



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 2011 Issue —

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



NURSERY SCHEDULE

November

06 Linda Olive and Sonja Williams
13 Melanie Myatt and Hannah McFadden
20 Jenny and Peter Lovassy
27 Troy and Jessi Moseley

December

04 Vicki Johnson and Amber Solan
11 Kevin and Sara Smith
18 Kristin Scarbrough and Lori Hewlett
25 Jon and Tanya Amis

CHURCH CLEANING

November - Swinneys

December - Moseleys

Thank You everyone who helped us clean the church this year. God bless you.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2011

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$112,636.09
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$112,371.63
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 611.00
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$107,219.26
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 1,930.00
Disaster Relief Offerings (ytd)	\$ 389.36
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 1,566.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$144,904.18
October Love offerings	\$ 1,566.00
October General Fund offerings	\$ 12,127.62
October Designated Missions	\$ 800.00
October Disaster Relief Offerings	\$ 0.00
Building Fund balance	\$ 87,146.80
Missions Fund balance	\$ 12,681.58
General Fund balance	\$ 87,745.82

A Prayer of Thanksgiving

from Psalms 105:1-6

1. Oh, give thanks to the Lord!
Call upon His name;
Make known His deeds among the peoples!
2. Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him;
Talk of all His wondrous works!
3. Glory in His holy name;
Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord!
4. Seek the Lord and His strength;
Seek His face evermore!
5. Remember His marvelous works which He has done,
His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth,
6. O seed of Abraham His servant,
You children of Jacob, His chosen ones!

Let all of us take time this Thanksgiving holiday to reflect and give thanks to God for His many blessings and provisions.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

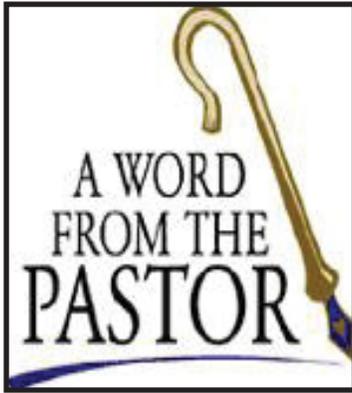
Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

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)



Be Careful of the Company You Keep

When God brought his people into the Promised Land, he told them to destroy the wicked nations. God's purpose was to use Israel as a sword to punish pagan religion. But the Israelites failed to comply fully with God's command. The Psalmist said, "They did not destroy the peoples

as the LORD commanded them, but they mixed with the nations and learned to do as they did" (Ps 106:34-35).

In failing to obey the Lord's command, they were influenced by the wicked and sinned greatly. The lesson for us is this: Be careful of the company you keep. Why be careful of the company you keep? Because as Phillips says, "Wickedness is infectious." We unconsciously imitate those we live among.

Take an eight-year old child from America and let him live in France for a few years and see what happens to him! He will be eating snails, speaking French, and probably wearing some strange looking clothes.

That kind of thing happened to Israel. They did not destroy the people but instead "mixed in with the nations and learned their ways" (NET). In becoming intimate with their pagan neighbor, the Israelites were corrupted. Calvin said, "Nothing is more dangerous than associating with the ungodly."

The Israelites became friends with the people they should have destroyed. In the NT era, we are not to destroy the enemies of God, but we are to keep ourselves free from intimate entanglements with them, lest we become like them. Christ would have us live in the world but not be of the world (John 17:15-18).

God would have us love all men and seek to be a friend to all by helping those who are in need as we are able. But fellowship and communion is something that we are to share with the Lord's people. If we would be godly, then our close companions and intimate associates must be among the Lord's people. At the deeper levels of life, we have nothing in common with those outside of Christ.

We have examples in the Bible of saints that remained uninfluenced by the world and others that were influenced by worldly associations. Joseph and Daniel lived among the heathen as captives but stayed strong and were useful; they were holy in unholy places. But Solomon and Ahaz, however, imbibed the ways of the heathen. They mingled among the pagans and became like them.

It is hard enough to make progress in sanctification as it is. But close ties with the wicked and immoral of

the world make matter much worse. That is why Paul said to the Corinthians, "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God... Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them..." (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

To mingle among the wicked is to learn their ways. It is to attend the school of iniquity. Put a clean, healthy board just cut from a tree next to a rotten, termite infected board, and what will happen? The rotten board doesn't become good; the good board becomes rotten!

What may seem to be innocent fun at first will soon lead to a life of sin. In becoming intimate with the Gentiles, the Israelites adopted their ways. Their downward ascent happened by degrees, not all at once. At first they served their idols and embraced their religion, but soon they were offering their sons as sacrifices (Ps 106:36-38). One sin leads to another. Matthew Henry says, "Omissions make way for commissions."

