

The BBI BULLETIN

WINTER 2021-2022

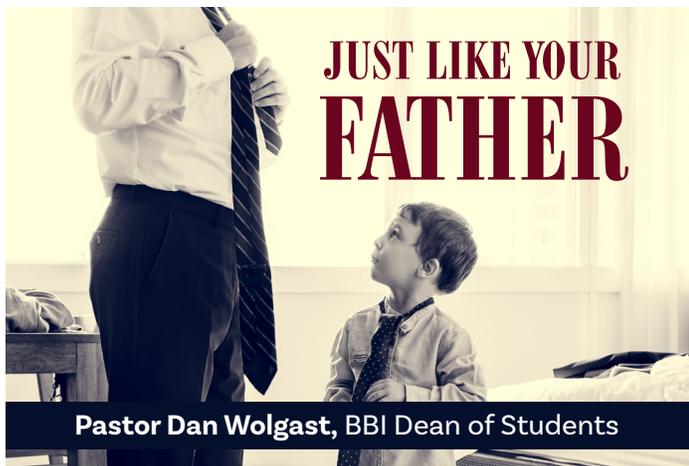
Volume 23

December, January, February

Issue 4

Training for Ministry

Rightly Dividing God's Word



knew, would be a good example of this. Lee, as a boy, saw his drunken cowboy father receive Christ as Savior, give up alcohol, and become an evangelist. Lee imitated his father in the good part, trusting Christ as Savior and becoming a cowboy evangelist. We know, however, that Lee was simply following his heavenly calling as he knew His heavenly Father and ultimately sought to imitate Him.

The problem with the word “imitators” is that we tend to think of an imitation as not being genuine. Our idea of an imitator is like that of a parrot imitating the words of a person while having no idea what the words actually mean. I have always wanted a pair of authentic military combat boots like I wore in Vietnam, but all I’ve ever found was a cheap imitation of them that neither looked like nor wore like the real thing.

People often imitate others as well, such as Elvis imitators. I was once doing carpentry for some friends who had a baby girl, Alexis. Every morning before getting dirty at my job, I would hold her as I talked to her and, mostly, her mom. In time, the parents would hear her laugh in a strange way. They finally realized that she was imitating Pastor Dan’s laugh. It was quite funny, as well as flattering to me. But Alexis

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How often we may have heard the words, “You’re just like your father!” These words are usually uttered by a disapproving mom after catching her child doing something just like dad does it. Or, with the kind of folks I grew up with, the statement may have been, “He’s becoming the spittin’ image of his old man.” How many of us would have liked to hear “He’s following in the footsteps of his father, a great man of character”?

There’s a time in every child’s life when dad can do no wrong, when he’s his daughters’ hero and his boys believe he is the best dad who can “whip anybody’s dad.” They want to be just like him and often imitate dad in their actions.

It is interesting that, once we trust Jesus as our Savior and become children of God, our new Father actually calls us to be imitators of Him. *“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma”* (Eph. 5:1,2). Lee Homoki, someone most of our readers

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THE INSTITUTE UPDATE

MOVING FORWARD

I can't help but reflect on where we were this time last year. As you may recall, we were praying feverishly for someone to purchase our old building and wondering if we would have to rent a place to store our contents as we looked for a new building. Little did we know (God knew) that in February, we would accept an offer to purchase our Slinger, Wisconsin property and in late February, we would agree to purchase our current building from *Kettle Moraine Bible Church* with a closing date of April 1st. Often when you're in the midst of a given situation it's hard to see what God is doing, but when you look in the rearview mirror, you see He was there the whole time. God has truly blessed us along the way and even though we are still in the process of getting our new building where it needs to be, we are forever thankful for His faithfulness and leading during the whole process. We are also grateful to you, our BBI Partners, and Champions of Grace. Your faithful and continued support is allowing us to continue with the projects necessary to completely establish our campus in our new West Bend, Wisconsin location.

VOLUNTEERS ARE ESSENTIAL

On December 17th, we hosted our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner for those who help us with the folding and processing of our monthly publications. On the second Monday of each month, we are honored to have hard-working servants of Christ gather at BBI and work on getting our mailings ready to send out all over the world. Because of the uncertainty of selling and moving into a new facility, we were not able to host a dinner last year for these special people. We are extremely thankful for these individuals, who give of their time to gather together to make it possible for the ministry of *Berean Bible Institute* to go forward.

