



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

— September 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

September

02 Jenny and Peter Lovassy
09 Jon and Tanya Amis
16 Troy and Jessica Moseley
23 Nellie McFadden and Amber Solan
30 Pat and Kristy Hines

October

07 Kevin and Sara Smith
14 Kristin Scarborough and Lori Hewlett
21 Vicki Johnson and Melanie Myatt
28 Jenny and Peter Lovassy

CHURCH CLEANING

September - Amises
October - Lovassys
November - Johnsons
December - Moseleys

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2012

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$161,680.08
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$168,617.38
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 4,867.25
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$112,956.81
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 11,151.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 110.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$124,217.81
August Love offerings	\$ 0.00
August General Fund offerings	\$ 13,158.00
August Designated Missions	\$ 1,583.00
Building Fund balance	\$ 84,451.51
Missions Fund balance	\$ 17,383.85
General Fund balance	\$ 63,693.62

Twelve Reasons Not To Sin

(shortened from 35 reasons not to sin)

by Jim Elliff

1. Because a little sin leads to more sin.
2. Because my sin invites the discipline of God.
3. Because the time spent in sin is forever wasted.
4. Because my sin never pleases but always grieves God who loves me.
5. Because my sin always makes me less than what I could be.
6. Because others, including my family, suffer consequences due to my sin.
7. Because my sin makes the enemies of God rejoice.
8. Because my sin may influence others to sin.
9. Because my sin may keep others from knowing Christ.
10. Because sin steals my reputation and robs me of my testimony.
11. Because my sin may be an indication of a lost condition.
12. Because to sin is not to love Christ.



**Relinquish Your Rights - Reject the Sin
Renew the Mind - Rely on God**

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

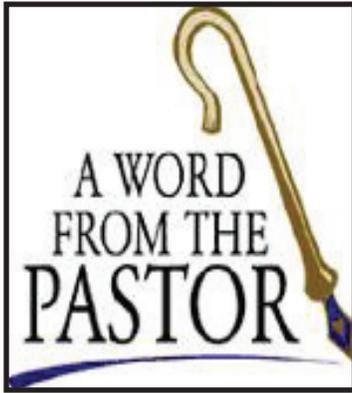
Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

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)



“Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners”

The hymn, “Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners,” was written by J. Wilbur Chapman. It was first published in 1910. Christians have been singing this hymn for 102 years. It is a favorite of many believers.

The refrain of the hymn contains four words that are striking—saving, helping, keeping, loving. “Hallelujah! What a Savior/Hallelujah! What a Friend/*Saving, helping, keeping, loving*/He is with me to the end.” Jesus is a Savior and Friend that deserves our praise for the work he does in saving, helping keeping, and loving!

The first word in this line is saving. We often speak of the saving work of God in Christ. One of the great titles that Jesus is known by is, Savior. Friends of the woman at the well of Samaria, after hearing her testimony of conversion and then hearing Jesus for themselves, said, “We know that this is indeed the Savior of the world” (Jn 4:42).

The purpose of Jesus coming into the world was to save sinners. He himself said, “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Lk 19:10). The apostle Paul said, “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief” (1 Tim. 1:15).

The kind of salvation that we are talking about, is of course, salvation from sin. According to the Bible all men are sinners and are bound for hell and Jesus Christ is the Savior who rescues and delivers them from sin and hell. It is the role of the Savior to save. That he saves presupposes that we cannot save ourselves, that we are in need of a Savior.

We are in need because sin has damaged us spiritually. Sin has rendered us incapacitated. Thus Jesus came into to the world to save sinners! God promises to save all who call on his Son. “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13). He will save you today if you cry out to him. God’s word declares, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).

The next word is helping. The Lord Jesus does not abandon those whom he saves. They become part of the family of God and receive help and aid from the Lord. Hebrews 4:16 speaks to us about the help we receive from the Lord. “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

This is one of the great prayer texts in the Bible. We are encouraged to pray with confidence, knowing that our Great High Priest will receive us and help us. We are bid to come to the throne of grace; that is prayer language. We are also instructed on how to come –

boldly, or with confidence. And we are told what we will find when we come – mercy and grace to help in our time of need.

