



BBC UPDATE

THE PATTERN OF A BIBLICAL ASSEMBLY



Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

Introduction

The Apostle Paul employed the *dis legomena* noun *hupotuposis* (literally “under-type”) in his two *Epistles to Timothy* to help the young pastor of the Ephesian Baptist Church maintain biblical truth about salvation (I Tim. 1:16) and sanctification (II Tim. 1:13). The assembly in Ephesus was a significant church in the first century since Paul spent three years ministering there (Acts 20:31), and since the Ephesian assembly received four New Testament books, namely *Ephesians*, *I and II Timothy*, and the *Apocalypse*, and perhaps the *Gospel of John* and the *Three Epistles of John*. He placed his best minister Timothy to oversee the church. The Gentile world of Europe and Asia was engulfed in various forms of the Garden Lies (deification and deathlessness of man) or Gnosticism (Gen. 3:1-6). The heresy of Gnosticism is the backdrop of the New Testament Scriptures and was and is a threat to the Lord’s assemblies. Gnosticism is the pantheistic teaching that all of mankind is deity locked in a fleshly bodies desiring escape through works advancing up the *Pleroma* (manifestations of deity) into the ineffable mind, soul, spirit-deity. Paul repudiated Gnosticism that had invaded the Colossian Baptist Church by teaching that the Lord Jesus Christ is the fulness (*Pleroma*) of the Godhead Who is over the angelic realm and that Christians are complete in Him (see Col. 2:8-10).

The Pattern for Salvation

The apostle left Timothy in Ephesus to protect the assembly from Gnostic inroads into the church by preaching the word of God with the premier focus on the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ, “*God was manifest in the flesh*” (I Tim. 3:16). Since the Gnostics taught a “works-salvation, no sin, no repentance” message (cf. I Jn. 1:6-10) of imprisoned deity in the evil flesh working up the *Pleroma* to spirit-“salvation,” Paul countered this heresy with his conversion experience. For instance, the Apostle Paul stated, saying, “*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting*” (I Tim. 1:15-16). He averred that his “born-again” experience (Jn. 3:7) was the “**pattern**” for all believers. Paul used the word *hupotuposis* to refer to the experience he had on the Damascus road (Acts 9:4 ff.). The noun literally means “under-type” and refers to a pattern, sketch, model, form, or example. In other words, he was saying that professed Christians should put their conversion-to-Christ experience over the “under-type” to make sure their experience fits neatly over the pattern, sketch, or model of the experience of Paul. What were the essentials of Paul’s salvation experience? 1) He recognized that he was a sinner (I Tim. 1:15). 2) He fell under strong conviction about his sin and needed forgiveness (Acts 9:5). 3) He realized that Jesus of Nazareth was the true, divine Messiah Who came to save sinners (Rom. 9:5). 4) He repented of his sins and put faith in Jesus Christ and was born-again (Acts 20:21; cf. also Jn. 3:1-7; Acts 19:8; 20:25). 5) He immediately demonstrated a

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changed life (from darkness to light [Acts 26:18]) with the fruit of salvation (Mt. 3:8; Jam. 2:17-18) by submitting to the will of God in receiving baptism and by becoming a faithful church member (Acts 9:6, 18). Paul's conversion is the *hupotuposis* or "pattern" for biblical salvation.

The Form for Sanctification

Paul commanded Timothy, saying, "*Hold fast the **form** of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus*" (II Tim. 1:13). Since Timothy was the pastor of the Ephesian Baptist Church, his responsibility was to follow the *hupotuposis* or "form" of sound words which Paul taught concerning salvation and sanctification. The sanctification of the believer occurs within "*the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth*" (I Tim. 3:15). Paul had given his son in the faith the **pattern** for biblical salvation and now the **form** for biblical sanctification. As Gnosticism attempted to enter and to destroy the assembly through false teaching concerning soteriology and through false teaching concerning ecclesiology, Timothy could only maintain the divine candlestick status of the Ephesian church (Rev. 2:1-5) by carefully following the model of biblical salvation and the form of biblical sanctification. Timothy was to guard the assembly membership by allowing entrance only of those whose testimonies fit neatly with Paul's conversion. Moreover, his organization and administration of the assembly must follow Paul's pattern. Candidates for church membership must believe biblical doctrine (I Tim. 1:3-17) and the assembly must discipline those with Gnostic beliefs and doctrine (I Tim. 1:18-20). Members must have biblical doctrine and practice about the corporate prayer of men and the modesty and roll of women in the assembly (I Tim. 2:1-15). Members must have biblical doctrine and practice about the church offices and maintain Christological teaching of the assembly (I Tim. 3:1-16). Members must avoid Gnostic practices (celibacy and veganism) in the assembly which spiritual discernment must begin with Timothy (I Tim. 4:1-16). Members must recognize proper behaviour toward the elderly, widows, and elders (I Tim. 5:1-25). Members must avoid the Gnostic hierarchy (master/slave), pride, and greed which appeal is always prevalent (I Tim. 6:1-21).

