

# BULLETIN

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

P.O. BOX 1609  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91386

[www.seedandbread.org](http://www.seedandbread.org)

Otis Q. Sellers, Founder

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JANE SELLERS HANCOCK

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## Updates from Rusty Hancock

I recently came across a memo dated May 16, 2004, written by our past Executive Director, the late David R. Hetteema. In the memo, Dave fretted about the future and viability of The Word of Truth Ministry. It had been 12 years since my grandfather passed away, and the Ministry was floundering. Dave was pretty much a "one man show." He was concerned that if anything happened to him that the Ministry would just fade away. Dave had told me several times that our audio recorder at the time, Harry Wells, would scold him that we had SO MUCH to offer students of the Word, yet we did so little to spread our information out.

Dave asked, "Where do we go from here?" The Ministry needed volunteers to step up and help out. Dave felt the Ministry needed the following four components: 1) Bible Study, Future Directions. 2) Word of Truth Ministry Daily Operations. 3) Written Communications. 4) Internet Communications. Dave said not only did we need volunteers, but supporting helpers too. "Remember, nobody should be the 'Lone Ranger' in this future group either."

And finally Dave wrote, "If it appears that responses won't cover our need, it will then likely become necessary to expand this search, and very possibly change the headquarters of this Ministry to another location, where there are larger numbers of supporters." Dave ended the memo by stating that he would be resigning from his position as Executive Director within the next four months. He would be happy to help train, coach, and advise—but no longer would he "do."

Fortunately for the Ministry, Dave did not follow through on his pronouncement to resign. He continued on, guided the Ministry, and started to build it back up. Volunteers did come forward. Gwen Staiger in Texas stepped up to take care of the audio recordings (after the death of Harry Wells). The Hammond Family (Milt, Bob, Joanne, and Mark) became the backbone of the Ministry for the next ten years. Of course, Jane Hancock was always there. Others participated, but getting our message out remained difficult.

Unfortunately, Dave's health began to decline. It was right about this time that some glorious events began to happen to the Ministry. Although the headquarters remains in Southern California, Dave was somewhat prophetic in his statement that we may need to relocate "this Ministry to another location, where there are larger numbers of supporters." My grandfathers' base had always been in the

Great Lakes area. That base is now becoming the backbone of the Ministry.

In the fall of 2013, a Bible conference was held in Pasadena, California. One of the main focuses of that Conference was for the Board of The Word of Truth Ministry to meet Nathan Johnson, an inspired student and teacher of the Word, from Minnesota. We had always been aware of Nathan's acute insight, understanding, and teachings of Otis Q. Sellers. Nathan flew to California, with his cousin Andy Brown (from Wisconsin), and they both spoke and taught at the Conference.

Nathan had a web page "Precepts," dedicated to teaching the Word. He also had a fledgling radio program, "Knowing God in the Word." We quickly realized that these two ministries needed to join together, as the message for both was driven by the same principle of rightly dividing the word of truth. Shortly thereafter this wonderful merger took place.

With The Word of Truth Ministry sponsoring Nathan's radio program, "Knowing God in the Word" has expanded from its original airing of a single broadcast in Minneapolis to 11 different cities throughout the United States (see enclosed listing).

Dave's four components included Bible Study, Future Directions. Nathan, Andy, Louis Tonetti, Bob Juneau and others have all stepped forward and become vital parts of a team. A team dedicated to continually studying God's word, and getting that message out to all who will hear it.

Another component was Daily Operations. My retirement from the police department could not have been timed any better, as I was able to transition into my new life as the office manager for the Word of Truth. I feel I have been truly blessed to have this responsibility given to me. To be able to assist in any way, to keep my grandpa's teachings available to all, is extremely heartwarming.

The third component was Written Communications. Seed & Bread and the Bulletin are published on a quarterly basis. Plans are in action now to publish bound volumes of the Special Studies written by OQS decades ago. (All are available on our website, [www.seedandbread.org](http://www.seedandbread.org) for free.)

And the final component was Internet Communications. Virtually every written word of OQS has been digitized and placed on our web page. All 570 tape-recorded messages are on the web page too. Additional teachings and Internet access can also be obtained through Nathan's websites for "Knowing God in the Word"

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## Grace To Help

By Nathan C. Johnson

We are probably all aware that it is by grace that God saves us through faith in this, the dispensation of the grace of God. That is Paul's clear statement, "*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast*" (Ephesians 2:8-9, *New King James Version* throughout). Yet we would also note that Paul opens and closes all of his letters, written mostly to believers, by wishing them grace. We see this in his last words written to us today in 2 Timothy 4:22, "*The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.*" It is clear that Paul also considers grace to be an ongoing actor in the life of a believer, not just something we receive at salvation.

