



# Grace Messenger



*"Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness."*  
Joshua 24:14a

## NURSERY SCHEDULE

### February

03 Linda Olive and Melanie Myatt  
10 Jenny and Peter Lovassy  
17 Troy and Jessi Moseley  
24 Jon and Tanya Amis

### March

03 Vicki Johnson and Amber Solan  
10 Pat and Kristy Hines  
17 Kevin and Sara Smith  
24 Kristin Scarbrough and Lori Hewlett  
31 Linda Olive and Melanie Myatt

## CHURCH CLEANING

February	- Hines
March	- Moseleys
April	- Lovassys
May	- Volunteer Needed

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF

### FEBRUARY 1, 2013

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 12,596.25
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 13,459.59
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 0.00
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 9,538.43
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 1,300.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 10,838.43
January Love offerings	\$ 0.00
January General Fund offerings	\$ 9,538.43
January Designated Missions	\$ 1,300.00
Building Fund balance	\$ 95,068.03
Missions Fund balance	\$ 18,648.78
General Fund balance	\$ 72,947.68

## 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**

— February 2013 Issue —

## SPRING BIBLE CONFERENCE

**MARCH 22-24**

### Speaker:

Dr. Sam Waldron

### Theme:

A Man as Priest in His Home



- **Friday** – 7:00 PM
- **Saturday** – 9:30 & 10:30 AM
- **Sunday** – 9:30; 11:00 AM & 1:30 PM

Christian husbands and fathers have an important ministry in the home. What kind of ministry is it? All Christian ministry is priestly in character, including that of a man in his home. This conference, however, isn't for men only. It is for everyone who wants to see their home ordered on a Biblical model.

Coffee and donuts will be served at 9:00 AM Saturday morning. Lunch will be served at 12:15 PM on Sunday.

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

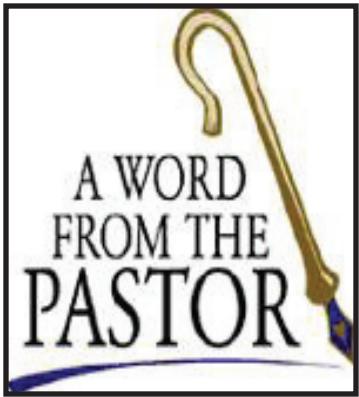
Morning Worship	9:30 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM

### 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)	

### WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting	7:00 PM
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## Detecting Covetousness

manifested in outward acts.

Covetousness, however, is a sin of a different order. It is a sin of the heart which isn't always obvious to the naked eye. Earnest longings for things, position, or immoral dalliances are sometimes hard for us to see because it concerns the thoughts and desires of the heart. It points to the part of our lives that is more difficult to judge.

For that reason sins of the heart can be more easily excused or camouflaged by depraved man. When it comes to covetousness, it's easy to view it as intense passion that is admirable rather than as evil desire that is contemptible. Covetousness can be made to look like we are just trying to get up in the world when we are really trying to satisfy our evil cravings.

Covetousness is earnestly desiring bad things, or if not bad things, things which take the place of God by consuming our undivided attention. We cover it up, explain it away, dismiss it outright. Paul, however, highlighted this sin as a major transgression. In Eph 5:5 he said, "... everyone who is... covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." He reiterated that in Colossians 3:5: "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

A covetous person is an idolater. It is easy for us to recognize idolatry. When a person worships a false god; when he bows down to an image, he is obviously guilty of idolatry. It is plain to see. But covetousness is not so easily detected. We can be consumed with covetousness and not be aware of it, yet it is a first-order sin. Covetousness is a heinous and monstrous sin!

Paul associates it with idolatry because it makes a god of whatever a man longingly seeks to possess. The lust for more, whatever it is, is idolatrous obsession. Arthur Phillips says, "An idol is a substitute for God and, at heart, the covetous person is a self-worshipper. He puts the satisfaction of his own appetites and longings where God ought to be."

When our desires take the place of God we are guilty of idolatry. The first of the Ten Commandments is,

Some sins are easier to detect than others. The ones that are easy to identify are those that are evidenced in an outward manner, sins like murder, theft, sexual immorality and the like. But even those particular sins are rooted in inward desires before they are

"You shall have no other gods before me" (Ex 20:3). The last commandment is, "You shall not covet" (Ex 20:17). It is clear why Paul made a connection between idolatry and covetousness.

Man's law cannot forbid covetousness but God's law does. The human eye doesn't always recognize covetousness but God sees it, for he looks on the heart. God evaluates the thoughts and aspirations of the heart as well as specific acts which his law condemns. Setting the heart on something or someone, whether rightfully or otherwise, if done to an inordinate degree, is idolatry.

Covetousness is a sin, but sadly, most people do not see it in themselves. We can see it in others. We can see it in our children. But what about us? Do we justify our desire for things when we condemn it in others? Do we have the intense desire, the craving to possess what we do not have?

