



# 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**

— August 2011 Issue —

*"Do not be slothful in zeal,  
be fervent in spirit,  
serve the Lord."  
(Romans 12:11).*



### NURSERY SCHEDULE

#### August

07 Vicki Johnson and Amber Solan  
14 Kevin and Sara Smith  
21 Kristin Scarbrough and Lori Hewlett  
28 Jon and Tanya Amis

#### September

04 Linda Olive and Sonja Williams  
11 Melanie Myatt and Hannah McFadden  
18 Kristy and Pat Hines  
25 Jenny and Peter Lovassy

### CHURCH CLEANING

**August** - Moseleys  
**September** - Dean & Linda Olive  
**October** - Johnsons

### LAWN CARE

**August** - Peter Lovassy  
**September** - Ricky Troy Moseley  
**October** - Dean and Linda Olive

### FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF AUGUST 1, 2011

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 78,845.26
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 78,400.81
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 611.00
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 94,683.51
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 330.00
Disaster Relief Offerings (ytd)	\$ 389.36
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 95,402.87
July Love offerings	\$ 0.00
July General Fund offerings	\$ 17,066.35
July Designated Missions	\$ 0.00
July Disaster Relief Offerings	\$ 0.00
Building Fund balance	\$ 81,435.79
Missions Fund balance	\$ 9,514.75
General Fund balance	\$ 80,360.38

CLASS BEGINS ON  
**TUESDAY, AUGUST 30**  
7:00 PM



Grace Baptist Church will be hosting a class for those who are interested in theological training with Ekklesia Theological Seminary, a distance learning approach to study, in community with others.

EKT employs distance learning via written correspondence, DVD, online resources, and possibly virtual classrooms with internet streaming at a later time.

Mentors are required for Seminary credit. Pastor Olive has been approved as a mentor and will work with any in the church who wish to pursue a Master of Arts or Master of Divinity degree. You must, however, enroll online at <http://ets-courses.chapellibrary.org/>. We will be taking the course, ET 201: The Life and Teaching of Jesus, taught by Dr. Daniel M. Doriani.

Jonny White coordinates ETS. He holds the M.Div. degree from Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama, and earned his Ph.D. in Church History from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Ekklesia Seminary's theological foundation is the *1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith*.

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

#### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

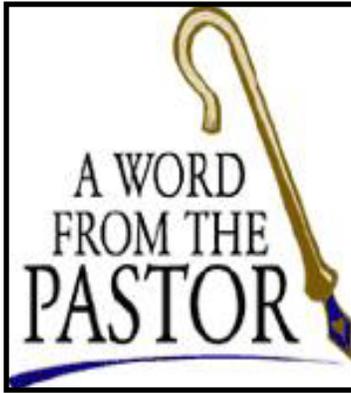
Morning Worship 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 11:00 AM  
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

#### 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)



## Judgment or Mercy, Which Will It Be?

It has been rightly said, judgment is God's strange work. The Lord delights in showing mercy but does not delight in pouring out his wrath. However, though God is slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, "He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever" (Ps 103:9). God

will judge the wicked without fail.

One of the most familiar portions of Scripture that reveals God's work of judgment is that of the ten plagues on the nation of Egypt. By various supernatural phenomena the Lord God of heaven brought down his wrath upon Pharaoh and his people. Because the hard-hearted Pharaoh would not set the Israelites go free, Jehovah rained down judgment upon him. He did this in a series of supernatural judgments that are usually referred to as the ten plagues.

The plagues involved the Nile turning to blood, frogs in abundance, gnats on men and beasts, flies swarming Egypt, livestock dying, boils breaking out on men and beasts, hail raining down, locusts descending and destroying, darkness covering the land, and the death of the firstborn (Exodus 7-12).

