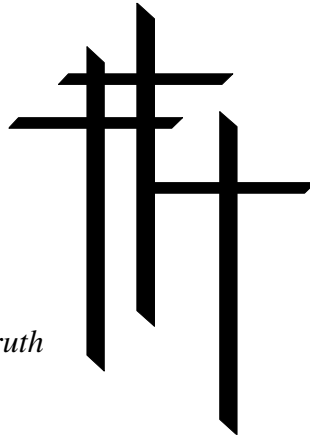


Timely Messenger



*Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth
Speaking the Truth in Love*

Volume 67 Nos. 1/2

January/February 2007

“YET NOT I, BUT ...”

By John D. LaVier

Twice the Apostle Paul uses this phrase, “Yet not I, but ...”. In his epistle to the Galatians he wrote:

“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” (Gal. 2:20)

This testimony of the great apostle belongs to all who have been saved and made

members of the Body of Christ, and identified with Him “who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification.” Each one can say, “I was crucified with Christ.” This is clearly brought out in Romans 6:3-4:

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into His death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the

glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

This applies to every believer, and the baptism mentioned has not one drop of water connected with it.

When Christ died on the cross He not only died for our sins, but we died with Him. His death was our death. His resurrection our resurrection, and now His life is our life. We reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, and by faith we can say, “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” This great truth is expressed in a separated life, a surrendered life, a life lived in the faith of the Son of God.

Once more Paul used “Yet not I, but ...” when he wrote to the Corinthians:

“But by the grace of God I am what I am; and the grace which was bestowed upon 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.” (1 Cor. 15: 10)

He had mentioned himself as a witness of Christ risen from among the dead. He saw the Lord, and his whole life was changed. He was as one born out of due season, a type of Israel's regeneration yet future, when "They shall look on Him whom they pierced." That great vision on the road to Damascus made of Paul not only a believer in the Deity and Messiahship of the Lord Jesus Christ, but he became the faithful servant of the Lord. It made him humble. Though he was by the will of God the great Apostle to the Gentiles, the one to whom was made known the truth of the mystery and to whom was given an abundance of revelations, yet he called himself "the least of the apostles" and "less than the least of all saints." He boasted that he had labored more abundantly than the other apostles, but he added, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." He ascribed it all, not to himself, but to the grace of God.

These two expressions, "yet not I, but Christ" and "yet not I, but the grace of

God," describe the entire ministry of Paul. Two things he magnified and glorified, extolled and exalted: Christ, and the grace of God. In all things, in all his messages and personal testimony, an exaltation of Christ and complete effacement of self are the great leading marks. He made his boast in Christ. He magnified Him and the grace of God which had been bestowed upon him.

How little of this self-effacement we see today. How many exalt themselves, boast of their attainments, their service, their ministry, their converts, instead of glorying in an all-sufficient Savior and the all-sufficient grace of God. The "Soli Deo Gloria," to God alone be the glory, is often forgotten. May the Lord help all of us in all our service for Him, of whatever nature it may be, to magnify Christ and the grace of God and to seek His glory only.

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ ... Gal. 6:14

MISSING ISSUE

Several of our readers have inquired recently about missing issues of the *Timely Messenger*. It was certainly nice to hear that this little Bible study paper was missed, at least by some on our mailing list.

Due to some pressing family issues that required my time and attention, as well as a recent sinus infection, I was simply unable to get out the January 2007 issue and am late getting out the February issue as well. I apologize for this situation, but it simply could not be helped.

We do appreciate the support and encouragement of many of our readers. We thank the Lord for your interest in the study of God's Word and in the ministry the Lord has given us here at Grace Bible Church.

It is our intention to continue to faithfully proclaim the gospel of God's grace and the teaching of God's Word, "rightly divided," through the printed page as the Lord allows us.

— Gregg Bing, *Editor*

Annual Bible Conference

March 16-18, 2007

The Love
of God



In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. (1 John 4:9)

Sound Teaching Beautiful Music Sweet Fellowship

Friday (March 16) — Saturday (March 17)

Services at 7:00 and 8:30 PM with a time of refreshments and fellowship in between.

Sunday (March 18)

Morning services at 10:00 and 11:00 AM.
Service at 7:00 PM with a light meal afterward.



Grace Bible Church

Speaking the Truth in Love

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TIMELY MESSENGER

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Gregg Bing — Editor

Sent **free** to anyone upon request. If you live in the Fort Worth area, we invite you to worship with us.

Sunday Services:

10:00 AM Sunday School
11:00 AM Morning Worship
6:00 PM Evening Worship

Mid-Week Services:

Tues. 10:00 AM Ladies Class
Wed. 7:00 PM Bible Study

ADDRESS CHANGED?