CONSIDER TAKING A SPRING ONLINE COURSE

By the time you read this Bulletin, our Spring First Term Online Courses will have already started. However, why not consider taking an eight-week course beginning in March and ending in May. Beginning March 18th our Second Spring term begins with the following courses: 108 Romans; 106 Basic

Bible Doctrines; 218 Ministry Leadership; 116 Biblical World View; 202 Christian Education I. Why not challenge yourself to grow deeper in God's Word and become better equipped to serve the Lord wherever He may lead.

CONSIDER LEAVING A LEGACY

Over the years BBI has been funded primarily by the monthly gifts of individuals and churches that see the need for an Institute to train students to be leaders in the Grace Movement. Since the founding of *Berean Bible Institute* in 1996, we have on occasion been blessed with various estate gifts. These donors have desired to see BBI continue to train leaders for the Grace Movement long after they have gone to be with the Lord. We want to ask that you prayerfully consider BBI as you plan for the future. Please note that there are also various Trusts and or Charitable Annuities that may allow one to give and also receive some tax benefits through their giving. If you have any questions about this process or need more information about *Berean Bible Institute* don't hesitate to call us.

BREAKING NEW GROUND

Over the years BBI has been blessed to have students from other counties take our courses. Last year, you may recall, we were blessed to add students in Brazil taking courses from BBI in the Portuguese language. We praise the Lord for this wonderful opportunity and these students are well on their way to earning our Certificate in Dispensational Studies. This last Fall Term, I am blessed to report that, we have added Costa Rica and Paraguay as two new countries where we have students currently taking our courses. We praise the Lord that God is using BBI to train these students to carry out the proclamation of God's wonderful grace in these countries. This news is a reason to celebrate as the ministry of *Berean Bible Institute* continues to spread to new lands. A special thank you goes out to those who financially and prayerfully support BBI. This would not be possible were it not for your faithful support and prayer for BBI.

Dr. Robert E. Nix,
President, *Berean Bible Institute*



Mail Received at Box 735

From Indiana:

"We sure enjoyed reading the recent BBI Newsletter and to hear that you are all settling into BBI's new home. We are so thankful that God has abundantly supplied every need. God Bless!!"

From Colorado:

"Thank you for your faithfulness to train young men to minister and labor in the Word of God, rightly divided. Keep up the good work!"

From New York:

"Just a note of appreciation for all you do at Berean Bible Institute. What a wonderful blessing it is to give to such a great ministry. Thank you so much for the teaching and understanding of God's Word, rightly divided. We are truly blessed!"

From Michigan:

"God bless you richly for the work you do to spread the Grace message in this very fallen world."

From Missouri:

"Greatly enjoy and appreciate receiving the BBI Bulletin and Bible Answers to Bible Questions. Last winter when our country's citizens were especially tested through the horrible virus, your small but powerful Great Is Your Faithfulness article brought much encouragement, comfort, and hope to me. I passed along several copies of this wonderful little article to friends and family. Thank you so much for your ministry and the unwavering stand you continue to uphold in rightly dividing His precious Word."

"Only one life,
'twill soon be past,
Only what's done
for Christ will last."

Just Like Your Father continued from page 1

could never imitate me perfectly, nor would anyone want her to. And since none of us can imitate God perfectly, we tend to ignore the instruction to "*be imitators of God as dear children,*" or else we try in our flesh to imitate Him.

Once we are saved, however, God our Father does call us to be imitators of Him. He wants us to love Him the way He loves us, and therefore be transformed into the image of His Son who stated, "*If you have seen me you have seen the Father*" (John 14:9). In the context of Paul's exhortation in Ephesians 5:1-2, we need to realize that we are also to imitate what our Father isn't, as well as what He is; how He doesn't conduct Himself, as well as how He does.

Let's back up to Ephesians 4:25, "*Therefore, putting away lying, Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor...*" Our Father **who cannot lie** exhorts us to put away lying and speak the truth instead.

In Ephesians 4:26 we read, "*Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath.*" We know our Father gets angry, but He never lets His anger go into sin. His anger is always directed to seeing that justice is done. He is never vindictive. His chastisement is carried out and then forgotten, giving no place for the Devil.

We see in Ephesians 4:28, "*Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.*" We know that our Father is not a thief but a giver. His whole being is that of giving, which is magnified at the cross where, instead of revenge, He gave His only begotten Son to die in our place for our sins that He might give us His life and bless us throughout eternity.

We see in Ephesians 4:29, "*Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.*" Our Father never uses corrupt words but, rather, only what is good for the benefit of those who hear. He imparts words of life and grace. Even the strong words Jesus used against the Pharisees and others were words of truth with the desire of them seeing their sinfulness and repenting of their unbelief.

