



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

— April 2014 Issue —

"Do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the Lord with all your heart." 1 Samuel 12:20

NURSERY SCHEDULE

April

06 Linda Olive and Vicki Johnson
13 Kevin and Sara Smith
20 Jenny and Peter Lovassy
27 Melanie Myatt and Amber Solan

May

02 Kristin Scarbrough and Lori Hewlett
09 Troy and Jessi Moseley
16 Linda Olive and Vicki Johnson
23 Kevin and Sara Smith
30 Jenny and Peter Lovassy

CHURCH CLEANING

April - Moseleys
May - Amises
June - Scarboroughs
July - Amber Solan / Kristy Hines
August - Moseleys

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF APRIL 1, 2014

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 37,205.49
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 35,327.55
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 1,065.00
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 39,541.85
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 2,550.50
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 200.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 53,292.35
March Love offerings	\$ 0.00
March General Fund offerings	\$ 15,855.00
March Designated Missions	\$ 730.00
Building Fund balance	\$122,649.46
Missions Fund balance	\$ 2,783.57
General Fund balance	\$ 64,370.59

the Crucifixion and Resurrection

The accounts of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection are so familiar that we must be careful lest we miss their full meaning.

The Father let His Son hang on the cross and the Son refused to escape it so that we might be forgiven.

*My sin—O, the bliss of this glorious tho't—
My sin—not in part, but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

The Father then raised His Son from the grave and the living Christ gives to all who believe in him everlasting life.

*Thine is the glory, risen conqu'ring Son;
Endless is the victory, Thou o'er death has won.
Let His church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,
For her Lord now liveth; Death has lost its sting.*

What blending of love and power we see in the crucifixion and resurrection!

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

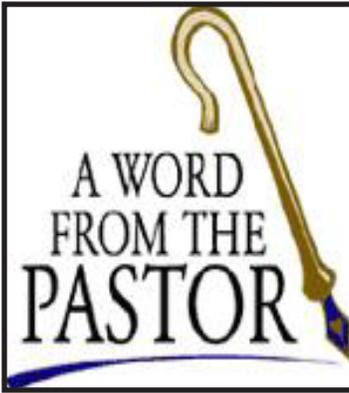
Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

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)



A Silent Witness

The apostle John records the story of one of the greatest witnesses for Christ that ever lived. But his testimony wasn't in what he said but the very fact that he lived. No word is recorded in Scripture of this man speaking but his mere

presence signified the power of Christ. That witness was given by Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha.

The silent witness of Lazarus brought numerous souls into the kingdom of Christ. His powerful witness is recorded in John 12:9-11. People came to see Lazarus and hear Jesus because Jesus had raised Lazarus from the grave. Jesus demonstrated that he was the resurrection and the life by raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11).

Jesus did a remarkable thing for Lazarus. His cold, lifeless body, four days in the tomb, came to life when Jesus said, "*Lazarus, come forth*" (John 11:43). Breath entered his body, which had already begun to stink, and he came out of the tomb! People marveled at the mighty power of Christ.

So the people came out in great numbers to see Lazarus and to hear Jesus. But not everyone who came out was happy. The religious leaders of Israel came but they wanted to put Jesus and Lazarus to death (John 11:53; 12:10). They plotted to kill Jesus and they made plans to kill Lazarus.

They should have been falling at the feet of Jesus but they refused to acknowledge that he was the Son of God even with irrefutable evidence staring them in the face. Since they couldn't challenge the facts they sought to destroy the evidence. But their efforts were fruitless.

Seeing Lazarus, however, caused many people to turn in faith to Jesus. The apostle John writes, "*On account of him [Lazarus] many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus*" (12:11). The verb translated "*were going away*" conveys the idea of "going over to." The people were going away from the hypocritical religion of the Jewish leaders

and were going over to Jesus. The picture is one of repentance and faith. They turned away from the false to the true, from the empty to the full. They turned from vain religion to true religion!

Many souls were liberated that day from the domain of darkness by the silent testimony of Lazarus. Many words of Mary and Martha are recorded in Scripture but none by Lazarus. That doesn't mean he didn't say anything but the fact that there is nothing on record is a great lesson on how important it is for we who are Christians to "*walk in newness of life,*" having been raised from spiritual death.

Lazarus is one of the greatest witnesses for Christ that ever lived. But that isn't because he was a powerful spokesman but because his changed life bore witness to Christ's power. His effectiveness as a witness wasn't due to what Lazarus did for Christ but because of what Christ did for him.

On account of Lazarus, many Jews believed in Jesus. Can it be said of us, on account of him or her, many lost sinners departed from their sins and believed in Jesus Christ?

