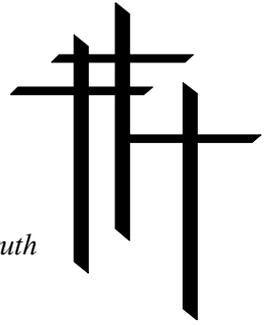


# Timely Messenger



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

Volume 71 No. 6

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## ONE THING IS NEEDFUL

By Lori Gardner

The days between Thanksgiving and New Years Day are usually the busiest time of year for most people. It can leave us feeling exhausted. As we busily prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior, we often put so much emphasis on the preparations that we forget the “one thing that is needful.”

Luke 10:38-42 tells us that this same thing happened to Martha. She and her sister, Mary, and brother, Lazarus, lived just outside Jerusalem in a village called Bethany. It seems that Martha was the head of their household and as a result felt the full responsibility of making sure her home was well managed.

The three siblings had a very special friendship with the Lord Jesus (John 11:5). In fact, sometimes He would even stay

at their home. It must have been a great honor to be allowed to entertain Him, but what a responsibility! Martha would be feeding and serving the Son of God, but wherever Jesus went, He always drew a crowd. She would also have been responsible for serving Jesus’ twelve apostles, as well as other friends and neighbors that wanted to be near Him.

She would have had to prepare food and drink and make sure everyone was served properly. It would have been rude not to make her guests as comfortable as possible. There is no doubt that she was extremely busy. In fact, she was so busy, she was “cumbered about with much serving” (Luke 10: 40). The word “cumbered” means she was dragged down, upset and distracted. While Martha worked so diligently, where was her sister? Luke 10:39 says Mary “sat at Jesus feet, and heard His word.”

So, Martha did what a lot of women would have done. She went straight to Jesus to tell Him what she felt needed to be done in the situation. “Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her, therefore, that she help me.” (Luke 10:40).

The overworked and overwrought woman probably never expected the answer she received. When the Savior spoke to her, He used very few words, but they sent a powerful message.

*“And Jesus answered, and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful (anxious) and troubled about many things. But, one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:41-42)*

What was going to happen to all the preparations that distracted Martha? They would soon be gone. The food would be eaten, the dishes washed and put away and her visitors would leave. Everything Martha was doing was temporary and these things made her too busy to spend time concentrating on the eternal Son of God.

Mary, on the other hand, had chosen the one thing that

was needed; the good part, the Lord Jesus Christ. She was in the presence of the Son of God and she was taking the opportunity to fellowship with Him and learn at His feet. She had chosen to spend her time on eternal things. The time spent with the Lord and the knowledge acquired were things that could never be taken away.

Later on, towards the latter days of Christ’s earthly ministry, Lazarus became very ill. His sisters knew it was serious and sent word to Jesus and His disciples who were staying in the wilderness beyond the Jordan River (John 1:28, John 10:40).

Because of their special friendship with Jesus, they must have expected that He would come to Lazarus’ aid immediately, but He didn’t. The Lord stayed right where He was for several more days. Not because He didn’t care, but because His timing is perfect. The situation in Bethany was going to be something that would amaze the people and glorify God (John 11:4).

By the time He and His disciples returned to Bethany, Lazarus had died and been buried for four days. Many of the Jews from the area had gathered to comfort the sisters in their loss (John 11:19, 31). There

was much mourning and weeping that the beloved brother was gone. There was also some grumbling and questioning. Most of those present, including the sisters, believed that if Jesus had only gotten there sooner, Lazarus would not have died (John 11:21, 32, 37).

Most believers are familiar with the rest of this amazing story. Jesus went to Lazarus' tomb, and in a loud voice called him back from the dead. All that had gathered there that day were witnesses to the fact that Lazarus miraculously walked out of his grave and that Jesus Christ had the power over life and death.

A short time later, Jesus came back to Bethany to be received once again into Martha's house. While He was there, Martha served Him supper. Her very much alive brother, Lazarus, also sat with Him at the table (John 12:1-2). We can only imagine what Martha must have been feeling. Just looking at her brother must have been a very pleasant reminder of what was really important. There is no mention in God's Word of Martha being distracted, upset, or burdened this time. She was probably only too happy to be serving the One who had raised her brother from the dead.

