



# BBC UPDATE

***"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21)***

Dr. Thomas Strouse



Dr. Thomas Strouse had been active in Christian service in several churches in central CT most of his adult life. Please remember to pray for his widow, Sue Pierpont.

## Article

### ***"Heaven is a Wonderful Place"***

The Apostle Paul made the authoritative statement *"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain"* (Phil. 1:21). Why is death *"gain"* for the Christian? In fact, the Apostle declared that being with Christ is *"far better."*<sup>2</sup> Scripture gives several reasons that death is *"gain"* for the Christian.

#### **I. The First Reason is that the Christian is in the Presence of the Lord.**

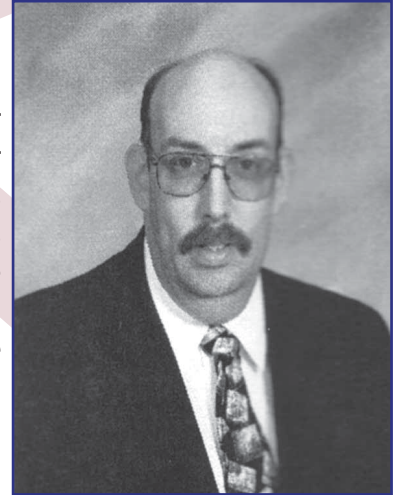
- A. The Apostle Paul asseverated this truth, saying, *"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord"* (II Cor. 5:6-8). The verb *"are at home"* (ἐνδημέω) is the same as *"to be present"* (ἐνδημέω), indicating that the believer *"is present at home with the Lord."*
- B. When the Apostle John enacted the rapture in his vision, he found himself in the third heaven with the Lord Who was on His throne (Rev. 4:1 ff.). He affirmed, saying, *"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth"* (Rev. 5:6). David recognized this truth as well, saying, *"The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men"* (Ps. 11:4).

#### **II. The Second Reason is that the Christian is in the Place of the Lord.**

- A. The Lord Jesus Christ promised His disciples that He would go and prepare a place (τόπος) with many mansions (μοναὶ πολλαί) for them. He said, *"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"* (Jn. 14:2-3). Assumed in His leaving would include His redemptive work on the cross, allowing for the preparation of the New Jerusalem which would have included His shed blood (Heb. 12:24; 9:11-14).

<sup>1</sup> The noun κέρδος refers to anything naturally or supernaturally advantageous. It also refers to Paul's supposed gain as an un-regenerated Jew climbing the ladder of prominence (Phil. 3:7), and to *"filthy lucre"* (Tit. 1:11).

<sup>2</sup> He actually used the rare triple comparative (πολλῷ μᾶλλον κρείσσον) meaning literally *"very much better."* The Geneva Bible (1560) translated the Greek as the superlative *"best of all."*



Brother Gary Pierpont

# ARTICLE

Continued from Page 1

Article

2

"Heaven Is a Wonderful Place..."

- B. Scripture described this place as **"Paradise"** (παράδεισος).<sup>3</sup> For instance, the Lord Jesus promised the believing thief on the cross, saying, *"Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise"* (Lk. 23:43). Paul averred that he had his out-of-body experience, from the Lystra stoning (Acts 14:19-20), in *"paradise,"* saying, *"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."* (II Cor. 12:2-4). Moreover, the Lord Jesus Christ declared to the believing church members at Ephesus, saying, *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."* (Eph. 2:7).
- C. Scripture also described this place as a **"City."** For instance, Abraham *"looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God"* (Heb. 11:10). Paul taught that this city was the prepared place, saying, *"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city"* (Heb. 11:16). He then described the current inhabitants of the city, saying, *"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel"* (Heb. 12:22-24; cf. also 13:14). Giving a brief look into the spiritual realm, Paul declared that the angels, the Book of Life, the God the Judge of all, the Old Testament saints, the Lord Jesus, and His blood, presently inhabit *"the heavenly Jerusalem."* The Lord Jesus promised to the believing church member, saying, *"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name"* (Rev. 3:12). Finally, the Apostle John revealed many details about this wonderful city of paradise called the new Jerusalem, saying, *"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband"* (Rev. 21:2; cf. 3-22:5).

### III. The Third Reason is that the Christian is with the People of the Lord.

- A. The Lord has separated the resting place of His saints from the abode of the deceased wicked. For instance, Scripture declared that *"Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people"* (Gen. 25:8). Likewise, the same terminology applies to Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 35:29 and 49:33). Believing Lazarus joined Abraham's people, as Scripture declared, saying, *"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried"* (Lk. 16:22).
- B. The redeemed of all the ages will gather around the throne of the Lamb and sing praises unto Christ, as depicted in the Apocalypse. Scripture revealed this truth, saying, *"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is*

<sup>3</sup> Adam and Eve were placed in the paradise of God (Gen. 2:10 ff.), the Garden of "Eden" (עֵדֶן = eden > hedon [ism] > pleasure).