In 1 Corinthians 15:10, Paul gives grace much credit in his own life. He says, "*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*" Paul claims that it was by the grace of God that he labored more abundantly than all his fellow apostles. He knew that grace can be a great motivator, as he himself had experienced it. Moreover, Christ Himself had taught him the sufficiency of His grace. In 2 Corinthians 12:9, when Paul had pled with the Lord three times to remove his "thorn in the flesh," the Lord had replied, "*My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.*" The Lord expressed confidence to Paul that His grace was what was needed to get Paul through the personal struggle of an ongoing health problem.

Paul is confident that grace can be a powerful force in the lives of others as well. When writing to his young son in the faith, Timothy, Paul urges him in 2 Timothy 2:1, "*You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*" In speaking to the Ephesian elders in Miletus, Paul says to them in Acts 20:32, "*So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*" Here Paul is speaking to men who are manifestly believers, so he is not commending salvation to them by any means. He is leaving them, and to keep them in his absence he commends them to the word of God's grace. He believes this grace is capable both of building them up and of giving them a portion among all those set apart. The author of Hebrews expresses the former sentiment in Hebrews

13:9. "*Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.*" The clear teaching is that it is grace, not external laws about things like foods, that truly establishes the heart or inner being of a person.

As far as grace giving an inheritance, Paul claims in 2 Thessalonians 2:16, "*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace.*" It is by grace that we have a good expectation for our portion with God in the future. It is not because we have done such a great job earning it or deserving it, but merely because of His grace that we can be assured of our future portion.

Paul also urges believers to speak in a way that imparts grace to each other. In Ephesians 4:29, he says, "*Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.*" He ties edification, building each other up, and grace together.

In the general epistles too we read that God gives grace for more than salvation purposes. James 4:6 says, "*But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.*" In closing out his second letter in 2 Peter 3:18, Peter urges his readers, "*... but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*" It is clear that Peter too views grace as a benefit that all his readers need more and more of in their lives.

No wonder, then, that the author of Hebrews urges his readers in Hebrews 4:16, "*Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*" We all need whatever help we can get from God. Do we believe that grace will truly be a help and be sufficient for us, or are we quite convinced it will merely leave us in the lurch? One thing is certain: it will help if we make ourselves strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Grace really is the necessary and powerful thing we have found it to be throughout these verses, and it will indeed be a great help to those who believe in Christ by faith. God has commended us to His grace, and we can be certain it will be a help indeed.



## Who Are the 'Children of God'?

By M.B. Hammond and Nathan C. Johnson

What do people mean when they say that you are part of "God's children"? Preachers often identify their "flock" as "children of God." However, what is really meant by the expression "children of God"? What does God's Word say about this subject?

Who are the "children of God"? We look to the New Testament for our answers. John 1:12 says (*KJV* used throughout), "*But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name.*" Oddly enough the Greek word used for "sons" is *teknon*, which means "children." John 1:13 indicates that "children of God" are produced directly from God: "*Which were born (generated), not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*"

It is a great act of love on God's part to make us children of God. 1 John 3:1 declares, "*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.*" Again the Greek for "sons" is *teknon*, which means "children." No one can disagree that it was a loving act of God to make children out of people like us! Romans 8:16 states, "*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*" It is the Holy Spirit, and not any membership role at a church that shows you are part of the "flock," that bears witness that God views you as a child. Though the world might not see the testimony of the Spirit as to who the children of God are, yet His children still shine out as lights to this dark world, as Philippians 2:15 tells us: "*That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.*" Again "sons" is *teknon*.

From this Philippians passage, we see that we are the "children of God" in this Dispensation of Grace. And such a title is most significant for those of us who stand before our God in a meaningful submissiveness and common humility toward our magnificent God. The first chapter of Ephesians gives some more insight as to our being "children of God" in this present dispensation. Starting with verse 3, it says, "*Blessed (Gk.-eulogia, exalted) be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed (exalts) us with all spiritual blessings (exaltation) in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, . . . to the praise of the Glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted*

*in the beloved (One). In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace, wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence*" (Eph. 1:3-8). "Children" in this quotation means being given a place of "sonship" in the future Kingdom of God from our Lord Jesus Christ.

The next verse reads like the Apostle John is talking about "children of God." 1 John 2:1-2 says, "*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. . . . And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*" Now we know that being called "children of God" is not an exaggeration or boast caused by pride. We have been called this because God knows that we are the important out-called group who can say truly, "Though we have not seen Him with our eyes, yet we have believed that Jesus Christ is our Savior. And we know He gave us the faith to believe and the message to believe" (refer to John 20:27-31). As Ephesians 2:8-10 says, "*By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*"

Moreover, as children of God we have a glorious future. 1 John 3:2 reads, "*Beloved, now are we the sons (teknon) of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.*" This "appearing" of the children of God is the same as Paul speaks of as ". . . the glorious appearing of the great God and (even) our Savior Jesus Christ" in Titus 2:13. And in Colossians 3:4, he states, "*When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.*" This is the glorious expectation of the children of God.

