



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 2010 Issue —

"But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:15).



NURSERY SCHEDULE

October

03 Jessica and Troy Moseley
10 David and Mary Alice Olive
17 Vicki Johnson and Amber Solan
24 Linda Olive and Sonja Williams
31 Jon and Tanya Amis

November

07 Pat and Kristy Hines
14 Jenny and Peter Lovassy
21 Troy and Jessi Moseley
28 Vicki Johnson and Amber Solan

LAWN CARE

October - Jon Amis

CHURCH CLEANING

October - Swinneys
November - Dean and Linda Olive

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2010

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$150,431.13
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$136,437.99
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 9,279.38
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$104,580.02
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 1,730.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$122,062.86
September Love offerings	\$ 1,330.42
September General Fund offerings	\$ 12,142.42
September Designated Missions	\$ 190.00
Haiti Relief (ytd)	\$ 5,150.00
Building Fund balance	\$ 62,927.55
Missions Fund balance	\$ 12,534.68
General Fund balance	\$ 63,276.19

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

20th Anniversary Celebration

1990-2010

November 7, 2010

Special Speaker

STEVE MARTIN

Pastor of Heritage Community
Church

Fayetteville, Georgia



Service Schedule

- 9:30 AM** – Worship Service with Steve Martin preaching
11:00 AM – PowerPoint Presentation of the History of GBC with Testimonies
12:00 Noon – Lunch
1:30 PM – Worship Service with Steve Martin preaching

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

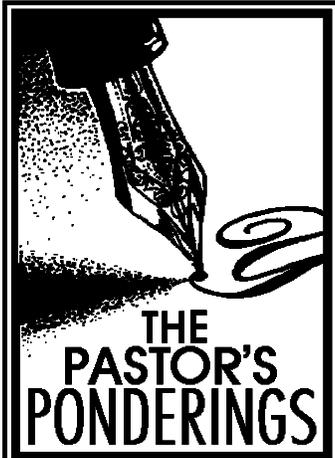
Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

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)



Great Joy

“So there was great joy in that city” (Acts 8:8, NIV). This is the report that Luke made about Samaria. “Great joy” is joy at an immense level. It is joy of a superlative degree. Something so wonderful had happened in Samaria that it resulted in “great joy.”

Under the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit, Phillip had gone to Samaria to preach the gospel. Jesus had told his disciples before he ascended into heaven that they were to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria (Acts 1:8). Phillip was given the assignment to make Christ known in the city of Samaria.

Samaria was founded by Omri, king of Israel. It was the capital city of the northern kingdom until its fall in 722 B.C. It was a city well-known for its idolatry in the Old Testament (Ahab and Jezebel were residents there, along with many prophets to Baal). The residents of Samaria by New Testament times were Jews mixed with other nationalities. Palestine was divided into three provinces. The province of Samaria, with the city of Samaria as its capital, was in the geographical center. Jews traveling from Judah to Galilee or vice versa, usually went around Samaria (there was much hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans). Jesus, however, once went through Samaria and brought salvation to an immoral woman at Jacob’s well (John 4).

The gospel is for all people. Even Samaritans! And the Lord Jesus sent his church to preach salvation there. It was a great step forward for Jewish Christians to go there with the gospel and what joy came in Samaria as a result of Phillip’s ministry. God visited the people and did great things for them which made them glad.

Phillip was the man God sent to Samaria. Phillip was one of the seven set aside to be a deacon in the early church (Acts 6:1-7). God also made an evangelist out of him (Acts 21:8). Phillip did what the others did who “went everywhere preaching the word” (4). Whatever the word said, that is what they preached. Like Paul, they could say, “I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). No truth was suppressed!

But part of that ministry, the largest part, was that Phillip “preached Christ to them” (5). The truth of God as preached by Phillip focused on the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. He didn’t go to preach Judaism, but Christ; he didn’t go to preach religion (they already had that), but Christ!

Later Phillip was called to leave the revival taking

place in Samaria and go to a lone man in the desert, but his message was the same. He ministered to an Ethiopian eunuch who was reading Isaiah 53. From that passage Phillip “preached Jesus unto him” (Acts 8:35).

Phillip did exactly what Peter did in the early chapters of Acts and what Paul did in the later chapters of Acts. He preached Jesus as the Christ according to the Scriptures.

God mightily blessed Phillip’s preaching in Samaria. Great power was present in Samaria. We read that “the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Phillip” (6). The power of the Spirit accompanied the preaching of Phillip. Phillip’s ministry was not an exercise in speaking the bare word. God came and directed the word preached into their hearts. Conviction of sin came and was followed by genuine faith in the crucified and risen Lord.

Other things were done by Phillip in the city of Samaria that were connected with the preaching of the gospel, which brought “great joy” to the people. Luke writes, “And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Phillip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For many unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed” (6-7).

God backed up his preaching and authenticated it by giving Phillip power to do supernatural signs. The miraculous deeds supplied evidence of the truth of his message. The things which were wrought, bodily healings and exorcisms, brought untold joy to those who had been relieved and to their loved ones.

