

Six months ago, my good friend, and spiritual father in the faith (I'll refer to him as J.P.), wanted to ask me a question. He would always ask me questions to stir my understanding of the Scriptures. It was he who gave me the Gospel found in 1Cor15:1-4, and nurtured me in the Word of God throughout our almost forty-year relationship. But this time I was afraid his question was one I didn't want to hear.

J.P. and I had lost touch for a while. It had been a couple of years since we had spoken. The last time we did speak, he said something about a glorious appearing, and resurrection. I had no idea what he was talking about. I had heard only that he was reading and studying Bullinger. My other traditionalist Mid-Acts brethren had said J.P. had gone off the rails and was in dangerous waters. In addition, I had just completed a fifty-eight-hour Bible Institute course given by a well-known Mid-Acts teacher. An entire class was taught on the dangers of Bullinger, and the Acts 28 position. Armed with what I thought I knew; I anticipated J. P's question. He asked, "If you could ask the Apostle Paul one question about the great division in the Church which His Body, what would it be?" I had no idea there was a great division but I knew what he was getting at, so, I answered, "It would be, when did the Church which His Body actually begin?" J.P. was shocked that I answered his question correctly. I believe that was the last time I felt smart. Little did I know what lay ahead of me.

At the time, I had no idea this brother had been praying to God to open someone's heart to the truths relating to the Acts 28 position. My prayers were more about missing something, and almost a deadness in my studies, and a sense of distance from my God. Soon after our conversation, J.P. started sending audio studies by Brian Kelson. The Bible became alive to me, and an excitement level I had not known for almost forty years of traditional learning. Like many others who have testified before me, my appetite for the Word of God was insatiable. I studied every chance I got. My beloved brother J.P was amazed that I grasped the teaching so quickly. How could I not? Like the children of Israel in the wilderness, I had been wandering with the chains of orthodoxy around me for forty years. I was finally free to enter into the land of the living who knew the true meaning of Eph 1:17. I humbly bow my knees in prayer to my God, and Savior, Jesus Christ with praise and thanksgiving, for it is truly His work in me as promised in Philippians 1:6. My schedule does not give me much free time so I decided to study at night by listening to the many audio lessons, and very early in the morning reading the many books available on the Acts 28 website. A Bible teacher once taught that when dealing with people about what they believe, and what God's Word actually says, you need to use caution. He said, "When you take away a belief a person may have, you need to replace it with something better." Seeing Acts 28 as the true dispensational dividing line for we believers today is truly that something better.

Many years ago, I had the good pleasure, along with my brother J.P. of sitting in the living room of CR Stam. We were new to 'right division', and 'Pastor' Stam was so very gracious. He gave much time to us discussing his book, Things That Differ. At that time, I thought it was a classic. The first book I read from the Acts 28 site was, The Appearing of Christ, by Brian Kelson. I poured over almost every verse given, comparing Scripture with Scripture. It took me almost three months of study to complete, and I was amazed how clear and orderly my understanding of God's Word became. The Appearing of Christ gave me a foundation to build upon. I truly believe every sincere Christian should have this book in their hands as a help in studying God's Word.

In closing, I have found that the word 'study' of 2Tim 2:15 means hard, but very rewarding work. For me, it is like peeling an onion, the more I peel, the more truth is discovered. And, like peeling an onion, the study of God's Word can sometimes bring tears of joy, or sorrow. The sorrow in knowing that I have wasted so much time in my life following traditionalism, and the knowledge that I taught countless people to do the same. Our Apostle warns us in Colossians 2:8 about the 'traditions of men'. He further

warns us in Ephesians 6:11 against the wiles of the devil. Please notice the word wiles is plural. Following the teaching of men (traditionalism), is just one of his devices, yet possibly the most destructive in the life of a believer. If possible, I would ask the forgiveness from all whom I led astray. My only solace is that like Paul, (1 Tim 1:13) I can claim that I did it ignorantly in unbelief, and lay claim to the mercy that is freely given me in Christ. And, now I can assuredly press on for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Finally, I comprehend what my beloved brother meant when he spoke of the glorious appearing our Lord and Savior, and the blessed truth in the hope of the resurrection. As a wise brother once said, "the baton is now passed on to me." I pray now with our Apostle Paul that I may hold forth the word of Life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain. (Phil 2:16)

Maranatha,

David

P.S. I would like to add this post script concerning my wife. I did not mention her in the above testimonial, but it was her being the rock of our marriage that kept us going. For forty-two years she has been a tremendous helpmeet to me and loves our Savior with undying devotion and praise. She worked right along side of me in teaching children, a bus ministry, a so much more. I never cease to thank God for her.