

Dearly beloved of God,

I pray that this finds you in good health and prospering even as your soul prospers. If these words have encouraged you, feel free to pass them on.

"Nevertheless" is a three syllable composite of three words which convey a meaning similar to a three letter, one syllable word, "but." I love these two words as they appear in the Bible. They usually illustrate 1) the consequences of choosing either fork in the road, or 2) God reversing an otherwise impossible situation. The first time we see the word "but" in Scripture is **Genesis 2:16-17 (NIV)**

¹⁶ *And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;*

¹⁷ ***but** you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*

"But" marked the consequences of taking the wrong fork in the road and the rest is history. Man got himself in an impossible situation and God has been doing his reversal thing ever since.

Check out the effect of this wonderfully placed "but." **Romans 6:23 (NIV)**

²³ *For the wages of sin is death, **but** the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

But and nevertheless, over and over again introduce us to the grace and mercy, the majesty and glory of God. Take this one passage of Scripture for example:

2 Samuel 5:6-9 (NIV)

⁶ *The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites said to David, "You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off." They thought, "David cannot get in here."*

⁷ ***Nevertheless**, David captured the fortress of Zion, the City of David.*

⁸ *On that day, David said, "Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those 'lame and blind' who are David's enemies." That is why they say, "The 'blind and lame' will not enter the palace."*

⁹ *David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the supporting terraces inward.*

Do you need a "but" or "nevertheless" in your life? We all do.

"Was tired; **nevertheless**, finished the job and was refreshed."

Never went to college; **nevertheless** became wise by learning the Bible.

Was in great pain, **nevertheless** acted in faith and God healed.

Was in financial stress, **nevertheless** God provided again and again.

What has your attention right now? God's strengths or your weaknesses? What God did for David, He will do for you. The bigger question is, "Will we do what David did?"

One thought longs to build you up; the other seeks to tear you down. And here's the great news: you select the voice you hear. Why listen to the mockers? Why heed their voices? Why give ear to pea-brains and scoffers when you can, with the same ear, listen to the voice of God?

Do what David did. Turn a deaf ear to the old voices. Open a wide eye to the new choices. Who knows, you may be a prayer away from a **nevertheless**. God loves to give them.

Peter had "foot-in-mouth" disease; **nevertheless** he became a great preacher.

Joseph was an imprisoned slave in Egypt; **nevertheless**, he later ruled the kingdom.

The fire was made seven times hotter; **nevertheless**, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego didn't even smell of smoke.

Jesus was dead; **nevertheless** three days later He arose, and lives forever more.

On Sunday some of you will hear me preach a message, "It's a Messed Up World." Don't let that get you down. You may live in a messed up world, **nevertheless**, you can be a world changer.

And since we started with a "but," let's end with a "but."

Jesus said in **John 16:33 (NIV)**

³³ "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. **But** take heart! I have overcome the world."

Yours for His Purposes, Pastor Les