Continued on Page 3

*the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever" (Rev. 5:9-14).*

C. Surely, "heaven is a wonderful place." Make sure that for you *"to die is gain,"* by repenting of your sins (Lk. 13:3, 5) and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour (Rom. 10:13).

## New BBTS Student

Mr. Dileshu Edwards is the newest BBTS seminarian, having moved temporary to CT for the spring semester. He is from Uniontown, PA, and recently joined the membership of BBC. Pray for him and his studies.



*Mr. Dileshu Edwards, temporarily studying for his degree from BBTS in Cromwell, CT*

## 2014 BBTS Spring Semester Class Schedule

### **Mondays**

<i>Greek I</i>	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
<i>Greek II</i>	11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
<i>Greek Proficiency</i>	6:00 PM - 7:00 PM
<i>Hebrew VIII</i>	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

### **Wednesdays**

<i>1 &amp; 2 Peter</i>	8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
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### **Thursdays**

<i>History of Christian Doctrine</i>	6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
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### **Fridays**

<i>New Testament Introduction</i>	9:00 AM - Noon
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### **BBTS On-line**

BBTS Classes will be available for viewing beginning February 3. Visit

<http://www.bbc-cromwell.org/seminary.shtml>

for more information.

## BBTS Spring Schedule

January 27, 2014

**BBTS Fall Semester Begins**

March 10-14, 2014

**HBTS Modules - Endicott, NY**

"I and II Peter" (TMS)

"Hebrew" (JWS)

April 18, 2014

**BBTS Spring Lecture Series**

"The Book of Revelation"

**BBTS Graduation**

May 18, 2014, 1:30 PM

See [www.bbc-cromwell.org](http://www.bbc-cromwell.org)

for more information



# DEVOTIONAL CORNER

## Sweet Savour

*"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish"*

**2 Corinthians 2:15**

God's word tells us, that we who are Christians, are "a sweet savour of Christ." To grasp the understanding of this phrase, let us first examine



Pastor Cas Reeves

the word. The word phrase, "sweet savour" is the Greek word "euodia" derived from "eu" meaning "good" and the word "ozo" meaning "to scent," involving an ill odor "to stink." The phrase "sweet savour" refers to a "good fragrance."

The first time we find this word phrase in the Bible is just following the Great Flood. *"And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a sweet savour"* (Genesis 8:20-21). Because it was an acceptable and pleasing offering unto the Lord, *"the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;*

*neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease"* (Genesis 8:21-22). Here the "sweet savour" of a man's acceptable offering is coupled with God's grace, mercy and promises.

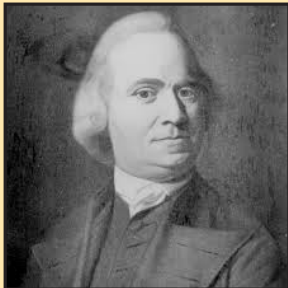
Again, we see this word phrase emerge with the offerings and sacrifices under the Mosaic Law. *"And thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: it is a burnt offering unto the LORD: it is a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD"* (Exodus 29:18). Note, this is the offering God commanded, this is the acceptable offering, no other offering would do, which God did not give instruction for. And God said of this offering it was a "sweet savour" to Him.

Our text says "we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ." In other words, God considers us the acceptable and "sweet savour" of Christ. We are the "good fragrance" of Christ to the saved and the perishing. We are God's official and acceptable "aroma" of heaven's sacrifice, Jesus Christ. Does our life represent Christ? Is it a "sweet savour" of Christ? -CAR

### Quotes From the Past:

#### Samuel Adams, 1722-1803

Founding Father, "Father of the American Revolution"



Samuel Adams

*"Among the natural rights of the colonists are these: First a right to life, secondly to liberty, and thirdly to property; together with the right to defend them in the best manner they can."*

## LADIES MEETING

### The Fourth Annual BBC

# Ladies' Fellowship & Tea

Saturday,  
March 8, 2014

*Let your light so shine before men,  
that they may see your good works,  
and glorify your Father which is in  
heaven. Matthew 5:16*

Ladies Meeting

5

Announcement



MRS. PATTY HERR,  
GUEST SPEAKER

*You are invited to join the Ladies of Bible Baptist Church as they host Fourth Annual Ladies' Fellowship & Tea from 10 AM to 1 PM.*

