



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## *The Herald of His Grace*

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

Volume XI  
Issue 260

# *I Am ... Who and What God Says I am*

*The Divine Reckoning of the Renewed Mind*

## Part 2

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

### **I AM ... BELOVED**

*But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brothers, **beloved by the Lord**, because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth: to which He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Thessalonians 2:13-14).*

I am beloved. This is who and what Father says I am.

My heart is humbled and thrilled every time I read this passage. These two verses are overflowing with meaning and wealth. In them Paul talks about who and what I really am, and he starts with this tremendous truth: I am “*beloved by the Lord.*”

“*Beloved*” in this passage is the same Greek word (*agapaō*) that Paul used in Ephesians 1:6, that I am “*accepted in the Beloved.*” My union in the Lord Jesus Christ not only means that I am “*accepted*” in Him, but that I, *TOO*, am now “*BELOVED.*”

Noah Webster defines “*beloved*” as “*greatly loved; dear to the heart*” (*American Dictionary of*



*the English Language*, 1828).

The Greek word *agapaō* is defined as,

Decided preference to one person out of many. – E.W. Bullinger, *Critical Lexicon*

Finding one’s joy in someone. – Spiros Zodhiates, *Complete Word Study Dictionary NT*

To have preference for ... unwilling to abandon ... or do without. – Joseph H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon NT*

When Paul uses the word *agapaō* here in II Thessalonians 2:13, it is not a slip of the pen. The fact is that he uses this word in reference to the saints many times!

*But in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him Who loved us (Romans 8:37; c.f. Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:4; 5:2, 25; I Thessalonians 1:4; II Thessalonians 2:16).*

To use Webster’s definition of beloved, I am greatly loved by God; I am dear to His heart.

(see **I AM ...**, page 2423)

## **Bible Student's Notebook™**

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
  - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14);
  - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
  - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

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### **Bible Student's Notebook™**

PO Box 265, Windber, PA 15963

Office: (800) 784-6010

Local: (814) 701-0063

bsn@studyshef.com

www.BibleStudentsNotebook.com

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. – Editor

(clyde@studyshef.com)

André Sneider – Managing Editor

Rick Lemons – Associate Editor

### Department Managers

Clyde L. Pilkington, III – Office

Nathan H. Pilkington – Shipping

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**I Am ...** (continued from page 2421)

To use Zodhiates' definition, God finds His joy in me. To use Thayer's definition, Father is unwilling to do without me!

Father's heart toward me is way beyond "love" – I am His "**BEloved.**"

Now that's grace! – and it *is* amazing! I will bask in this glorious revelation!

This is who and what Father says I am.

**I am beloved.**

**I AM ... BLESSED**

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has **blessed** us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).*

I am blessed. This is who and what Father says I am.

God has blessed me in more ways than I can even begin to comprehend. Indeed, in the spiritual realm, He has *already* fully blessed me beyond measure "*with ALL spiritual blessings.*" In this sphere I could not possibly be more blessed.

This is not to say that I do not have physical blessings, for surely they are abundant, as He "*gives us richly **all** things to enjoy*" (I Timothy 6:17); but Paul teaches me that my real sphere of blessings is in the spiritual realm, in the heavenly places.

God blessed Israel with *physical* blessing, as they were His *earthly* people. This is not to say that they did not have any spiritual blessings, for surely they did, and we are partakers of them (Romans 15:27); but God's emphasis was upon their *physical* blessings.

I am a part of God's *heavenly* people, and He has blessed me "*with all spiritual blessings in HEAVENLY PLACES in Christ.*" Paul records these spiritual blessings right in his letter to the Ephesians, and

they are intended to make me "*spiritually minded*" (Romans 8:6).

That I have been separated to the celestial sphere can be seen easily by looking at the Ephesian collage of the "*heavenly places*":

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in HEAVENLY PLACES in Christ ... Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His Own right hand in the HEAVENLY PLACES ... And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in HEAVENLY PLACES, in Christ Jesus ... To the intent that now to the principalities and powers in HEAVENLY PLACES might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God ... For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in HEAVENLY PLACES (Ephesians 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12).*

My spiritual blessings are directly associated with these "*heavenly places.*" This is where I have my position and standing in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am seated with Christ in the celestials (Ephesians 2:6); my citizenship is there (Philippians 3:20). How fitting, then, that it is from the heavenly places that Father supplies me with all of my spiritual needs. All of what I possess from God that is real and lasting is located there. All else is but an elusive shadow.

*If you then were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth (Colossians 3:1-2).*

I am who and what Father says I am.

**I am blessed.**

## I AM ... CALLED

Among whom are you also the **called** of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:6).

... Who are the **called** ... (Romans 8:28).

I am called. This is who and what Father says I am.

Those who trust God are “*The Called*” – they are God’s elect. This calling is an election to divine service.

Knowing, brothers beloved, your **election** of God (I Thessalonians 1:4).

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s **elect**? (Romans 8:33).

... That the purpose of God according to **election** might stand, not of works, but of Him Who calls (Romans 9:11).