Paul closes this section, basically, with what the Father is not in Ephesians 4:31, "*Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from*

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you, with all malice." And then reveals what our Father is: *"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."* We are to be kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving, just like our heavenly Father.

What we often fail to learn about our Father is that He does not expect us to imitate Him in our own power. Most of us have tried in our own strength and know that it doesn't work. As we look closer at the context of this passage, we see the Spirit must be included in our "imitation." Ephesians 4:30 tells us not to *"grieve the Holy Spirit of God."* It is God the Holy Spirit whom we grieve when we are outside of walking in the love that He is. Paul has just written in Ephesians 3:16,19, *"that we would be strengthened with might through His Spirit in our inner man...to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that we may be filled with all the fullness of God."* It only stands to reason that if we are *"filled with all the fullness of God,"* we will be magnifying the same love that He is.

In Ephesians 5:18, Paul tells us to *"be filled with the Spirit"* in the context of *"not being drunk with wine."* When a person is drunk with wine, the alcohol in it controls that person. When a person who is filled with the Spirit allows Him to bear fruit, our Father's love will control the believer, and he will more and more imitate his/her Father.

The key to all of this is found in Ephesians 4:20-21. After writing about the believer no longer walking like the Gentiles who were alienated from God, Paul writes, *"But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus."* It is the child of God who has learned Christ, has true knowledge of Him, has applied to his heart the truth that is in Jesus, that truly desires to imitate His Father and *"walk in love as Christ has also loved us"* (Eph. 5:2).

For others to see us as the *"spittin image of our Father"* we need to know Him. We need to know in our hearts that He can do nothing but what is **good, righteous and truthful**. He is the Truth that sets us free—free to become like Him.

I once had a very interesting event in my life that serves as an illustration. A few years back, I pulled into a gas station in a busy part of Florida. The gas pump wouldn't take credit cards, and, somewhat disgruntled, I went into the store to prepay to fill

my tank. I got in line and, when it was my turn to pay, the cashier looked at me and said, "You're happy." I, naturally, was somewhat taken aback by her statement and hesitantly answered, "Well, yeah. Don't happy people come into this store?" She earnestly replied, "No. But you are happy." Having had a little time to think, I replied, "Yes, I am happy. I know the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior." She interrupted with, "You know Jesus?! Will you pray for me?" By this time, she had hold of my wrist. I said, "Sure," and asked her name, intending to pray for when I left the store. But by this time she had a tighter grip on my arm. I looked at the line behind me as I realized the only way I was going to get out of the store was to drag her over the counter and take her with me, or pray. So I prayed for her.

This is what it means to be imitators of God as His children. Even though I wasn't in the best of spirits when I went into the store, this lady saw something different in me. Plenty of Christians walking with our Lord had surely gone into that store, but she picked me out as one imitating His Father. She saw something deeper in me than how I felt at the moment. I wish that I always imitate my Father in this way, but none of us walk a perfect walk of faith.

The main thing that we need to see is that being imitators of God is an inside work. It is not something that we try to do, but something that happens when we know and believe who our Father is and grow in our relationship with Him. We have been taught, and taken to heart, the truth that is in Jesus; we follow Paul as He follows Christ; we become imitators of our Father and walk in love as Christ also has loved us.

*Do you want to see God's
Word more clearly?*

Earn your
Certificate of Dispensational Studies at

BEREAN
BIBLE INSTITUTE

AM I APPROACHABLE?

Pastor Justin Lynn, Director of Technology
and Institutional Advancement

Maya Angelou is most frequently credited for saying, “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But, people will never forget how you made them feel.” As God’s children, we bear the burden of reaching hearts for Christ. Most certainly, one way we do this is through bearing the marks of being *approachable*. Let us briefly explore this idea from Scripture.

Being approachable is *a reflection of our identity in Jesus Christ*. The position and power of Jesus Christ is so immense that Paul refers to Him as “*dwelling in unapproachable light*” (I Tim. 6:16). Yet, Ephesians 3:12 details a stunning contrast for all in Christ: “*we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.*” What a change this represents! It is only through the grace and mercy of God that we have been gifted a new identity in Jesus Christ so that we now can approach the “unapproachable,” holy, awesome God because of our standing in Christ. Through our baptism into Christ (Rom. 6:3-10), believers are granted intimate access to God; we now “cry out, ‘Abba Father!’” (Rom. 8:15). In Christ, we have unrestrained access to Him, to cast our burdens, griefs, and trials before Him. What a relief to not withhold a single care but rather “*pray without ceasing*” (I Thess. 5:17), approaching our heavenly Father with boldness and confidence.

