



# 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**

— November 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

### NOVEMBER

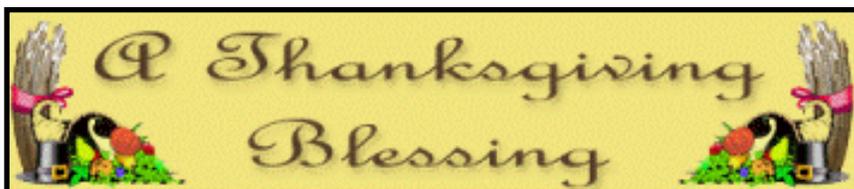
- 2 Kevin and Sara Smith
- 9 Joshua and Lori Hewlett
- 16 Jon and Tanya Amis
- 23 David and Mary Alice Olive
- 30 Nellie and Hannah McFadden

### DECEMBER

- 7 Linda Olive and Sonja Williams
- 14 Vicki Johnson and Sharon Bagley
- 21 Bob and Faye Williams
- 28 Kristy Hines and Jenny Lovassy

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2008

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 92,102.94
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 88,161.90
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 215.95
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$127,271.58
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 6,370.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$135,171.67
October Love offerings	\$ 50.00
October General Fund offerings	\$ 12,258.41
Building Fund balance	\$ 50,956.05
Missions Fund balance	\$ 11,028.87
General Fund balance	\$ 49,484.53



Now thank we all our God  
With heart and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things hath done,  
In whom His world rejoices;  
Who from our mother's arms  
Hath blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love,  
And still is ours today.



All praise and thanks to God  
The Father now be given,  
The Son, and Him who reigns  
With them in highest heaven:  
The one eternal God,  
Whom earth and heaven adore!  
For thus it was, is now,  
And shall be evermore.

Oh, may this bounteous God  
Through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts  
And blessed peace to cheer us;  
And keep us in His grace  
And guide us when perplexed  
And free us from all ills  
In this world and the next.



## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

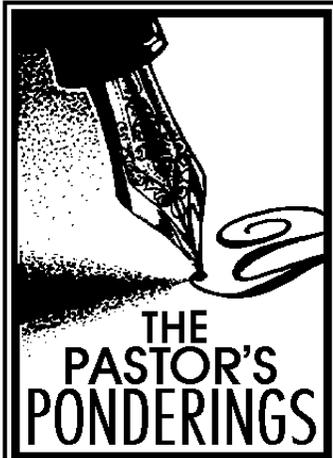
Morning Worship	9:30 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM

### WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting	7:00 PM
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### 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)	



## “Doctor Law and Doctor Grace”

**T**here is nothing more diametrically opposite than law and grace. That doesn't mean that law and grace cannot work together in the plan and purpose of God, for they do, but it means that they are distinct

categories and that they do not function in the same way. They are polar opposites in what they do.

Paul informs us of the purpose of the law and of grace in Romans 5:20-21. He says that “the law entered that the offense might abound,” and then he said, “but where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.”

Why the law? “The law entered that the offense might abound.” The word “entered” literally means, “to come in beside.” A good translation is “added” (NIV). The codified law was added to the law written in the heart, and it came in alongside God's redemptive scheme in order “that the offense might abound.”

God didn't give the law to save sinners; he gave it in order to show us that we need saving! Charles Hodge says, “It was super-induced on a plan already laid, and for a subordinate, although necessary purpose. It was not intended to give life, but to prepare men to receive Christ as the only source of righteousness and salvation.”

This is something the Jews missed entirely. They regarded the law as an instrument of salvation. They believed that they were regarded righteous in God's sight by the keeping of God's commandments (cf. Rom 9:30-10:4). But that was not the purpose of the law. Rather, the law entered “that the offense might abound.” The law entered to show sin to be utterly sinful. The law becomes our friend when it condemns us because without it, there would be no conviction that we are sinners and in need of a Savior.

So “the law did not put sin into the heart, but it was [and is] an instrument to display the depravity already existing in the heart” (Haldane). The law brings out the character of sin. It reveals sin in all its hideousness and ugliness!

The solution to our plight is grace. The law works to reveal sin and grace gives us hope. “But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.” With the increase of sin, there was the increase of grace. This increase of grace was not in order to balance out the proliferation of sin, but rather, to overcome it and defeat it.

When Paul said, “grace abounded much more,” he used a word that means “super-abound,” or “super-increase.” The provision of God's grace in saving and redeeming sinners is far greater than the law's power to increase sin. It doesn't matter how far a man goes in sin, God's grace reaches farther!

Thanks be to God for his wonderful grace! Though there is plenty of sin, there is much more grace! Paul never for one moment minimized the seriousness of sin, but he always stressed the victory of grace (Morris). There are times when we look at the abundance of sin in the world and are tempted to despair, but there is always more grace, much more grace than there is sin!

