



# BBC UPDATE

## THE SERVANTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS?



Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

### INTRODUCTION

Freedom is a great blessing in life. Everyone has the desire to be free from the control of others, whether personal, social, political, or financial. The Saviour of the world made the profound statement, saying, *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (Jn. 8:32) and *“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed”* (Jn. 8:36). The Lord Jesus Christ gives true freedom to enslaved sinners through His word of truth. The greatest freedom that the sons of Adam can experience in this life is the freedom from sin. Paul summed up the practical and theological truth of spiritual freedom, saying, *“Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness”* (Rom. 6:18). Seemingly, American Christianity which has enjoyed many freedoms has in part perverted the spiritual message of freedom and interpreted it to mean “freedom to be worldly”! Rather than being *“the servants of righteousness,”* many have become “the servants of worldliness.” Several developments have exacerbated this teaching and practice. Many pastors and therefore churches do not teach or promote the doctrine of righteous sanctification. Rather, in order to fill pews the message is “come as you are” and “stay as you are”—warm bodies at the expense of godliness. Another development is the scores of Bible college graduates who were trained in para-church ministries with man-made convictions now reject all godly restrictions in sanctification, and seek the numerous “grace” (freedom to be carnal) churches and ministries movement!

### THE SERVANTS TO WHAT?



Since Christians are “made free” to be *“the servants of righteousness,”* are they free to worldliness? May *“the servants of righteousness”* think worldly, talk worldly, dress worldly, behave worldly, drink alcohol, pray worldly prayers, imbibe in the love of mammon, use worldly Bible translations, and attend and become members of worldly churches? Worldly American churches of all stripes allow all the aforementioned ungodly vices! Is it righteous for the Christian to think like the world with plans, calculations, motivations, and manipulations when the Apostle Paul said, *“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”* (Phil. 4:8)? Is it righteous for the

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Christian to use the gutter language and minced oaths of the world? Again, Paul averred, saying, *“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice”* (Eph. 4:29-31). What does the Holy Ghost think of the professed Christian’s language in private or public?

Since Christians are *“made free”* to be *“the servants of righteousness,”* are they free to worldliness in dress? Are Christian women free to wear tight-fitting and revealing garb which emphasizes the female anatomy and leaving little to the male imagination? Is it godly sanctification to entice purposefully men to lust after the feminine form? Is this the Christian freedom for *“the servants of righteousness”*? Is it godly to blur the distinction of genders or undermine Christian modesty? Is it godly for men to wear their hair long and dress in provocative garb? How many pastors know or preach about Paul’s injunctions concerning gender distinction in hair length, saying, *“Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering”* (I Cor. 11:14-15)? Is the Christian free to dress his or her body in pagan practices such as tattoos and body piercings? Should *“the servant of righteousness”* engrave a tattoo of the Cross or pierce the body with a Christian symbol, since Moses condemned paganism, saying, *“Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD”* (Lev. 19:28)? Should *“the servants of righteousness”* imbibe in the addiction of alcohol since the precious Lord Jesus condemned alcoholic drink (Prov. 23:29-31)? Should the Christian “throw back some cold ones” with his Christian buddies at the local bar? Should the servant of the righteous Christ enable the bartender to sin against Scripture, as Habakkuk warned, saying, *“Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness”* (Hab. 2:15)? Can the righteous follower of the Lord be filled with wine and filled with the Spirit at the same time, as the Apostle Paul denied, saying, *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;”* (Eph. 5:18)?

Since Christians are *“made free”* to be *“the servants of righteousness,”* are they free to pray worldly, selfish, and carnal prayers? Paul instructed *“the servant of righteousness,”* saying, *“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints”* (Eph. 6:18). Are Christians free to love mammon over God by pursuing finances at all costs, undermining the Lord’s Day and tithing? Paul warned all Christians, including pastors, saying, *“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows”* (I Tim. 6:10), and not to be *“greedy of filthy lucre”* (I Tim. 3:3; Tit. 1:11; Prov. 23:23). Are Christians free to use “adulterated scriptures” as manifested in the modern versions, which versions omit about 7% of the New Testament Greek Text? Even the dangerous *ESV*, the darling of spiritual pygmies, rendered the verse as “and, having been **set free from sin**, have become **slaves of**