We are sincerely "children of God"—ever-learning, ever-perceptive like young children who are ever-ready to open their hearts to new things, such as believing and knowing that the Lord Jesus Christ is truly our God and Savior.

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### Updates From Rusty Hancock

(<http://www.knowinggodintheword.org/>) and "Precepts" (<https://precepts.wordpress.com/>).

I thank all who have contributed with their hard work, prayers, donations, encouragement, time, and effort. We will continue to reach others as we pray for, and await, God's Kingdom here on earth.

## His Grace and Love Are Enough

By Joanne L.H. Johnson

Have you ever been angry with someone who has put you down unfairly and accused you of something that was not altogether true? We all get accused from time to time and feel such accusations to be really unfair. But, how does God in Christ see all these things? How would He like us to deal with these accusations and other unfair obstacles?

Remember how Jesus Christ was accused by the Pharisees when He was on earth and how He fired back at them the TRUTH (John 8:39-58)? And how many times the Apostle Paul was accused by the Jewish leaders falsely and how he appealed to Christ for his help (Acts 21:27-40; 22:1-16)?

God in Christ's grace and love are enough for us all. God does see many things done to many people unfairly. Nobody can hide from Him. God knows everything about us. I believe in the one true living God, even our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. In spite of my sometimes unanswered prayers in this dispensation, I know in my heart that trusting in Him is the way to go (Psa. 71:5; the whole chapter is worth reading).

I am a "child of God" (John 1:12-13) and that means that I do not need to necessarily "fire back" about what a great person I am to others, and definitely NOT to God. He basically knows my constitution; that I am wonderfully made up of the breath of life that He has given me (and us all) at birth, and, also, a wonderful body given me by my mother, again, with God's help. However, I am basically just composed of dust—I can die at any time and that would be the end of me, with my spirit (breath of life) going back to God who gave it to me in the first place (Eccl. 12:7). After my death I have the promise of resurrection into the future Kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15:20-22).

Instead of sustaining myself in the face of attacks by thoughts of what a great person I am, it is God's grace and love that should sustain me, even as these have sustained me throughout my life. Without these two important things I would be a wandering individual without someone or somebody greater than myself to have faith and believe in.

Satan's temptations to return evil with evil as contrasted to God's goodness (grace and love) are reflected in the following verses: I Thessalonians 5:15; Romans 12:17-21.

One way to respond to unfair accusations is grace. It is very important that we define our terms regarding "grace," which in the New Testament (N.T.) is from the Greek word *charis*. The late Otis Q. Sellers defines "grace" as "a love and favor [from God] to the undeserving." We might even be more reinforced if as "children of God" we become very humble in God's sight; like children who are open to new ideas and information in the future Kingdom of God (see article on *Who Are the "Children of God"?*

by M.B. Hammond and Nathan C. Johnson on Page 3). This is to be contrasted with today where we see or hear from people who are not very subservient and may try to impress others by "knowing it all." How much easier it would be if we were all humble!

Another better way to respond to unfair treatment is love. Scripture says "God is love" (1 John 4:8). Sellers' definition of "love" is: "Love is that principle or attitude that seeks that highest good for the one that is loved." We can feel God's gracious love when we become down and out. We know that our Savior will help us through all of the awful things out there that get "thrown our way" from time to time. In the N.T., "love" is translated from two Greek words: *agape*, which is a "love" that is offered without condition or reservation; and *phileo*, which means "a strong friendship or brotherly love."

God's grace and love do wonders for many people who are believers, as well as those who are NOT believers in this time of the Dispensation of Grace. God seems to be making a record of this time period just for Himself, when He is allowing evil men to run their course. Particularly, He is giving everybody a choice of believing in Him or NOT believing in Him. However, those not choosing to believe in God after being resurrected may find that they are delivered to destruction, as it says in John 3:16-21.

In the future Kingdom of God upon resurrection, when men's hearts and minds will be changed, they will all be obeying the Most High God, as recorded in many Old Testament Scriptures (for instance in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and the Minor Prophets. Also see Nathan C. Johnson's *Grace To Help* on Page 2). God's grace and love will be different then, with God's love contingent upon obeying God's new laws at that future time. Hopefully, men will be following God's statutes "to the letter" if they want to live in this time period, again upon their resurrection from the dead. If they do not obey God's laws and statutes, then they will be consigned to "hell" or the "burning rubbish heap" (Gk. *-gehenna*; Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5).

Grace embodies all of God's love for us. Consequently, I do not need to take my anger or frustration out on anybody who has wronged me, even though I am imperfect (refer to Ephesians and Colossians for behavioral guidelines written for this dispensation). And, remember, only *God is perfect* (Psa 18:30). Now, with all of my human shortcomings, God's infinite grace and love are really enough for me.

*Thy Word have I hid (treasured) in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.*

*Psalm 119:11, KJV*