When we pray, we are coming to a throne of grace where there is mercy and grace in abundance. At the throne of grace we receive what we need. The help that God gives could be either material, physical, or spiritual. He stands ready to help us whatever our need is.

The third word in the hymn line is keeping. One of our Lord’s petitions in his high priestly prayer was, “Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one” (Jn 17:11). Jesus asked the Father to preserve, guard, and protect us. In Old Covenant days, God was known as the “Keeper of Israel” (Ps 121). He never slumbers or sleep. He always watches over his own. He has the power and the will to keep those who are his.

We need the keeping power of God. We need keeping from the evil one (Mt 6:13). We need keeping from error. We need keeping from sin. Even though we have been saved from the penalty of sin, we still need keeping. Though we have been born again by the Spirit, we still have a tendency to wander.

The Lord’s people require keeping! “Greatly do we need keeping,” said Spurgeon. And none but God in heaven is able to keep us from falling. The apostle Peter writes of believers being “kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5). The salvation of those who are the Lord’s are kept by the mighty power of God. We are secure in Christ, thus we delight to sing about the keeping power of our Savior.

The last word in the hymn line is loving. *Hallelujah what a Savior; Hallelujah what a Friend; Saving, helping, keeping, loving*. One of the greatest statements in Scripture is, “God is love.” The apostle John says this twice in 1 John 4—vv. 8 and 16. In the very essence of his being God is love. Love is his nature.

But to be love is to show love! What God is he expresses. Because he is love he acts in love. John states in this chapter that it was love that caused God to send his Son. “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (10). The cross is a demonstration of the love of God. The NT everywhere points to the cross of Christ as the crowning proof of the reality and boundlessness of God’s love.

The wonderful thing about this love is that it never ends. John speaks of Jesus as “having loved his own who were in the world,” and then says, “He loved them to the end” (Jn 13:1). The love of Jesus Christ for those who are his continues throughout eternity! He loves us to an infinite degree. His love doesn’t rise or fall; it doesn’t depend on how we act.

Thanks be that our God and Savior Jesus Christ is active in saving, helping, keeping, and loving!

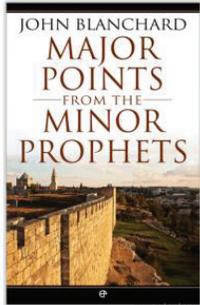
BOOK REVIEW



Major Points from the Minor Prophets

by John Blanchard

Evangelical Press, 288 pp.



As the 'clean pages' in our Bibles they appear culturally foreign and remote from our modern Christian understanding. Some chapters can strike us as uncouth and inhospitable. But the author serves us superbly, becoming to the Minor Prophets what Lonely Planet is to, say, Yemen. His aim is not to provide in-depth analytical commentary. Rather, to whet the appetite and give us a hankering to visit the twelve books from Hosea to Malachi.

The book considers similarities between all twelve prophetic messages. The common denominators are God's utter and undeniable sovereignty, his inevitable judgment against sin, his amazing love, a passionate call to get right with him, and predictions of the coming Messiah.

The 'major points' are investigated with New Testament light, historical understanding, enormous literary breadth and keen human observation. Its selected themes convince us of the abiding relevance and power of Scripture, which is written, Minor prophets and all, for our admonition.

When a resourceful and reliable author like John Blanchard pens such an exploration of the uncharted chapters of Scripture, pastors will be planning their consecutive expositions, and church members will determine on sight-seeing tours of their own. Reading this book will get you eagerly reading twelve more.

Ali McLachlan, Dundee



SEPTEMBER 2 – We welcome Dr. Brandon Meeks to our church. He will be preaching in both morning and afternoon services and giving his testimony in Sunday School.

SEPTEMBER 16 – Rev. Dana Crowell, pastor of Prosperity Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Yukon, TN, will be preaching in the evening service.