But the basis of the joy they experienced was the forgiveness of sins wrought in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The healing of bodily ailments was secondary to that. We should always remember that the most important blessing is the salvation of the soul. What would it profit a man if he were healed of a terrible infirmity and not be forgiven of sins? What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

So “great joy” came to Samaria because hell-bound sinners found the forgiveness of sin and started a journey up the road to heaven! When people get right with God heaven comes down and glory fills their souls. Joy was the by-product—it always is! Joy is the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22).

“Great joy” is found in knowing Christ. It is not found in pleasure, or unbelief, or money, or position and fame. Joy is found in Christ! Draw near to Christ and you will discover the height of joy. William Gurnall said, “The reason why many poor souls have so little heat of joy in their hearts, is that they have so little light of Gospel knowledge in their mind. The further a soul stands from the light of truth the further his needs must be from the heat of comfort.”

BOOK REVIEW



By Grace Alone: How the Grace of God Amazes Me

Sinclair B. Ferguson

Published by Reformation Trust, 2010, 123pp.

Here we see Sinclair Ferguson in his best clothes, as pastor-preacher. In this companion volume to *In Christ Alone* (Reformation Trust, 2007) we find nothing novel but much that is fresh and sweet. Taking the hymn of African pastor Emmanuel T. Sibomana ('O how the grace of God amazes me') as his rough guide to Christian truth and experience, the author leads us with a Scripture map more closely through God's gracious dealings with sinners. Addressing readers in varying situations and circumstances, the exegesis is simple and thorough with occasional particular insights to ponder, and profundities into which we humbly gaze. This is more than a mere study of doctrine by a disinterested observer: a man captured by grace calls on us to know and feel the truth in its power — to taste, enjoy and live relying on God's amazing grace in Christ. Warmly recommended for those needing to arrive at or return to first things.

Reviewed by Jeremy Walker



OCTOBER 6 – Men's Reading Group meets from 6-7 AM for a discussion of the book, *Who Made God? Searching for a Theory of Everything*, by Edgar Andrews.

OCTOBER 17 – Bill and Jennifer Hale will be with us Sunday morning. They have been laboring in gospel work in Cambodia for five years. Bill will preach in the morning worship hour and will give a PowerPoint presentation of their work in the Sunday School hour (dv).

OCTOBER 22 – Ladies of Grace meet at 6:30 PM at the church. The ladies will be putting together a package of gifts for Elizabeth Meade to use in her ministry to the women of Tunisia.

NOVEMBER 7 – The year 2010 marks the 20th anniversary of Grace Baptist Church. We are going to celebrate God's blessings on our congregation on November 7. Steve Martin, pastor of Heritage Community Church, Fayetteville, Georgia, will be preaching. A slide presentation will be shown in the Sunday School hour, marking the history of the church, and testimonies will be given by various people in our congregation.

NOVEMBER 20 – Ladies of Grace meet at 9:00 AM at the church. There will be a discussion of Noel Piper's book, *Faithful Women and their Extraordinary God*.

We Believe

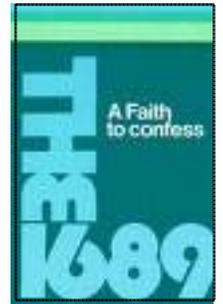
The 1689 Confession of Faith

CHAPTER 6

THE FALL OF MAN: SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT

(PARAGRAPHS ONE AND TWO)

1. MAN, as he came from the hand of God, his creator, was upright and perfect. The righteous law which God gave him spoke of life as conditional upon his obedience, and threatened death upon his disobedience. Adam's obedience was short-lived. Satan used the subtle serpent to draw Eve into sin. Thereupon she seduced Adam who, without any compulsion from without, willfully broke the law under which they had been created, and also God's command not to eat of the forbidden fruit. To fulfill His own wise and holy purposes God permitted this to happen, for He was directing all to His own glory.
Gen. 2:16,17; Gen. 3:12,13; 2 Cor.11:3.
2. By this sin our first parents lost their former righteousness, and their happy communion with God was severed. Their sin involved us all, and by it death appertained to all. All men became dead in sin, and totally polluted in all parts and faculties of both soul and body.
Ex. 8:15, 32; Deut. 2:30; 29:4; 2 Kings 8:12-13; Ps. 81:11-12; Isa. 6:9-10; Matt. 13:12; Rom. 1:24-26; 11:7-8; 2 Thess. 2:10-12; 1 Pet. 2:7-8
7. God's general providence reaches out to all creatures, but in a very special way it is directed to the care of His church. All things are controlled providentially for the good of the church.
Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-19,23; 5:12-21; Titus 1:15.



LIVE NEARER TO CHRIST

Think more of Jesus' cross, spend more time in contemplation of his blessed person, of his death and of his rising again; drink in more of his life, and live more upon him. I pray you do this. The words may sound in your ears as very common, and such as you have heard ten thousand times before, but the sense is weighty and all-important. If I had but one sentence that I might utter to you believers, I think I should make it this: live nearer to Christ. All virtues flourish in the atmosphere of the cross, all vices die beneath the shade of the cross; but get away from your Master, and you will be undone.

