

## A Helpful Note

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by Bill Crews

In the Bible, especially in the New Testament, one vehicle for emphasizing one thing over another, or showing that one thing is more important than another, is a sentence employing a “**not**” clause and a “**but**” clause. The emphasis is to be put upon the clause prefaced by “**but**,” — meaning this is the greater, the more important thing. A common mistake made is in concluding that the “**not**” clause is a thing wrong or forbidden. It is rather to be understood as the less important thing. For example: “Lay **not** up yourselves treasures upon the earth, .. , **but** lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,…” (**Matthew 6:19-20**). Also: “Work **not** for the food which perisheth, **but** for the food which abideth unto eternal life” (**John 6:27**). And: “Whose adorning let it **not** be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel, **but** let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price” (**1 Peter 3:3-4**).

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