If so, please notify us at the above address. Be sure to include both your name, your old address and your new address. This will help us keep our mailing list current and thus reduce the cost of postage.

Thanks for your help!

THE MAN OF GOD — PART 4

By Gregg Bing

Continued from last month.

“But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” (1 Tim. 6:11-12)

Paul identified three things that characterize a “man of God:” the things he flees, the things he follows after, and the fight he wages. Last month we looked at two specific things in 1 Timothy 6 Paul told Timothy to flee: false teaching and the love of money. We move on to what the man of God is to:

FOLLOW

The man of God is to

“pursue” or “follow after” (KJV) certain things. The Greek word used in this verse is “dioko” which literally means “to pursue, to run or follow after in order to catch.” A similar word is used in the Old Testament to describe Pharaoh’s army as they “pursued” the children of Israel after they left Egypt (Exo. 14:4). Figuratively, dioko means “to seek after eagerly, to endeavor to acquire.” Paul wrote the Romans, “Let us pursue the things which make for peace” (Rom. 14:9). In the New Testament, the most common translation of the Greek *dioko* is the word “persecute” (28 of its 44 occurrences). Saul of Tarsus, before he came to know Christ as Savior, “persecuted the church of God beyond measure” (Gal. 1:13). While Saul’s persecution of the church was certainly a sinful pursuit, done “ignorantly in unbelief,”

his zeal, eagerness, and intensity in pursuing his objective to destroy the church, helps us understand what it means to “pursue” or “follow after.”

The Declaration of Independence begins with these words: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” Most people focus on the last of these rights: “the pursuit of happiness.” They devote their time and energy to the pursuit of such things as pleasure, power, prestige in the eyes of men, even “the almighty dollar,” thinking these things will bring them happiness. Yet, so few in the world are really happy.

A man of God is to zealously pursue six things: righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.

Righteousness

The word *righteousness* refers to what is right or

just in God's eyes. There are two different types of righteousness to consider: imputed righteousness and practical righteousness. The man of God is not to pursue imputed righteousness. This righteousness becomes ours the very moment we trust Christ as Savior. Christ took our sin upon Himself on the cross of Calvary, that we might have His righteousness imputed to us (put on our account) (2 Cor. 5:21). Upon believing, God justifies us, or declares us righteous in Christ, enabling us to have peace with God (Rom. 5:1).

In 1 Timothy 6:11, Paul is referring to practical righteousness or righteous living—doing what is right in God's sight.

Noah is described as a "just" or "righteous" man; a man who walked with God (Gen. 6:9) during a time when this was not an easy thing to do. During the days of Noah, the earth was "corrupt before God" and "filled with violence" (Gen. 6:11). The Lord saw that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every

intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). Yet the Lord took note of Noah, "I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation" (Gen. 7:1), therefore He saved Noah and his family through the flood. While the world around him pursued evil, Noah pursued righteousness. He sought to do what was right in God's eyes, what was pleasing to Him.

Paul is another example of a man who focused on pleasing God and not men. He wrote the Galatians: "Do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). He reminded the Thessalonians that while in their midst, he lived "not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts" (1 Thess. 2:4). He told the Corinthians: "We make it our aim ... to be well pleasing to Him" (2 Cor. 5:9).

What is your aim in life? What do you labor and strive earnestly to attain in life? The man of God pursues righteousness; not what is pleasing or right in his own eyes or in

men's eyes, but what is pleasing to God.

Godliness

Many like to define "godliness" as "God-likeness," being or behaving "like God." A godly man will certainly be "like God," but there is much more to godliness. Being "like God" is the result of godliness, not godliness itself. In fact, it is possible to act like God and not be godly at all. Paul warned Timothy of those who have "a form of godliness" but deny its power; from such people we are to "turn away" (2 Tim. 3:5).

While righteousness speaks of our outward behavior—doing what pleases God—godliness has more to do with our inner man, or our heart. It is concerned with two things: our attitude toward God's person and our awareness of God's presence.

Godliness is characterized by the following traits:

Fear

Godliness begins with

fear, a respect or reverence for who God is; to stand in awe of His eternal being, His omnipotence, His omniscience, His holiness, His righteousness, His love, His sovereignty. The psalmist said:

“Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him” (Psa. 33:8).

The wicked have quite a different attitude: “There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Psa. 36:1). As believers, we are instructed: “work out your own salvation (practically) with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you both to will and do for His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:12-13).

Knowledge

Godliness involves having a desire to know God; not just to know about Him, but to know Him personally and intimately; to develop a close relationship with Him. Jeremiah put in perspective the importance of knowing

God.