SEPTEMBER 23 – Andrew Ward, missionary with ABWE to Togo, West Africa, will be preaching in the morning worship hour and presenting his missionary work in Sunday School. Part of his responsibilities will be to train national pastors in theology through the Bible Institute and Baptist Academy of Theology in Africa.

OCTOBER 15-16 – Regional FIRE Conference at Faith Bible Church, Sharpsburg, Georgia.

OCTOBER 18 – The Sovereign Grace Baptist Pastor's Fellowship will be meeting at Vineland Park Baptist Church, Hueytown, AL. David Ellis, Gary Scott, and Dean Olive are scheduled to preach.

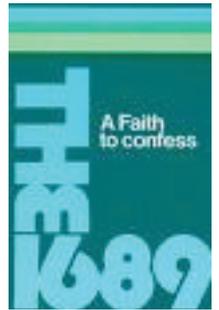
OCTOBER 19-21 – Fall Bible Conference at our church with David Ellis preaching. David has been with us before and we are delighted to have him again. He is pastor of Mount Road Baptist Church, Hinckley, England. Barbara Ellis, David's wife, will be speaking to the ladies on Saturday morning, as David speaks to the men.

We Believe

The 1689 Confession of Faith

CHAPTER 18

THE LAW OF GOD (PARAGRAPHS ONE, TWO, THREE AND FOUR)



1. GOD gave Adam a law, written in his heart, that required his full obedience; also one command in particular, namely, that he must not eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Thereby Adam and all his posterity were bound to personal, complete, exact and perpetual obedience. God promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of the law, and endued Adam with power and ability to keep His law.

Gen. 2:16, 17; Eccles. 7:29; Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:10, 12.

2. The same law that was first written in man's heart continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after Adam fell into sin, and was given by God upon Mount Sinai in the form of ten commandments, written in two tables. The first four commandments constitute our duty towards God and the remaining six our duty to man. The ten are known as the moral law.

Deut. 10:4; Rom. 2:14, 15

3. Besides the moral law God also gave to the people of Israel ceremonial laws which served as types of things to come. They fell into two main groups. In one group were rites, partly relating to worship, which pre-figured Christ, His graces, actions, sufferings, and the blessings He procured for us. The other group contained a variety of instructions about moral duties. By divine appointment all these ceremonial laws were to be observed, but only until they were abrogated in New Testament days by Jesus Christ, the true Messiah and only law-giver who was empowered by the Father to terminate them.

1 Cor. 5:7; Eph. 2:14, 16; Col. 2:14, 16, 17; Heb. 10:1

4. To the people of Israel God also gave sundry judicial laws which applied as long as they remained a nation. The principles of equity which appear in them are still valid, not because they are found in Moses' laws but in virtue of their unchanging character.

1 Cor. 9:8-10

Ladies of Grace

The Ladies of Grace will meet in the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, September 8 at 7 p.m. The ladies fellowship will meet on the second Saturday of each month between September 2012 and June 2013 and is open to all women attending Grace Baptist Church.



John Owen

“Meet thy temptation in its entrance with thoughts of faith concerning Christ on the cross; this will make it sink before thee. Entertain no parley, no dispute with it, if thou wouldst not enter into it.”

Is Eternal Life *Always* Eternal?

Fred Butler

Coordinator with "Grace to You" radio ministries

I remember exactly where I was when I discovered some Christians believe eternal life may not always be eternal. The moment is still etched in my memory.

Shortly after I was saved, a friend invited me to a midweek Bible study at a local church. During the course of our study, one fellow asked, "How can someone know if he has lost his salvation?" As discussion ensued, it became clear he was talking about himself. This poor man thought he was in danger of losing his salvation.

That was the first time in my Christian life I had personally encountered someone who was sincerely afraid of losing his salvation. And even as a young believer, I believed once you were saved, that was it—your hope of eternal life is secure and certain. I mean, it is eternal life, isn't it?

