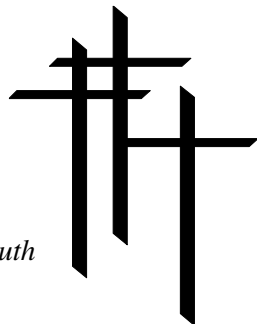


# Timely Messenger



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

Volume 69 No. 1

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*“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” In our last issue we saw that this so-called “Great Commission” of Mark 16 is not our commission today; Jesus spoke these words specifically to the twelve apostles regarding their ministry of the gospel of the kingdom to God’s earthly people, Israel. Some may ask, “If this is not our commission today, then what is?” In this issue we seek to answer this question as we look at ...*

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## OUR GRACE COMMISSION

By Gregg Bing

One of the reasons many assume that Mark 16 is our “Great Commission” today is because they believe these were Jesus’ last words. While these

may have been some of the last words Jesus spoke while here on earth, they were not the last words He ever spoke to men. Jesus’ ministry was not limited to the time He spent here on earth.

With Israel’s rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the twelve apostles during the Acts period, the Lord Jesus spoke again, this time from heaven, this time to Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1-16). Saul, who became known as Paul, was called to be “an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God” (Eph. 1:1), but his commission was distinct from that of the Twelve. Paul was chosen to be the apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13) and entrusted with a different gospel, “the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24). Though Paul often referred to it as “my gospel” (2 Tim. 2:8), it consisted of “the words of our Lord

Jesus Christ” (1 Tim. 6:3) for he received it by direct revelation from Him (Gal. 1:12).

Christ also revealed to Paul a new plan and purpose of God for this present age, the dispensation of the grace of God (Eph. 3:2). This truth was a mystery kept secret from men of other ages until made known to Paul. Today, God is no longer dealing with a nation (Israel) but with individuals without distinction as to nationality, race, religion, or social status. All men who put their trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are added to a new body of believers, the Church, the Body of Christ. As members of the Church, we have a new commission from God, distinct from the commission Jesus gave to the Twelve.

Our commission as believers in the dispensation of grace is found in the writings of the apostle Paul whom God established as the steward of this present age. As we examine the letters he wrote under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we find that our commission consists of two different ministries, ministries that are brought into focus by the fact that God, according to 1 Timothy 2:4, desires two things for all men: (1) that they be saved and (2) that they come to the knowledge of the truth.

Our commission is to reach out to “all men” in the area of these two needs. The first part of our commission is to

### **Preach the Gospel**

Grace believers (those who recognize the distinct ministry of Paul for this present age) are often accused of focusing too much on doctrine (teaching) and not enough on evangelism (preaching the gospel). Some of these detractors seem to think that “preaching Jesus Christ” should be our only concern. What they don’t seem to realize is that doctrine and evangelism cannot be separated. Doctrine is, in fact, vital, especially in the area of evangelism. It answers critical questions such as: “What are we to preach about Jesus Christ?” and “What is required for a person to be saved?”

The twelve apostles preached Jesus Christ, but in accordance with the gospel of the kingdom. He was proclaimed as the Son of God, but the emphasis was on the fact that He was Israel’s Messiah (Christ), the One anointed by God to be their King. If you carefully examine Peter’s preaching in Acts, chapters 2 and 3, you find that he never

mentions that “Christ died for our sins.” When the Jews asked Peter what they must do, he responded:

*“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)*

In Acts 3:19-21, Peter further proclaimed the good news that if Israel, as a nation, would repent, then “times of refreshing” would come from “the presence of the Lord,” and He would “send Jesus Christ” back to earth to establish His kingdom and bring about the “restoration of all things” spoken by God’s holy prophets.

This is not the gospel we are to preach today! This is not the message by which a person can be saved today. During this present age of grace, we are to preach Jesus Christ, but in accordance with the revelation of the mystery, the truth entrusted to us through the Apostle Paul (Rom. 16:25).

What are we to preach or proclaim about Jesus Christ? What do people need to hear and believe about Him in order to be saved? Paul describes our  
*(Continued on page 4)*

## 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 Grace Bible Church. Be sure to include your name, your old address, and your new address. This will help us keep our mailing list current and reduce the cost of postage.

*Thanks for your help  
in this matter!*

*(Continued from page 3)*

gospel commission in 2 Corinthians 5, verses 14-21, a passage which focuses on reconciliation. The basic meaning of “reconciliation” is the idea of change or exchange. The word was used to describe the business of money changers who exchanged coins for others of equivalent value. Reconciliation also speaks of the adjustment of a difference. Reconciliation is the means by which sinful men are brought into a relationship with a holy God. For this to occur, a change has to take place. God does not need to change, but we do. In order to be reconciled to God, we must be made new creations in Christ (vs. 17). In this passage, Paul addresses three aspects of reconciliation .