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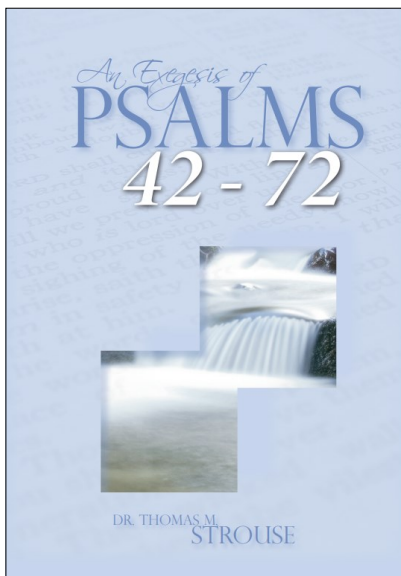
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**righteousness**” (Rom. 6:18)! Since Christians are “*made free*” to be “*the servants of righteousness,*” are they free to visit, attend, and become members of worldly or heretical churches which permit, condone, and promote all of the above carnal, worldly practices? Many American churches now have gone the route of becoming Christian community centers for the casual carnal Christian who needs social programs for every facet of life. America is no stronger spiritually than the churches which foster a weak, carnal version of “*righteousness.*” Carnal Christianity gives no spiritual remedy for the anemic morality and superficial spirituality for the fall of the United States of America! When freedom from sin is sacrificed on the altar of carnality, all other freedoms will dissipate!

### CONCLUSION

Although the professed proud and carnal Christian may attempt to rationalize or reject the scriptural challenges, Paul remonstrated, saying, “*For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth*” (II Cor. 13:8). The repentant sinner receives the righteousness of Christ, as Paul explained, saying, “*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*” (II Cor. 5:21). The Lord commanded through the Apostle Paul the sobering admonition: “*Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame*” (I Cor. 15:34)! Again, he admonished the six house churches in Rome (Rom. 16:1-16), saying, “*And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 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. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof***” (Rom. 13:11-14). This is the Lord’s message for 21<sup>st</sup> century American Christianity!



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### NEW BOOK

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The next commentary by Dr. Thomas Strouse on the Psalter will be available shortly. It is entitled *An Exegesis of Psalms 42-72* (452 pages; 934 footnotes) and will cost \$25.00. It focuses on two significant issues, namely the use of imprecatory Psalms, and the interpretation that Absalom and Ahithophel are in the background audience of many of these psalms.

His previous commentaries on *An Exegesis of Psalms 1-41* (2006) and *An Exegesis of Psalm 119* (2008) are still available.

## WEDDING

Pastor and Mrs. Darrell Nelson are glad to announce that BBC member Ms. Allayah Nelson married Mr. Marquis Burrell on Saturday, February 3, 2024.

The wedding was beautiful and honored the Lord.



## PRAYER REQUEST

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Gagnon and family would like to thank everyone for the cards, gifts, words of encouragement, and most importantly your prayers since Kirsten's diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. The treatment is ongoing and the doctors are optimistic, but *our* hope is in the Lord.

We kindly request that you continue come boldly unto the throne of grace on Kirsten's behalf, that she may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb 4:16)

*"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.*  
Psalm 23:6

## BBC/BBTS 2024 SCHEDULE

**February 26-March 1**  
**Philippines Module**  
Quezon City  
*Johannine Epistles*

**April 12**  
**BBTS Spring Lecture Series**  
*"Christian Suffering: Well Doing or Evil Doing"*

**May 18**  
**Bible Baptist Church**  
*Graduation Banquet*

**May 19**  
**Bible Baptist Church**  
*Commencement Service*

**May 27-31**  
**Ireland Module**  
Greek and Acts III

**June 3-7**  
**Community Baptist Church**  
Coopersburg, PA  
*Bibliology*

**July 22-26**  
**Plymouth, NH**  
*TBA*

**August 12-17**  
**Indonesia Module and Commencement**

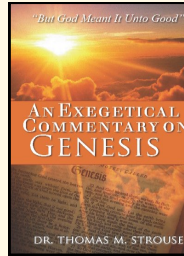
**September 23-27**  
**Bible Baptist Church**  
Nashua, NH  
*TBA*

**October 20-23**  
**Willow Grove Baptist Church**  
Waynesburg, PA  
*Timeless Truths Bible Conference*

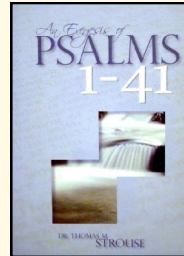
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# The Publication Page

