



M Grace Messenger

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

122 Walnut Street
Madison, AL 35758
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GBC HOMEPAGE

<http://www.gracemadison-al.com>

"Preaching the free grace of God which brings a change of lifestyles, masters, and destinies."

DEAN OLIVE, Pastor

— May 2007 Issue —

"We should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter" (Romans 7:6).



NURSERY SCHEDULE

MAY

06 – Kristy Hines & Jennifer Lovassy
13 – David & Mary Alice Olive
20 – Jon & Tanya Amis
27 – Nellie & Hannah McFadden

JUNE

03 – Troy & Jessica Moseley
10 – Bob & Faye Williams
17 – Vicki Johson & Sharon Bagley
24 – Linda Olive & Sonja Williams

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF MAY 1, 2007

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 34,649.80
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 36,608.01
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 35,596.43
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 46,544.30
Building Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 2,672.95
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 49,927.65
April General Fund offerings	\$ 14,240.65
April Building Fund offerings	\$ 0.00
Building Fund balance	\$ 11,571.21
Missions Fund balance	\$ 9,366.84
General Fund balance	\$ 8,830.38

LOOKING UNTO JESUS

A PRESENTATION OF NEW COVENANT THEOLOGY

MAY 19-20



Guest Preacher -- Tom Wells
Pastor of Kings Chapel Reformed Baptist Church
West Chester, Ohio

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

8:30 a.m. – Coffee and Refreshments

9:00 a.m. – Reflections on New Covenant Theology, part 1, followed by Q&A

10:30 a.m. – Break

10:45 a.m. – Reflections on New Covenant Theology, part 2, followed by Q&A

SUNDAY – Tom Wells will be preaching at 9:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. He will also be teaching the adults and youth in Sunday School at 11:00 a.m.

Pastor Wells has been pastor of Kings Chapel for 30 years. He is the author of numerous books and is a frequent contributor to theological journals. His books included *A Price for a People*; *A Vision for Missions*; *Christian Take Heart: Truth About the Christian Life*; *God is King*; *New Covenant Theology*, with Fred Zaspel; and *The Priority of Christ: A Study in New Covenant Theology*.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

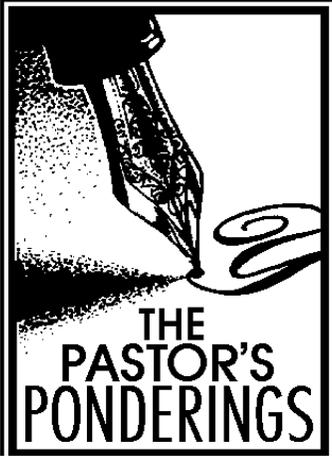
Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting
7:00 PM

FIRST SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Dinner at the Church 12:00 Noon
Afternoon Service 1:30 PM
(No Evening Service)



“HE WAS SEEN”

When writing to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul reminded them of the main points of the gospel message that he had preached to them and which they had believed. He said, “Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you,

which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you -- unless you believed in vain (1 Cor. 15:1-2).

He went on to state four major points of the gospel message in vv. 3-11. The four items are set forth in a close-net series of “that” clauses: 1) that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 2) that He was buried, 3) that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 4) and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve, and after that by over 500 brethren.

Points two and four, the burial and the appearances are apologetic in nature. They are important points, for Paul included them in his presentation of the gospel, but their primary purpose in the preaching of the gospel is to offer evidence of the reality of the death and resurrection. The essence of salvation is wrapped up in our Lord’s death on the cross and in His resurrection from the grave.

“Christ died” is a simple historical statement. “Christ died for our sins” is a deep and profound theological statement. It signifies the purpose for His dying. He died in order to remove sin and transgression. He became the sinners’ substitute in suffering the penalty of sin and thereby can grant forgiveness to those who trust him. Candlish said, “Christ died for our sins so that we might not have to die in our sins.”

“He arose” means death could not hold Him. It tells us that the Father was satisfied with his offering for sin. Jesus’ resurrection becomes the basis for God’s promise of eternal life to those who believe on Him. Because He was raised, all that are His will be raised to life everlasting.

That is the essence of the gospel. Christ died for our sins and rose again the third day. But the burial verified that He died and the appearances verified that he arose. So the burial and appearances offer a strong apologetic for the reality of His death and resurrection.

Little emphasis is placed on the fact that many saw Jesus alive after His resurrection, but this is a very important fact of history. There is no gospel without the resurrection. Belief in Christ without the doctrine of His bodily resurrection is

worthless. “Christianity lives or dies with the claim of Christ’s resurrection. To be sure, it is possible to believe in Jesus’ resurrection and not become a Christian, but without the bodily resurrection Christianity crumbles” (C. Blomberg).

