



# 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**

— November 2013 Issue —



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

### NURSERY SCHEDULE

#### November

03 Kevin and Sara Smith  
10 Troy and Jessi Moseley  
17 Jenny and Peter Lovassy  
24 Melanie Myatt and Amber Solan

#### December

01 Linda Olive and Vicki Johnson  
08 Pat and Kristy Hines  
15 Kristin Scarbrough and Lori Hewlett  
22 Kevin and Sara Smith  
29 Jenny and Peter Lovassy

### CHURCH CLEANING

**November** - Pages  
**December** - Dean & Linda Olive

*A "Thank you" to all our 2013 church cleaning volunteers. We appreciate you.*

### FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2013

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$124,962.50
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$130,795.59
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 12,206.66
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$122,331.88
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 8,573.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 7,733.00
Disaster Relief (ytd)	\$ 1,175.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$139,741.02
October Love offerings	\$ 250.00
October General Fund offerings	\$ 11,967.30
October Designated Missions	\$ 75.00
Building Fund balance	\$111,460.98
Missions Fund balance	\$ 6,390.10
General Fund balance	\$ 57,907.00

## Thank You Jesus For

the **Love** that redeemed us from sin  
the **Joy** that came because of the resurrection  
the **Peace** that was made at the cross  
the **Patience** that taught people to serve  
the **Kindness** that healed the sick  
the **Goodness** that prayed for others  
the **Faithfulness** that lived 'Not My will but Thine'  
the **Gentleness** that accepted the nails and thorns  
the **Self-Control** that withstood temptation

*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."*

(Galatians 5:22-23)

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

#### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

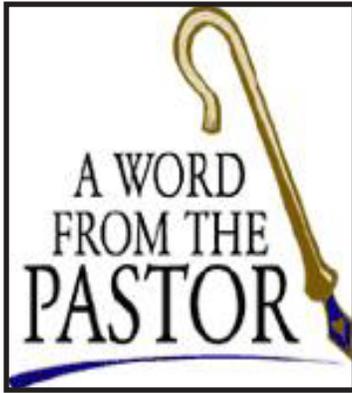
Morning Worship 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 11:00 AM  
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

#### 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)



## What Shall I Render to the Lord?

Psalm 116:12 contains a question that everyone who knows the Lord often asks: “What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits to me?”

It is a very natural response to offer God something in return for the good he has done

for us. But what gift can we possibly give to God? We can't pay him. He gives graciously and freely to us. Besides, we don't have enough to give him if there was a price. There is nothing that we did to deserve his gifts. We can do nothing to merit his favor.

What we have received from God is mercy. He punished his Son in our place. He poured out wrath due to us on Jesus Christ. He bruised his Son so that he might save us. God maintained his righteous justice in showing us mercy through Christ.

How good God has been to us! He has saved us, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy and grace. This gift of salvation is the primary blessing he has bestowed upon us.

But he also helps us in our times of need. The 116th Psalm is about a saved man, a man in covenant with God, who cried out to the Lord in his trouble and was helped. In pondering the help he received from the Lord, he asks, “What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits?”

We learn from the Psalmist that there are two gifts that we can give to God in response to what he has done for us. These are the only gifts we have to offer.

**We can offer gratitude (13).** The first answer to the question, “What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits to me?” is, “I will lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the LORD.”

His answer should be understood figuratively. Lifting up the cup of salvation is a way of expressing thanks to God. That it is a cup of salvation indicates that God has given it to us and he is the one who fills it. The table is prepared by God; the provisions are from God. We learn this from the 23rd Psalm: “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over” (5).

We deserve the cup of wrath but he gave us the cup of salvation. Lifting it up shows we are the receivers, seeking God forever to fill it. Lifting it up indicates

that all we have to give is a request for more. It also shows that all we have to give is a debt of gratitude.

This is the gospel pure and simple. We receive grace from God through Christ and all we have to give in return is gratitude. We can only “call on the name of the LORD.” We can only worship him, seek him, cry out to him! God freely and graciously filled our cup so that it overflows.

The Lord is pleased when his people who have received grace upon grace return his favors in the only ways they can – and the first of these is gratitude. But there is another response we ought to have.

**We can live obediently (14).** “What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits to me?” The psalmist gives one more answer. “I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.”