*(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

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If so, please notify Grace Bible Church. Be sure to include your name, 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)*

Many of us can see ourselves in Martha, especially at this time of year. We want to make sure the Christmas holiday is special and memorable, so much so that we put too much emphasis on little, insignificant details. We lose our focus and forget that we are supposed to be celebrating the birth of the One that, through His death, gave us life.

The Apostle Paul wrote that we should be “given to hospitality” and be “lovers of hospitality” (Rom. 12:13; Titus 1:8). We should have a fondness for receiving guests and making them comfortable in our home, but we should never let the preparations get in the way of what is really important.

Our time here on this earth is very precious and quite short. God’s Word tells us to redeem it, or buy it up (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). We are to make sure that we get the most value out of the time we are given. It is easy to get so distracted by the season that we forget “the one thing that is needful”—the Lord Jesus Christ.

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**That in all things He may  
have the preeminence.**

## **THE HOUR HAS COME**

By Gregg Bing

*(Continued from last issue)*

**J**esus Christ, the eternal Son of God, came into this world and became a Man to die for our sins. The Jewish rulers, which included the scribes and Pharisees, as well as the priests and Sadducees, rejected Jesus early in His ministry. They even “plotted against Him how they might destroy Him” (Matt. 12:14), but every time they tried to lay hold of Him, Jesus escaped out of their hands, for “His hour had not yet come” (John 7:30). In seeking to put Jesus to death, the Jewish leaders were unknowingly carrying out God’s determined will; and God’s will would happen in God’s own time (Acts 4:27-28).

After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the resolve of the Jewish rulers to put Jesus to death intensified. As a result, Jesus could no longer walk openly among the Jews (John 11:54). As the Passover drew near, the Jews wondered among themselves if Jesus would come to Jerusalem for the feast. The stage was now set for what many refer to as “the Passion Week,” the week of Jesus’

greatest sufferings, the week that would culminate with His death on the cross.

### **The Triumphal Entry**

Six days before the Passover, Jesus and His disciples had dinner at Bethany with their good friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. The next day, when the Jews heard Jesus was coming to Jerusalem for the Passover, great multitudes gathered on the road between Bethany and Jerusalem (John 12:1-12). As Jesus neared Bethphage, He sent two of His disciples to a nearby village to retrieve a donkey He could ride, fulfilling Zechariah's prophecy: "Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zech. 9:9).

As Jesus rode toward Jerusalem, many spread their clothes on the road before Him; others cut down palm branches and laid them in His path (Matt. 21:8). They began to cry out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord—The King of Israel!" (John 12:13).

What was happening that day? This was Jesus' public presentation to Israel as their Messiah, the One anointed by God as Israel's rightful King.

Earlier in Jesus' public ministry, He commanded His disciples to "tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ" (Matt. 16:20). Why did Jesus keep His identity secret? "His hour had not yet come."

With Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, the time had come for "Messiah the Prince" to be publicly presented to His people, Israel, the very day prophesied in Daniel 9:24-27. However, verse 26 of this passage also declared that "after" the Messiah was presented to Israel, He would be "cut off, but not (or 'with nothing') for Himself." The One anointed to be Israel's King would be crucified without receiving what was rightfully His—the throne of David's kingdom.

How did these cries of praise from the people of Israel change so soon to cries of scorn? It appears the people were caught up in the excitement of the moment. For the last three years, the multitudes had witnessed Jesus casting out demons and healing all manner of disease. His power led them to wonder, "Could this be the Son of David?" (Matt. 12:22-23). The Jews welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem because of "all the mighty works they had seen" (Luke 19:37), expecting that "the kingdom of God

would appear immediately” (Luke 19:11). They especially wanted to get a glimpse of the Man who had raised Lazarus from the dead (John 12:17-18).

The Jews’ cries of “Hosanna” literally meant “Save now!” They were not looking for Jesus to save them from their sins. The Jewish multitudes were hoping this powerful Man who worked miracles would be the one to deliver them from their enemies, the Romans.

