



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

— May 2012 Issue —

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" 1 Peter 4:10



NURSERY SCHEDULE

May

06 Jenny and Peter Lovassy
13 Jon and Tanya Amis
20 Troy and Jessica Moseley
27 Vicki Johnson and Amber Solan

June

03 Pat and Kristy Hines
10 Kevin and Sara Smith
17 Kristin Scarbrough and Lori Hewlett
24 Melanie Myatt and Hannah McFadden

CHURCH CLEANING

May - Myatts
June - Lovassys
July - Hammecks
August - Moseleys

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF MAY 1, 2012

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 53,858.48
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 49,570.46
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 309.20
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 58,821.39
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 5,860.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 110.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 64,791.39
April Love offerings	\$ 0.00
April General Fund offerings	\$ 18,041.78
April Designated Missions	\$ 1,125.00
Building Fund balance	\$101,366.59
Missions Fund balance	\$ 15,383.77
General Fund balance	\$102,633.27

Mothers Wanted

NEEDED – The Christian Community is in desperate need of godly mothers. History has shown that the general mindset of the mothers in a nation determines the direction that nation will move. The mother has unparalleled opportunities to educate her children that no one else will ever have (2 Tim. 1:5).

QUALIFICATIONS – Having children automatically qualifies you to motherhood. However, how you choose to act will have an immense impact on many lives. They will learn from how you handle disappointments, how you view work, how you raise your voice, and how you treat and train them.

IMPORTANT CHARACTER TRAITS:

1. An all-consuming passion to serve Christ.
2. A willingness to stand for righteousness in God's strength, wisdom, and patience.
3. An eternal vision and mindset that looks past the temporal inconveniences of life.
4. A servant's heart and attitude.

BENEFITS – While a mother receives no monetary compensation, the benefits of motherhood far exceed silver or gold. They can only be reckoned in Heaven.

EXHORTATION – Rest assured, your "labor in the Lord is not in vain."

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

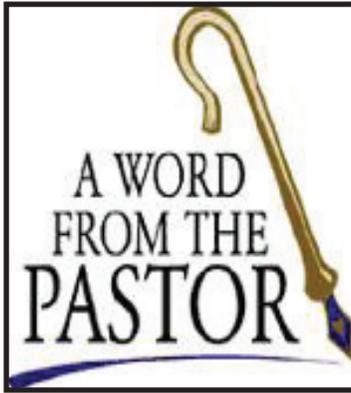
Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

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)



How to Be Wise

All of us have memorized particular verses of great importance from the book of Proverbs, verses about trusting the Lord, bringing up our children, watching what we say and how we say it, keeping the heart, working to earn a living, having a good name, being a good wife, etc. But one

that we would do well to put to memory is Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom..."

This verse lays the foundation for true wisdom. The primary truth set forth is that "the fear of the Lord" is the ground of all wisdom. Without the fear of the Lord, all the wisdom which we obtain in the world, is not well anchored. We need to know God and fear him in order to make sense of everything else.

Jim Newheiser, in his excellent book on Proverbs, says, "You cannot discern the true nature of life and the world apart from the LORD who is the root of all knowledge. The one who tries to be wise apart from God is a branch cut off from the root. For this reason, only the godly are truly wise. The humble workman or the faithful homemaker may be wiser than the Professor of Philosophy at Oxford or Harvard."

The wisdom we need to for godly conduct cannot be obtained without the fear of the Lord! Everyone wants to be wise but only those who fear the Lord can discover that wisdom "that is from above," as James puts it (3:15, 17). The rest of the book of Proverbs "works" only when this principle is discovered.

It is critical then that we know what it means to fear the Lord. The phrase "fear of the Lord" is found 14 times in Proverbs, an indication of how foundational it is to obtaining wisdom. So what is the fear of the Lord? Perhaps we should begin by stating what it isn't. The fear of the Lord isn't an attitude that sees God as a tyrant.

