



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume 37
Issue 903

The Current Administration

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

To enlighten all as to what is the **Administration of the Secret**, which has been concealed from the eons in God (Ephesians 3:9).

The truths of Ephesians were an *absolute secret*. Our current administration does not rest in *any* of Paul's earlier epistles.



These were a secret, not only *unrevealed* before Ephesians, but actually *concealed* until that grand epistle was penned. These are bold and powerful truths!

There was much progression made in the revelations given to Paul in his early epistles, but this progression, as important as it was, related to the clarity and advancement of revelations already given in the Scriptures. The *absolute secret* that he revealed was reserved until *after* Israel was set aside by the judicial decree of Acts 28:28. These *pinnacle* truths of divine revelation were recorded in Ephesians and Colossians *alone*.

Knoch further wrote that,

Unless we realize the fact that the burden of ... Ephesians was an *absolute secret*, this precious quality will not endear it to us, and we will fail to appreciate its message and the underlying love which it reveals. Its greatest charm will be lost to us if we find it foreshadowed in Genesis, or foretold in the Hebrew prophets, or revealed in the "Gospels," or the Acts of the Apostles, or if we even confuse it with Paul's previous revelations in his earlier epistles. It was hidden from the eons in God (Ephesians 3:9) and was made known only by Paul, during his Roman imprisonment (Ephesians 3:8).

We totally embrace A.E. Knoch's bold words that,

— "The Present Secret Administration"
Unsearchable Riches, Volume 18 (1927)

We have been reading this mystery [the Secret Economy] into previously revealed truth. Earlier Scriptures have been so colored by its presence that their true import is difficult to entertain. Search the Scriptures and see: where is there any license for introducing a heavenly destiny and hope before Paul wrote Ephesians? All things shall be heavenly as to character, but this refers to position. It was a secret, not only *unrevealed*, but actually *concealed*.

Again, this is spot on. The *absolute secret* of Ephesians must not be confused "with Paul's previous revelations in his earlier epistles." It was not foreshadowed, foretold or revealed prior to Ephesians.

— The Divine Mysteries (The Secret Economy)
Unsearchable Riches, Volume 1, page 56 (1909)

This is spot on. There is no destiny or hope *among the Celestials* revealed before Ephesians was written.

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Vladimir Gelesnoff also wrote, in the very first issue of the *Unsearchable Riches* magazine, that,

The Secret Economy was an *absolute secret*. God was positively hiding it from the ken of former ages. There is no mention of it even in Paul's letters until Ephesians was sent on its mission (Ephesians 3:9).

— *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 1, page 4 (1909)

Spot on as well!¹

Before considering the revelations of Paul's earlier epistles we should consider some of the facts that we know from Paul's own statements during the Acts period – things that we rarely ever hear anyone discuss:

- Paul's ministry was the fulfillment of prophetic Scripture;
- Paul was acting as a priest of Israel to the Gentiles;

1. We encourage that the two Gelesnoff articles in [Bible Student's Notebook #509](#) be read. These were taken from the first volume of the *Unsearchable Riches* magazine. Grasping the 3-fold ministry of Paul presented in these studies are essential.

- Paul taught only what the prophets and Moses did say should come;
- Paul's hope was the "Hope of Israel";
- Paul operated under the priority of Israel;
- Paul was an able minister of Israel's New Covenant;
- Paul's Gentile converts were guests of Israel's covenants of promise, grafted into Israel, partakers of Israel's spiritual things, and counted as Abraham's spiritual seed.²

So, what bearing does all of this have on all of Paul's epistles except Ephesians and Colossians? Everything!

All that Paul taught in his Acts epistles was under the auspices, and in *harmony* with Israel and her prophetic program. Paul's revelations during this period were not the *absolute secrets* of Ephesians, but

(see *ADMINISTRATION*, last page)

2. All of these aspects of Paul's ministry during the Acts period are covered in the short article entitled "Paul's Priestly Ministry" found in [Bible Student's Notebook #721](#) (and also in the [compilation book](#) by the same title, found on the [order form](#) under "Compilations").

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);

- union in His death, burial and resurrection and ascended seated position among the celestials (Romans 6; Ephesians 2:6);
- adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of ordinary men intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneidar

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For definitions of abbreviations/acronyms, see the [online key](#).

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Tidbits of Truth #29

“Tidbits” is a column dedicated to short comments, thoughts, studies and excerpts.

