



# M Grace Messenger

## GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

122 Walnut Street  
Madison, AL 35758  
256-837-8821

### GBC HOMEPAGES

<http://www.gbcmadison-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 2014 Issue —

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

### NURSERY SCHEDULE

#### September

07 Jenny and Peter Lovassy  
14 Melanie Myatt and Kristin Scarbrough  
21 Vicki Johnson and Lori Hewlett  
28 Troy and Jessi Moseley

#### October

05 Linda Olive and Andrea Page  
12 Amber Solan and Wilma Pinch  
19 Jenny and Peter Lovassy  
26 Vicki Johnson and Nellie McFadden

### CHURCH CLEANING

September - Carol Tucker  
October - Johnsons  
November - Volunteer Needed

### LAWN CARE

September - Amises  
*Thank you to our 2014 Volunteers!*

### FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2014

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 96,458.69
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 101,042.41
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 2,782.08
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 109,436.18
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 5,195.50
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 2,885.00
Benevolence (ytd)	\$ 1,060.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 118,076.68
August Love offerings	\$ 560.00
August General Fund offerings	\$ 11,974.82
August Designated Missions	\$ 500.00
Building Fund balance	\$ 131,980.99
Missions Fund balance	\$ 4,998.56
General Fund balance	\$ 54,856.93

## FIRE SOUTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE OCTOBER 6 - 7

THEME:

### TO SEEK AND TO SAVE:

*The Mission of our Triune God*

#### Monday, October 6

Registration begins at 5:30 pm  
Session 1 begins at 7:00 pm

#### Tuesday, October 7

9 AM first service  
Last session begins at 7:00 pm  
Lunch and Supper provided



Speakers:



Geoff Thomas



Don Currin



Trevor Johnson



Martin Rizley

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

#### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

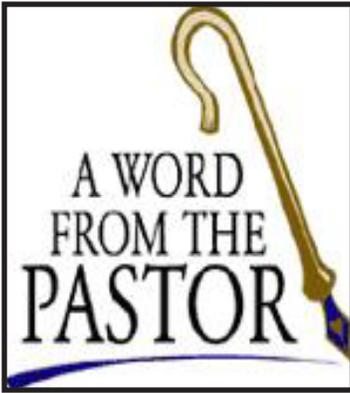
Morning Worship 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 11:00 AM  
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

#### 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)



## The Harvest is Great

Years ago during the Great Depression, a farmer's field's produced a bumper crop. He and his son moved their combine into the field and began to gather the grain. Suddenly the combine broke down, and the farmer discovered he needed a part. He rushed to the store only to learn

that the part was unavailable. He searched in neighboring towns without success. In desperation, the family tried to harvest by hand. After days of backbreaking work they had not made a dent. With a broken heart he said, "I'm afraid we are going to lose this harvest."

The farmer's dilemma speaks to us of the situation facing the Christian church. The crop in the field is comparable to lost souls. Evangelism is equivalent to harvesting. The dilemma is this: If we do not harvest the crop, it will be lost.

Jesus told his disciples, "Look on the fields, they are already white unto harvest" (Jn 4:35). He also told them, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Mt 9:37-38). He urged his disciples to take their responsibility to harvest the crop seriously, to get involved in the great work of spiritual reaping.

We need to realize that the harvest is plentiful. There are many that are lost and in need of salvation. Jesus commissions us to preach the gospel to every person, Jew and Gentile. There are vast numbers in the world and few of them are Christians.

The population of the world is currently over the 7 billion mark. The world contains about 24,000 people groups, each with its own language, culture, and customs. Out of 6500 spoken languages in the world, only 2000 languages have the entire Bible. The need is obviously great. The harvest is plentiful.

But the laborers are few! How can a crop be gathered if there are not enough laborers to work in the fields? Boaz would have never gathered in the grain from his fields if he didn't have the workers to do the job. Why are there so few laborers working to gather the harvest? There are many reasons.

Laziness. Proverbs 10:5 says, "He who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame." Are God's people sleeping on the job?

Wrong Priorities. Many of the Lord's people are working on other projects. Evangelism and missions are low on the list if they are on the list at all.

Worldly Pursuits. Love for the things of this world can choke our passion for spreading the gospel. It is a shameful thing when we let love for the world diminish our desire for people to know God.

Pluralism. Many are of the opinion that since everyone has their own religion, we shouldn't try to convert them to ours. But their end is destruction and their only hope is Christ.

Jesus set forth a solution when addressing the problem of the harvest. He said, "Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." Laborers are required. To get more laborers Jesus calls us to pray. We are to seek the face of God to work in the hearts of men, making them willing to work in the harvest.

There are other things besides prayer, but nothing more important than prayer. The seed must be planted and water. And then we must trust God to bless it. "Some plant and some water, but God gives the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6).

A missionary friend of mine, Jim West, shared a story about a man who came to Christ. The man whom God saved was Maurice Caughens. Maurice learned to reverence God while growing up, but had no thought of knowing the Lord or serving him.

Maurice was single and at 36 years of age decided he wanted to find a wife. He was very shy, so he contacted a dating agency and asked for a pen pal from another country. They suggested a Filipino girl by the name of Fraley, living in the United Arab Emirates.

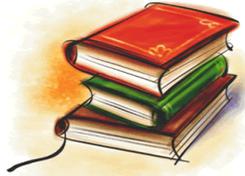
In her first letter to Maurice, Fraley wrote that she was a Christian and asked if they could read the same Bible verses daily. This sounded strange, but Maurice bought a Bible and began reading it. A man in his office who was a born-again Christian invited him to church. Maurice was impressed with the simplicity of the Word of God, but the church was too far away.