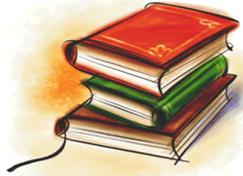
This should be true of us. I hope we are all able to set forth the way of salvation to others with words, but oh, how important it is for us walk in the world showing forth the saving grace of Christ in our daily conduct. How we live is proof of what the Scriptures say about free salvation by the death and resurrection of Jesus. This is the greatest argument that we can give for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The change that occurs in the lives of believers is the greatest evidence of the reality of God's grace while at the same time it is the greatest threat to the kingdom of darkness. There will always be opposition to Christ and his followers by the devil's servants. They hated Christ, they hated Lazarus, and they will hate us if we magnify Christ in our lives.

On account of Lazarus, many Jews believed in Jesus. Can it be said of us, on account of him or her, many lost sinners departed from their sins and believed in Jesus Christ? Are we good witnesses for the Lord? Do we walk among the people of this world as men and women risen from the dead? Do they see that we are alive in Jesus Christ?

If we have been brought to spiritual life by Jesus Christ, then others should be able to tell! May God grant this to be true of all of us and may he be pleased to save many because of our testimony.

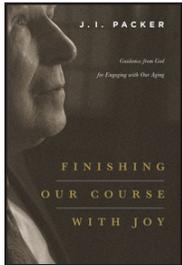
BOOK REVIEW



Finishing Our Course With Joy: Guidance from God for Engaging with our Aging

by J. I. Packer

Crossway Books, 2014, 112 pages (available also for Kindle)



Thinning hair, failing eyesight, and arthritic hands reveal an inescapable truth: we're only getting older. But that doesn't mean we should simply sit back and take it easy. In *Finishing Our Course with Joy*, renowned theologian and author J. I. Packer challenges us to embrace old age as an opportunity for continued learning, careful planning, and heartfelt discipleship.

Packer's pastoral words and personal stories encourage us to press on toward the upward call of God with endurance and grace—that we might continue to glorify God in our aging and finish our lives with joy.

"I wish I had thought more about growing older when I was younger. If I had, perhaps I wouldn't need wisdom from J. I. Packer. But I didn't, and therefore I do! And what wonderful wisdom it is, the sort that challenges us, redirects our energy, and equips us with biblical truth to face our latter years. I'm at that stage in life where 'engaging' with my 'aging' has become increasingly more urgent. And I can't think of anyone who can provide more helpful and encouraging insight than J. I. Packer. Don't wait until you're sixty or seventy to read this book. Start now and finish well" (Sam Storms).

"J. I. Packer is his usual wise self as he gives his counsel herein for older people to pursue their aging with 'zeal'! He urges us to serve God and his church however we can while we can. This is devout and inspiring motivation" (Marva J. Dawn).

J. I. Packer is the author of numerous books, including the classic best-seller *Knowing God*. Packer served as general editor for the English Standard Version Bible and as theological editor for the *ESV Study Bible*.



APRIL 13 – Randy McClendon, pastor of Trinity Reformed Baptist Church, Bartlett, TN, will be preaching in the morning worship hour.

MAY 4 – The Lord's Supper will be observed in the afternoon service. Elder Bob Marsh will be preaching.

OCTOBER 5-7 – Geoff Thomas, pastor of Alfred Place Baptist Church, Aberystwyth, Wales, is the preacher for our Fall Bible Conference in conjunction with our hosting the regional FIRE conference.

We Believe

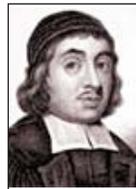
The 1689 Confession of Faith

CHAPTER 31

THE STATE OF MAN AFTER DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD



- The bodies of men after death return to dust and suffer decay, but their souls which neither die nor sink into a state of unconsciousness—they are inherently immortal—immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous, whose holiness is at death perfected, are received into paradise, where they are with Christ, looking upon the face of God in light and glory, and waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. The souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Souls separated from their bodies are in either paradise or hell, for the Scripture speaks of no other abodes of the departed.
Gen. 3:19; Eccles. 12:7; Luke 16:23, 24; 23:43; Acts 13:36; 2 Cor. 5:1, 6, 8; Phil. 1:23; Heb. 12:23; 1 Pet. 3:19; Jude 6, 7
- At the last day, saints then alive on the earth Will not die, but be changed. All the dead will be raised up with their selfsame bodies, and none other, although with different qualities, and shall be united again to their souls forever.
Job 19:26, 27; 1 Cor. 15:42, 43, 51, 52; 1 Thess. 4:17
- Those who, as worthy participants, outwardly eat and drink the visible bread and wine in this ordinance, at the same time receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and receive all the benefits accruing from His death. This they do really and indeed, not as if feeding upon the actual flesh and blood of a person's body, but inwardly and by faith. In the supper the body and blood of Christ are present to the faith of believers, not in any actual physical way, but in a way of spiritual apprehension, just as the bread and wine themselves are present to their outward physical senses.
1 Cor. 10:16; 11:23-26
- By the power of Christ, the bodies of the unrighteous will be raised to dishonor. By His Spirit, Christ will raise the bodies of the righteous to honor, for they will be refashioned after the pattern of His own glorious body.
John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; Phil. 3:21



Thomas Watson Puritan Preacher & Author

CREATION IS THE HEATHEN MAN'S BIBLE

"The creation is the heathen man's Bible, the ploughman's primer, and the traveler's perspective glass, through which he receives a representation of the infinite excellencies which are in God. The creation is a large volume, in which God's works are bound up; and this volume has three great leaves in it, heaven, earth, and sea... The world is like a curious piece of tapestry, in which we may see the skill and wisdom of Him that made it... Every star in the sky, every bird that flies in the air, is a witness against the heathen. A creature could not make itself."