Be Vigilant

Life is made up of good days and bad ones. Most are somewhere in the middle. There are even some days that are rather lighthearted, while others can be very trying times in which we are – in the words of our Apostle – *“pressed out of measure, above strength, in-somuch that we despair even of life”* (II Corinthians 1:8).

We must never forget that God is the Originator (the *Elohim*) of all, He is the Placer (the *Theos*) of all, and He is the Subjector (the *El*) of all – the good as well as the evil. All work wisely and skillfully toward the Divine goal.

God declares,

I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things (Isaiah 45:7).

He further informs us of our response to the good and evil days.

In a day of good be resting in the good, and in a day of evil, be vigilant; indeed the One, Elohim, has made this one along with that one” (Ecclesiastes 7:13-14, CV).

The “*day of evil*” is also translated as “*the day of adversity*” (KJV), “*the day of misfortune*” (REB) and “*the day of affliction*” (Geneva).

Relatively speaking, in the “*the day of good*” we have an opportunity to “take it easy” and *relax* a bit. However, in “*the day of evil*” we’re not to be thoughtless and indifferent – but we are instructed to “*be vigilant.*”

All the while, either way we can ultimately rest assured that “THE ONE,” God (*Elohim* – the Originator), has originated both days, for “*God has made the one as well as the other*” (HCSB).

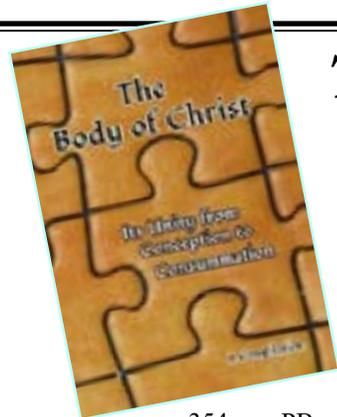
Among the greatest results of this divine awareness is peace.

Relax and know that I am God (Psalms 46:10, CV).

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is fixed on you (Isaiah 26:3).

What peace and rest are brought about in our lives by the realization of God’s operation of “*all.*”

[He is] the One Who is operating all in accord



354 pp., PB

The Body of Christ: Its Unity from Conception to Consummation (A Compilation)

This is a significant compilation of 18 authors, 69 works, spanning over a century. Author’s include: Arthur P. Adams, Daniel Andersen, E.W. Bullinger, Alan Burns, Edward Clayton, F.W. Davis, John Essex, Stephen Hill, A.E. Knoch, E.A. Larsen, Aaron Locker, William Mealand, J.R. Miller, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Frank Neil Pohorlak, Alan Reid and William B. Screws.

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

with the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11, CV).

So, even while we must “*be vigilant*” in “*the day of evil*” – in our spirits we can also “*relax*,” for Father has everything under control!

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Judgment in the Acts Period Contrasted with the Riches of Ephesians and Colossians

[*Edited Excerpt:*] That the believers had a *standing in grace* (Romans 5:1) is a great truth underscored in Romans. But that Gentile believers could experience a “*cutting off*” is also a matter of record in Romans 11. (The non-believing Gentiles wouldn’t be grafted into anything, hence, wouldn’t be cut out.).

That Jewish and Gentile believers experienced judgments during the book of Acts era is easily detected if we will read the books covered by that time. There was a “*sin unto death*” as I John speaks of it. There was a being saved though “*as by fire*”; there were those believers struck dead like Ananias and Sapphira for falsehood, and others who were partaking of the Supper unworthily and were guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord and, as a consequence, were weak, sickly, and some had died (I Corinthians 11:27-31). They had been told that, if they would judge themselves, they would not be judged of the Lord.

So, during the book of Acts there was grace given to the saved and unsaved. There were judgments to the saved and unsaved. Apostolic powers were exercised,

and judgments were pronounced and executed. How different things are when the book of Acts closed and subsequently a new revelation given, a new position opened, a new sphere entered, a new dispensation of Grace operative with all its glory.

The Body of Christ in Ephesians and Colossians has thrust upon it wealth, riches, honor, position and hopes not hitherto known or revealed. No wonder it is called “*a dispensation of grace*,” for here all is a display of His favor to His own, “*in Christ*.” What an acceptance, what an en-gracing in the Beloved! There is no threat of “*sin unto death*,” no thought of being cut off from Israel’s olive tree, no sickness or death if eating unworthily; for here the believer is brought beyond the “*flesh*” and “*Israel*,” and on into the realm of the Father, seated with Christ there (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1-3).

