



# 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**

— October 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

### OCTOBER

- 05 – Linda Olive and Sonja Williams
- 12 – Vicki Johnson and Sharon Bagley
- 19 – Faye and Bob Williams
- 26 – Kristy Hines and Jenny Lovassy

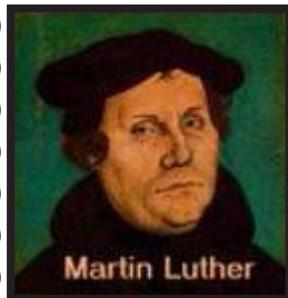
### NOVEMBER

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

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2008

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 82,337.99
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 77,025.59
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 215.95
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$104,194.87
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 6,370.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$115,013.17
September Love offerings	\$ 510.00
September General Fund offerings	\$ 10,818.30
Building Fund balance	\$ 49,117.28
Missions Fund balance	\$ 13,373.19
General Fund balance	\$ 50,472.22

## REMEMBERING THE REFORMATION OF OCTOBER 1517



"What happened at the Reformation... was the revival of vital Christianity... What Luther did was to rediscover vital Christianity and to give it afresh to the world. To do this was to put the spark to the train. We are feeling the explosion yet.

The Reformation was then—we insist upon it—precisely the substitution of one set of theological doctrines for another. That is what it was to Luther; and that is what, through Luther, it has been to the Christian world. Exactly what Luther did was for himself—for the quieting of his aroused conscience and the healing of his deepened sense of sin—to rediscover the great fact, the greatest of all the great facts of which sinful man can ever become aware, that salvation is by the pure grace of God alone" (B. B. Warfield, *The Theology of the Reformation*).

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

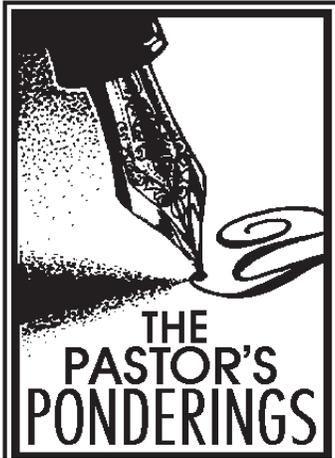
Morning Worship	9:30 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM

### 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)	



## THE EVIL OF SODOMY

The name Sodom has become synonymous with the sin of homosexuality, even being referred to as sodomy. The reason is due to what happened when God sent two messengers to Lot's house to take him out of the city that he was going to destroy. The story is told in Genesis 19.

The two messengers stayed with Lot. At bedtime, the men of Sodom, young and old, assembled outside Lot's home. They actually surrounded the place. They then called out to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them" (5). What depravity existed in this city! The men in Sodom were perverted to the point of wanting to have unnatural relations with other men. They demanded that Lot bring the visitors out to them so they could violate them.

The expression, "know them" means sexual activity (Gen. 4:1; Judges 19:25). Yet some in the modern era conclude that the story has no reference to a vile sexual act in Genesis 19. In 1955, an Anglican scholar by the name of D. Sherwin Bailey, wrote a book entitled, *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition*. His book was an attempt to justify the practice of homosexual behavior from the OT. This work had a major impact on the change in British law regarding this issue, and even our own. It has become a standard reference work for the pro-homosexual viewpoint.

P. Michael Ukleja, in an article entitled, "The Bible and Homosexuality" (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, issue #558), says, "Bailey believes that much of Christian prejudice against homosexuality is the result of misunderstanding the story of Sodom in Genesis 19. He argues that the men of Sodom were anxious to interrogate the strangers to find out if they were spies. Therefore, he argues, the story does not refer to homosexuality at all. The sin involved was not homosexuality... Lot had angered these residents by receiving foreigners whose credentials had not been examined. The men were angered by this omission, and were showing extreme discourtesy to these visitors by demanding to know their credentials. Bailey argues that the demand of the men of Sodom to 'know' the strangers in Lot's house meant nothing more than their desire to 'get acquainted with' them. The problem, argues Bailey was nothing more than inhospitality."

One has to be blind and prejudiced to maintain such a view. The context of Genesis 19 does not allow for that interpretation. Such a view is a deliberate distortion of the Scriptures. Also, the NT book of Jude refers to the men of Sodom as "having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh" (v. 7). Their behavior wasn't because they wanted to get

acquainted with the two visitors; it was because they wanted to satisfy their perverted lusts.

Homosexuality is wickedness in the sight of God. It is condemned in both the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9). God condemns the sin of homosexuality and so should we! Like all other sinners, homosexuals can be saved if they repent and believe on Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. But what they do is wicked in the sight of God.