The Subtle Body — Should Christians Practice Yoga?

Dr. R. Albert Mohler

When Christians practice yoga, they must either deny the reality of what yoga represents or fail to see the contradictions between their Christian commitments and their embrace of yoga. The contradictions are not few, nor are they peripheral.

Some questions we ask today would simply baffle our ancestors. When Christians ask whether believers should practice yoga, they are asking a question that betrays the strangeness of our current cultural moment — a time in which yoga seems almost mainstream in America.

It was not always so. No one tells the story of yoga in America better than Stefanie Syman, whose recent book, *The Subtle Body: The Story of Yoga in America*, is a masterpiece of cultural history. Syman, an engaging author who is also a fifteen-year devotee of yoga, tells this story well.

Her book actually opens with a scene from this year's annual White House Easter Egg Roll. President Barack Obama made a few comments and then introduced First Lady Michelle Obama, who said: "Our goal today is just to have fun. We want to focus on activity, healthy eating. We've got yoga, we've got dancing, we've got storytelling, we've got Easter-egg decorating."

Syman describes the yoga on the White House lawn as "sanitized, sanctioned, and family-friendly," and she noted the rather amazing fact that a practice once seen as so exotic and even dangerous was now included as an activity sufficiently safe and mainstream for children... In her book, Syman tells the fascinating story of how yoga was transformed in the American mind from a foreign and "even heathen" practice into a cultural reality that is widely admired and practiced...

Syman describes yoga as a varied practice, but she makes clear that yoga cannot be fully extricated from its spiritual roots in Hinduism and Buddhism. She is also straightforward in explaining the role of sexual energy in virtually all forms

of yoga and of ritualized sex in some yoga traditions. She also explains that yoga "is one of the first and most successful products of globalization, and it has augured a truly post-Christian, spiritually polyglot country."

Reading *The Subtle Body* is an eye-opening and truly interesting experience. To a remarkable degree, the growing acceptance of yoga points to the retreat of biblical Christianity in the culture. Yoga begins and ends with an understanding of the body that is, to say the very least, at odds with the Christian understanding. Christians are not called to empty the mind or to see the human body as a means of connecting to and coming to know the divine. Believers are called to meditate upon the Word of God — an external Word that comes to us by divine revelation — not to meditate by means of incomprehensible syllables.

Nevertheless, a significant number of American Christians either experiment with yoga or become adherents of some yoga discipline. Most seem unaware that yoga cannot be neatly separated into physical and spiritual dimensions. The physical is the spiritual in yoga, and the exercises and disciplines of yoga are meant to connect with the divine.

Douglas R. Groothuis, Professor of Philosophy at Denver Seminary and a respected specialist on the New Age Movement, warns Christians that yoga is not merely about physical exercise or health. "All forms of yoga involve occult assumptions," he warns, "even hatha yoga, which is often presented as a merely physical discipline." While most adherents of yoga avoid the more exotic forms of ritualized sex that are associated with tantric yoga, virtually all forms of yoga involve an emphasis on channeling sexual energy throughout the body as a means of spiritual enlightenment.

Stefanie Syman documents how yoga was transformed in American culture from an exotic and heathen practice into a central component of our national cult of health. Of course, her story would end differently if Americans still had cultural access to the notion of "heathen."

The nation of India is almost manically syncretistic, blending worldviews over and over again. But, in more recent

times, America has developed its own obsession with syncretism, mixing elements of worldviews with little or no attention to what each mix means. Americans have turned yoga into an exercise ritual, a means of focusing attention, and an avenue to longer life and greater health. Many Americans attempt to deny or minimize the spiritual aspects of yoga — to the great consternation of many in India.

When Christians practice yoga, they must either deny the reality of what yoga represents or fail to see the contradictions between their Christian commitments and their embrace of yoga. The contradictions are not few, nor are they peripheral. The bare fact is that yoga is a spiritual discipline by which the adherent is trained to use the body as a vehicle for achieving consciousness of the divine. Christians are called to look to Christ for all that we need and to obey Christ through obeying his Word. We are not called to escape the consciousness of this world by achieving an elevated state of consciousness, but to follow Christ in the way of faithfulness.

There is nothing wrong with physical exercise, and yoga positions in themselves are not the main issue. But these positions are teaching postures with a spiritual purpose. Consider this — if you have to meditate intensely in order to achieve or to maintain a physical posture, it is no longer merely a physical posture.

The embrace of yoga is a symptom of our postmodern spiritual confusion, and, to our shame, this confusion reaches into the church. Stefanie Syman is telling us something important when she writes that yoga "has augured a truly post-Christian, spiritually polyglot country." Christians who practice yoga are embracing, or at minimum flirting with, a spiritual practice that threatens to transform their own spiritual lives into a "post-Christian, spiritually polyglot" reality. Should any Christian willingly risk that?

(you can read the full article at <http://www.albertmohler.com/2010/09/20/the-subtle-body-should-christians-practice-yoga/>)