Beyond our identity in Christ, we must also recognize that being approachable is *an expression of our transformation in Christ*, resulting in an outward, others-centeredness. Philippians 2:3-4 challenges all believers to seek the needs of others above their own. To the extent that we allow Christ to transform us, His humble, servant-like spirit will be formed within us and expressed in very tangible ways to those around us, to whom we “*shine as lights in the world*” (Phil. 2:14). We now have a new desire and ability to offer the same open accessibility to others because we so greatly desire to offer to them what has first been granted in our own hearts and lives. We bear a

crucial witness of God’s image as we wholly receive and invest in those around us.

As we apply this challenge, we would do well to periodically ask ourselves the probing question, “Do others view me as approachable?” I’m not simply referring to being friendly or pleasant. Am I characterized by a spirit of humility that welcomes the thoughts, ideas, concerns, questions, and in the proper context, even criticisms of others in a way that is thoughtful, receptive, genuine and sincere? Or, do others hesitate for fear of being immediately dismissed? Do others worry they will suffer an abrasive attack or aggressive, angry outburst when they bring contrary news to me? Would my spouse and/or children offer the same answer as my co-workers? We must all reflect on these difficult concerns as we ponder the portrait of Jesus Christ that we portray to the world around us.

When I think of some of the brightest reflections of God in my life, I discern the common thread of approachableness. This often overlooked virtue yields countless gospel-sharing and ministry opportunities. As this new year continues, would you join me in an intentional endeavor to grow in approachableness? Here’s a bold challenge: whenever we see one another face to face, might we courageously *approach* one another to see how we are growing in this area!

CHRIST’S RELATIONSHIPS IN COLOSSIANS 1:15-22

Pastor Matthew Ritchey, Managing Editor

In Colossians 1:15-22, the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to highlight Christ’s relationship to God (v. 15), to Creation (v. 16), and to the Church the Body of Christ (v. 18).

CHRIST’S RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

Jesus was God in the flesh. He was the “*image*” of God, which means “to be like, a replica, expression,

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or embodiment." John 1:18 states: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared [him]." Christ is literally God in bodily form. The Scriptures make it clear that Jesus Christ was Deity, God the Son, Who took on flesh by being born of a virgin.

Verse 15 also states that He is the "firstborn," which, in this case, refers to the fact that He existed before Creation. It also speaks of His authority over all Creation. Christ is the Head of Creation and has preeminence over it. He ranks first in importance and priority. Of course, this designation of firstborn, carrying with it the characteristics of eternal, sovereign, and superior, can only belong to God. There is no doubt that this passage tells us that Christ is God in the flesh.

CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO CREATION

He is Creator of all. Not only is He firstborn of Creation, Christ is the Creator of everything that was created. John 1:3 confirms verse 16 saying, "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made." Also, Ephesians 3:9, speaking of the Mystery revealed to Paul, ends with the statement: "God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." It is safe to say that nothing exists in the universe without Christ having created it.

Without directly stating his intentions, Paul is countering false views about Creation that were being taught in Colossae. Greek philosophies taught 3 causes: primary cause (plan), instrumental cause (power), final cause (purpose). This one verse says Jesus is all three of the causes—the plan, power, and purpose. Further, Gnosticism taught that all matter was evil, including the human body. The truth is that all things (e.g., angels, humans, rulers) were created by a righteous source with a righteous purpose. Everything was created by Christ for His honor and purpose. As Revelation 4:11 records, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." All things come under His authority.

Christ is "before all things" (v. 17), meaning He was prior, or advance, to all things. This usually takes

into account chronology. Hebrews 7:3 says, "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually."

All things consist by Him. They hold together, or cling together. Hebrews 1:3 also has something to say about this when it uses the statement, "Who... upholding all things by the word of His power." Christ is the Creator, Sovereign, and Sustainer of all of Creation.

CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE BODY

He is the Head of the Body. Christ is first over Creation, and He is first over the Church. "And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23).

Verse 18 tells us many things about our Head. He is "the beginning," or it started with the Eternal One. He is "firstborn from the dead." He is first in order of things and promises others will follow. He is Preeminent, supreme, first in rank.

While Gnostics taught that Jesus was only one of many emanations from God, the Apostle Paul speaks the opposite. Verse 19 says that God thought it was good ("pleased") for all fullness to dwell in Jesus Christ. God was delighted for the sum total of all His divine power and attributes ("all fullness") to exist in Christ. The word "dwell" is not just a temporary fullness. It means "to be at home permanently." Jesus Christ was not just an angel or one of many other lesser gods. He was full Deity eternally and permanently.

