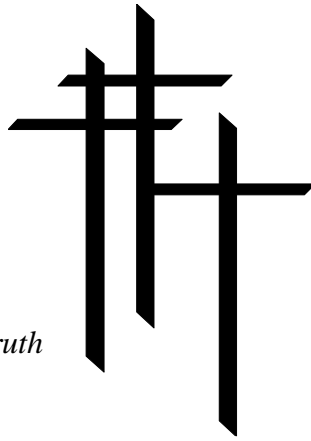


Timely Messenger

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



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THE DAYS OF OUR LIFE

By Charles Wages

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” (Psalms 90:12)

Much is being said and written about “accountability” in every medium of communication today. It means many things to many people in many ways, but what place does it have in the life of a believer in Christ? God is not particularly interested in the counting of our days as He is in our being accountable for our words and deeds. Most of us are

not really serious about the day by day business of living for the Lord.

The Psalmist spoke of “spending our years as a tale that is told” (verse 9). It appears that he was pointing up the fact that life is often taken lightly or as fiction instead of fact. Some people go through life in a “make-believe” world like Cinderella or Snow White. Others follow the view of “eat, drink, and be merry,” never thinking that they really will die in time.

To “number” our days simply means to make our

time count for the Lord as we realize that we are accountable to God. We must realize that the quality of our days is more important than the quantity of our days. If we are not careful we are in danger of letting our lives gradually slip away without accomplishing God’s “ordained good works.” The captain of a ship often does not realize that an anchor is slowly slipping until it is too late.

Oftentimes we become too familiar with important things, and we fail to see the real reasons for them. The story is told of a man in a restaurant who called the waiter and said, “I cannot eat this soup.” The waiter became alarmed, thinking something was wrong with the soup. He called the manager, who in turn called the chef from the kitchen. They all asked in chorus, “Why can’t you eat the soup?” the man replied, “I don’t have a spoon.”

We might well ask, what is the purpose in numbering our days? The answer is quickly forthcoming from God—“that we may apply our hearts

unto wisdom.” God’s ancient people used to say, “that we may bring home a heart of wisdom.” This can often be accomplished by not rushing through life. I read not long ago of a man who waited two weeks in line to watch men travel at 140 m.p.h. in cars. In reverse, an old military expression used to read, “hurry up and wait.” It is wonderful to see and feel God work every day. That most beautiful passage in Lamentations 3:22-26 is always appropriate.

“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; Therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.”

It is very instructive to see that when the children

of Israel were in the wilderness, God only gave them bread enough for a day at a time (Exodus 16:4). Not only did this allow them to know that God was the giver of every good gift, but served as a test of their dependence on the One that delivered them. This dependence required their faith in God to be exercised every day. It also gave them a means or source of continual rejoicing. It is a wonderful and exhilarating feeling to see God work in the fulfilling of our needs. The Lord led Paul to say,

“But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:19)

We must understand that God supplies our needs not only for us to rejoice, but that we may be able to serve Him. The provision of God should not be used to satiate the flesh or even satisfy a spiritual longing, but rather to bring glory to His Name.

In closing, it must be seen that we need to be

taught how to “number” our days. In order for this to be accomplished we must feed upon Christ and His Word every day. The most responsible or accountable persons are those who look to God for their strength (Phil. 4:13) through food He supplies, continually rejoice in His bountiful provisions, and “apply their hearts unto wisdom.” May this new year find us all following and applying these fundamental principles in our lives.

I can do
all things
through
Christ who
strengthens
me.

—Phil.4:13

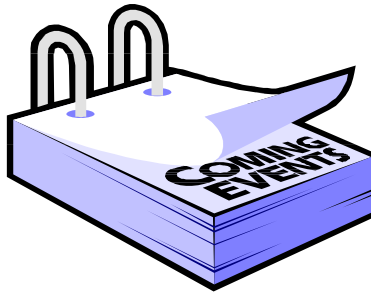
FOLLOWING JESUS

By Pastor John LaVier

Many times we have noticed various church bulletin boards, and have often wondered as to the source of the “words of wisdom” displayed on them. Most of the sayings displayed must have been taken from the almanac, for very few of them come from the Bible. One thing may be said in their favor; though often senseless, they are usually harmless as well. However, just recently, we were astounded to notice the following on the bulletin board in front of a large denominational church. It said: “Jesus Christ should be followed, not worshipped.”

Surely we are living in days of apostasy when a man who calls himself a minister of the gospel would have the brazenness to put such a statement in front of a church which pretends to bear the Name of Christ.

