



M Grace Messenger

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

122 Walnut Street
Madison, AL 35758
256-837-8821

GBC HOMEPAGES

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

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

DEAN OLIVE, Pastor

— March 2008 Issue —

"Knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ" (Colossians 3:24).



NURSERY SCHEDULE

MARCH

02 – Jon & Tanya Amis
09 – David & Mary Alice Olive
16 – Nellie & Hannah McFadden
23 – Linda Olive & Sonja Williams
30 – Amber Solan & Sara Smith

APRIL

06 – Vicki Johnson & Sharon Bagley
13 – Bob & Faye Williams
20 – Kristy Hines & Jenny Lovassy
27 – Kevin & Sara Smith

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF MARCH 1, 2008

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Budgeted expenditures (ytd) | \$ 17,859.74 |
| Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd) | \$ 16,938.83 |
| Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd) | \$ 0.00 |
| General Fund offerings (ytd) | \$ 21,347.85 |
| Love offerings (ytd) | \$ 2,040.00 |
| Total offerings (ytd) | \$ 23,387.85 |
| February Love offerings | \$ 1,120.00 |
| February General Fund offerings | \$ 10,705.85 |
| Building Fund balance | \$ 35,191.19 |
| Missions Fund balance | \$ 5,098.77 |
| General Fund balance | \$ 31,353.54 |

SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST PASTOR'S FELLOWSHIP

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2008



**10:00 AM – Jim Gables
Birmingham, Alabama**

**11:00 AM – Don Currin
Muscle Shoals, Alabama**

**12:00 Noon – Lunch provided by the
Church**

**1:15 PM – Miles McKee
Kingston Springs, Tennessee**

Although this is a pastor's fellowship, everyone is invited to attend. We have hosted the pastor's fellowship in March for ten years now and have been blessed with wonderful preaching and sweet fellowship. Plan to attend the entire meeting or catch one service and lunch if possible.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

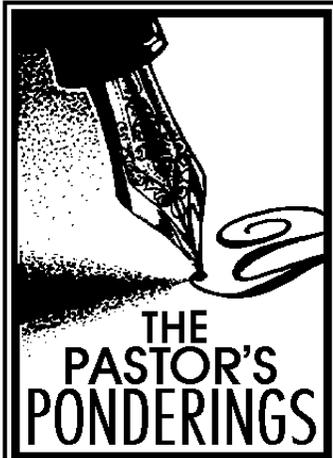
Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

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)



THE GOOD EFFECT OF TRIALS

Simon Peter wrote his first letter to saints that were scattered throughout Asia Minor. They had undergone many trials and hardships for their faith in Christ. They were persecuted because they confessed Jesus as Lord, yet they

were not downcast and depressed; they didn't moan and groan because they were victims of cruel injustice. They were full of joy!

Simon Peter wrote, "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials," and then he said, "You rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:6, 8).

They could rejoice because they knew that God was on the throne of heaven and that their trials were ordained by him. God ordained them because he deemed them necessary ('if need be'). And they were only temporary ('now for a little while'). They were unpleasant but they were needful; they were grievous but they were temporary. Thomas Charles, the Nineteenth Century Welsh preacher, said:

"When [the Lord] afflicts, it is not willingly, that is, not from any injustice or cruelty in his nature; no, infinitely far from it. Afflictions proceed from his *goodness*; and they are ordered by perfect wisdom and the greatest tenderness."

Do you have trouble believing that trials are divinely ordained for the child of God? Well they are, and in the midst of them love, faith, joy, and hope thrive (see 1 Peter 1:8-9). These things were found in the lives of those who were undergoing great trials. The trials produced grief, but Christian graces and virtues were refined and improved!

One might think the opposite would be the case. Surely trials produce an opposite effect, not love, faith, joy, and hope, but instead, hate, unbelief, distress, and despair. Let's look at this.

