

# GRACE Great Good News!

May 2001

*I am growing to see that true transformation comes when people personally receive God's Word.  
God has lovingly created us to live by His revelations (dependence on Him) and not by information (independence from Him).  
My growing desire in teaching is to encourage people to learn to hear from God, not from me.  
I hope you hear His heart in this newsletter! Gregg*

Kay Arthur (*Precept Ministries*) has a passion to teach people all over the world to study the Bible for themselves. Following is her quote about Bible teachers Bill and Anabel Gillham at *Lifetime Guarantee*, a ministry in Dallas, TX ([www.lifetime.org](http://www.lifetime.org)) associated with *Christ Life Ministries* in Hendersonville, NC ([www.aelm.org](http://www.aelm.org)) where I help teach:

*"Every teaching we hear, we need to come back to this Book (the Bible),  
and we need to find out 'Is this what the whole counsel of God says?'  
And when you get into the whole counsel of God, you're going to see this is what Bill and Anabel are teaching.  
It's Christ in you. Christ is the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27)!"*

Kay Arthur teaches that the context of a set of Scriptures (the author's original purpose, the historical situation, and the theme of the entire Bible) is key to understanding the truth of Scriptures. My attempts to discover contexts using Bible handbooks were laborious and dry...until...**UNTIL GOD REVEALED TO ME THAT THE CONTEXT IS HIS HEART!**

And what is the ultimate context of all Scriptures, God's deepest heart? **THE FINISHED WORK OF THE RISEN CHRIST THROUGH THE CROSS!** And that's God's context (His truth) of my identity. My identity is not in what I do or don't do...my identity is the result of what Christ has DONE! He has forgiven me of ALL my sins, and IN CHRIST my sinful identity was crucified and I was re-born a new righteous identity! **IDENTITY IS DETERMINED BY BIRTH, NOT PERFORMANCE!** What Christ has done is FINISHED, and therefore, my identity is COMPLETE IN HIM (Colossians 2:10)!

With this ultimate context in my heart, the Bible has started coming alive to me! Previously, I typically isolated verses out of context, resulting in a perceived identity that was not true and that was based on my performance to certain guidelines (law). I tried to produce fruit for God! However, God wants us to bear fruit He produces (John 15:4-5)! *Oh, may we hear the heart of the Father regardless of our performance: **YOU ARE MY CHILD IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED!***

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In a Bible study I helped teach at *Christ Life Ministries* in late April, a woman said:  
*"God has given me a new set of glasses to see His Truth!"*

Also on behalf of *Christ Life Ministries*, I shared *Philippians 1:12-21* in a prison chapel service on May 17<sup>th</sup> to eighteen special men. The context of those verses is that Paul experienced Christ as his Life even as he was chained in a Roman prison. For Paul, it all comes down to: **FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST** (*Philippians 1:21*). We discussed other options that we try to substitute as "life" by filling in this blank, "For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_." Anything else in this blank besides CHRIST (for example, family, job, house, financial security, possessions, a sport, hobby, health, happiness, fame, retirement, church, ministry, freedom from prison, etc) represents an identity that never truly fulfills. Christ is the only true Life; anything else on earth that claims to offer life is really death in disguise. *Oh, may we see the majesty of Christ's life in and through us!*

#### GRACE NOTE

Living by law focuses me on my ability to hear from God.  
Living in grace focuses me on God's ability to speak (to reveal His heart) to me!