Are we like greedy Gehazi (2 Kings 5:20–27)? Do we act like Achan, who saw, coveted, and took (Joshua 7)? How many of us are like the rich young ruler (Mk 10:17–22)? Money had a grip on him! What about Judas, who betrayed Jesus (Mt 26:14–15)? And what of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1–11)?

Jesus said to a man that was longing after his share of an inheritance, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Lk 12:15). Are you like this man, consumed with the desire for things? Are your affections set on things above or on things below? Don't be caught in the stampede to enthrone materialism or to satisfy any fleshly desire. Jesus asks us, "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?" (Mk 8:36).

Conrad Mbewe, an African pastor in Zambia, makes this comment about our culture in America. "Western Christians have filled their lives with too many things (toys?) that have robbed them of eternal perspectives. Electronic gadgets, holidays, sports, recreation, and so on have become idols. Even church must be about having fun. The church has little time in the lives of its members to prepare them for eternity. There is a greater consciousness of eternity here in Africa. Perhaps it is because we have fewer toys to dull our spiritual senses and death is all around us."

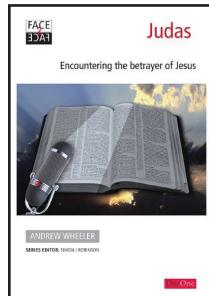
Let's examine our hearts. Are we covetous? Are we ruled by our sinful desires? We can detect whether this is true of ourselves by asking some simple questions. What do I love? What do I hate? What do I want, desire, crave, lust, or wish for? What am I seeking after and aiming for? One thing should consume our hearts and that is Christ! Let's set our minds on things that are above, where Christ is, and not on things that are on earth (Col. 3:1–4).

# BOOK REVIEW

## Judas: Encountering the Betrayer of Jesus

by Andrew Wheeler

Day One Publication, pp. 64



We like to read books about our favorite Bible characters – books which help and encourage us; but a book about Judas Iscariot? He too, however, is a Bible character with a not-insignificant part in the Gospel narrative and he presents a lasting warning that we need... You will not ‘enjoy’ this book – at least I hope not – but read with a prayerful, humble spirit you will find it truly edifying.

—Paul E Brown

The strength of this little book is that it speaks to heart and conscience. Andrew forces me to look at myself and to examine my heart. Any book that does that is worth reading.

—Stephen Rees

Andrew Wheeler has given us a perceptive study of one of the Bible’s most enigmatic and tragic figures. In doing so, he reminds us how very far one can go in religion without ever possessing the true knowledge of Christ.

—Roger Ellsworth

Whilst this book exposes the true and sad nature of Judas, at the same time it clearly shows the mercy of God being extended to Judas right till the end. Judas rejected that mercy and departed into everlasting darkness. Judas provides us with a frightening example of someone awakened but not saved. What a tragedy!

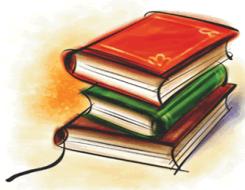
—Philip Grist



**FEBRUARY 3** – Annual Church Business Meeting in the afternoon at 1:30 PM. All members should be in attendance and non-members are welcome to attend.

**MARCH 21** – We will be hosting the Sovereign Grace Baptist Pastor’s Fellowship. Speakers are Chad Beck, Sam Waldron, and Darrell Lingerfelt. The first session begins at 10:00 AM. Coffee and donuts will be served at 9:30 AM and lunch at 12:00 noon.

**MARCH 22-24** – Spring Bible Conference with Dr. Sam Waldron. Dr. Waldron is one of the pastors of the Heritage Baptist Church of Owensboro, Kentucky, a Reformed Baptist Church which is also affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. He also serves as the Professor of Systematic Theology at the Midwest Center for Theological Studies. He is the author of numerous books and pamphlets including *A Modern Exposition of the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith*, *The End Times Made Simple*, *Faith, Obedience & Justification*, and is a contributor to the four-views book on church government, *Who Runs the Church?*



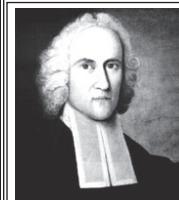
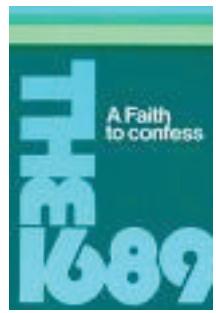
## We Believe