The law of God is designed to make us cry, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!” And the grace of God makes that prayer effective for it produced the provision for salvation in the death of Jesus Christ! Before the gospel makes any sense to us, we must recognize our sin. It is the role of the law to produce the knowledge and conviction of sin in us in order that we might be prepared for the appreciation and reception of the work of Christ.

Asahel Nettleton was one of the effective preachers during the second Great Awakening in America, which occurred in the early part of the Nineteenth Century. He set a good example for preachers of the gospel everywhere. John Thornbury describes his preaching this way: “His scalpel was the law and his medicine was the gospel.”

I had two doctors during my bout with a bad heart. Dr. Campbell was my cardiologist. He examined me and told me what was wrong. He told me that my mitral valve was bad and that if I wanted to live, I would have to have heart surgery. But he didn't operate on me. He only told me what my problem was. He sent me to another doctor, Dr. Washburn. Dr. Washburn is a heart surgeon. He put me on the table, cut into my chest cavity and into my heart, took out the bad valve and put in me a mechanical one in its place, sewed me up and sent me on my way forever thankful for the work he did on my behalf.

That's a picture of how God saves us. We have two physicians – Dr. Law and Dr. Grace. Dr. Law shows us our sin but can't do anything else for us. But Dr. Grace brings relief. He fixes the problem by saving our souls! What does the law do? It makes sin abound. What does grace do? It super-abounds to save our souls from sin, death, and hell.

## WEB SITES

**BUILDING OLD SCHOOL CHURCHES** –  
[www.biblebased.wordpress.com/](http://www.biblebased.wordpress.com/)

**CRISWELL THEOLOGICAL REVIEW** –  
[www.criswelljournal.com/](http://www.criswelljournal.com/)

**DOXA DIGITAL PRESS** –  
[www.doxapress.com/index.html](http://www.doxapress.com/index.html)

**BUNYAN MINISTRIES** –  
[www.bunyanministries.org/](http://www.bunyanministries.org/)

**CHURCH HISTORY STUDY HELPS** –  
[www.theologywebsite.com/history/](http://www.theologywebsite.com/history/)



**NOVEMBER 7** – The Ladies of Grace will meet on Friday, Nov. 7, at 6:30 PM. The meeting will involve a discussion of the book about the hymn writer, Francis Ridley Havergal, entitled, “Ever, Only, All for Thee.”

**NOVEMBER 16** – Dana Crowell will be preaching at GBC in the evening service.

**NOVEMBER 26** – Thanksgiving Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM.

**NOVEMBER 30** – A four-part Sunday School series begins entitled, “Christless Christianity: The Alternative Gospel of the American Church,” taught by Michael Horton (via DVD).

**DECEMBER 14** – Elizabeth Meade will update us on her mission work in the Sunday School hour, and her father, David Meade, former missionary to the Philippines and now director of Propempo International, an agency that assists churches in missions, will preach in the worship service.

**DECEMBER 21** – We will be joining Providence Presbyterian Church for our annual Christmas service on Sunday evening, Dec. 21. The meeting will be held at their church this year, with pastor Olive preaching and our folk bringing the desserts.

**DECEMBER 28 & JANUARY 4** – No Sunday School on these two days. Worship services will be at normal times.



The evidence of thanksgiving is thanksgiving. Add to your prayers of thanksgiving the acts of thanksgiving for a genuinely thankful heart will show its gratitude in action.

**QUESTION #103** – What do we pray for in the fourth petition (of the Lord’s Prayer)?

**ANSWER** – “In the fourth petition (which is, *Give us this day our daily bread*) we pray, that of God’s free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them.”

**SCRIPTURE** – Proverbs 30:8; 1 Timothy 4:4-5; Proverbs 10:22

**COMMENT** – “We ought to ask for our daily outward provisions, first, because God requires that we should ask for these things; and he hath promised only unto such, that they should not want them. ‘The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing’ (Ps. 34:10). Second, because in asking aright [for] our daily outward provisions, we ask and obtain the blessing of God with them; and without asking, if we have these things, we have them with God’s curse. ‘And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water’ (Exod. 23:25).

**ILLUSTRATION** – “For these reasons, then, we consider it our precious privilege, as heretofore, to continue to wait upon the Lord only, instead of taking goods on credit, or borrowing money from some kind friends, when we are in need. Nay, we purpose, as God shall give grace, to look to Him only, though morning after morning we should have nothing in hand for the work-- yea, though from meal to meal we should have to look to Him; being fully assured that He who is now in the tenth year feeding these many orphans, and who has never suffered them to want, and that He who is now in the twelfth year carrying on the other parts of the work, without any branch of it having had to be stopped for want of means, will do so for the future also” (George Muller).