The psalmist is referring to the vows he made when calling on the name of the Lord for help. He vowed that he would “call on him as long as he lived” (2). And he vowed that he would “walk before the LORD in the land of the living” (9). He promised to render to the Lord gratitude for all his benefits and he promised to live in obedience to the Lord. Rendering thanks is worship with the lips and living obediently is worship with the life!

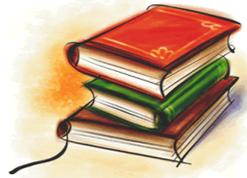
Obedience to God is not the way by which we are delivered but it is the way we express genuine gratitude. So the psalmist was anxious to serve the Lord. He even says in v. 16, “I am your servant.” And he was determined to serve and obey openly and publicly. He was not ashamed of the Lord. A secret disciple he would not be.

Our gratitude should not be in word and tongue only but in deed and truth. We do not live unto ourselves but for his glory. We are to surrender ourselves fully unto him. We are not our own. We have been bought with a price; we therefore glorify him with our lives – body, soul, mind, and spirit. We long to serve him and do serve him with supreme devotion, being obedient to his Word. We are called to love God and keep his commandments.

The benefits that we have received from the Lord are many. It would do us well to consider them, beginning with redemption, and then by pondering every other blessing that has come to us from God's gracious hand.

And having done so, then render to him gratitude and obedience. If we really comprehend all that God has done for us we most certainly offer to him a life of praise and service, thanking him continually and obeying him gladly for all his benefits.

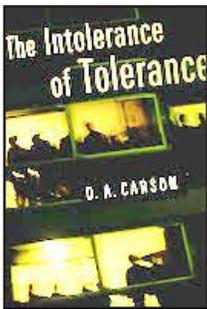
# BOOK REVIEW



## The Intolerance of Tolerance

D. A. Carson

IVP, 2012, 200pp.



The central premise of this book is that a true and proper tolerance defends both the right of others to hold views other than one's own together with one's own right to challenge those views. However, tolerance as commonly understood has come to mean the conviction—strongly held in the name of tolerance—that any strongly-held convictions which cut across the convictions of others are intolerable.

In the course of this book, these straightforward and easily observable propositions are beaten rather thin and embossed with some intricacy. The reason for this may be that the material has its origin in an academic environment. Along the way, some useful points are made, including cogent warnings concerning the tyranny of democracy and the subtle progress of this intolerant tolerance, particularly as Christianity—with its exclusive claims—comes under increasing fire in the West. At this point, perhaps, a treatment of the natural man's incapacity for and antagonism to the truth might have been enlightening.

Carson closes with ten counsels, in the course of which he urges Christians to demonstrate true tolerance in their engagements with one another and with the world at large, while exposing the new and flawed tolerance for the dangerous nonsense it is. Not a ground-breaking analysis, but a useful one for those engaging with the issues, especially in the more public intellectual sphere.

Jeremy Walker



**NOVEMBER 3** – Communion service in the afternoon at 1:30.

**NOVEMBER 27** – A service of Thanksgiving in prayer, testimony, Scripture reading, and song.

**DECEMBER 22** – Our friends from Providence Presbyterian Church will be joining us for a Christmas service and meal. The meal is scheduled for 5 PM and the service of worship will follow. The ladies of PPC will

bring the desserts and we will provide the main meal. Pastor Thole will be preaching God's Word in the worship hour and we will offer thanks to God for sending his only Son to redeem us.

**DECEMBER 25 AND JANUARY 1** – No prayer meeting on Christmas and New Year's Day.

**DECEMBER 29** – Worship service at 9:30 AM and 6:00 PM as usual, but no Sunday School.

**JANUARY 5** – Worship service at 9:30 AM and 1:00 PM with Brunch between the services. No Sunday School. We will be observing the Lord's Supper in the afternoon service (dv).

## We Believe

### The 1689 Confession of Faith

#### CHAPTER 27

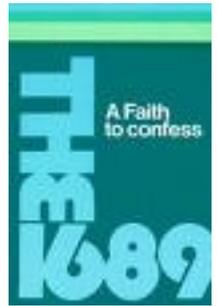
##### THE FELLOWSHIP OF SAINTS

1. All saints are united to Jesus Christ their head by His Spirit and by faith. But this does not mean that they become one person with Him. Yet they have fellowship in His graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory. Also, as they are united to one another in love, they enjoy fellowship in the gifts and graces one of another, and are under obligation to render such services, public and private, as promote their mutual well-being, in both spiritual and temporal matters.