God the Father used His Son in an amazing way to bring redemption to us. Please, understand that Jesus Christ, the Creator God, took upon flesh to bring you back to Him. We are asked to trust that He did all of the work to bring salvation to us. We are called to accept this salvation by believing that Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. Then, we are placed into the Body of Christ where Christ serves as our Head.

If you haven't, won't you trust Him today? If you have trusted in Christ alone, won't you take the time to thank Him?

BIBLE WORDS

Pastor Matthew Ritchey, Managing Editor

HYPOSTATIC UNION

The term “hypostatic union” is from the Greek word transliterated *hypostasis*, which refers to the reality of the underlying substance. Christ had two underlying substances, or natures: Divine and human, and “hypostatic union” means that these two substances existed in unity. In other words, Christ was really God at the same time He was really human. With our limited experience and knowledge, overanalyzing the hypostatic union of Christ will only cause us to overemphasize one side or the other, or to come to faulty conclusions that only serve to soothe our ego. While some, like Soren Kierkegaard, saw this union as a paradox and others, like Nestorius of the 5th century, concluded that there were two distinct persons of Christ, we must acknowledge that the Bible teaches Christ was fully Divine (Mark 2:5-10; John 1:1; 20:28; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8) while also fully human (i.e., Luke 2:7,52; John 4:6; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:9) in a glorious harmony (Col. 2:9) that we accept by faith.

INCARNATION

Incarnate means *embodied in flesh*. Jesus Christ is an eternal member of the triune Godhead (John 1:1). He has always been Deity. At a certain point in time (Gal. 4:4), He embodied flesh as He was born of a virgin. He was “*made in the likeness [form; resemblance] of men*” (Phil. 2:7) and “*found in fashion [figure; external condition] as a man*” (Phil. 2:8). The incarnation of Christ refers to Him taking on flesh. And, in the figure of man, He was obedient unto the death of the cross so that those who believe will one day receive bodies “*fashioned like unto His glorious body*” (Phil. 3:21). Since the Son “*in the likeness of sinful flesh...condemned sin in the flesh*” (Rom. 8:3), we will be united together “*in the likeness of His resurrection*” (Rom. 6:5).

A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

We use this phrase to refer to someone who is not who they seem. Outwardly, they portray as good

and helpful, one of us, but inwardly their intentions are harmful and ruinous. History tells us of various fables using this idiom to teach a truth. Perhaps the first known use in secular culture came from Grecian Nikephoros Basilakis in a rhetorical exercise called *Progymnasmata*. The story goes:

“A wolf once decided to change his nature by changing his appearance, and thus get plenty to eat. He put on a sheepskin and accompanied the flock to the pasture. The shepherd was fooled by the disguise. When night fell, the shepherd shut up the wolf in the fold with the rest of the sheep and as the fence was placed across the entrance, the sheepfold was securely closed off. But when the shepherd wanted a sheep for his supper, he took his knife and killed the wolf.”

Perhaps a more familiar name to most of our readers would be Aesop, who penned a fable about a wolf who was raised among a shepherd's dogs. We could even find loose ties to this phrase in the story of Red Riding Hood and the wolf who dresses up as her grandmother.

The phrase, however, originated in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus warned His disciples against false teachers by saying, “*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*” (Matt. 7:15). Even our Apostle Paul, speaking to the church of Ephesus, warned that when he left “*grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock*” (Acts 20:29). Let us be also warned against those who play the part of good church members, but inwardly are false teachers looking to ruin the congregation (II Tim. 3:5).

RISE AND SHINE

When we take the nice route of waking someone up, we sit beside them on the bed and whisper, “Rise and shine.” This phrase can be found in the Bible in Isaiah 60:1, “*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee....*” Here, Isaiah is calling the nation to rise out of spiritual slumber and get to action. Our Apostle Paul gives us a similar call to rise out of spiritual slumber and get to action in the dispensation of Grace. “*The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light*” (Rom. 13:12). So, rise and shine, and get busy serving the Lord.

The BBI Bulletin is the official newsletter of the *Berean Bible Institute Inc.*,
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Berean Bible Institute exists as a college level school of adult education,
which endeavors to provide advanced Biblical and doctrinal studies in accordance with
the Biblical principle of right division and the revelation of the mystery along with practical
training in ministry and leadership skills, in order to help individuals become prepared to do
the work of the ministry in local churches, the mission field, at home or abroad, with the
overall goal of making the Gospel of Jesus Christ known to the lost throughout the world,
the edification of believers, and the promotion of personal Bible study.

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