Conclusion

Those professing to belong to the Lord Jesus Christ and serving in a biblical assembly need to assess how closely their salvation experience fits over the *hupotuposis* or pattern of the conversion of the Apostle Paul. The heresies of Calvinism (no "born again" experience prior to being a "Christian"), paedobaptism (baby baptism [water saves and places the baby in "the household of faith"]), works-salvation (adding some good work to Christ's finished work), and "faith only" (no repentance [*contra* Lk. 13:3, 5]) are being peddled in many so-called "churches" with spiritually detrimental results! Pastors must examine the doctrine and practice of their respective assembly to make sure they fit closely over Paul's "*form of sound words.*" Moreover, those pastors who allow or promote weak conversion testimonies and do not discipline heretics, who do not maintain the biblical roles of men and women in the assembly, who do not insist on qualified leaders, who do not focus on the Person and Work of Christ, who do not guard against insipient Gnosticism (social or financial status-ism), who do not regard the elderly, widows, and elders biblically, and do not denounce Gnostic teachings and practices in their assembly, have failed to promote the biblical pattern of salvation and sanctification. Too many Baptist churches seem to be more interested in gaining membership size, wealth, and earthly prominence at the cost of truth, and thereby promote the godless, carnal, flesh-enticing, demonic Gnosticism of the Garden, or the Christian form of Gnosticism, and thus destroying lives and nations. Paul's injunction still stands: "*Hold fast the form of sound words*" (II Tim. 1:13).

NEW ADDITION TO THE STROUSE FAMILY



Bryce Christopher Strouse

Bible Baptist Church members Mr. and Mrs. Ryan Strouse rejoiced in the birth of their fourth son on December 28, 2021, who weighed 7.5 pounds, and named Bryce Christopher Strouse.

Along with Bryce their other sons are Jack, Landon, and Preston.

Obviously, we are thankful for this new arrival.



BBC church member, David Cagliostro, recently returned from Greece where he visited many places that the Apostle Paul visited. He presented photos of his trip during the afternoon service on December 19th (left).

We were also joined by Missionary Bill Hardecker and his boys (below right).



Mark & Amanda Reeves attended services over the holidays as they visited with the Gagnon Family.





Pastor Cas Reeves

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." (2 Peter 1:20)

There are great blessings to be found in the knowledge of God. Grace and peace are just two of those blessings. Salvation is another with the promise of finding the knowledge of God. *"If thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;...if thou criest after knowledge;...If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God"* (Proverbs 2:1-5).

The knowledge of God is something Christians are expected to have. Paul admonishes the church at Corinth to *"awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame"* (1 Corinthians 15:34).

Christian, if you want to understand the knowledge of God, you must *"study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"* (2 Timothy 2:15). You can do this by bringing your mind under Christ's discipline; *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 2:5). *"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ"* (2 Corinthians 10:5).

To the Romans, Paul wrote, *"O the depth of the riches both of wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out"* (Romans 11:33). But God has shared with us the secret of finding the deep riches of his knowledge. We find it written to the Hebrew Christians; *"For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil"* (Hebrews 5:13-14).

When God shares truth with his children He expects them by true faith to believe it and to follow it in obedience through use. When that happens the Believer will find an alertness to the knowledge of God and many rich blessings. - CAR

QUOTES FROM THE PAST



Samuel Adams
1722-1803
Founding Father

"How strangely will the Tools of a Tyrant pervert the plain Meaning of Words!"

BBC/BBTS 2021-22 SCHEDULE

January 17-21, 2022

Module

Heritage Baptist Church, Endicott, NY
Alleged Errors in KJV

January 24, 2022

12th BBTS Spring Semester Begins

February 28-March 4

Module

Bible Baptist Church, Cromwell
Greek Text of II Timothy 1-4

April 15, 2022

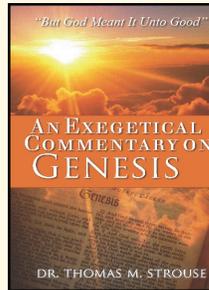
12th Annual BBTS Spring Lecture Series

May 15, 2022

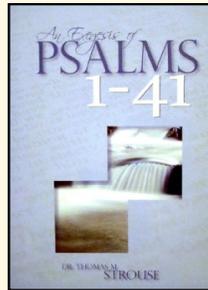
12th Annual BBTS Commencement Service

THE BOOK CORNER

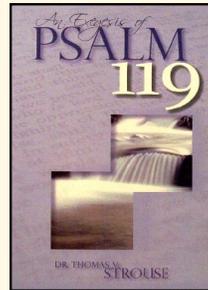
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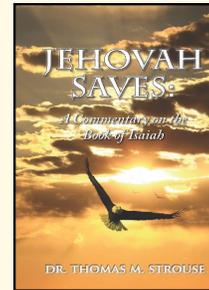
Genesis
\$20.00



