

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

December 28

2008

FINAL ISSUE OF 2008

With the passing of another year we are again reminded of how swiftly this life is passing by. This issue of *THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER* is the last of 2008. As we come to the end of this year we are saddened as we reflect upon some events of the past year. The church here suffered a great loss in the death of brother Paul Thomas. Paul had been a part of this congregation from its very beginning and had faithfully served as an elder for many years. We do rejoice in the blessed hope Paul and all others who die in the Lord have.

The greatest sadness of the past year is the fact that some who were once obedient to the Lord have fallen away and many who are not Christians did not avail themselves of the time and opportunity to become such during the year. Of course, that sadness can be turned to joy in the coming year if they will repent and obey God's will.

There were many things during the year for which we are most thankful. We rejoice in the obedience and spiritual growth in so many (especially in some of our young). We pray that there will be many others to follow their example during the coming year.

As we look forward to the coming new year we would like to take time to thank all of you here at Belleville for your support and encouragement to us in our efforts to preach the gospel in this area. As we look to the new year I hope each of us will resolve to do even more to teach His word to the people of this community. There is

much to do and we need to busy ourselves in teaching the word at every opportunity. We should never become content with our past efforts but should strive to do even more.

We have plans for teaching efforts in 2009 which we hope will result in much good being accomplished. In April we will have a gospel meeting (12th through the 17th) with Steve Niemeier, from Greenwood, Indiana, doing the preaching. In June (the 8th through the 12th) we will have our regular summer Bible studies with Ron Daly, from Indianapolis, Indiana, teaching the adult class. Leland Ping, from San Diego, California, will be with us in October (11th through the 16th) for a series of gospel meetings. Let each one of us be working and planning for the success of these efforts. Also, we would like to get as many home studies started as possible. If you know of those who would like to have a Bible study in their home please let us know.

There is much that every member can do to make 2009 a successful year in the work of the Lord in this area. In addition to the things previously mentioned you can be a good example to others by faithful service in your own life by faithfully attending every period of worship and Bible study and inviting your friends and neighbors to attend with you and you can call, visit and encourage those who may not be able to attend the regular services.

Another way you can help is in submitting suggestions of lessons to be preached and Bible questions to be answered on the third Sunday evening of each month. All our efforts can be much more successful with the support and cooperation of every member

✠ James Hahn



APPRECIATION

We wish to express appreciation and thanks to all those who have served so faithfully in so many ways during the past year. Thanks to all the Bible class teachers who devoted so much time and effort in teaching the various classes through the year. Thanks to Cheryl Stanley for preparing the newsletter each week and to Mike Dearing for agreeing to serve as treasurer for the congregation. Unless you

have done these tasks you do not realize the time and effort involved in doing so.

We thank brother Raymond Harris for the fine job he has done in teaching the men's training class during the past few weeks. We also commend those men who have faithfully attended this class. It shows the desire they have in improving themselves in service to the Lord. We hope those who did not take advantage of this wonderful opportunity will have a change of heart and will attend future classes.

We also wish to thank all those who have cleaned the building and prepared the Lord's Supper each week. The list is on the bulletin board for signing up to do these tasks during the coming year. If you have not already signed up we encourage you to do so. If everyone would take a turn no one would need to sign up more than once during the year.

For those who worked in keeping the grass mowed we thank you. We will post a new list for 2009 and encourage all who can to sign up for mowing and trimming. (JH)



"Speak As the Oracles of God"

In the third chapter of the book of James there is an important statement for anyone who would teach the word of God to bear in mind. Verse one declares - **"let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment"** (NKJV). This is important and fearful because it shows the care that teachers must use in the words that they say because of the stricter judgment that they will receive.

Is such caution necessary only for those who teach? In the book of Philippians Paul tells us all to **"...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"** (2:12). That indicates that caution should be exercised in each Christian's life so that both our words and our lives may be pleasing to God. As the Psalmist prays - **"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer."** (Psalms 19:14).

The question is how do we teach what the world needs to hear and

yet exercise this caution? The recognition that God expects us to use great care in the words that we say could lead us to become timid and never speak. Certainly there is a time when we should choose silence. James 1:19 teaches us - **"...let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."** Yet, at the same time in Christ we can have confidence in our relationship to God and the things that we teach from His word. Paul tells the Ephesians that in Christ - **"...we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him"** (Ephesians 3:12). Caution must not result in timidity.

The way to exercise caution in our words and yet avoid timidity rest in some advice offered by the Apostle Peter. In his first epistle he teaches, through the direction of the Holy Spirit - **"If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God..."** (I Peter 4:11). If all of the things we say are firmly grounded on "book, chapter and verse" authority from God's word we "speak as the oracles of God." When we train ourselves to allow God to speak through us, through His word, we will direct our words in a way that is safe and sound. It may seem a little bit odd or old fashioned to establish what we say by specific scriptures, but when we do so we will not only avoid danger but be confident that we are speaking the truth. We will do well to remember - **"a fool finds no pleasure in understanding, but delights in airing his own opinions"** (Proverbs 18:2, NIV).

✍ Kyle Pope

<h3><i>Belleville church of Christ</i></h3> <p>5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258 www.bellevillechurch.net</p>	
Schedule of Services	Elders
Sun. Bible Study..... 9:30 a.m.	Charles Carpenter.... (317) 839-3873
Sun. Morning Worship... 10:30 a.m.	James Hahn. (317) 745-1507
Sun. Evening Worship. 5:00 p.m.	
Wed. Bible Study..... 7:00 p.m.	
	Deacons
Evangelist	Leon Nevins (317) 272-2966
James Hahn. (317) 745-1507	Don Perry. (765) 676-5825
	Alvin Stanley. (317) 831-3514