How can we follow Christ, unless we can worship Him as well? If the Lord Jesus Christ was not the Eternal Son of the Living God, then He was a deceiver of the basest sort, and is neither to be followed nor worshipped. If He was God manifest in the
(Continued on page 4)



ANNUAL BIBLE CONFERENCE

March 18-20, 2005

Our Annual Bible Conference will be held March 18-20 this year at Grace Bible Church in Fort Worth. Mark these dates on your calendar and make your plans to be with us this year. The theme has not yet been selected, but it will be by next month.

FAMILY BIBLE CAMP

July 4-8, 2005

Our Family Bible Camp will be held July 4-8 this year at Camp Copass in Denton. This camp is for all ages. We would love to have you come and be with us during this week. Make your plans now to attend.

Timely Messenger

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Gregg Bing — Editor

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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

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*Thanks for your help
in this matter!*

(Continued from page 3)

flesh, as He claimed to be, then He certainly is to be worshipped as well as followed, and like Thomas, we should prostrate ourselves at His feet and say, "My Lord and my God." We need not speculate, though, as to whether He was or was not the God-Man. Hear the testimony of the Father Himself, who testified from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." We read also, "That all me should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him" (John 5:23). Is God the Father worthy of our worship? Then so is God the Son.

The cry of these so-called Modernists, who are no more than Christianized agnostics, is "Back to Jesus," and it is sad to relate that many Fundamentalists seem to be echoing the cry of these infidel preachers. God's program is not back to Jesus, but on to the Mystery. We are not to follow Jesus as a minister of the circumcision in the land of the Jews, but we are to be occupied with Him as He NOW is, seated at the Father's right hand in the heavens, and made to be Head over all things to the Church,

which is His body.

The statement is often made that we should follow the Lord in baptism. If this is so, we ought also to follow the Lord in circumcision (Luke 2:21). We ought to follow Him into the synagogue on the Sabbath day (Luke 4:16). We ought to follow Him as one under the Law, obeying them that sit in Moses' seat (Gal. 4:4 and Matt. 23:1-3). We ought to follow Him and proclaim the kingdom at hand (Matt. 4:17; 9:35; 10:7). We should heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and raise the dead (Matt. 10:8). If anyone sues us, we should not contest the suit, but should give them even more than they demand (Matt. 5:40). If one would borrow from us, we should not deny their request, but should lend to them without expecting to be repaid (Matt. 5:42; Luke 6:34,35). If we are going to follow Jesus of Nazareth we should do all these things, for Jesus Himself taught and practiced them.

While on earth, "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. 15:8). He was a Jew among the Jews, confining His ministry to the nation Israel, and announcing Himself as their

King. Israel having rejected Him, He went back to glory, and when Israel continued in their rejection, He revealed through the Apostle Paul His new program for this dispensation of the grace of God, so that now we do not follow Him in His humility, as the Messiah of Israel, but we follow Him as the glorified One at God's right hand, and the Head of the Body.

The Apostle Paul, though whom the truth for this age has been revealed, never once in any of his inspired writings refers to anything that Jesus said or did while he was upon earth. In fact, we read, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more" (2 Cor. 5:16).

As we follow Christ today, we must obey 1 Corinthians 11:1: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Thus, as we follow the Risen, Ascended Christ in Glory according to the Blessed Son of God, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, which in His time He shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15).

This article was reprinted from February 15, 1967.

UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS THE HOUSE

By Gregg Bing

Continued from last month

“Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it...” (Psalm 127:1)



Last month we began looking at God’s principles for building a godly home or family as found in Colossians 3:18-21. Having examined marriage, the foundation of the home, which God instituted “in the beginning,” we turn our attention to specific members of the family and their primary responsibilities, beginning with wives.

Wives—Submit to Your Own Husbands

In Colossians 3, Paul begins by specifying the primary responsibility that the wife is to focus on in marriage.

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.” (Col. 3:18)

The word “submit” means “to place or arrange under,” to place one’s self in subjection to the authority of another. In the case of wives, to their own husbands. This does not teach that all women are to be in subjection to all men, or that the wife is to be subject to all men, but that each wife is to submit to her own husband. This is not a popular teaching today, and would not be considered “politically correct.” Many people think these ideas are archaic,

hopelessly out of date. It is assumed that this teaching relegates women (wives) to a position inferior to that of men (husbands). While this might be true in the eyes of some people in this world, this was never God’s intention.

For instance, some are offended by God’s use of the word “helper” or “help meet” (KJV) in Genesis 2:18 to describe what the woman would be for Adam, but there is nothing in this word that indicates a subservient role for women (wives). In fact, God uses this same word numerous times in the Old Testament to describe Himself as a “help” for His people Israel (cf. Psalm 33:20, Psalm 115:10-11). The word “helper” is not the role of a servant but of one who provides help or assistance in areas where another has need. In other words, the wife, as a helper, provides what is needed to complete her husband.