Pray then like this...

Kevin Tucker

The Bible teaches a great deal about the importance of prayer. Paul urged his readers to continue steadfastly in prayer (Col. 4:2) and to be constant in prayer (Romans 12:12). James wrote *'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.'* (James 5:16) Many prayers are recorded in both the Old and New Testaments.

The outstanding characteristic of the most saintly people the world has ever known has been that they have spent much time in private prayer. Martyn-Lloyd Jones said we are engaged in the highest activity of the human soul when, in prayer, we come face to face with God.

Still, many Christians are uncertain or confused about prayer. Our Lord recognized our need in this most important facet of the Christian life, our need to be taught both how to pray and for what to pray.

The Lord's Prayer, as given in Matthew 6:9-15, is part of Jesus' teaching on prayer from the Sermon on the Mount. Our Lord's teaching on prayer is often misunderstood superficially or even misunderstood. This article is the first in a series of four on the Lord's Prayer. The idea is to help us understand the Lord's Prayer so that we might glorify Him more in this key aspect of Christian life.

Early in Matthew 6, our Lord warns his followers against certain dangers in connection with prayer. He warned them not to be like the hypocrites who pray in order to be seen and praised by others as righteous people. He also warned them about the futility of vain repetitions and the shear volume of words in prayer.

Now, He comes to positive instruction on prayer when He says in Matthew 6:9 *'Pray then like this...'* These words tell us the Lord's Prayer is an outline for our

guidance. It is not a prayer He prayed, but a model for prayer given to us by the one who brings us into God's presence. It is extraordinary in that in these few verses Jesus really covers all facets of true prayer. The Lord's Prayer is a perfect synopsis of how to pray and for what to pray.

God's supreme purpose for prayer, the purpose beyond all others, is to glorify himself. True prayer, like true worship, centers not on man's needs, but on God's glory. True prayer acknowledges His sovereignty, displays His glory and seeks to obey His will.

Every facet of the Lord's Prayer focuses on the Almighty. It gives a comprehensive view of all the elements of righteous prayer. Every part centers on God-acknowledging His paternity, priority, program, plan, provision, pardon and protection.

The Lord's Prayer is easily divided into two parts. The three petitions in verses 9 and 10 deal with God's glory in terms of His name, His kingdom and His will. The petitions in verses 11-13 deal with God's glory in His provision for our needs that we may be fit for His service. Here, the petitions are for our daily bread, forgiveness and protection from temptation.

The first thing we must do in prayer is to remind ourselves of what we are about to do. Prayer means speaking to God; forgetting ourselves and realizing His presence. In the Lord's Prayer, the invocation, *'Our Father in heaven,'* leads us into God's presence. Only true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ can say *'Our Father.'* Only the people of whom the Beatitudes are true can say *'Our Father'* with confidence.

'Our Father' is followed immediately by *'in heaven.'* The two phrases must always be taken together. It is vital that when we pray to God, that we should remind ourselves that He is *'our Father in Heaven.'* We should remind ourselves of His majesty and of His greatness and of His almighty power. As the writer of Ecclesiastes said, *'Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your*

heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth.' (Ecclesiastes 5:2)

We must also remember His holiness and His justice and His utter, absolute righteousness. We must remember to *'... offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.'* (Hebrews 12:28-29) *We must come humbly, in reverence and awe.*

God's priority is addressed in the first petition-- *'Hallowed be your name.'* *Hallowed* means to sanctify, to revere, to make and keep holy. *Name* here means God Himself. It means all that is true of God and all that He has revealed concerning Himself. It means God in all His attributes, God in all that He is and God in all that He has done and is doing.

God revealed Himself by various names to the children of Israel. *Jehovah* means eternally self-existent, *'I am that I am.'* *Elohim* means strength and power and dominion. Other names described Him as Provider, the One who heals, our Banner, our Peace, our Shepherd, our Righteousness and as the One who is present.

So, we see the purpose of this first petition is to express the desire that God Himself may be revered, that the very name of God and all it represents may be honored and kept holy by all people throughout the entire world.

Our Lord had a deep and burning desire for the honor and glory for God (see, for example, His High-Priestly Prayer in John 17) and so should we. We should have a consuming desire that the whole world might come to know God as He has revealed Himself. We should desire that all people everywhere would bow before God in adoration, in reverence, in praise, in worship, in honor and in thanksgiving.