— Russell H. Schaefer (1919-1999)

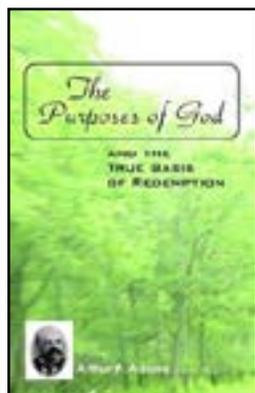
“Misconceptions About the Dispensations of Grace”

Scripture Research, Volume 1, Number 8 (1964)

Illusion of the Human “Free Will”

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things (I Corinthians 13:11).

“Free will” is like the steering wheel on those cars at amusement parks. The car is on a cement track with a steel insert down the middle and the kids get to steer all they want. However, unknown to them, they’re actually on a track that has only one path.



This is a compilation of some of Arthur P. Adams’ smaller works that first appeared in his periodical *The Spirit of the Word* in 1885. Adams suffered greatly for the truths presented here. The riches found within these pages deserve to be preserved for future generations. Even though Adams wrote over one hundred years ago, in many ways his writings are just as fresh as if they had been written today.

This is THE TRUE BASIS OF REDEMPTION – God our Creator, responsible for His Own creation, and every attribute of His being pledged to its successful completion. God is able, and He will. The creature may rest secure on that basis – the all sufficient ground and full assurance of his deliverance and final triumph in the redemption of Jesus Christ. – A.P. Adams

135 pp, PB

See [order form](#) under “Adams.”

Great men have always chosen their own paths and dared to go against the orthodoxy of their day. – Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

And the same holds true for those grocery carts with an attached “car” in the front. The kids get to steer all they want but the one pushing, who is unseen to the child, is totally in charge of the child’s direction.

Only God can dispel this illusion and enable mankind to “grow up” (II Peter 3:18) to the truth (John 8:32):

A person’s steps are from the Lord, so how can anyone understand their own way? (Proverbs 20:24).

I know, Lord, that a person’s way of life is not their own; no one who walks determines their own steps (Jeremiah 10:23).

Believe God ... not religion (II Timothy 2:15).

— Ken Ehrenfeld

Arrogance

Christendom is extremely self-centered. It seems to think that all of Scripture is somehow just about “them.” Even though it is surely true that “*all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable*” (II Timothy 3:16), it must be rightly divided (:15).

We hear the arrogance of Christianity in such audacious statements as, “All of the promises in the Bible are mine!” Yet all of the promises in the Bible do NOT belong to any one group of people. Again, while all of the Bible is certainly FOR us, it is not all TO us or ABOUT us.

Many today remain caught up in a mindset that

wants all of the truth of Scripture to be directed to them. With such conceit many have been carried away, pilfering that which belongs to others. They embrace a manmade theology espousing that God’s dealings with Israel are permanently over, and that somehow, they themselves have managed to take ownership of her promises and destiny, and as a result have by some means managed to become “Spiritual-Israel.”

Paul warned against such self-centered conceit that does not recognize Israel’s future place in God’s plan and disregards the vital truth of “*rightly dividing the Word of Truth*” (II Timothy 2:15).

For I would not, brothers, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in (Romans 11:25).

God clearly is *not* done with Israel. Their presently having been set aside is only “*until the fullness of the Gentiles*” is accomplished. Paul cautioned against being ignorant of the mystery that was revealed to him and being “*wise in our own conceits.*”

— Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

BSN

TOPICS:

Major: [Be Vigilant:] Evil; Peace; Sovereignty [Judgment in the Acts Period Contrasted with Riches of Ephesians and Colossians:] Judgement; Acts Period; Ephesians; Colossians [Illusion of the Human “Free Will”:] Free Will; Sovereignty [Arrogance:] Right Division; Israel



The Witness of the Stars

by — E.W. Bullinger

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

205 pp., PB

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



Reader's Question Box #68

What Unites Us?

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Q: What unites us and makes us a group? Anything? – J.F.

A: Unlike Israel – with their physical, visible union – ours is *solely* spiritual.

Israel had their tribal nation that united them. They had the national Temple, and the local synagogue which made them a group. They had the priests and Levites to bring them together.