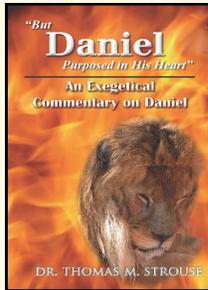
Psalms 1-41
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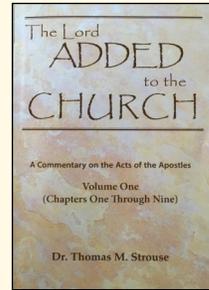
Psalm 119
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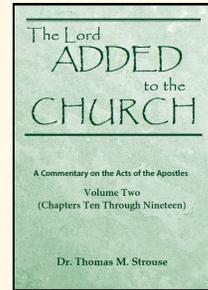
Isaiah
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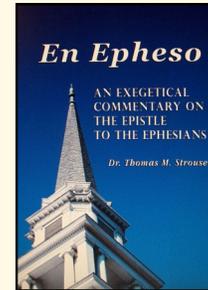
Daniel
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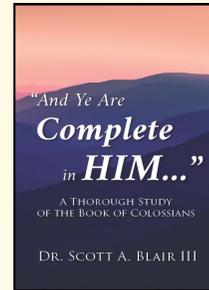
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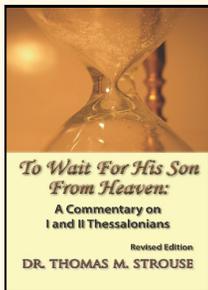
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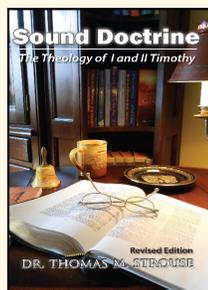
Ephesians
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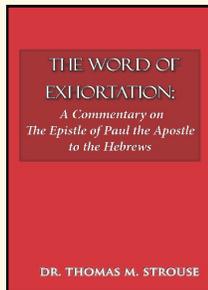
Colossians
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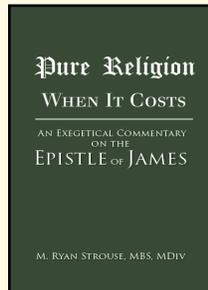
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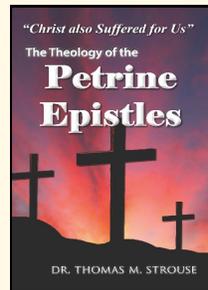
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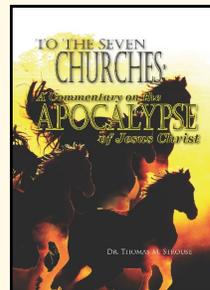
Hebrews
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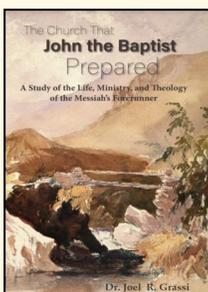
James
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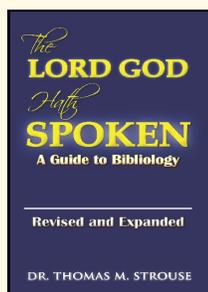
1 & 2 Peter
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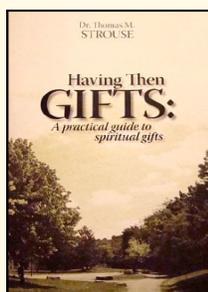
Revelation
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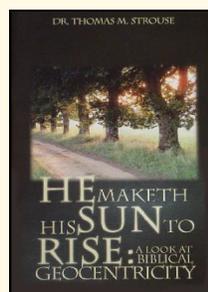
John the Baptist
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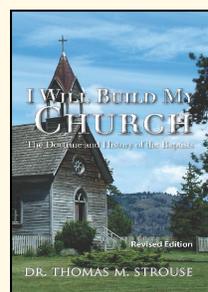
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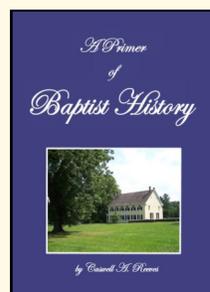
Spiritual Gifts
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Geocentricity
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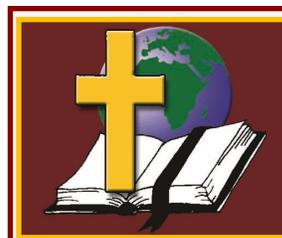
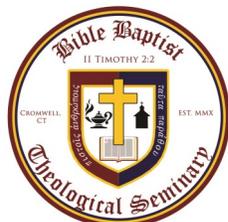


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