For sure, God is a consuming fire and will surely punish the wicked. But God has also demonstrated his great love for sinners by sending his Son to die for them so as to save them from his wrath. So the fear of God is not flinching at God because he is harsh, unpredictable, or tyrannical. God is holy and will judge sinners, yet he has graciously made a way for the guilty to escape judgment.

Charles Bridges, a contemporary of Spurgeon, a leader in the Evangelical Party of the Church of England, well defines the fear of God in his outstanding commentary on Proverbs. Bridges says that the fear of the Lord "is that affectionate reverence, by which the child of God bends himself humbly and carefully to his Father's law."

The fear of the Lord is "affectionate reverence" for God. This leads to the desire to please him. The one who fears the Lord submits his mind, body, and spirit to the Lord

and he pleads for wisdom to be granted to him in living. He gladly bows to the will of God that is revealed in the Word of God and then seeks that wisdom be given to apply the Word in every part of life.

When the fear of God exercises the mind, God grants an abundance of wisdom. A question we must ask ourselves is, "Do I fear God?" To fear God is to stand in awe before him, to bow in praise to him, and to submit in humility at his feet. He is the ultimate source of all wisdom. And wisdom will be ours only if we fear God.

Getting wisdom begins with knowing that you don't have it, that you need it, and the only place to get it is in knowing and fearing the Lord! But we must remember that we come to know God through Jesus Christ. The New Testament reveals that the ultimate expression of wisdom is found in Jesus Christ. Paul tells us that in Jesus Christ are hidden "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 1:30). In fact, he is wisdom personified! For Paul also tells us that he became "for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30, NET).

I conclude with a lengthy and relevant quotation from Jim Newheiser.

"We live in a world full of fools playing games. They imagine that their accumulation of fame, fortune, and pleasure will make them winners. In spite of our investment of billions in educating our young people, test scores are down and juvenile crime is rising. Some students are learning facts but remain foolish. Spurgeon writes, 'To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great deal and are the greater fools for it. There is no fool as great as a knowing fool.' Our young people are being taught materialism and hedonism instead of the fear of the LORD. Ultimate moral and spiritual values are excluded from the classroom. Parents need to heed the message of Proverbs by taking responsibility for the training of their children in wisdom.

"Sadly, many churches are failing to impact on our culture because they are pandering to these misplaced man-centered values of the world rather than proclaiming the fear of the LORD. Sometimes Proverbs is taught merely as a book of practical tips for earthly success so that people can win at the game of life. But wisdom begins with the fear of the LORD, and it grows in personal relationship with him. We need churches that unashamedly declare the truth of God to believers who treasure wisdom.

"God's offer of wisdom to all who seek it from him is not merely a maxim; it is a promise. Skill for living does not come upon you suddenly but grows as you apply yourself to understanding and applying the wisdom of God contained in his Word. Ultimately, you can only become wise through Christ, who both embodies wisdom and makes his people wise. Pursue wisdom!"

Do you need wisdom. Then remember, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom..."

BOOK REVIEW

The Doctrine and Practice of Holiness

by Erroll Hulse

Evangelical Press, 2011, 368pp



This is unquestionably one of the most important books on the subject of sanctification and holiness by any modern author to be published in the last few years. Like Ryle's classic treatment of the subject over a hundred years ago, it is written in an easily understandable style and is suitable for recommendation to all readers, not just theologians. The general character of the approach is deliberately that of the English Puritans, who excelled in their practical as well as theoretical treatment of the theme of holiness...

Those who love the great writers of our Reformed tradition will find many old friends here such as Calvin, Owen, Flavel, Spurgeon and others whose books have nourished the souls of thousands of hungry Christians in this and other nations. However, whilst being well-read in these older writers the author handles his theme with a modern pastor's awareness of the problems of our own day, such as the rampant post-modernism of our western world. With faithfulness and yet with due kindness, the author exposes the perfectionism of John Wesley and its subsequent influence on the Keswick movement. C. G. Finney, Pelagian that he was, is justly censured for promoting the false theory of revivalism, as if revival were something which man can do...