This is such a common thing among Christians and professed believers. We "court worldly company and copy worldly fashions" (Spurgeon). If we expose ourselves to worldly company, this is what happens. If we expose ourselves to bad TV shows, read bad books, and attend bad places, we tumble into sin. The descent into sin is easy. The ascent into holiness is difficult!

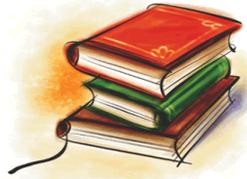
A New Testament passage that is like Psalm 106:35 is 1 Cor. 15:33. Paul told the Corinthians, "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals.'" The context refers to doctrinal error. There were those in Corinth who had denied the resurrection. They had been deceived doctrinally and it affected their lives morally. "False teaching not only poisons the mind, but also demoralizes the life" (Wilson).

To deviate doctrinally is to deviate morally. Doctrine has implications for life. The consequence is that good morals of others are corrupted. Our associations with wicked men should be in order to bring them to Christ, not to be their buddies and pals.

O, the power of influence! "A little leaven leavens the whole lump (1 Cor. 5:6). That is one reason why those who err doctrinally and morally are to be disciplined (see Rom. 16:17-18). Contaminating influences must be avoided for sin is contagious. If you want to preserve yourself from contamination of an infectious disease, then don't live in the village where the plague is.

What folly comes from worldly conformity. Let's be careful of the company that we keep. May God help us to maintain our closest friendships with the children of God.

BOOK REVIEW



Puritan Books

Published by The Banner of Truth Trust

Since the 17th century the effect of Puritan books has been felt at every period of evangelical recovery and missionary advance. At times forgotten, they have been repeatedly recovered, to speak with fresh power and to challenge superficial and lukewarm Christianity.

Works of John Flavel (6 vols). Flavel remains permanently among the Puritan authors who lead in instruction and readability. One of his books was the means of the conversion of Archibald Alexander, first professor of Princeton Theological Seminary.

Works of Richard Sibbes (7 vols). Once read, Sibbes is unforgettable. He was one of the favorites of Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

Works of Stephen Charnock (5 vols). This includes his great work on 'The Attributes of God'. It is Charnock's doctrinal depth that has been his main appeal to gospel ministers, including in recent times, John MacArthur.

For those only making a start on reading the Puritans, you may want to begin with the **Puritan Paperback series**, which includes some of the best of the main authors.



NOVEMBER 13 – Deacon ordination service for Peter Lovassy at 6 PM. Dana Crowell will be preaching.

DECEMBER 4 – Alan Hughes, pastor of First Baptist Church, Ardmore, TN, will be preaching in the 1:30 PM service.

DECEMBER 18 – Joint Christmas service with Providence Presbyterian Church. We are hosting the meeting this year. A meal will be at 5 PM and Pastor Darren Thole will preach at the 6 PM service of worship.

DECEMBER 25 – Service of worship at 10:30 AM (no Sunday School). We will be joining with Providence Presbyterian Church for evening worship at 5 PM.

JANUARY 1 – Service of worship at 10:30 AM (no Sunday School). Soup and sandwiches for lunch afterwards and Communion Service in the afternoon at 1:15 PM.

We Believe

The 1689 Confession of Faith

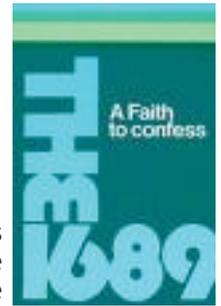
CHAPTER 12

ADOPTION

(PARAGRAPH ONE)

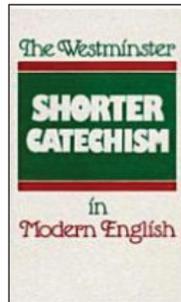
1. For the sake of His only Son, Jesus Christ, God has been pleased to make all justified persons sharers in the grace of adoption, by means of which they are numbered with, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of children of God. Furthermore, God's name is put upon them, they receive the spirit of adoption, and they are enabled to come boldly to the throne of grace and to cry 'Abba, Father'. They are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by God as by a Father. He never casts them off, but, as they remain sealed to the day of redemption, they inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.

Ps. 103:13; Prov. 14:26; Isa. 54:8,9; Lam. 3:31; John 1:12; Rom. 8:15,17; 2 Cor. 6:18; Gal. 4:4-6; Eph. 1:5; 2:18; 4:30; Heb. 1:14; 6:12; 12:6; 1 Pet. 5:7; Rev. 3:12.



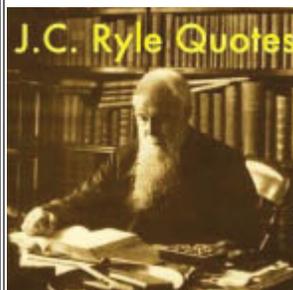
Westminster Shorter Catechism

Question 34



Q: What is adoption?