Sadly, some say that God made them homosexual. They say they were born with this tendency, but that is not true. The fault does not lie with God but with human sinfulness. Being homosexual is not like being redheaded or left-handed; it is not generic. It is a sinful lifestyle that one chooses.

Our culture is as sick with this perversion as Sodom was. James R. Beck, in an article in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, "Evangelicals, Homosexuality, and Social Science," (March, '97) says, "Society is under pressure to recognize gay marriages, to alter the standards of the Boy Scouts on this issue, and to drop all military bans on the service of practicing gays. Both the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological Association are under tremendous pressure to declare that any therapy with homosexual persons not designed to help them adjust to their orientation is unethical... The American church is facing the question of admitting the Metropolitan Churches of America to the National Council of Churches. Nearly all mainline denominations are embroiled in debates about the nature of human sexuality."

The religious community by-and-large has caved into the homosexual agenda. There are gay churches these days with gay pastors; mainline denominations are ordaining gays as ministers and deacons and performing gay marriages. It's acceptance as norm is a sure sign of degradation in a society.

The men of Sodom were so perverted that they did not want to know women; they wanted men; they wanted the visitors who were in Lot's house. They even attempted to break down the door and take the men by force. God struck them with blindness at that moment and the next day destroyed the city with fire and brimstone.

The Bible is very clear on the subject of homosexuality. We must not tone down what it says. Sodomy is a sin. It is a vile sin that calls down the judgment of God. Someone said, "If God doesn't judge America, he will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah." God never has a need to apologize for anything because he is righteous and true. But Sodom and Gomorrah are examples to those today who live ungodly, and as surely as He judged those twin cities for their wickedness, He will do the same to others, if not now, on the Day of Judgment (2 Peter 2:6-9).

## WEB SITES

### GENDER BLOG –

[www.cbmw.org/Blog](http://www.cbmw.org/Blog)

### INSTITUTE FOR CREATION RESEARCH –

[www.icr.org/](http://www.icr.org/)

### THE SPURGEON ARCHIVE –

[www.spurgeon.org/mainpage.htm](http://www.spurgeon.org/mainpage.htm)

### THE S. LEWIS JOHNSON INSTITUTE –

[www.sljinstitute.net/](http://www.sljinstitute.net/)

### SHARPER IRON –

[www.sharperiron.org/](http://www.sharperiron.org/)



**TURN YOUR  
CLOCKS  
BACK!**

## DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME CHANGE

Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, November 2, so be sure to set your clocks back one hour the night before so you can arrive at church on time.

## LADIES FELLOWSHIP MEETING

The next Ladies of Grace meeting is scheduled for Friday evening, Nov. 7, 6:30 to 8:30. The ladies will be discussing the book about Francis Ridley Havergal entitled, “Ever, Only, All for Thee.” All the women in the church are invited to attend.



## Puritan Gems

### TREATED AS A DARLING OF HEAVEN

RALPH ERSKINE

“O come! And kiss the Son, by believing in Him, and applying the benefits of this glorious transaction to yourself; and be who you will, if you kiss and embrace the Son, you shall find the glorious attributes of God kissing and embracing you, and hugging you in their arms, as a darling of heaven and a favorite in the house of God.”

QUESTION #102 – What do we pray for in the third petition (of the Lord’s Prayer)?

ANSWER – “In the third petition (which is, *Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*) we pray, that God, by his grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.”

SCRIPTURE – Psalm 119:34-36; Acts 21:14; Matthew 26:39; 2 Samuel 15:25; Job 1:21; Psalm 103:20-22.

COMMENT – “By doing the will of God, we evidence sincerity... It is not all our golden words, if we could speak like angels, but our works, our doing of God’s will which bears witness of our sincerity. We judge not the health of a man’s body by his high color, but by the pulse of the arm, where the blood chiefly stirs; so a Christian’s soundness is not to be judged by his profession; but the estimate of a Christian is to be taken by his obediencial acting, his doing the will of God. This is the best certificate and testimonial to show for heaven” (Thomas Watson).

ILLUSTRATION – A Sunday School teacher, instructing his class on the third petition of the Lord’s prayer, said to them, “You have told me, my dear children, what is to be done—the will of God; and where it is to be done—on earth; and how it is to be done—as it is done in heaven.” But I ask you, “How do you think the angels and happy spirits do the will of God in heaven, since they are our pattern?” The first child replied, “They do it immediately.” The second, “They do it diligently.” The third, “They do it always.” The fourth, “They do it with all their hearts.” The fifth, “They do it all together.” Here a pause ensued, and no other child appeared to have any answer, but after a while a little girl rose and said, “Why, sir, they do it without asking any questions.”