We, however, have the “*One Body*” (Ephesians 2:16; 4:4; Colossians 3:15), the “*One New Man*” (Ephesians 2:15) that unites us. This is not a physical, visible “group.” We have no “meetings” that unite us.¹ We have no single doctrine, nor set of doctrines (creeds) that outwardly make us one. We have no human authorities (bishop, pastor, etc.) that make us a “group.” Our unity is not tangible, but it is *absolute!*

In Christianity, we are so trained to “belong” to something, that we have difficulty embracing a union apart from man-made “groups.” However, our only “belonging” is to God, and to His Christ.

1. Although a member of Christ's Body may host a gathering, and I may teach at it, and some individual members of Christ's Body may attend, this gathering is not the Christ's Body.

... *We are the Lord's* (Romans 14:8).

... *We are Christ's* (I Corinthians 3:23).

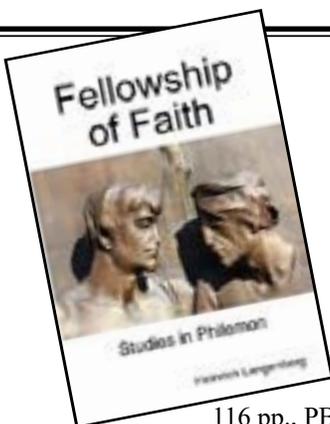
While some will vainly attempt to take it upon themselves to decide who “belongs” to Christ and who doesn't, Paul was quite content to leave the matter with our Lord Himself.

*Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, **The Lord knows those who are His*** (II Timothy 2:19).

If all of this was true in Paul's earlier writings, how much more so of us who make up the “*One Body*,” the “*One New Man*” of the Secret Administration! We not only *belong* to Him, but we have also been made *one with Him* Who is our Head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Colossians 1:18; 2:10, 19)!

It is for this reason, in every issue of the *Bible Student's Notebook* we state that,

This publication is not connected with any “church,” “denomination,” “movement,” “organization,” “mission,” “creed,” “meeting,” “school,” “conference” or “fellowship.”



116 pp., PB

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

Fellowship of Faith: Studies in Philemon

by — Heinrich Langenberg (1876-1972)

This short and rather intimate epistle of the apostle Paul to Philemon might almost be regarded as an appendix to Colossians. Langenberg was born in Bremen, Germany, and studied theology in Basel. He pastored several Evangelical Free Churches, afterwards becoming an evangelist and prolific author. He had an in-depth knowledge of ancient Hebrew and Greek, which served him well as one of A.E. Knoch's early research assistants on the *Concordant Version*. He founded Scripture Mission in Berlin and was well known among German believers as one who stood for the reconciliation of all.

So, what is it that unites us? It is the call of God “*in Christ.*” We have been called into union with our Head, and as a result, we are united with all of those who likewise are chosen “*in Him.*”

We do not make, form or create this unity. We can’t join it, we can’t add anyone else to it. It is a unity that was divinely pre-set before the Disruption of the World. It just is. It is a prehistoric spiritual union. It is neither physical *nor* visible *at this time.*

We say “at this time” because, when Christ, Who is our life, is manifested on His throne (Colossians 3:4) at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:20) in Glory, far above all Heavens (Ephesians 4:10; 1:21, *i.e.*, in the *Super-Heavens*), we, too, will be manifested (appear) with Him there – and THEN the One Body will be a visible group among the Celestials! Until then, we live in abject obscurity.

As for our unity, Paul reveals to us that there are **Seven “Ones”** (Ephesians 4:3-6) that have established it:

- ◆ One Body
- ◆ One Spirit
- ◆ One Expectation
- ◆ One Lord
- ◆ One Faith
- ◆ One Baptism
- ◆ One God

This seven-fold unity of “ones” is true whether or not

anyone sees and embraces it.² This unity is already a done deal. These “ones” formed the One Body from the beginning. As we are enlightened to this pre-established seven-fold unity, we are able to rejoice in it, and are thus commissioned to peacefully “*keep*” its glorious truth!

Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit with the tie of PEACE (Ephesians 4:3).