The plagues were more than mere natural occurrences; they were supernatural, miraculous judgments. The Psalmist described the horrors of the ten plagues. "He let loose on them his burning anger, wrath, indignation, and distress, a company of destroying angels. He made a path for his anger; he did not spare them from death, but gave their lives over to the plague. He struck down every firstborn in Egypt, the firstfruits of their strength in the tents of Ham" (78:49-51).

The plagues were sent by God in order to induce Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go. The last one was effective. Pharaoh eventually pleaded with Moses to take the people of God out of the land after the death of his firstborn son. But A. W. Pink says that there were three main purposes for the plagues.

1. They were a Divine visitation of wrath, a punishment upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians for their cruel treatment of the Hebrews. Pharaoh acknowledged this himself. "Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you" (Exodus 10:16).
2. They were a judgment from God upon the demonic gods of Egypt. This is brought out in Numbers 33:4: "For the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had killed among them. Also on their gods the LORD had executed judgments."
3. They gave a public manifestation of the mighty

power of the Lord God. God said to Pharaoh, "But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show my power in you, and that my name may be declared in all the earth" (Exodus 9:16). Even the magicians were made to acknowledge this, for "the magicians said unto Pharaoh, 'This is the finger of God'" (Exodus 8:19).

The great lesson of the plagues or judgments of God upon Egypt is that the truth and rule of God will prevail over evil. What contradiction there is to God's truth will ultimately be overcome. What competition there is to God's reign will finally be overthrown. The God of heaven and earth will accomplish all his purposes and his kingdom will endure through eternal ages.

The plagues of Egypt were terrible but they are nothing like the judgments to come. The God who poured out his wrath on the Egyptians will pour out his wrath on all who defy him at the day of judgment. God judged them for their sins and he will judge all men for their sins.

But judgment is still God's strange work. God manifested grace to Pharaoh in the midst of judgment. Through Moses, God repeatedly called Pharaoh to repent, but he would have none of it. And sinners still defy God today. Yet he extends open arms of grace to all men, calling them to cast away their transgressions and make themselves new hearts and new spirits. God still says to sinners today, "Why will you die?... I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezek. 18:31; 33:11).

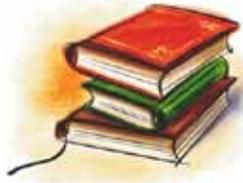
The most magnificent display of God's grace is seen in the offering his Son as a sacrifice for sin. In fact, Jesus is pictured in Exodus as the Passover Lamb. The Israelites escaped the judgment of the death of the firstborn by offering a lamb and putting the blood over the entrance of the house. But there was no protection for homes that did not have the blood applied.

The only way of escape from the judgment of God is to be united by faith to Jesus Christ who bore God's judgment at the cross. The Lord Jesus is our Passover who was sacrificed for us. His blood covers our sins and sets us free.

God promises life for those who believe in his Son. But those who turn a deaf ear to the gospel will be like those in Egypt. If you ignore the repeated offers of divine mercy, you will be overwhelmed with grief and sorrow worse than was known in Egypt. A day of judgment is coming but today is a day of grace. Cast yourself down before the Lord now and call on him for mercy. His judgment passes over those who are covered with the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

*Dear Lord, what heavenly wonders dwell/In Thy atoning blood/By this are sinners snatched from hell/And rebels brought to God.*

# BOOK REVIEW



## JOHN MACARTHUR

*Servant of the Word and Flock*

by Iain H. Murray

The Banner of Truth, 272 pp.

Through more than forty years, John MacArthur has opened and taught the Word of God in one local congregation, Grace Community Church, Los Angeles. Consequences have followed which no one anticipated, and which the preacher attributes to 'the sovereign hand of God'. A people

united to Christ, and to their pastor, became a channel for blessing across the earth. It has been a ministry marked by characteristics that re-appear in every spiritual advance – not concern for 'relevance'; not special attractions for young or old, male or female; but love for God and dependence on his Word and promises. MacArthur has proved, without ever intending to do so, that true preaching of the Word of God is international, 'because if you teach the Bible it transcends every border, every language, every culture. It is as relevant today, and will be tomorrow, as in all the years since God put it down.' That is why his sermons are heard or read in more than two hundred countries around the world today.