Over the years I've been repeatedly confronted with the sad fact that the biblical teaching of an eternally secure salvation is not a common doctrine. In fact, many groups claiming to be Christian have codified in their doctrinal statements the fear of losing your salvation. Roman Catholicism, Wesleyan Methodists, Free Will Baptists, Church of Christ, and many Pentecostal denominations are just a few of those that teach a Christian can lose his salvation.

A more formal name for the belief that a Christian can lose his salvation is conditional security. That may sound academic and austere, but it reveals the fundamental issues at stake. The doctrine of conditional security teaches that as a Christian, your salvation is secure, but only if you are consistently obedient to Jesus Christ.

Think about that for a moment. If your hope of eternal life is tied to the consistency of your earthly obedience, what hope is that? When you compare your obedience to the divine standard, when you compare yourself with the holiness of God, how do you measure up? A thousand lifetimes wouldn't enable me to perfect holiness before an absolutely holy God; a thousand lifetimes would only reveal how utterly corrupt I truly am.

There's no hope in the doctrine of

conditional security. None at all. In fact, ever since that first encounter with someone who believed he could lose his salvation, I've met a number of people with the same fear. They constantly fret over the possibility they've unwittingly forfeited their salvation, having committed a sin so bad that God has disowned them.

So, is that possible? Can a true Christian really forfeit his salvation? Is that what the Bible teaches? On the other hand, if you think a Christian can't lose his salvation, does that mean he can sin and not worry at all about what God thinks?

... consider just a couple of doctrinal ramifications. First of all, if you are a true Christian, and you can lose the salvation God gave you, then what does that say about the saving work of Christ? If you can lose your salvation, then Christ's "saving work" didn't really save you at all; it may have made you savable in some sense, but it didn't actually save you.

Let's trace that out a bit further. If the death of Jesus Christ only made you savable, and didn't secure your salvation completely, then that means it's up to you to save yourself. Denominations that teach conditional security are actually consistent on this point. Many of them teach that your salvation depends on your first believing, and then continuing in your faith, cooperating with God to perform good works.

That means if you fail to perform in that little partnership, you put your soul in eternal peril. According to their teaching, God has done His part, making you savable, and you need to uphold your end of the bargain to seal the deal. If you don't maintain good works, if you fail to avoid disobedience, don't blame God; blame yourself.

What a tremendous and tragic burden! Having been justified and set free by faith, are you now held bondage to maintain your salvation by works? That's just another form of works righteousness, which the Bible categorically condemns (see Eph 2:8-9 and Rom 3:27; 4:4-5).

Beyond the impossible burden of

maintaining personal salvation, the doctrine of conditional security also strikes a blow against the power of God. To say you can lose your salvation—which the Bible says God accomplished through the death of Jesus Christ—is to make God into an impotent deity with no actual power to save anyone. The full exercise of His divine power is at the mercy of a weak, finite, and sinful creature who may or may not cooperate with Him.

So, can we believe God or not? When John 3:16 says God loved the world and gave His Son to provide eternal life for all who believe, can we take Him at His word?

Yes, absolutely. John 3:16 stands, immovable and unshaken. But to say you can lose the salvation He grants is to say you can nullify God's promise by your faults, sins, and spiritual missteps. In effect, you've subverted the promise and power of God.

Rest assured—none of us can truly subvert the will, power, and promise of God. The Bible presents eternal life with God as the consummation of all the doctrines of salvation. The whole point of God decreeing His plan of salvation, electing a people to be called by His name, sending His Son to redeem those people, and then sending forth His Holy Spirit to empower them to live righteously—His overarching purpose in all of that—is to bring those people into eternal life. God will accomplish what He set out to do.

... let me state this as strongly and as clearly as I can: Not only do I believe the doctrine of conditional security is false, I would even dare to say it is blasphemous. The idea that you could lose the salvation God gave you slanders God and runs contrary to a number of the Bible's core doctrines.

As my mind goes back to that first encounter with the guy who feared he was losing his salvation, I wish I could have told him all that—unpacking the greatness of the gospel, elaborating on the power and wisdom of God's plan of salvation. The Bible could've equipped him and assured him in the gospel of an eternal life that truly is eternal and secure.