## THEOLOGY

CORNER



A REFORMED AND  
BAPTIST CATECHISM



## Puritan Gems

### SINS PARDONED—SINS SUBDUED

THOMAS WATSON

“Wherever God pardons sin, He subdues it. ‘He will have compassion on us, He will subdue our iniquity’ (Micah 7:19). Where men’s persons are justified, their lusts are mortified. There is in sin a commanding and a condemning power. The condemning power of sin is taken away when the commanding power of sin is taken away. We know our sins are forgiven when they are subdued.”

# ELECTION AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Ian Hamilton

It is often missed that the doctrine of God's sovereign election of sinners to life is presented in the Bible, not as a puzzle to solve, far less as a truth to make us proud, but rather as a truth to humble us and then to inspire us to live lives to God's praise and glory. This is not grasped by many in the church, let alone outside. The doctrine of election is thought to breed pride and a careless attitude to godly living.

If I am an elect sinner (so the thinking goes) then I must be better than the rest, and it does not matter how I live, because I am one of God's 'chosen ones'. This thinking is diametrically opposed to the thinking and teaching of God's Word and is nothing short of blasphemy.

In Colossians 3:12–13 Paul exhorted God's 'holy and dearly loved' people to clothe themselves 'with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience'. He went on to encourage them to 'Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances [they] may have against one another', just as the Lord had forgiven them. What is striking is the truth that Paul sets before them as the foundation for this exhortation to godliness: 'Therefore, as God's chosen ones (his elect), holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility . . .'

Paul was following here the invariable grammar of Holy Scripture, grounding his exhortation in gracious doctrine. We see this pattern in Exodus 20:2–3. First, the Lord reminds his people that he is the God who brought them out of the land of bondage (verse 2), who carried them on eagles' wings and brought them to himself (*Exod.* 19:4). It is only then that he commands them, 'You shall have no other gods before me.' God graciously provides his people with a powerful incentive to obedience. He chooses not to constrain obedience by divine fiat only. Rather, he resolves

to 'woo' them to a life of believing obedience by reminding them of his great grace towards them.

Failure to appreciate the gracious context of the giving of the law has led throughout the centuries to a practical dislocation of law from grace. This has resulted in 'legal obedience', which is the religion of devils, not the religion of the God of grace. The same principle operates in *Col.* 3:12. Paul reminds the Colossians who they are, 'God's chosen people', his elect ones. They are the recipients of God's sovereign, distinguishing love. They did not first choose him; he chose them. But for God's distinguishing, electing love, they would yet have been 'children of wrath like the rest' (*Eph.* 2:3). But sovereign, electing love intervened and rescued them from their hell-bound state. For Paul this was a wonderful incentive to godly, Christ-like living. Godliness of life is the response of love to love, of forgiven love to forgiving love.

Too often sanctification, likeness to Christ, is divorced in our thinking from God's electing love and becomes in the process a duty more than a desire. Of course sanctification is our Christian duty; but it is a duty of love, not a duty of mere demand. The same principle operates in human relationships. A wife is under divine obligation to submit to her husband (*Eph.* 5:22). But how is that submission to be drawn out from her? Yes, it is a divine command she is to obey whether she feels like it or not. But in the theological grammar of the Scriptures, what follows in *Eph.* 5:25–28 is surely to be connected to verse 22. Husbands are to 'love (their) wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her'. As husbands self-denyingly love their wives, cherishing them to the point of laying down their lives for them, wives have gospel submission sweetly drawn from them. Love responds to love.

This was Paul's unvarying pastoral methodology. You see the point more panoramically in Rom. 12. For 11 chapters Paul had expounded the astonishing grace of God in

Christ. As he concluded his exposition of this grace his heart and mind overflowed in soaring doxology (11:33–36). At this critical point Paul summoned the Romans to 'offer (their) bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God' (12:1). The call to sanctification is rooted and grounded in the prior 'mercies of God' (12:1a). Election is not conceived for one moment as a deterrent to sanctification; in fact the exact opposite. For Paul the one inevitable response of a forgiven sinner to the wonder and mystery of God's sovereign election was undivided surrender and whole-hearted commitment.

The response of a believing sinner to God's sovereign, electing love is well expressed in McCheyne's hymn:

*Chosen, not for good in me,  
Wakened up from wrath to flee;  
Hidden in the Saviour's side,  
By the Spirit sanctified,  
Teach me, Lord, on earth to show,  
By my love, how much I owe.*

Where this song of adoring wonder at God's electing love is absent from our lives it is hardly possible that such love has captured our hearts and our wills. Nothing less than a transformed life is the evidence of electing love truly experienced. . .

Is election, then, a doctrine to make man proud and arrogant? God forbid! It stirs forgiven sinners to cry out, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him' (*Eph.* 1:3–4a) . . .

(See The Banner of Truth Magazine, October 2008, for the complete article)