When trials come to an unbeliever it produces hate instead of love. Doesn't the world get mad at God when they go through hard times? Don't they shake their fist in his face? Yes, but not the believer. Trials brings a Christian to love his Savior more. He is like the child who is disciplined by a loving father and afterwards clings to him more closely. A Christian loves God more after chastening. J. H. Thornwell wrote a letter to a pastor friend who had lost a son in death. He sympathized with him for he too had lost a daughter. He said:

"It would be monstrous ingratitude to talk of grief in a case like this. There may be, and there must be, the pang of separation; there may and there must be those tears of nature, which testify to a father's interest, and a father's love; but anything that deserves to be called grief, must not enter where God and Christ are so gloriously present, and where the chamber of death is irradiated with the light, and joy, and blessedness of the eternal city."

When trials come to an unbeliever it puzzles him that God does not prevent them. He then hardens himself in unbelief and wonders how Christians can trust in a God that allows his children to suffer. After all, they reason, how can anyone trust a God who purposefully and deliberately sends misery into their life?

Yet Christians do just that. We know that trials have several benefits for our faith. Trials reveal faith, strengthen faith, purify faith, and beautify faith., They are sent because we have need of them. Isaac Backus said that trials are sent "to kill pride, to cure us of worldly mindedness and love to the creature, to rouse us from our sloth, and to quicken our regard to eternal things, etc."

When trials come, and unbeliever is down in the dumps for he sees no reason for them. But the Christian that undergoes trials, while he may be sour and dour momentarily, will get the victory and experience joy. The Holy Spirit picks us up and enables us to have joy in the midst of suffering. And not just a sibilance of joy or a smidgen of joy, but joy "*unspeakable and full of glory.*" James said, "Count it all joy when you fall into various trials" (1:2).

And finally, when trials come, all hope is lost for any unbeliever. Actually, he has no hope to start with, but his pretensions of hope are smashed. It seems to them that a God who causes one of his creatures to go through fiery trials is cruel, but such is not the case for a believer. Trials do not remove hope for believers but makes them hope all the more. Assurance and confidence is the result. Trials create greater dependence upon the Lord.

Despite severe trials, the Christian loves, believes, rejoices, and hopes in Christ. These qualities are enhanced by trials, not diminished. And such a reaction to trials is one of the greatest proofs to ourselves and to the world that we are truly the Lord's.

Do you have joy when you go through trials? Is your faith made stronger? Remember, in the midst of trials, God gives his saints springs of great joy, peace, love, and hope.

WEB SITES

HVERGAL TRUST –
www.haverгалtrust.com/index.html

SPURGEON GEMS – www.spurgeongems.org

BELIEVERS CHAPEL –
www.believerschapelDallas.org

MONERGISM – www.monergism.com

THE CENTER FOR BIBLICAL SPIRITUALITY –
www.spiritualdisciplines.org



MARCH 2—The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper will be held in the afternoon service.

MARCH 12 – The Ladies of Grace will meet 11:30 AM at Main Street Cafe in downtown Madison.

MARCH 13 – Our church will be hosting the monthly meeting of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Pastor’s Fellowship. Ladies, your help will be needed to feed our guest lunch.

MARCH 19 – The men’s Wednesday morning reading group resumes with the reading of *Culture Shift*, by Al Mohler, 6:00 AM.

MARCH 23 – Easter Sunrise service at Prosperity Presbyterian Church, Yukon, TN, 6:15 AM, pastor Dana Crowell.



Puritan Gems

THE BRIERS OF AFFLICTION

THOMAS WATSON

“God by affliction would prevent damnation. We are corrected in the world, ‘that we should not be condemned with the world.’ A man, by falling into briars, is saved from falling into the river; so God lets us fall into the briars of affliction that we may not be drowned in perdition. It is a great favor when a less punishment is inflicted to prevent a greater.”

QUESTION #98 – What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord’s Supper?
Answer – It is required of them who would worthily partake of the Lord’s Supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord’s body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience, lest coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

SCRIPTURE – 1 Cor. 11:28-29; 2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Cor. 11:31; 1 Cor. 11:18-20; 1 Cor. 5:8, 1 Cor. 11:27-29.