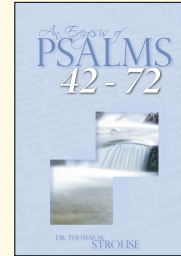
The books on this page may be purchased by contacting:  
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 860-229-5387  
 drtms\_bbts@juno.com



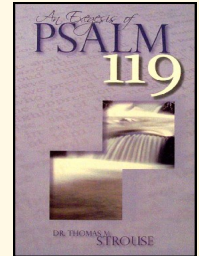
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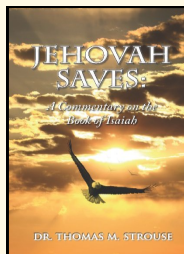
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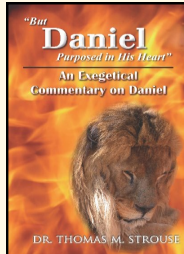
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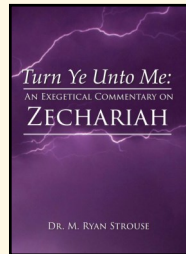
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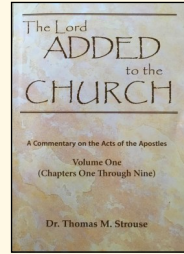
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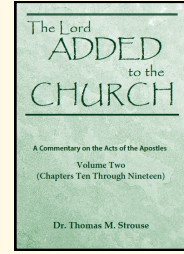
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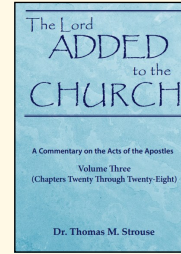
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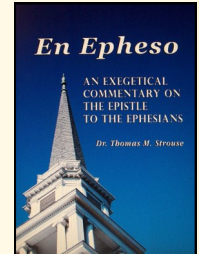
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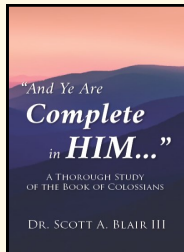
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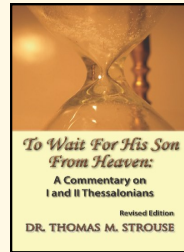
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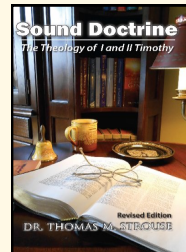
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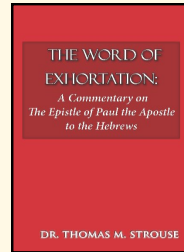
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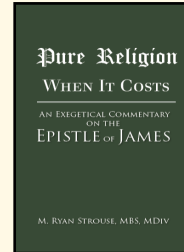
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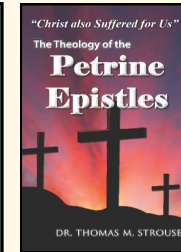
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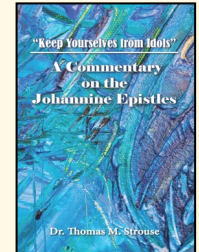
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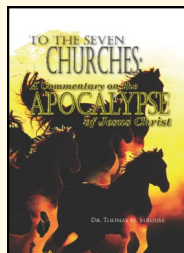
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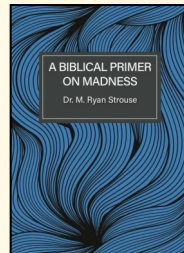
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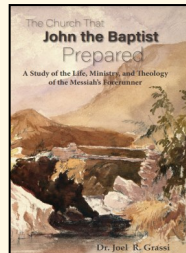
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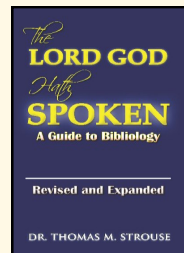
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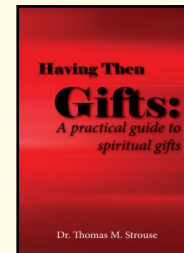
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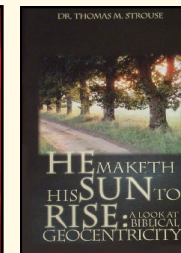
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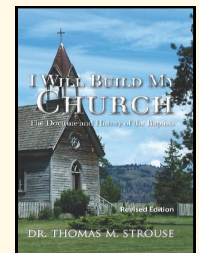
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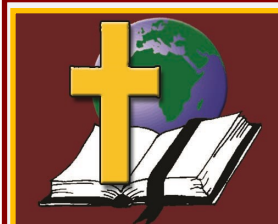


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