But this is also a human story, including the shaping of his youth, the strength of marriage and family, the refining influence of trials and controversies, and the building of a man whose staff have never known to be angry. There are friends who, for all their love of his ministry, say his life is his best sermon.



**AUGUST 14** – Justin Dillihay will be preaching both morning and evening in the pastor's absence. Pray for him as he comes to open God's Word.

**AUGUST 18** – The Sovereign Grace Baptist Pastor's Fellowship will be hosted by Providence Baptist Church, Pulaski, TN. Everyone, not just pastors, are invited to attend. The conference begins at 10 AM. The church will be providing lunch.

**SEPTEMBER 11** – Tom Henry, assistant pastor of the Bible Baptist Church, St. Louis, Missouri, will be preaching at both services. He will also be teaching in the Sunday School hour about the importance of the Old Testament.

**OCTOBER 17-18** – The Regional FIRE Conference for the Southeast will be held at Grace Baptist Church, Hartsville, TN. Pastor Donny Martin and the good folk there will be hosting the meeting in their new building.

**OCTOBER 21-23** – Tony Carter, pastor of Eastpointe Church, Atlanta, GA, will be the preacher for our Fall Bible Conference. Mark these days on your calendar and plan to attend every service.

## We Believe

The 1689 Confession of Faith

### CHAPTER 10

#### EFFECTUAL CALLING

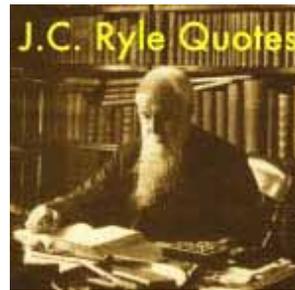
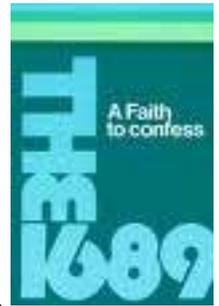
(PARAGRAPHS THREE AND FOUR)

1. Infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who works when and where and how He pleases. The same is true of all elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called through the preaching of the gospel.

John 3:3, 5, 6, 8

2. Men who are not elected, even though they may be called upon to embrace salvation by the preachers of the gospel, and may be the subjects of some common operations of the Spirit, cannot be saved, because they are not effectually drawn to Christ by the Father, for which reason they neither can, nor will, truly come to Him. Much less can men who do not receive the Christian religion be saved, no matter how diligent they are to frame their lives according to the light of nature and the teachings of the religion which they follow.

Matt. 13:20-21; 22:14; John 4:22; 6:44-45, 65; 17:3; Acts 4:12; Heb. 6:4-6; 1 John 2:24-25



### THE SINNER ON HIS DEATHBED

*"Ask the dying sinner, stand by his bedside and inquire of him, whether it proves a comfortable and supporting thought that he has cared more for the world than for his soul. Perhaps you never*

*saw the deathbed of one who had not got his feet upon the rock. Oh! It is a fearful, instructive, soul-moving sight! When the heart begins to beat faintly and the eyes grow dim, when friends are weeping all around and human medicines avail no longer, when all the intoxication of worldly pleasure or business is past and far away, when each lies in his own silent chamber, with nothing apparently between himself and God, when something whispers, 'You shall not come down from that bed on which you have gone up – but shall surely die!'*

*"In that solemn hour; beloved, we have little idea how small appears this earth and how broad eternity; how much the memory of sin improves; how deeply a guilty conscience darkens. You would then hear him acknowledge that his life had been a grand mistake; you would hear him confess that the care of the soul was indeed the one thing needful, and bitterly repent the time he had lost, the opportunities he had neglected and the instruction he had despised. God grant I may be spared the pain of seeing any of you in such a plight!"*