*Mrs. Patty Herr, wife of Pastor Daniel Herr (Chester Baptist Church, Chester, MA) will share her testimony. The fellowship will include congregational singing, special music, testimonies, and a brunch.*

*Please RSVP with the number of Ladies attending by March 1 to [drtms\\_bbts@juno.com](mailto:drtms_bbts@juno.com)*



**BIBLE**  
BAPTIST CHURCH

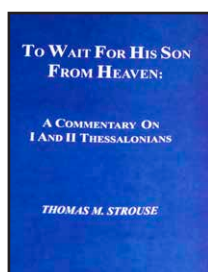
**Bible Baptist Church**  
40 Country Squire Road  
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860-613-2096  
[www.bbc-cromwell.org](http://www.bbc-cromwell.org)



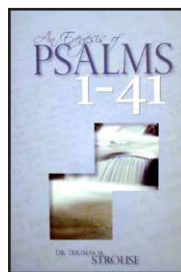
# THE BOOK CORNER

## The Book Corner

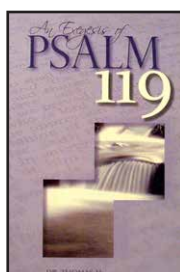
These Books may be purchased  
through **Bible Baptist Church**:  
40 Country Squire Rd.  
Cromwell, CT 06416  
860-229-5387



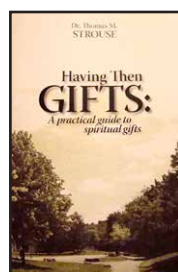
I & II Thessalonians  
\$10.00



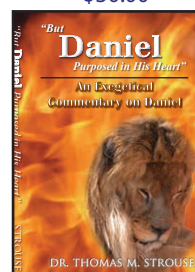
Psalms 1 - 41  
\$20.00



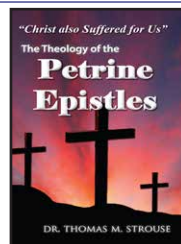
Psalm 119  
\$20.00



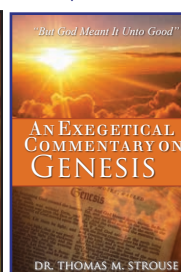
Spiritual Gifts  
\$8.00



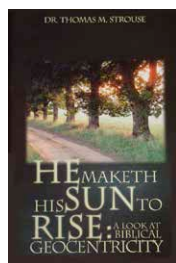
Daniel  
\$20.00



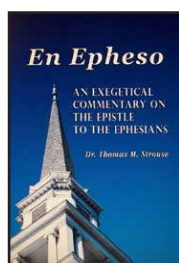
Peter  
\$20.00



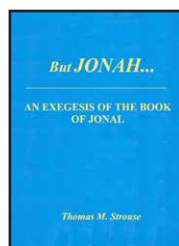
Genesis  
\$20



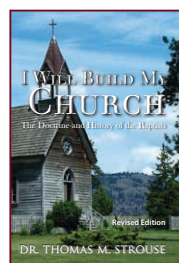
Geocentricity  
\$10.00



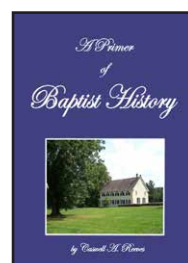
En Epheso  
\$20.00



Jonah  
\$10.00



I Will Build My Church  
\$15.00



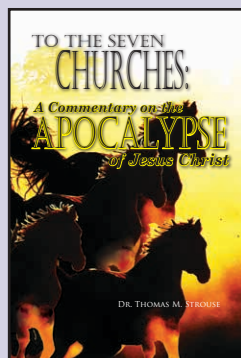
A Primer of Baptist History  
\$20.00



The Lord God Hath Spoken  
\$15.00

## New Revelation Commentary Now Available

Dr. Thomas M. Strouse has completed his latest book: *Unto the Seven Churches: A Commentary on the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ* (1022 pages). The book may be purchased for \$30.00.



## Save the Date!!

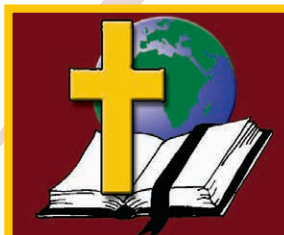
### 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Lecture Series "The Book of Revelation"

Friday, April 18th  
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM



If you have any news for the next issue of the BBC Update, please send to the Editor, Cas Reeves, at either

bbts@stny.rr.com  
hbc5923@stny.rr.com



## Bible Baptist Theological Seminary A ministry of Bible Baptist Church

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