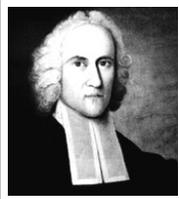
John 1:16; Rom. 1:12; 6:5-6; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; 12:7; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:15-16; Phil. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:11, 14; 1 John 1:3; 3:17-18

2. By their profession of faith, saints are committed to the maintenance of a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God and in the performance of such other special services as promote their mutual well-being. They are also bound to relieve one another in their temporal concerns according to their various needs and abilities. According to the rule of the gospel, this type of fellowship, while it particularly applies to the family and church relationships of saints, is to be extended, as God gives opportunity, to the whole household of faith, that is to say, to all who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus. At the same time, however, it must be understood that such a sharing one with another as saints, does not deprive any man of the title and proprietorship which he has in his own goods and possessions, nor does it infringe such title.

Acts 5:4; 11:29-30; 1 Cor. 12:14-27; Eph. 4:28; 6:4; Heb. 3:12-13; 10:24-25




Grace Baptist Church will be participating again this year in *Operation: Christmas Child*. Packages will be due Sunday, November 24. For more details please visit : [www.samaritanspurse.org/occ](http://www.samaritanspurse.org/occ)



**The Wisdom of Jonathan Edwards**

“True virtue never appears so lovely as when it is most oppressed; and the divine excellency of real Christianity is never exhibited with such advantage as when under the greatest trials; then it is that true faith appears much more precious than gold, and upon this account is ‘found to praise and honour and glory.’”

## Not Much to Be Thankful for

by Jim Elliff

Table Mountain reigns over Cape Town, South Africa. When we first got sight of it from the highway, we were unable to take our eyes off of its stately, presiding presence. Its abrupt cliffs, rising up out of Cape Town on the oceanfront etched its postcard beauty in our minds. As you see, I can get rather poetic about it. But . . .

Not everybody sees it this way.

My first child was with us in the back seat playing with an inexpensive toy. We tried to get him to see this impressive sight but, because he was only eight months old, he wasn't the least bit interested. Though we begged him to look, he obviously didn't believe anything worth seeing was out there. He may have not even known what a mountain is, for all I know. Tourists pay thousands of dollars to see this and he couldn't care less!

Like a child enamored with a small toy when there is so much to see, many people are caught up in such insignificant trifles. They long for sex and cars and honor and possessions as if these are what life is actually about. Even the best of it all is so temporary and circumstantial. So you win a few accolades along the way, and you add to your pile of things—are these really so

important?

When it comes to Thanksgiving time, such people really have little to be thankful for—not because much more is not there to experience (He even *invites* people to know *Him!*), but because they are entirely too enamored with what is only marginal by comparison.

What if you were called on this Thanksgiving to give a report of what you were thankful for? If you could say, not what you *ought* to say, but what is strictly true, what would come out of

*What if you were called on this Thanksgiving to give a report of what you were thankful for? If you could say, not what you ought to say, but what is strictly true, what would come out of your mouth? What makes you really happy?*

your mouth? What makes you really happy?

I once heard a man use the phrase, “the expulsive power of a new affection.” He used it about the story of the woman at the Samaritan well. Jesus promised her a “fountain of water springing up to eternal life.” She was told that she would never thirst again. When she grasped the meaning of this, she immediately “left her water pot” and ran into the city to tell the great news.

She drank of something, *someone*, so satisfying that she forgot the whole reason for her trip to the well! Someone was more attractive than anything she had ever encountered. And she was a veteran at chasing her cravings. She had married five husbands and was living with yet another man. But her true longings were not met until that encounter with Jesus.

There, outside of the window of your own limited experience is something more fulfilling than you've known before, something for which you will be far more thankful if you could only see it.

Christ is that one who *satisfies*. You don't just have to take my word for it, or the word of millions of others through the centuries—you may keep on playing with your toys and forget Him if you wish. That's

every person's prerogative.

But there is *much* more.

“Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:14

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