## THEOLOGY

CORNER



A REFORMED AND  
BAPTIST CATECHISM

## LUTHER’S TESTIMONY

“There [Rom. 1:17] I began to understand the Justice of God as that by which the just lives by the gift of God, namely by faith, and this sentence, ‘the justice of God is revealed in the gospel,’ to be that passive justice, with which the merciful God justifies us, by faith... This straightway made me feel as though reborn, and as though I had entered through open gates into paradise itself...”

# JOHN BUNYAN: BLESSING GOD FOR AFFLICTION

Susan Verstraete

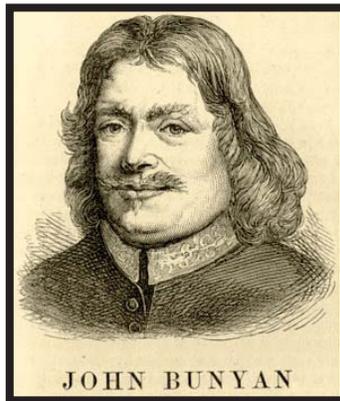
“Like the tearing of my flesh from my bones.”

That’s how John Bunyan described parting with his family after their brief visits with him in prison. Each time they walked away, John was reminded of the great difficulty his incarceration imposed on them, especially on his blind daughter, Mary. “What sorrow you are likely to have as your portion in this world!” he wrote. “You must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand other calamities, even though I cannot so much as bear the wind blowing upon you.”

Adding to John’s misery was the knowledge that by just saying the word, he could be released. Just one simple statement—“I will not preach the gospel of Jesus Christ”—was all it would take to set him free to support his family again. But John couldn’t do it. “I have determined,” he said, “the almighty God being my help and my shield, yet to suffer, if frail life might continue so long, even till the moss shall grow on mine eyebrows, rather than thus to violate my faith.” And so John waited on God for twelve long years in the overcrowded, unsanitary, poorly heated Bedford jail. Here’s something of what he learned there.

“I have often thought that the best of Christians are found in the worst of times.” It was a great mercy that John found himself in a position to both minister and be ministered to in the Bedford jail. Most of the men housed in the Bedford jail at that time were there because of religious persecution. They were free during the day to study Scripture together, to pray and to encourage one another. John found himself in the ironic position

of doing in prison what he was imprisoned for doing—preaching and teaching the Gospel—as well as learning from the other imprisoned preachers. Members of his church often came to the jail to comfort John and ask his counsel, and his family was allowed to visit regularly. God ministered His sustaining grace to John through His people.



“Nothing can render affliction so insupportable as the load of sin; would you, therefore, be fitted for afflictions, be sure to get the burden of your sins laid aside, and then what afflictions soever you may meet with will be very easy to you . . .” John learned many spiritual lessons in prison, and came to a clear understanding that he needed to entrust his family to God. He meditated on Jeremiah 49:11—“Leave your fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let your widows trust in Me.” Later he wrote, I also considered that if I entrusted all to God, I engaged God to take care of my concerns. But if I forsook His ways, then I would not only falsify my profession, but would also consider that my concerns, if left at God’s feet while I stood true to, and for, His name, were not as secure as they would be if they were under my care, even though I was denying the way of God.

“If thou canst hear and bear the rod of affliction which God shall lay upon thee,

remember this lesson-thou art beaten that thou mayest be better.” John Bunyan discovered his voice as a writer while in prison. He began writing as an extension of his ministry to the church and had written four books before his arrest. However, Bunyan’s two major works were written during his stay at the Bedford jail. The first, *Grace Abounding*, is an autobiographical testimony of his own conversion. The second, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, is an allegorical novel that in many ways tells the same story as *Grace Abounding*, universalizing and personifying Bunyan’s struggles with guilt, doubt, despair and even incarceration.

Could these books have been written without the rod of affliction? George Whitefield didn’t think so. He said, “It [*Pilgrim’s Progress*] smells of the prison. It was written when the author was confined in the Bedford jail. And ministers never write or preach so well as when under the cross; the Spirit of Christ and of Glory rests upon them.”

“In times of affliction we commonly meet with the sweetest experiences of the love of God . . . Jesus Christ was never more real and apparent than now. Here I have seen and felt Him indeed!” After being released from prison, John added a chapter to the second edition of *Grace Abounding* describing some of his experiences there. In the final paragraph he described the comfort he received from God during a time of doubt in prison. He wrote, “I would not have exchanged this trial for much else; I am comforted every time I think about it and I hope I shall bless God for ever for the things I have learned by it.”

[www.CCWtoday.org](http://www.CCWtoday.org)