure" (II Thessalonians 1:2-4). If we would count ourselves equal to their example, we are properly instructed: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him" (Colossians 3:17).

REH

Notes:

THE ULTIMATE ONENESS

Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:19

If we would contemplate the mystery of unity, there is no more valid way to proceed than to ponder the imponderable—the triune Godhead. Note the words of the Lord Jesus Christ as he commissioned the Eleven: "ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH. GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME (not names—name) OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST."

How inconceivable to our poor finite powers of comprehension are the words of God spoken to His Son Jesus Christ. "UNTO THE SON HE SAITH, THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOR EVER AND EVER: A SCEPTRE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THE SCEPTRE OF THY KINGDOM...AND THOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING HAST LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH; AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF THY HANDS" (Hebrews 1:8, 10). Christ declared His deity: "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). When he presented infallible proof to doubting Thomas, the apostle cried, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28).

The Lord Jesus Christ affirmed the fact of His omnipresence. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven" (John 3:13). He demonstrated His omniscience often before witnesses. "Jesus knew their thoughts" (Matthew 12:25 and Luke 6:8). "Immediately when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they so reasoned within themselves..." (Mark 2:8), and He asserted His omnipotence. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19).

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