But what proof is there that Jesus rose from the grave? Is the resurrection religious dogma with no substantive evidence? There is an abundant amount of credible, historical evidence. Some of the greatest proofs are His appearances to hundreds of people after He was raised, people, many of whom were later martyred for preaching a risen Christ.

The evidence is that Christ “was seen” after His death, burial, and resurrection. Four times in 1 Cor. 15 Paul writes, “He was seen” (“He appeared” in some translations). The witnesses didn’t see Him in lifeless state; they saw Him alive and walking about on the earth. They didn’t see Him in a vision; they saw Him; they talked with Him; they touched Him. When they saw him they were not hallucinating; the same Jesus that died on the cross was raised to life and they saw Him!

Paul reminds the Corinthians of six separate appearances that Jesus made to individuals and/or groups after his resurrection. He was seen by Cephas, by the twelve, by over 500 brethren, by James, then by the twelve again (the apostles), and then by Paul. This list is not comprehensive; Christ appeared to others that Paul does not mention. There are at least 12 resurrection appearances in the NT record. The Gospels tell us that Christ appeared to several women; He appeared to John, etc.

The Lord Jesus didn’t appear to everyone. He didn’t walk back into the judgment hall of Pilate; He didn’t go publicly into Jerusalem. He only revealed Himself to select individuals, but to enough of them to offer ample proof of His resurrection. When Peter preached the gospel at the house of Cornelius, he said, “Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead” (Acts 10:40-41).

Between His resurrection and ascension, Jesus appeared to all the apostles and to others. Acts 1:3 says that Jesus “presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”

We believe in the resurrection of Jesus because He was seen by many credible and reliable witnesses. The message of the early church was that Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, that He rose again, and that He was seen by many. That is the old-time religion and since it was good enough for the church in the 1st Century, it should be good enough for us!

WEB SITES

Truth and Way Ministries –

<http://truthandway.org/>

In Depth Studies –

<http://ids.org/ids/index.php>

English Standard Version –

www.esv.org/about/intro

Bryan Chappell –

www.covenantseminary.edu/BryanChapell/

Eternal Life Ministries –

<http://farese.com/>



“LET US COME BEFORE HIS PRESENCE WITH THANKSGIVING”

The title admonition from Psalm 95:2 should have special meaning for Grace Baptist Church, as this month marks the end of our financial indebtedness incurred ten years ago for the purchase of this meeting-house. We should be thankful for the Lord's abundant provision for this building, and for the stewardship of God's people in their tithes, offerings, and labors of love – the means God has used to make this place what it is today. May this place be one where saint and sinner alike hear the Word of God proclaimed – for *“faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God”* (Romans 10:17) – until Jesus comes.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Peter and Jenny Lovassy on the birth of their firstborn, Charles Alexander Lovassy. He was born on Thursday, May 3. Pray for them and offer God thanks for the safe birth of a healthy child.



Puritan Gems

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST IN US

RICHARD SIBBES

“A man may know that he is in Christ, if he find the Spirit of Christ in him; for the same Spirit when Christ took our nature, that sanctified that blessed mass whereof he was made, when there was a union between him and the second person, the same Spirit sanctifies our souls and bodies. There is one Spirit in the head and in the members. Therefore if we find the Spirit of Christ in us, we are in Christ and he in us” (*A Description of Christ*).

QUESTION #87 – “What is repentance unto life?”

ANSWER – “Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.”

SCRIPTURE – Acts 11:18; Acts 2:37-38; Joel 2:13; Jeremiah 31:18-19; 2 Corinthians 7:11; Psalm 119:59

COMMENTARY – “Repentance seems to be a bitter pill to take, but it is to purge out the bad humor of sin. By some Antinomian spirits it is cried down as a legal doctrine; but Christ himself preached it. ‘From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent...’ (Matt 4:17). In his last farewell, when he was ascending to heaven, he commanded that ‘Repentance should be preached in his name’ (Luke 24:47). Repentance is a pure gospel grace... Repentance comes in by the gospel; it is the fruit of Christ’s purchase that repenting sinners shall be saved. It is wrought by the ministry of the gospel, while it sets before our eyes Christ crucified. It is not arbitrary, but necessary; there is no being saved without it. ‘Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish’ (Luke 13:3). We may be thankful to God that he has left us this plank after shipwreck” (Thomas Watson).

ILLUSTRATION – Noah’s message from the steps going up to the Ark was not, “Something good is going to happen to you!” Amos was not confronted by the high priest of Israel for proclaiming, “Confession is possession!” Jeremiah was not put into the pit for preaching, “I’m O.K., you’re O.K.!” Daniel was not put into the lion’s den for telling people, “Possibility thinking will move mountains!” John the Baptist was not forced to preach in the wilderness and eventually beheaded because he preached, “Smile, God loves you!” Instead, what was the message of all these men of God? Simple, one word: “Repent!”