In every situation, we can live knowing that our true calling is out of this seven-fold unity. This is the basis of our life and actions. This foundation equips us to, if possible, as much as lies in us, to live *peaceably* with all (Romans 12:18). However, if keeping unity is not possible, then we simply excuse ourselves:

Excuse yourself from a quarrelsome person, after advising him once and twice (Titus 3:10, BSV).³ **BSN**

TOPICS:

Major: Ecclesia; Union; Unity

Minor: Calling

2. And by far most do not see or embrace it! A.E. Knoch (1874-1965) aptly wrote:

“The unity which we are to keep with diligence is based upon seven fundamental truths. It’s keyword is one. There is one body—and only one—one spirit, one expectation, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father. The apostle is not revealing to the Ephesians that there is a God, or that there is a body. He is insisting that there is only one. **The church of today repudiates every one of these divine unities.**” - *Unsearchable Riches*, volume 22 (1931), page 532

3. For more on this excusing of oneself, see:
– “Excuse Yourself,” Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student’s Notebook #682](#).



185 pp., PB

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

Wife Loving: The Husband’s Paramount Privilege

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

This book is about Christ-mentored husbandry; a look at husbands’ important and honored role of loving their wives. So lofty and divine is its pursuit, Paul presents none other than Christ Himself as the mentor: “*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church.*”

“What wonderful thoughts. They are so true and practical. I love it!” – *The Netherlands*

“I have seldom read so much wisdom on marriage in relation to biblical principles.” – *Denmark*

“Powerful, powerful stuff! As a woman I am honored by it. I am deeply grateful for your boldness to honor women and to portray the marriage relationship as simply yet profoundly as God intended.” – *CA*

ADMINISTRATION (continued from page 7642)

“secrets” merely “hushed in times eonian,” yet now manifested by him “through prophetic Scriptures” (Romans 16:25-26). Even Paul’s gospel, “the gospel of the uncircumcision,” as distinct as it was from Peter’s “gospel of the circumcision,” was founded upon Abraham – but, before he was circumcised (Romans 4:1-4, 9, 12-13, 16).

Therefore, Paul’s earlier epistles are in harmony with Israel’s prophetic program. For example, read Paul’s words to the Thessalonians that they were delivered “from the wrath to come” (I Thessalonians 1:10, KJV; or, “out of the coming indignation,” CV). It was always the hope of believing Israel to be saved from the day of indignation. This underlies John the Baptist’s declaration, “who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come” (Matthew 3:7; Luke 3:7), and is the basis of the promise offered by our Lord, “he that endures to the end will be saved” (Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13). Note that salvation from the “wrath to come” at the Second Advent is the very message of Peter in Acts 2:

And I will shew wonders in Heaven above, and signs in the Earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that **whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved** (:19-21).

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Besides the material already suggested in this article, we would encourage the following further resources:

- [Ephesians & Colossians: Scripture for the Present Administration](#), see [order form](#) under “Pilkington”;
- [Hope of Paul’s Acts Epistles](#), see [order form](#) under “Ballinger”;
- [None Other Things](#), see [order form](#) under “Welch.”

TOPICS:

Major: Acts 28; Colossians; Ephesians; Paul’s Early Epistles; Secret Administration
Minor: Calling; Right Division



48 pp., PB

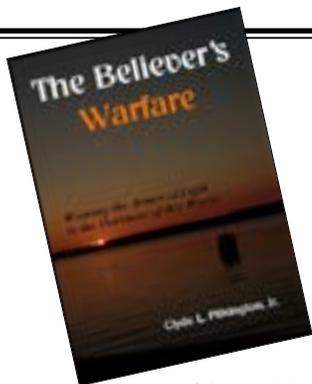
The Ages: God’s Time Periods

by — Edward Henry Clayton (1887-1972)

Chapters:

The Purpose of the Ages	The Number of Ages	The First Two Ages
Eonian Life	(Eons)	(Eons)
The Ages (Eons, Aeons)	The Present Age	The Purpose of the Ages
	The Ages (Eons) to	(Eons)
	Come	

See [order form](#) under “Clayton.”



84 pp., PB

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

The Believer’s Warfare

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

The believer is in the middle of an ancient spiritual warfare that is as old as mankind. The battle itself, although intense, is not complicated. It is not a process of spiritual hoop-jumping. Indeed it is simple. *The Believer’s Warfare* surveys a few key passages of Scripture to reveal God’s sure plan of victory in the life of His saints.

“I have really enjoyed *The Believer’s Warfare*. For years I have struggled with my walk with Christ, bouncing ‘in and out of fellowship’; using some human effort to try and control the flesh. It seems as though I still have a lot of legalistic and guilt-ridden programming in my brain.” – **OH**