### ***The Work of Reconciliation***

The work of reconciliation is accomplished by God Himself, “who reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ.” Paul declares that “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.” The essence of this work is seen in verse 21:

*“For He (God) made Him (Christ) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might*

*become the righteousness of God in Him.”*

Here we find what some call “the great exchange.” Christ took our sins upon Himself, paying the penalty for us, so that we might have His righteousness imparted to us. This makes it possible for us to have peace with God (Rom. 5:1).

What does it mean that Christ reconciled “the world” to Himself? It does not imply universal reconciliation—that everyone will eventually be saved. It simply means that Christ has paid the penalty for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2). While everyone’s sins have been judged at Calvary, not everyone will be saved. This is evident when Paul speaks of the need to implore people “to be reconciled to God.” The reconciliation Christ accomplished for us on the cross is a gift of God’s grace, a gift that each person must receive (Rom. 5:11) by faith (Eph. 2:8-9). As servants of the Lord, we are commissioned to have a part in the process of reconciliation, for God has given us:

### ***The Ministry of Reconciliation***

*“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though*

*God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.” (2 Cor. 5:20)*

Our commission is to be ambassadors for Christ, His representatives here on this earth. As the Body of Christ, we are the instruments God uses to reach out to all men with the gospel of Jesus Christ. God uses us to plead with lost sinners and implore them, on Christ's behalf, to be reconciled to God by faith.

The love of Christ compels us to fulfill this commission (vs. 14)—love for the Lord who has given us such a wonderful salvation and love for those outside of Christ, knowing that God loves them (1 John 4:7-11).

The key to fulfilling this ministry is the message God has entrusted to us:

### ***The Word of Reconciliation***

We are to implore people to receive, by faith, the reconciliation Christ provided. For this to happen, they must hear the Word of God, since “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). But, what part of the Word should we preach? What is the gospel we are to proclaim

today? We are to preach the gospel entrusted to Paul, God's steward for this present dispensation. Paul declares what this gospel is quite clearly in 1 Corinthians 15, verses 3 and 4,

*“For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”*

This gospel that Paul preached is the same gospel we are to proclaim today—that Christ died as a substitute for our sins, was buried, and rose again that we might have eternal life. This is the gospel that people must believe to be saved from their sins. It is the only gospel by which a person can stand before God “holy, blameless, and above reproach” (Col. 1:22).

What a great commission has been entrusted to us today! May we be faithful to carry out this charge that precious souls may be brought to Christ.

**Next Issue:** We will look at the second part of our commission which relates to God's desire that all men “come to the knowledge of the truth.”

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## COME, BECOME, OVERCOME, WELCOME

By John LaVier (*Jan. 1953*)

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### COME

What a wonderful word of invitation, found many times over on the pages of Holy Writ. In the early chapters of the Bible we hear God's call to Noah: "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." In the middle of the Book is His invitation of old: "Come now, and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Also through Isaiah He said: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." In the last chapter of the Bible an invitation is still extended: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." All through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, and in every age, God calls sinful man to Himself. The Saviour says, "Come unto Me, all ye

that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and the promise is made, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Of course, John 6:44 is true: "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." Salvation is all of God, from first to last, and thus we sing: "He drew me, and I followed on, charmed to confess the voice divine."

### BECOME

First we come and then we become! We become saints, saved by the grace of God. We become sons; sons of God through faith in Christ, for "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." We become heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. We become the righteousness of God in Christ, and accepted and complete in Him. We become without condemnation in Christ, justified by His blood. We become new creatures, for

“if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” We become members of the Body of Christ, made one with Him who is the Head and joined to Him in a union that can never be broken. We become citizens of heaven, raised up with Christ and seated in the heavens in Him. We become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, awaiting that day when we shall be manifested with Christ in glory. We become ambassadors for Christ, entrusted with the wonderful message of grace and reconciliation. We become the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, for having become saints, we are now to walk as becometh saints. We are to “speak the things which become sound doctrine,” and our manner of life is to be “as it becometh the gospel of Christ.”

## OVERCOME

The Apostle John, in his epistles, and also in the Apocalypse, has much to say about overcomers and overcoming. However, this language is not to be found in the Pauline let-

ters addressed to us. In them we are seen as being “in Christ,” seated with Him “far above all” and with “all things under His feet.” As members of the Body of Christ we are seen as having already overcome all “in Him.” In ourselves there is nothing but failure, but in Him there is nothing but victory. We can do nothing in our own strength, but “we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us.” Of ourselves, we are weak, but we can be “strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” We need never know defeat, for “we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.” To be “more than conqueror” means to be unconquerable. We can overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil; not in our own strength, but in Him. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is operative in us, and we are to reckon ourselves dead to sin but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We are to yield ourselves unto God, as those alive from the dead, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God. We are to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Then we have the victory that overcomes all, and can exult: “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.”