When the Jewish rulers heard the crowds of people proclaiming Jesus as their King, they feared this could cost them their positions of leadership in the nation. They reasoned among themselves saying, “The world has gone after Him!” (John 12:19).

These Jewish leaders need not have worried. The Jewish people typically followed the lead of their religious rulers, particularly the Pharisees. The problem was, the Pharisees were spiritually blind, leaving the lost sheep of the house of Israel “without a shepherd” (Mark 6:34). As Jesus said, “If the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch” (Matt. 15:14).

Jesus foretold what would soon happen using a parable to

reveal the true hearts of the nation.

*“A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return ... but his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us’” (Luke 19:12-14).*

Though the people initially praised Jesus and welcomed Him as King, Jesus knew they would eventually follow the dictates of their rulers and cry out for His death.

### **The Hour Has Come**

After arriving at Jerusalem, certain Greeks (Gentiles) who had come to worship at the Passover feast asked to see Jesus. When His disciples brought this request to Jesus, He did not see them or speak to them directly. The Gentiles could have no access to God until Jesus completed the work the Father sent Him to accomplish, so Jesus responded:

*“The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and*

*dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. ... Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour" (John 12:23-24,27).*

The hour had come for Jesus to do His Father's will: to give His life as a sacrifice for the sins of the world (Heb. 10:7-10). While His death would bring salvation to all who trust in Him as Savior, it troubled Jesus' soul for He was well aware of what He would have to endure. He knew that His sufferings would not only cause Him severe physical pain; it would also separate Him from His Father, an agony beyond our comprehension. Nevertheless, Jesus said, "What shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour?' For this purpose I came to this hour" (John 12:27).

Jesus' death was the most critical moment in history. As Jesus spoke to the people in Jerusalem that day, He declared:

*"Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself. This He said, signifying by what death He*

*would die." (John 12:31-33)*

The Greek word translated "judgment" is "krisis" from which we get our English word "crisis." It is translated "judgment" in most cases in the New Testament, but the basic meaning of the word has to do with separation or division, often the result of making a judgment. Jesus declared that "Now," the coming of this hour, would bring about the judgment of the world and the casting out of Satan, the prince of this world.

Certainly this was the time when God would judge our sins as Christ bore them in His own body on the cross (Rom. 8:3; 1 Pet. 2:24). In paying the penalty of death for the sins of the world (Rom. 6:23; 1 John 2:2), Jesus would make it possible for everyone to be saved and receive the gift of eternal life. Through His death, Jesus provided eternal redemption, freeing us from the one who held the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb. 2:14; Gen. 3:15). This is how Jesus would "draw all peoples" to Himself (John 3:16).

We might think this would bring all people together in Christ, but Jesus' death did not bring peace; it brought division instead (Luke 12:51). The world became divided over the issue

of Jesus Christ Himself: those who believe in Him and those who do not.

*“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:18)*

Sadly, the majority in Israel “did not believe in Him,” though “He had done so many signs before them” (John 12:37). This was no surprise to Jesus; He knew all men; He knew what was in man (John 2:24-25).

As Jesus drew near Jerusalem, amidst the cries of adulation from the people, He looked down on the city and “He wept over it” (Luke 19:41), saying:

*“If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, be-*

*cause you did not know the time of your visitation.” (Luke 19:42-44)*

The word “wept” speaks of crying or sobbing aloud. Jesus loved and cared for His people, and He grieved, knowing their hearts were unpersuaded. Being despised by His own nation must have hurt Jesus deeply, on a personal level, but He sorrowed more, knowing that by rejecting Him, they would bring condemnation upon themselves (Luke 19:43-44).

Jesus lamented over two things Israel did not understand: the things that made for their peace (Luke 19:42) and the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44). This was their day! The God of glory had come into their midst, their promised Messiah, but they refused to acknowledge Him (John 1:11).