The present reviewer is delighted to see that the author does not stop at quoting isolated texts on practical points referring to holiness but brings out the underlying systematic theological doctrines which every Christian who is serious about holiness needs to have firmly in his mind and understanding

This is certainly one of the books which speak very relevantly to us in our times and in our modern situation. The serious practice of holiness is essential for all who wish to serve God and to be with Christ in glory at last. This treatment of the subject deserves to be extensively read both in this country and on the mission fields. After all, 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord' (Heb. 12:14).

Reviewed by Maurice Roberts



MAY 6 – Communion in the afternoon service.

MAY 21-23 – Annual FIRE Conference at Trinity Baptist Church, Shreveport, LA. Preachers are Rick Anderson, Dr. Michael Haykin, Jason Deutsch, Curt Arend, and Martin Rizley. Pastor Olive and elder Hoos will be in attendance (dv).

AUGUST 5 – Don Currin will be preaching in both services and taking the SS hour to tell us about the work of HeartCry Mission Society in Europe.

SEPTEMBER 30 – OCTOBER 2 – David Ellis, pastor of Mount Road Baptist Church, Hinckley, England, is scheduled to preach our Fall Bible conference.

We Believe

The 1689 Confession of Faith CHAPTER 16

GOOD WORKS (PARAGRAPHS FIVE, SIX AND SEVEN)



5. We cannot, even by our best works, merit either the pardon of sin or the granting of eternal life at the hand of God, for those works are out of all proportion to the glory to come. And furthermore, there is infinite distance between us and God, and no works of ours can yield Him profit or act as payment for the debt of our former sins. Indeed, when we have done all that we can, we have done but our duty and remain unprofitable servants. We are also to remember that, so far as our works are good, they are produced by His Spirit. As far as they are our work they are marred, and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection that they fall utterly to meet the searching requirements of God's standards.

Ps. 143:2; Isa. 64:6; Luke 17:10; Rom. 3:20; 4:6; Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 2:8, 9

6. Nevertheless, since believers as to their persons are accepted by God through Christ, their works also are accepted as being wrought in Christ. Not as though they were, during this life, beyond reproach and unprovable in the sight of God, but that, as He looks upon them in His Son, He is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, even though it is accompanied by many weaknesses and imperfections.

Matt. 25:21, 23; Eph. 1:6; Heb. 6:10; 1 Pet. 2:5

7. As for works done by unregenerate men, even though God may have commanded them, and they may be highly useful both to themselves and to others, yet they remain sinful works for the following reasons: they do not originate in a heart purified by faith; they are not done in the right manner prescribed in Scripture; and they are not directed to the glory of God as the only right end. Hence they cannot please God, nor can they make a man fit for the reception of grace. Yet the neglect of such works is more sinful and more displeasing to God than is the performance of them.

Gen. 4:5; 1 Kings 21:27, 29; 2 Kings 10:30; Job 21:14, 15; Amos 5:21, 22; Matt. 6:2, 5; 25:41-43; Rom. 9:16; 1 Cor. 13:1; Titus 3:5; Heb. 11:4, 6



John Owen

Prayer for Protection

"If we do not abide in prayer, we will abide in temptation. Let this be one aspect of our daily intercession: "God, preserve my soul, and keep my heart and all its ways so that I will not be entangled." When this is true in our lives, a passing temptation will not overcome us. We will remain free while others lie in bondage."

No Lay-up Shot: A Lesson from the Master

Jim Elliff

For some reason unknown to humankind, my older brother got to play golf on the distinguished Augusta National Golf Course, the course where perhaps the best tournament of the year is held—The Masters.

It was there that the following life-shaping event took place. He was playing through the course with the required caddy. After he landed in the middle of the fairway on hole 13, part of the notorious 3-hole Amen Corner, he asked the caddy for a certain short iron.