“Thus says the LORD: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight, says the LORD.” (Jer. 9:23-24)

This desire to know God is something that is to continue throughout our lives. Paul, as he neared the end of his life, expressed what was still his heartfelt desire: “that I may know Him” (Phil. 3:10). What a tremendous privilege to know the Lord of glory, to have a personal relationship with the One who is our God, our Creator, our Savior, and our Head.

Love

Godliness is also seen in a growing love for God.

Those who fear the Lord and truly desire to know Him, will grow to love Him more and more each day. This is what God desires for His children. The Lord instructed His earthly people, Israel:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” (Deut. 6:5)

Jesus later told the Pharisees this was the greatest commandment! As we experience the love of the Lord and grow to love Him more, we will then show forth His love to others (1 John 4:11).

Devotion

Godliness is, in essence, complete devotion to God, and to God alone! Godliness is seen in a life that is totally committed to knowing, loving, and serving the Lord. What about you? Are you devoted to God? Do you truly fear God? Do you stand in awe of who He is

and of what He has done for you? Do you desire and actively seek to know Him more and more each passing day? Do you spend time feeding on His Word? Do you truly love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength? The pursuit of godliness is, in reality, the pursuit of God. This is what characterizes the man of God.

The pursuit of godliness, a heart and life devoted to God, enables us to pursue righteousness, a life that pleases God. A good example from the Scriptures is the life of Enoch. We read in Genesis 5:24 that Enoch “walked with God.” He had a close personal relationship with the Lord. As a result, we find this testimony concerning Enoch: “he pleased God” (Heb. 11:5).

The pursuit of godliness and righteousness is the key to an effective ministry for the Lord and a powerful testimony for Christ.

How do we practically pursue godliness and righteousness? The way to develop a close, personal re-

lationship and walk with the Lord is by spending time in His Word. It is only in the Holy Scriptures that we find the teaching (doctrine) that “accords with godliness” (1 Tim. 6:3). It is only in the Bible that we receive sound “instruction in righteousness (righteous living)” (2 Tim. 3:16). If we are to be men and women of God, we must be men and women of the Word.

Next month we will continue looking at what the man of God “follows after.”

(Continued Next Month)

*Thy words were
found, and I did
eat them; and Thy
word was unto
me the joy and
rejoicing of mine
heart: for I am
called by Thy
name, O LORD
God of hosts.*

—Jeremiah 15:16

MINERAL WELLS ANNIVERSARY

Sunday, March 4, 2007

Eleventh Avenue Church in Mineral Wells will celebrate their 57th Anniversary on Sunday, March 4th, with worship services throughout the day.

Pastor Charles Mays will speak at the 10:00 AM service followed by Founding Pastor R.B. Shiflet at 11:00 AM. These services will be followed by a noon meal in the fellowship hall.

The afternoon service will begin at 2:00 PM with Bible messages from Pastor Mark Carr of Arlington Community Church and Pastor Gregg Bing of Grace Bible Church in Fort Worth.

You are welcome to attend and enjoy a wonderful day of fellowship and a time of rejoicing and thanksgiving to God for His love, grace, and faithfulness.

Eleventh Avenue Church
204 SW 11th Avenue
Mineral Wells, TX 76068

BIBLE STUDY BOOKS

The following Bible study materials are available free of charge for your personal use or for use in teaching a Bible class.

by Charles Wages

- Written for Our Learning
- Stepping Stones to Truth
- Past Pentecost to Paul
- Points to Ponder
- The Ages
- Saved by Grace
- Ministry of the Church
- The Perfect Will of God
- Once in a Lifetime
- Fellowship in Christ
- Hidden in God
- Thoughts on Vision
- Spiritual Fitness
- What Saith the Scripture
(Set of 6 Diff. Tracts)

by Mrs. Charles Wages

- Seasons
- Spiritual Thoughts for Young Minds
- A Man Named Paul
- Studies for Women

by R.B. Shiflet

- Informal Study: Philippians
- Informal Study: Ephesians
- Personal Meditations on Paul's Post-Acts Ministry
- Giving Under Grace
- Ultradispensationalism
- The Lord's Supper

by Ike T. Sidebottom

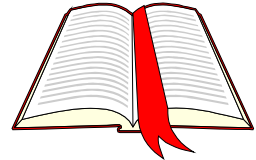
- The Book of Acts
- Through the Bible Dispensationally
- Prophetic Gleanings from Daniel and Revelation
- Saved, Settled and Sure
- Fellowship of the Mystery

by Gregg Bing

- Keys to the Word : Understanding the Bible
- That I May Know Him
- Making Good Choices
- For God So Loved the World
- It is Finished!
- Conformed to the Image of His Son
- The End of the World
- Assurance : Can We Know that We are Saved?

by John D. LaVier

- Yokefellows : Paul and His Companions
- Sure Words of Prophecy
- The Lord has Spoken
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