MAY 6 – Observance of the Lord’s Supper in the afternoon service.

MAY 13 – There will not be a Sunday Night Get-Together in May, so we are going to watch the film that was scheduled, “*C. H. Spurgeon Tonight*”, during the Sunday School hour.

MAY 19-20 – Tom Wells, pastor of Kings Chapel, West Chester, Ohio, will be speaking on Saturday morning on the subject of New Covenant Theology, and will be preaching in both services on the Lord’s Day.

MAY 27 – Mike McFadden will begin a series of Sunday School lessons on the subject of humility.

THEOLOGY



CORNER

A REFORMED AND
BAPTIST CATECHISM

THE RADICAL NEW ERA

Tom Wells

How radically different is the age of the New Covenant from all that has gone before? The answer to this question is multi-faceted and demands that we give our undivided allegiance to Him in this new era.

The first part of the answer lies in the following fact: the appearance of the Lord Jesus brings with it nothing less than the kingdom of God. If we ask, "Hasn't God always been king and hasn't this earth been the scene of his sovereign activity since creation?" the answer is, "Yes." David praised God with the following words: "Praise be to you, O LORD, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all" (1 Chron. 29:10-11).

God was king when David wrote these words, and he had always been king. Nothing had ever threatened his kingship for even a moment. "Dominion belongs to the LORD, and He rules over the nations" (Ps. 22:28; cf. 103:19).

Yet the first words Jesus speaks in the Gospel of Mark are these, "The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15). In keeping with the promises of the Old Testament, the kingdom arrives in such a way as to suggest that there never was a kingdom before. Yet, in two very real senses, the kingdom of God had already appeared in the past. First, God had always been sovereign over absolutely everything. Second, the nation of Israel, with the presence of its Davidic line (Ps. 2) and even in its absence (Matt. 21:43), was the bearer of God's kingdom (cf. the question of the disciples in Acts 1:6).

What then can Jesus' good news about the kingdom mean? He announces the enormous step forward in the program of God that focuses on the person and work of the Son. The two earlier senses of God's kingdom remain, but Christ's arrival transforms them. "All authority in heaven and earth" is His (Matt. 28:18).

"We have arrived at the age of grace and truth par excellence. So much is this the age of truth, that God has found in the word truth a name for the Lord Jesus."

The absolute sovereignty of God, as it bears on men and angels, is administered through Christ's hands. He says this, however, as the Messiah, the Davidic king. The two strands of kingship in the Old Testament unite in him. Since nothing on this scale has been seen in history before, all eyes are turned on the one who brings it about and on the consequent disjunction between this age and all that has gone before it.

The New Testament accentuates this distinction with John's point about the grandeur of the turning point of the ages: "the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). It is hard here to decide what stands at the forefront, the new era or the bearer of it. Clearly, there is a contrast in ages. There was an age characterized by the Mosaic law. There is a new age, characterized by grace and truth. There first age is associated with Moses, the second with Christ. Was there, then, no grace and truth in the day in which Moses lived and in the covenant of which he was the mediator?

The Mosaic age was rich in both grace and truth. John may be making that very point in the preceding verse, 1:16,

where some scholars translate the last three Greek words as "grace in place of grace," and where the KJV has "grace for grace." Either of these translations may mean that the grace that comes with Christ has replaced the grace of the Mosaic era. Despite this presence of grace in the Mosaic era, however, "1:16-17 does describe a contrast between the law and Jesus Christ. Grace and truth have come in Jesus Christ to a degree that they were not available in the law... The Mosaic law was characterized by grace; but its measure of grace pales in comparison with what has become available with the appearance Jesus Christ. Believers, John claims, have drunk deeply from the fullness of the incarnate Word and, in so doing; have replaced the grace of the law with the true grace of Jesus Christ" (Frank Thielman, *The Law and the New Testament*, p. 105).

The extent of this contrast has been captured in the observation, "God sent the law, but brought grace." Given John's emphasis on the deity of Christ in his prologue, his meaning in 1:17 must have something of this flavor to it. We have arrived at the age of grace and truth par excellence. So much is this the age of truth, that God has found in the word truth a name for the Lord Jesus (John 14:6)...

The unprecedented change that would come with the arrival of the Messiah has been a theme not only of the church, but of Judaism for two thousand years... [This longing] has been met in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the establishment of the New Covenant.

Taken from chapter 8, "The Radical New Era and the Priority of Christ," in *The Priority of Christ*, by Tom Wells, New Covenant Media.