COMMENT – “Some Christians rarely or never come to the Lord’s Table, just as there are some who are never obedient in baptism. Sometimes they are just ignorant; they do not understand the importance of the Lord’s Table or of baptism. Sometimes Christians are just disobedient. They are acting carnally. But it may be that people who have no desire for testimony in baptism or fellowship at the Lord’s Table are not Christians at all. They may *think* they are, but they are not. Do you know what’s worse than never coming to the Lord’s Table? Coming to His Table when you do not deserve to be there. To do that is to eat and drink unworthily and ‘be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord,’ according to 1 Cor. 11:27... It is a serious matter for a Christian to come to the Lord’s Table when he has not repented of everything and does not desire righteousness and holiness above all. What is even more serious is to come to the Lord’s Table and drink unworthily when you are not a Christian at all...” (John MacArthur).

ILLUSTRATION – “There are many kinds of memorials on the earth. If you have ever been to Washington, D. C., you have seen there the tall, monolithic marble monument to the Father of our country—the Washington Monument. In Egypt, you can see many towering obelisks. Sometimes a monument will take the form of a mausoleum. In India, you will see the most beautiful mausoleum in the world—the Taj Mahal—built by Shah Jahan in memory of a beloved wife. But our Lord did not create a monument out of marble to bring to us the memory of our Savior’s suffering on our behalf. In fact, this memorial is not in the form of any kind of structure. He did it in a primeval, fundamental, and basic way—by eating and drinking—and this simple memorial is to be repeated again and again and again. The broken bread recalls for us His torn body and the crimson of the cup reminds us of the blood poured out upon the earth for the remission of sins” (W. A. Criswell).

THEOLOGY



CORNER

A REFORMED AND
BAPTIST CATECHISM

SPRING BIBLE CONFERENCE
APRIL 18-20

PREACHER – KEVIN LANDIS
PASTOR OF BIBLE CHAPEL OF
DELHI HILLS, CINCINNATI

WHAT BRINGS SATAN PLEASURE?

WHEN THE APPLAUSE OF HELL BECOMES THE BLIND DELIGHT OF EVANGELISM (PART 1)

By Steve Camp

1. When men of God abandon the preaching of the gospel to become “social engineers and would be politicians” consumed with the temporary affairs of society.

2. When the preaching of God’s Word is substituted with relational anecdotal experience, personal happiness programs, health and wealth gospel, and human potentiality makeovers.

3. When pastors no longer shepherd God’s people and the pulpits become playgrounds.

4. When psychology replaces biblical discipleship.

5. When men of God are flattered to become “late night talk show guests” on cultural and spiritual issues, but never once open up the Bible to develop their answers; or call the nation, other guests, or the talk show host to repentance by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation; they’ve simply become culturally acceptable biblical motivational speakers thinking that access to mainstream media means they are making an impact.

6. When the vicar of Rome is acknowledged as the vicar of Christ.

7. When sin is called sickness; when disobedience is called disease; and when adultery is called addiction.



8. When money becomes a prerequisite for ministry by charging people for the gospel, worship, discipleship, counseling, evangelism, etc.

9. When we are liked by all people; when the world is not offended by the message we represent and flatters us for being “relevant and nice”.

10. When church becomes something we only do one hour a week on one day a week.

11. When prayer becomes

the seldom thing we do.

12. When brothers and sisters hold ought against each other in bitterness and unforgiveness.

13. When church discipline of sin ceases.

14. When irreconcilable differences becomes an acceptable reason to break the covenant of marriage.

15. When the goal of faith is no longer holiness, but happiness.

16. When the object of faith is no longer Christ, but self.

17. When the foundation of faith is no longer the Scriptures, but my personal experience.

18. When error is tolerated and accepted as truth.

19. When Christians partner with nonbelievers in the work of the ministry.

20. When ministries are enticed to give up their autonomy and become owned by the world for just a little more money and a little more personal promotion.

(Continued next issue)