God has not saved me, and called me with a holy calling, simply to abandon all of the rest of mankind to eternal torment. I am but a part of the *first-fruits* of Christ’s redemptive work. By His calling of grace I am one of His *first-trusters*. God’s ultimate plan includes *all* of His creation. None will be permanently lost.

God currently does not seek to reveal Himself nor His plan to the masses. If it was His purpose, He would have accomplished it long ago. He has actually taken elaborate steps to assure that He and His plan are sufficiently hidden from the masses.

... You have **hidden** these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes (Matthew 11:25).

But they understood not this saying, and it was **hidden** from them, that they perceived it not ... (Luke 9:45).

Instead, God chooses who He wants to receive His revelation *at this time*.

... All men cannot receive this saying, except they to whom it is **given** (Matthew 19:11).

God’s plan upon the stage of human history initially is to reveal Himself to a few – the remnant, the called, the elect. This is why my salvation and calling is “*according to His Own purpose and grace*,” both of which were given to me “*before the ages began*.”

Who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our performance, but according to His Own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus **before the ages began** (II Timothy 1:9).

God draws those whom He has chosen, whether in His past dealings with Israel, or His present dealings with the members of the Body of Christ.

## Israel

... The Lord your God has **chosen** you to be a special people unto Himself, above all people who are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for you were the fewest of all people (Deuteronomy 7:6-7).

O you seed of Israel His servant, you children of Jacob, His **chosen** ones (I Chronicles 16:13).

You have not chosen Me, but I have **chosen** you, and ordained you ... I have **chosen** you out of the world (John 15:16, 19).

## The Body of Christ

According as He has **chosen** us in Him before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before Him in love (Ephesians 1:4).

... God has from the beginning **chosen** you to salvation through sanctification of

the Spirit and belief of the truth (II Thessalonians 2:13).

God's calling has always been to a few. The reason that God has only called a few during the course of human history is that He is calling out a *small* company of servants for His name.

The called are the stage-setters of all of God's future purposes. He has called a few with whom He is preparing to rule, serving the rest of creation. A survey through the Scripture's use of the word "chosen" will reveal that God's calling is clearly one to service:

... God has **chosen** him out ... to stand **to minister** in the name of the Lord ... (Deuteronomy 18:5).

... Them ... God has **chosen to minister** to Him ... (Deuteronomy 21:5).

... Them has the Lord **chosen ... to minister** to Him ... (I Chronicles 15:2).

... He has **chosen** Judah **to be the ruler** ... (I Chronicles 28:4).

... He has **chosen** Solomon ... **to sit on the throne** of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel (I Chronicles 28:5).

... The Lord has **chosen** you to stand before Him, to serve Him, and that you should **minister** to Him ... (II Chronicles 29:11).

... My **servant** whom I have **chosen**: that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He (Isaiah 43:10).

Behold My **servant**, Whom I have **chosen** ... (Matthew 12:18).

... I have **chosen** you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain ... (John 15:16).

... He is a **chosen** vessel unto Me, to bear

My name ... (Acts 9:15).

Isaiah 43:10 is of particular significance to me as to my calling in relationship to God Himself.

... My **servant** whom I have **chosen**: **that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He** (Isaiah 43:10).

Father has *chosen* me to draw me into personal relationship with Him. He has chosen me for the purpose of *knowing* Him, *believing* Him, and *understanding* Him. *This* is my calling.

Many are satisfied to learn *about* Him, the chosen are given the heart to actually *know* Him. Paul wrote,

*That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death* (Philippians 3:10).

Father is now tutoring me for service in the "heavenly places." I am part of the many-membered Christ, the Firstborn. This calling provides me with a rich catalog of Scripture truth:

I am the Called of *Jesus Christ*.

*Among whom are you also the called of Jesus Christ* (Romans 1:6).

I am Called into the *Fellowship of Jesus Christ*.

... *Called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord* (I Corinthians 1:9).

I am Called into the *Grace of Christ*.

... *Called you into the grace of Christ* ... (Galatians 1:6).

I am Called to *Peace*.

... *God has called us to peace* (I Corinthians 7:15).

I am Called to Liberty.

... You have been called to liberty ... (Galatians 5:13).

According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world ... (Ephesians 1:4).

I am Called into God's Kingdom.

... Who has called you unto His kingdom ... (I Thessalonians 2:12).

My Calling was from the Beginning.

... God has from the beginning chosen you ... (II Thessalonians 2:13).

I am Called into God's Glory.

... Who has called you unto His ... glory (I Thessalonians 2:12).

Mine is a "Not Many" Calling.

... Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called (I Corinthians 1:26).

We are Called into Christ's Glory.

... He called you ... to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Thessalonians 2:14).

Mine is an Out-Calling.

... The body, the church [i.e., the *ekklesia* – the called-out-ones] ... (Colossians 1:18).

I am Called by Paul's Gospel.

... He called you by our gospel ... (II Thessalonians 2:14).

My Calling is Established upon God's Faithfulness.