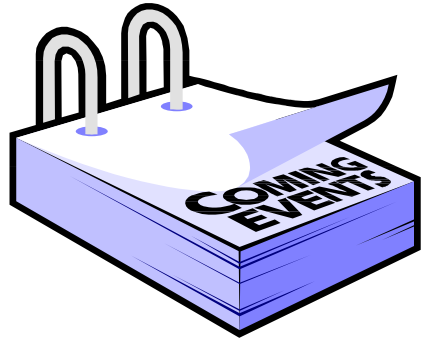
## WELCOME

The word *welcome* is not to be found in the Bible, but certainly the thought is many times expressed. In that which has been referred to as his swan song, Paul wrote: “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand ... Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.” When the old warrior penned these words he was doubtless anticipating the glad welcome by his Lord in glory, and not only His welcome but also His “well done.” And surely it will be a royal welcome for each one of the Lord’s own. He who loved us, and gave himself for us, must even now be eagerly waiting for that day when He shall return “with grace on His brow, like a halo of glory, to receive from the world “His own.”

O Lord Jesus, how long,  
How long, ere we shout the glad song,  
Christ returneth! Hallelujah!  
Hallelujah! Amen. Hallelujah! Amen!

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## MINERAL WELLS ANNIVERSARY

**March 1, 2009**

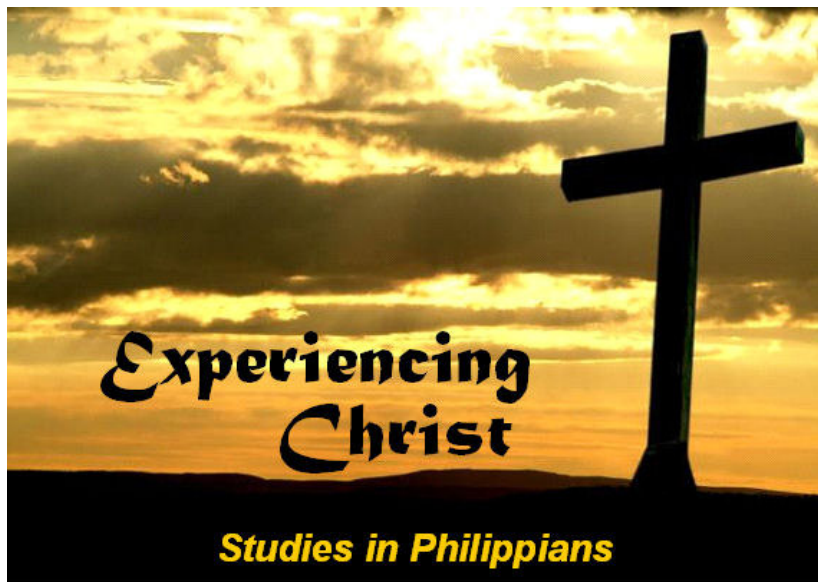
Eleventh Avenue Church will celebrate its 59th anniversary on Sunday, March 1, 2009, with services at 10:00 and 11:00 A.M., a lunch at 12:00 noon, and an afternoon service at 2:00 P.M.

We thank the Lord for the faithfulness of Pastor R.B. Shiflet who founded the church, Pastor Charles Mays, the current pastor, and all the dear saints who have been a part of this ministry for so many years.

Therefore, my beloved  
brethren, be ye steadfast,  
unmovable, always  
abounding in the work of  
the Lord, forasmuch as ye  
know that your labour is  
not in vain in the Lord.

# Annual Bible Conference

March 13-15, 2009



## Service Times

Friday ..... 7 & 8:30 PM

Saturday..... 7 & 8:30 PM

Sunday..... 10 & 11 AM, 7 PM

*Nursery will be provided at each service.*

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Sound Bible Teaching — Good Music — Sweet Fellowship

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## Grace Bible Church

*Speaking the Truth in Love*

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## THE DIVINE WORD

By Robert E. Hanna

I wept to see my friend deny the Lord who died for  
him,

And I grieved to hear him curse the name of  
Elohim.

To think that heaven's hope (for which I look with  
such delight)

Might be denied another, seemed a dark and fear-  
ful plight.

I asked myself the burning question, "Have you  
said enough?"

I wondered whether I had shown my friend the  
kind of 'stuff'

That constitutes the brand of witness God would  
have me bring

To magnify the glory of my Savior, Lord and King.

And then I stopped to ponder on a truth I know so  
well:

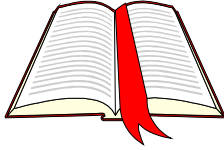
That God will give the increase, just so long as we  
will tell

The gospel of His grace and love to those who've  
never heard,

And faithfully abide and walk according to His  
Word!



## 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
- Saved, Settled and Sure
- Fellowship of the Mystery

### by Gregg Bing

- Keys to the Word : Understanding the Bible
- Unless the Lord Builds the House
- A Good Conscience
- 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
- Why is Heaven Silent?

**S** tudy to shew  
thyself approved  
unto God, a workman  
that needeth not to  
be ashamed, rightly  
dividing the Word  
of truth.

— 2 Timothy 2:15