# Tattoos and Body Piercing: What's a Christian to do?

by Sam Storms

On a recent broadcast at DesiringGod.org, John Piper briefly addressed the issue of tattoos and body piercing among Christians. I especially appreciated the spirit in which John took up this subject. He did not come down in a heavy-handed or judgmental fashion, insisting in some legalistic way that such actions are altogether and always a sin. He mentioned the prohibition on tattoos in Leviticus 19:28 and suggested that although there were probably unique historical and religious circumstances in the ancient near east that evoked this prohibition, we should still seek to learn from it. Whereas not everything in the Levitical code is binding on the believer today, we still must ask if there is some underlying principle in the OT prohibition that might find application to us in the present day.

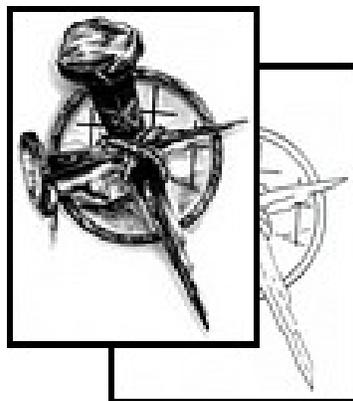
But Piper mentioned two additional factors to take into consideration, to which I would like to add a third.

First, he asked the all-important question that every Christian contemplating getting a tattoo or body piercing should ask: "Will this exalt the Lord Jesus Christ? Is this going to draw attention to him or to me? Will his beauty and splendor and all-sufficiency be highlighted in this action? Will the gospel itself be adorned or obscured in what I'm doing?"

Second, John also said that we should carefully monitor our motives for getting a tattoo or body piercing. In particular, he suggested that often times (not always!) people get tattoos in an effort to estab-

lish for themselves an identity that they have failed to find in Christ alone. In other words, each person needs to ask: "To what extent does this tattoo or body piercing reflect my failure to find full satisfaction in Christ alone? To what extent is this an attempt to 'be' or 'become' something that until now I've failed to find in who I am in Christ and because of what he has accomplished in grace on my behalf?"

It may well be that the person contemplating getting a tattoo feels fully established in Christ and is keenly aware of who they are in him, and thus the issue of identity



simply does not factor into one's motivation. But it is an important matter to keep in mind.

To these excellent observations, I'd like to add a third. I think a Christian needs to ask himself/herself whether or not the tattoo or body piercing expresses respect for the human body as the temple of the living God. Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. He abides in us, not in buildings or tabernacles or anything else as the unique expression of his saving and sanctifying presence. The apostle Paul makes this clear on a number of occasions (see especially 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:16-18; Eph. 2:21-22). I think particularly of 1 Cor. 6:19-20 where Christians are exhorted to "glorify God in your body" (v. 20).

I'm not saying that people with tattoos and body piercings can't glorify God in their bodies. I'm not the judge of that. I'm simply asking Christians to think and pray about it before they engage in this activity.

Needless to say (or perhaps it does need to be said), this text in 1 Corinthians 6 would apply to a number of issues other than tattoos and body piercing. I suspect that many reading this article are guilty of gluttony and have become excessively obese. This is only one example of what undoubtedly are any number of activities in which we may fail to glorify God in our bodies. We must be careful, therefore, lest we single out tattoos and body piercing and ignore the many ways in which we might *potentially* fail to glorify the Lord in how we treat our physical frame.

The fact is, the Bible is not as explicit and unyielding on this issue as some might like. If there were a specific and undeniable commandment in the NT that addressed the point, we probably wouldn't be having this conversation. So I encourage everyone to be gracious and gentle at the same time we give full consideration to the principles set forth in God's Word. For those who've already been tattooed, perhaps the question should now be to what extent and in what ways, if any, can I turn this for the good of the gospel and the glory of God. I'm certainly not prepared (or qualified) to answer that question, but it is one that needs to be addressed.

May God grant us wisdom and patience with one another as we seek to understand how best to glorify God in our bodies.