Men and women are different, in spite of what some social and political forces today would have us believe. God created men and women this way, with

pronounced differences physically, socially, emotionally, and, in some ways, even mentally. Because of their differences, most men and women need someone to help make them complete, so God instituted marriage to bring a husband and wife together to live as one.

Since men and women have different strengths and weaknesses, it makes perfect sense for God to give husbands and wives different roles and responsibilities in the marriage relationship. Loving, successful marriages occur when both the husband and wife acknowledge their respective roles, as set down by God in His Word, and are obedient to God in fulfilling their unique responsibilities.

The wife's role is laid out by God in Genesis 3:16, after Adam and Eve sinned against God. God spoke these words to Eve:

"... Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."

The position of authority in marriage was given

by God to the husband. He was to "rule" or have dominion over the wife. He was not to be a dictator or a taskmaster, but was to have the responsibility of leadership in the home.

Paul compares the relationship of the wife to her husband with that of the church to Christ.

"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." (Eph. 5:22-24)

When a wife submits to her own husband, she is to do so "as to the Lord." His role as head in the family is a God-given role, so when the wife submits to her husband, she is, in effect, submitting to the Lord and to His will and purpose for her marriage and home.

The husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the Head of the

church. This is what God declares to be His order and arrangement. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, in the same manner wives are to be subject to their own husbands "in everything." When a wife submits to her own husband, she demonstrates her reverence and respect for God (Eph. 5:21). In Colossians 3:18, Paul describes such submission as being "fitting in the Lord." The word "fitting" speaks of one's due response or duty. The wife's duty to her husband, and more importantly her duty to God, is to submit to her own husband.

Since the husband is the head, does this imply a lesser position for the wife? Not at all! Women and wives are very special and very valuable to God. The apostle Peter spoke of this in his first letter to the Jews of the dispersion.

"Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their

wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands.” (1 Peter 3:1-5)

Peter also stressed the importance of a wife being submissive to her own husband, even a husband who is not obedient to the Word. This may refer to an unbelieving husband or to a believing husband who is not being obedient to the Word in regard to his walk. Peter speaks of the impact a wife’s submission can have on such a disobedient husband. Her chaste (pure) conduct accompanied by her fear of God can be used

of God to win her husband to the Lord.

Most women today, including many Christian women, put too much emphasis on their outward appearance: arranging their hair, adorning themselves with fine jewelry, or wearing fine clothes. While these things are not necessarily wrong in themselves, the Lord is more interested in “the hidden person of the heart.” Real beauty is that which is incorruptible; beauty that is found in a “gentle and quiet spirit.”

The word “gentle” is also translated “meek.” A meek spirit is one that maintains an attitude toward God which accepts His dealings with us as good and therefore rests in Him and His strength. This meekness is seen in kind and gentle dealings with others, even those who treat us with malice or hostility. Meekness is the opposite of selfishness or self-assertiveness. The word “quiet” means one who is tranquil; one who does not cause disturbances, but seeks to be at peace with others (Rom. 12:18). Peter states that this

type of gentle and quiet spirit is “very precious in the sight of God.” The word “precious” literally means “of great price,” thus implying something of great value; something worthy of great honor; something that is held to be very dear. Women (wives) who possess this type of beautiful spirit are of great value in God’s eyes.

Wives and mothers play a vital role in the Christian home. In his letter to Titus, the apostle Paul instructs Titus to teach things which are proper for sound doctrine. He is to instruct the older women to be “teachers of good things.” In particular, they are to teach the younger women the following:

“That they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.” (Titus 2:4-5)

Older women are to “admonish” the younger

women. The word “admonish” means to instruct them to be sober minded; to keep themselves under control. The word also carries the idea of carrying out their duties to God; duties which center on their home and family. A wife’s duties begin with love; love toward their husbands and toward their children. Wives are to be discreet (of sound mind), to be chaste (morally and ethically pure), to be homemakers. The word “homemaker” does not refer to a good housekeeper who always maintain an immaculate home, but to one who “keeps” or “guards” the home and family. The King James

Version translates this word as “keepers at home.” In our society today, their are an increasing number of attacks against God’s view of home and family as set down in His Word. The wife’s role as “keeper” of the home is clearly an important responsibility. When she takes this responsibility seriously, does that which is good, and is submissive to her husband as head of the family, her actions stand as a solid testimony “that the Word of God may not be blasphemed (spoken against).”

What about husbands? You might expect their prime responsibility to be: “husbands, rule well over your wives,” but this is not

what God’s Word teaches. Instead, husbands are admonished: “love your wives, and be not bitter against them” (Col. 3:19).

Next month we will look at the husband’s role and responsibility in a godly home.

Continued next month.

CHARM IS DECEITFUL
AND BEAUTY IS PASSING,
BUT A WOMAN WHO
FEARS THE LORD, SHE
SHALL BE PRAISED.
—PROVERBS 31:30

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