A: Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.



J.C. Ryle Quotes

CHRIST'S COMPASSION

Let us take comfort in the thought that the Lord Jesus does not cast off his believing people because of failures and imperfections. He knows what they are. He takes them, as the husband takes the wife, with all their blemishes and defects, and once joined to Him by faith, will never leave them. He is a merciful and compassionate High Priest. He knew what they were before conversion – wicked, guilty, and defiled; yet He loved them. He knows what they will be after conversion – weak, erring, and frail; yet He loves them. He has undertaken to save them, notwithstanding all their shortcomings, and what He has undertaken He will perform.

Knowing You're In

by Jim Elliff

There was a troubled look on the student's face as I finished my talk. "I believe that Christ is who He says He is," he stated, "but I just don't know if I am really a Christian. What if I'm deceiving myself?"

The question is a reasonable one. After all, God put up a huge billboard in 1 Corinthians 6:9 that says, "DO NOT BE DECEIVED!" So, how do you know you're a Christian?

First be sure that you understand the basics. Do you believe that Jesus is God? Do you believe that He came to the earth to deliver sinful people from the consequences and power of their sin? Do you believe that Christ lived a perfect life and then died on the cross to pay the penalty that you deserved to pay before a holy God?

Do you believe that He was raised from the dead and has overcome the power of sin and death? And have you, to the best of your knowledge, placed your entire trust in Christ alone as your only way of salvation? Have you rejected the selfish life you have now come to despise? Then you have the basics and may well be a true believer.

In addition to all this, God says that He has given you His Holy Spirit to help you know for sure that you are in the family and truly forgiven. He says, "By this we know that we abide in Him, because He has given us of His Spirit" (1 John 3:13).

God says in Ephesians 1:13-14 that the Holy Spirit is a "deposit guaranteeing the future inheritance." Like the down-payment on a car or house or college education, the Holy Spirit in you is a pledge that the future with Him will be there as He promised. And this deposit of the Spirit is placed in you by the One who cannot lie.

The Holy Spirit helps you know you're an authentic Christian in two ways. First, the Bible says that He produces "fruit" in us.

It's a preposterous idea, but just imagine Michael Jordan (the pre-comeback Jordan) inside your skin when you shoot hoops. You look like you've always looked on the outside, but something is coming out of you that nobody has seen there before.

When Christ enters the life through the Holy Spirit, He makes you noticeably different. This word "fruit" is just a way of saying that Christ in you is now working through your own personality in some unique and powerful ways.

When I lived in Orlando, I grew

The Spirit inside of true Christians is the One that causes us to want to be with God, to know Him well, and to talk to Him as our Father.

some orange trees in my back yard. They were pitiful and the fruit was, well...not so appetizing. But I could tell I had an orange tree and not a pecan tree. A tree is known by its fruit; even if it is not perfect fruit.

In Galatians 5: 22-23, the Bible describes the fruit of the Holy Spirit as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." Notice that the first fruit is love. Though you cannot see it clearly in our English translations, the passage actually implies that the entire cluster of fruit is about love in its many forms. A true Christian loves others, and shows that love by his acts of kindness, goodness, patience, and respect toward them. It is a giving and forgiving kind of love—even toward parents, teachers, athletic opponents, and enemies.

Love is no small matter. Actually, it is the most often repeated indicator that a person is a true Christian.

For instance, in 1 John 4: 7-8 the Bible says, "Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."

Do you have this God-given love for others? If so, you have reason to believe that you are a true Christian. But if there is no fruit of love, then you have good reason to believe that you are not yet a true child of God. The fruit tells the truth.

But there is a second way that the Holy Spirit helps us know we are in. In Romans 8:15 we read that the Spirit causes us to "cry out, 'Abba, Father.'" The word, "Abba" is like "daddy." This means that the Spirit inside of true Christians is the One that causes us to want to be with God, to know Him well, and to talk to Him as our Father.

In John 3:19-20, Jesus said that non-believers actually run from the Light. But when the Spirit comes you have new desires. You want to know God and to communicate with Him like you do with someone you really care about.

If you have this desire to love God, you ought to be encouraged that you are in the family. But if you can remain apathetic over a long period of time, you have good reason to question if you are a true Christian.

Apathy, in fact, is just the quiet form of rebellion.

It is not unusual for you to have doubts from time to time, especially when you are weak in your faith. But when you have those doubts you should be serious about finding out the truth. Too much is at stake.

As a friend of mine said, "Doubts never send anyone to hell, but deception always does."

Copyright © 2001 Jim Elliff
Christian Communicators Worldwide, Inc.