### **The Things that Make for Your Peace**

Israel’s problem in Jesus’ day is the same one that exists today. Most people do not know (and believe) “the things that make for their peace.” They do not understand that the only way to have “peace with God” (Rom. 5:1) and have the “peace of God” in their hearts is through believing that Christ’s

death on Calvary is God's means of providing salvation for sinful men. They also do not comprehend "the time of their visitation." Jesus stressed to Israel that the time is "now." Paul emphasized the same thing to the Corinthians, imploring them to see that, "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).

If you have never trusted in Jesus Christ as your Savior, believing that He died on the cross for your sins and after three days rose again (1 Cor. 15:3-4), I encourage you to carefully consider this good news of Jesus Christ and believe in Him as your Savior today! You can be saved and receive the wonderful gift of eternal life through simple faith in Christ and His finished work of redemption (Eph. 2:8-9).

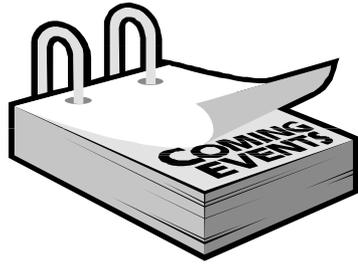
The hour came for Jesus to suffer and die for your sins. Has the hour come for you to trust in Him as your Savior?

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**Visit our Website**

<http://www.gbcbfw.com>



## **WINTER YOUTH RETREAT**

**December 29-31, 2011**

Theme: *"Defending the Faith"*

Our annual Winter Youth Retreat will be December 29-31 at Three Mountain Retreat in Clifton, Texas. This is a wonderful opportunity for our young people (ages 13 through college age) to enjoy a weekend of fellowship centered around the study of God's Word.

We will study the importance of "Defending the Faith" so that each of us may "be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks us a reason for the hope that is in us" (1 Pet. 3:15). We will examine the clear evidence that God is real; evidence that God Himself has provided for us through:

- His Creation (Rom. 1:20)
- His Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- His Son (Heb. 1:1-3).

We invite you to come and join us!

**Registration forms** and additional information about the retreat are now available on our website:

**[www.gbcbfw.com/ministries/retreat](http://www.gbcbfw.com/ministries/retreat)**

# Jesus, Me, and Calvary

By Betty Jo Orsini

God searched the dark alleys looking for me,  
Knowing all the while just where I'd be.  
He wanted to meet me face to face  
When He offered me His saving grace.

Grace that would lift me from out of my sin,  
Let me start living my life once again.  
Wonderful, marvelous, infinite grace,  
Nothing else can take its place.

As I stood there on that warm, summer night,  
Looking up at the heavens with stars so bright,  
I first heard a voice, then felt a nudge.  
evI knew it was God waiting for my hug.

So I chose a star from the sky that night,  
The furthest one with the brightest light.  
So undeserving of His love and grace,  
I was ready to live with Him in His heavenly place.

So, thank You, God, for this second chance  
To be forgiven for the things I've done.  
I know it now, but not at the time,  
I helped to bring on the death of Your Son.

Jesus, I know the story is true,  
It's all about me and all about You.  
So, thank You for mercy shown to me,  
As You hung on the cross of Calvary.

**PASTOR JAMES ROBERTS**  
**1928—2011**

Pastor James Roberts went home to be with the Lord on Thursday, November 24, at a hospital in Dallas, Texas at the age of 83. James served as pastor of Peace Congregational Church near Indianahoma, Oklahoma beginning in 1961 until he recently retired after 50 years of ministry.

James was preceded in death by his wife of 56 years, Jane Roberts, who passed away in 2005. We rejoice in knowing they are now together in the presence of their Savior and Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.



We are so thankful to the Lord for the faithful ministry of this dear couple and for the many years of fellowship we enjoyed with them in the work of the Lord, in worship services, Bible conferences, family Bible camps, and youth retreats.

We ask you to be in prayer for James's family: two daughters and sons in law, Jane Ann and Kerry Malakosky and Judy and Wayne Schoonover, son and daughter in law, Jim and Joan Roberts, six grandchildren, fifteen great grandchildren, sister, Betty Wood, and two sisters in law, Doris Rightmer and Sue Payton.

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*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast,  
immovable, always abounding in the work of  
the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in  
vain in the Lord.*

*(1 Corinthians 15:58)*