### The 1689 Confession of Faith

#### CHAPTER 23

##### LAWFUL OATHS AND VOWS

1. A lawful oath is an aspect of religious worship in which the swearer, having God’s truth, justice and righteousness in view, solemnly calls God to witness what he swears, and to judge him according to the truth or falsity of his words.  
Exod. 20:7; Deut. 10:20; 2 Chron. 6:22, 23; Jer. 4:2
2. An oath is only lawful when it is taken in the name of God, with all holy fear and reverence. To swear vainly or rashly by that glorious and dread name, or to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful and to be abhorred. God’s Word sanctions the taking of an oath when weighty and momentous matters are engaging attention, and when truth requires confirmation and an end to strife is desired. In such circumstances it is permissible to take a lawful oath imposed by lawful authority.  
Neh. 13:25; Matt. 5:34, 37; 2 Cor. 1:23; Heb. 6:16; Jas. 5:12
3. Each and every person who takes an oath agreeably to the Word of God must well consider the seriousness of such a solemn act, and be extremely careful to assert nothing but what he knows to be truth; for by rash, false and empty oaths the Lord is provoked, and by reason of them a land is brought to misery.  
Lev. 19:12; Jer. 23:10.
4. An oath is to be taken in the plain and usual sense of the words used, without equivocation or mental reservation.  
Ps. 24:4
5. Vows are to be made to God alone and not to any creature. Once made they are to be performed scrupulously and faithfully. But monastical vows of perpetual single life, professed poverty, and regular obedience, that pertain to the church of Rome, so far from representing superior sanctity, are merely superstitious and sinful snares in which no Christian ought to entangle himself.  
Gen. 28:20-22; Ps. 76:11; Matt. 19:11; 1 Cor. 7:2, 9; Eph. 4:28



### The Wisdom of Jonathan Edwards

“... some people actually imagine that the revelation in God’s Word is not enough to meet our needs. They think that God from time to time carries on an actual conversation with them, chatting with them, satisfying their doubts, testifying to His love for them, promising them support and blessings. As a result, their emotions soar; they are full of bubbling joy that is mixed with self-confidence and a high opinion of themselves. The foundation for these feelings, however, does not lie within the Bible itself, but instead rests on the sudden creations of their imaginations. These people are clearly deluded. God’s Word is for all of us and each of us; He does not need to give particular messages to particular people.”

## Peanut-Butter Passion

Phil Johnson

I'm a passionate person. People who know me will affirm that. I think Christians *ought* to be passionate about truth, passionate in our love for God and for one another, and (above all) passionate about the glory of God.

But raw passion is not the point. Passion is valid and edifies *only* when it's the right kind of passion, based on legitimate affections for the right things. I'm concerned about the unbridled passions frequently turned loose by people whose only religious affections were cultivated in evangelical youth groups (and if I can speak freely, that includes a lot of our so-called young, restless, and Reformed friends.)

Everything seems to unleash stadium-style passions. I've even seen people scream, whistle, stomp, and cheer at baptisms, as if they were celebrating a touchdown. Many Christians glorify passion for passion's sake—as if raw passion *per se* were something praiseworthy and deeply spiritual. It's not. And this has become a *serious* problem in today's post-Pentecostal, post-evangelical, anything-goes era.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that so many Christians imitate all the world's passions. Christian leaders invent gimmicks to try to win worldly people by appealing to their worldly passions. All of us devote

energy and emotion to things that are not even worthy of our attention. And then we bring our addiction to raw passion into our corporate gatherings. We do things to stir *artificial* passions—which is a form of false worship, no better than idolatry, really.

Our passions should not need to be artificially stirred up by spiritual cheerleaders and team chants. We shouldn't have to be worked into an emotional state by melodrama and musical manipulation. If we can get pumped to a fever pitch by some preacher's antics rather than by the truth of the biblical message, then whatever we are feeling isn't even a legitimate passion in the first place.

*Passion is valid and edifies only when it's the right kind of passion, based on legitimate affections for the right things.*

And sometimes it gets even worse than that.

Someone a few months ago sent me an article about a youth leader who likes to provoke his students to a state of screaming enthusiasm with gross-out games. The article describes how this youth leader had a teenager with hairy armpits smear gobs of peanut butter on his underarms; then the youth pastor asked for volunteers to lick it clean and swallow the peanut butter.

The youth leader uses skits like that to "shock and astound" (those are his exact words.) He told a secular reporter that he does things like that all the time to get the students excited, so that they will talk about the church. He says he wants to start "a buzz that [will] go viral, [so] that teens [will] text and Twitter about [it]." And what the youth leader said about his strategy is: "The idea is to get students here to meet our Savior. They are getting all this crazy stuff out there in the world all the time. We are trying to show them that God is cooler."

You may think that's an extreme, one-of-a-kind example, but that type of thing is *far* more common than you think. It illustrates rather vividly the foolishness of trying to stir artificial passions by making God seem "cool" rather than simply uplifting His glory and letting the grandeur and majesty of our God move people's hearts to more legitimate expressions of deep passion.

That sort of artificial enthusiasm actually hinders (and in some cases totally nullifies) the message we're supposed to be proclaiming. With so many churches merely trying to entertain people, or lull them into a state of self-satisfaction, or simply gross them out, it's no wonder the world is not being won to Christ but actually becoming steadily more hostile to Christianity.