Faithful is He Who calls you, Who also will do it (I Thessalonians 5:24).

My Calling is a Divine Vocation.

... The vocation by which you are called (Ephesians 4:1).

God is faithful, by Whom you were called ... (I Corinthians 1:9).

Mine is a High Calling.

... The high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14).

Mine is a Permanent Calling.

... The gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Romans 11:29).

Mine is a Holy Calling.

... Called us with a holy calling ... (II Timothy 1:9).

Mine is an Unalterable Calling.

And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

My Calling was Predestinated.

... Whom He did predestinate, them He also called ... (Romans 8:30).

My calling is one of the most amazing and glorious truths of my relationship with God. This catalog of the details of my calling is pregnant with divine richness.

My Calling was Before the Foundation of the World.

I am who and what Father says I am.

**I am called.**

## I AM ... COMPLETE

For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Deity bodily. And you are **complete** in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power (Colossians 2:10).

I am complete. This is who and what Father says I am.

Could there be any more beautiful words to my ears than “*complete in Him*”? What more could I ask? What is it that I long for and desire that is not contained in this immensely rich little phrase – three simple words that are the very key to my life: “*complete in Him*.”

I am complete in Christ and need nothing else. I am filled with His fullness. It does not say that I ought to be complete in Him; it says I AM complete in Him. Completion cannot be made any more complete. There are no ordinances, ceremonies, experiences or efforts that I need to be added to the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Noah Webster defines the English word *complete* as “Having no deficiency; perfect.” He then cites: “*And ye are complete in Him Who is the Head of all principality and power*” (*An American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828).

The Greek word used for complete is *plēroō*. It is defined by James Strong as “to make replete, i.e., (literally) to cram” (#4137). Thayer’s Lexicon gives these rich definitions:

To make full, to fill up, i.e., to fill to the full ... to fill to the top: so that nothing shall be wanting [lacking] to full measure, fill to the brim ... to carry through to the end, to accomplish, carry out.

In 1955 William B. Hallman wrote about this completeness in Christ:

The *greatest discovery* that any human being can make is the discovery of the ALL SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST ... Christ is all, and in Him we

have all ...

“*Complete in Him*” – Nothing can go beyond completeness. You can add nothing to it. You might well try to purge a sunbeam, or purify the whiteness of the newly fallen snow as to add to what is already perfect. It is not only true that “*all fullness dwells in Him*,” but also that we are “*complete in Him*.” (*Complete in Christ*, reissued in the *Bible Student’s Notebook*™ #182, 2009).

What can be added to me that I do not already possess in Jesus Christ? Nothing! All that is left for me is maturity *in Him*.

The only difference between an oak seed and a mighty oak tree is time. The oak seed is as complete as the massive tree. The seed embodies in full the reproduction of the life from which it came. The seed is complete and can never be improved or enhanced. The only difference is growth.

I will simply appropriate what I have in Christ alone and, by faith, live accordingly. I will grow in the knowledge of Him as I progress in spiritual maturity – but all along the journey my completeness exists in perfection and fullness.

It is futile to attempt to add anything to my completeness in Him. I will rest in it.

I am “*complete in Him*.” I am who and what Father says I am.

## I am complete.

## I AM ... FREE

Stand fast therefore in the **liberty** with which Christ has made us **free**, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1).

I am free. This is who and what Father says I am.

## **The Lord Jesus Christ Has Made Me Free**

*If the Son therefore shall make you **free**, you shall be **free** indeed (John 8:36).*

## **Christ's Spirit, Resident in Me, Has Made Me Free**

*...Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is **liberty** (II Corinthians 3:17).*

## **His Truth Has Made Me Free**

*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you **free** (John 8:32).*

## **I Am Free from the Bondage of Sin**

*Being then made **free** from sin, you became the servants of righteousness (Romans 6:18).*

*But now being made **free** from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness ... (Romans 6:22).*

*In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the **freedom** from sins, according to the riches of His grace (Ephesians 1:7).*

*In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the **freedom** from sins (Colossians 1:14).*

## **I Am Free from the Bondage of Condemnation and Guilt**

*There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus ... (Romans 8:1).*

*Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God Who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Who died, or rather, Who is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also makes intercession for us (Romans 8:33-34).*

## **I Am Free from the Bondage of Religion**

*Wherefore, if you are dead with Christ from the elements of the world, why, as though living in the world, are you subject to ordinances (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using), according to the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh (Colossians 2:20-23).*

## **I Am Free from the Bondage of Tradition**

I am not bound by man's vain religious traditions.

*Making the Word of God of no effect through your traditions ... (Mark 7:13).*

*But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Matthew 15:9).*

## **I Am Free from the Bondage of Fear**

*For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, love and a sound mind (II Timothy 1:7).*

## **I Am Free from the Bondage of the Opinion of Others**

*With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment (I Corinthians 4:3).*

Freedom is my birthright!

*For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, "Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15).*

I am free to live, to serve, to love, to be who I am in Christ!

I am who and what Father says I am.

**I am free.**