Astonished, the veteran caddy exclaimed, “What do you want with this iron?” “I want to play it safe by laying up just this side of the creek,” my brother replied.

“Man,” the caddy exclaimed, “You didn’t fly all this way to hit no lay-up shot!” And he yanked out a fairway wood to hand to my brother.

My brother said, “But I might go into the water.”

“You might or you might not,” said the caddy, “but one thing is for sure—you’ll never know till you try.”

My humbled sibling dutifully took the wood from his hands, smacked the ball, and landed it on the green!

Astounded, he exclaimed, “I’m going to go home and write down in my Bible what you just told me.”

“I don’t understand what you’re talking about.”

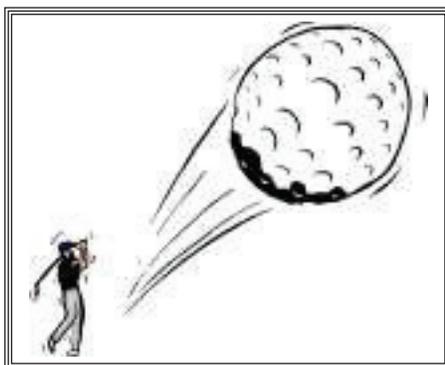
“You see,” said my brother, “a man can get to an age and stage in life where he can be content just to hit lay-ups—short, easy, no risk shots. But you’re right, I haven’t come all this way in life just to hit lay-ups. Starting tomorrow morning, I’m going to get up and hit it as hard and as far as I can.”

There are those believers whose entire life is spent hitting lay-ups.

These are the cautious, forever tentative people. Sadly, not much happens for the kingdom of God through them.

There is a time to be careful, of course. It’s not courageous to play tennis on the highway, for instance. It’s just stupid. But we’re talking here about the big issues of life. Are you tentative or tenacious in your approach to the future? Did God place you in the world just to protect yourself or to do something meaningful and courageous?

We should have the spirit of Caleb. He was no golfer, but he could still climb a mountain at age 85. As a friend of mine once said, “He was not of a retiring disposition.” In the allotment of lands in Canaan, this adventurous, faith-filled octogenarian requested that his portion



be the hill country where the giants lived in “great fortified cities.” Life would not be flat and meaningless for this man. There was something to do.

God often commends boldness. “Be strong and very courageous,” God told Joshua. “We had the boldness of God,” said Paul. “The righteous are as bold as a lion,” stated Solomon.

You only have one trip through this world, or, to put it another way, you only get on the course once. You may not play out the entire 18 holes, or you may be blessed with a double round. Regardless, you had better take advantage of the short time you have. Life is not about lay-up shots, but bold advances for the Savior.

I remember a turning point in my life

at age 38. Lots of men feel it. They know enough about their past to understand what they should and should not be doing. They are not that old, but they are more aware than before that the last hole is actually not all that far away. It’s time to decide. Do you hit a lay-up or do you go for broke?

With the help of a now deceased friend, J. Oswald Sanders, who had also experienced a great change in his life direction around my age, I decided against complacency in my Christian life and ministry. I took an entirely new direction, over my uncompromising creek, for the sake of the glory of God. Some of my friends and family were not sure I was sane, but I was determined to experience “God’s work, done in God’s way” (as missionary Hudson Taylor put it). I’ve never regretted it.

You cannot just dream something up for your life out of nothing, but rather must find out from God what you are to do. He leads you in a way that demands faith. But will you do it? Can you even bring yourself to think of it?

First, humbly tell God that you are ready to do something significant for Him, whatever glorifies Him at any cost. Second, pray, read the Bible, get counsel, and search till you find out the kind of faith-filled ministry that will make a difference in the kingdom. Get this from God. Third, ask others who will encourage your faith to pray with you. Surround yourself with caddies who have some spunk. And then, pull out your fairway wood and swing hard.

“For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.” Luke 9:24

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