Maurice then remembered the newsletter delivered to his door from a church only a mile from his home. One Sunday he came to this church, where Jim West was pastor. An usher greeted him in a friendly manner and introduced him to various people in the church. After the message that day, he told the pastor he would be back, and he did return and was later converted and is now serving the Lord faithfully.

Look at all the people involved in this man's conversion. Someone got him to read the Bible. Someone invited him to church. Someone passed out literature at his door. Someone welcomed him to church and was friendly to him. Someone prayed for him (actually several did). And someone preached the gospel to him. And not to be forgotten, someone supported the missionary with their prayers and finances so he could be there preaching the gospel.

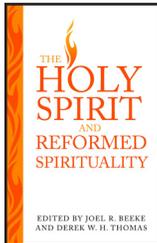
There is no pleasure in life that can equal the joy of helping bring a person to the Lord Jesus Christ! How will we help in reaching the harvest? Let's get more involved in the work of doing missions and evangelism ourselves and then pray that God will raise up other laborers for the harvest, for the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few.

## BOOK REVIEW



### The Holy Spirit and Reformed Spirituality: A Tribute to Geoffrey Thomas

edited by Joel Beeke and Derek Thomas, Reformation Heritage Books, 2013, pp. 240.



Geoffrey Thomas is known and respected far and wide for his love for the doctrines of grace and warm-heartedness as a pastor. This book, written in honor of him, contains helpful essays by various men illustrating the importance of the Holy Spirit's work in saving sinners, in promoting their holiness and spiritual growth, and in supplying biblical preaching past and present. How does God bring His Word into our lives? The answer is: by the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit the Word was revealed and written. By the Spirit the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. By the Spirit the Word roots itself in the hearts of sinners and produces fruit.

Calvin recognized long ago that the Holy Spirit is the bond of union between believers and Christ. Jonathan Edwards said that the Spirit is the sum of all Christ bought for His people with His precious blood. How precious then is the Spirit, and how important to know Him and His ways!

In this book, a team of pastor-theologians uncover the rich biblical teachings about the work of the Holy Spirit. How was the Spirit involved in the human life of Jesus Christ? What is a spiritual person? How does the Spirit open the mind of sinners to trust in Christ? What does it mean to serve God in the power of the Spirit? How does the Spirit's sovereign work relate to our responsibility in evangelism? These questions and more are addressed in this book.



**SEPTEMBER 7** – Steve Grissom, pastor of Haven Baptist Church in Madison, will be preaching in the morning worship hour in the pastor's absence. Bob Marsh will be speaking at the Lord's Supper in the afternoon service.

**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. He will be preaching on Sunday, Oct. 5, and then for the FIRE conference on Monday and Tuesday evening, Oct. 6-7. The theme of the FIRE Conference is, TO SEEK AND TO SAVE: The Mission of Our Triune God. Also preaching on Tuesday, Oct. 7, is Trevor Johnson, Don Currin, and Martin Rizley.

## Spurgeon's Catechism with Scripture Proofs



**Question 3:** What do the Scriptures principally teach?

**Answer:** The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.

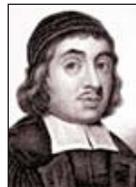
**Scripture Proof:** 2 Timothy 1:13, "Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus." Ecclesiastes 12:13, "The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

**Commentary:** It necessary that we have a faith concerning God for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Heb 11:6). The knowledge of God is a great privilege for this is life eternal, to know the only true God (Jn 17:3). We have that faith by being taught.

We should all be concerned to get the knowledge of God! We should all know him, from the least even to the greatest (Heb 8:11). Children must get that knowledge. And we must all grow in that knowledge.

We are to believe what the Scripture reveals concerning God for these things are written that we may believe (Jn 20:31). And we must believe all that the Scripture reveals about God and what he requires for man. The Scriptures teach us what duty God requires. "He has showed thee what the Lord thy God requires of thee" (Mic. 6: 8). And must we do all that the Scriptures teaches. We must observe to do according to all that is written therein, and not turn from it to the right hand, or to the left (Josh. 1:7).

This obedience always accompany faith for they which have believed in God must be careful to maintain good works (Tit. 3: 8) [Matthew Henry].



### Thomas Watson Puritan Preacher & Author

#### RUNNING INTO TEMPTATION

"There is a great deal of difference between falling into a temptation, and running into a temptation. The falling into a temptation shall work for good, not the running into it. He that falls into a river is capable of help and pity, but he that desperately turns into it is guilty of his own death."

# The Immutability of God

*Geoff Thomas*

Whatever troubles we have today, and whatever buckets of regrets that burden us, they must shrink into thimblefuls as we begin to consider God. Whatever are the achievements that make us proud, they will grow less and less in the might of God. Whatever academic success we have known, when we consider God we will say, "I am but of yesterday, and know nothing." Our praise will be greatly increased as we gain a new understanding of God.

*Great God, how infinite art Thou!  
What worthless worms are we!*

But while the theme of the perfections of God humbles our minds it also expands our minds. You may be a specialist in one subject, in librarianship, in indexing, in plant breeding, in geology, in sports science, in medieval Welsh – and how fascinating all those subjects are – but the most excellent study for expanding the mind and the soul is the knowledge of the glorious Godhead, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Nothing can enlarge the intellect or make man's shrunken soul swell with strength and joy as an investigation of the perfections of God.

Here is medicine for every sick condition; here is an ointment that can heal every wound; here is the source of the strength needed to carry every burden. Would you lose your worries and fears this day? Then you must immerse yourself in the immensity of God, and especially in the topic of the immutability of God, the fact of the changelessness of God.

We live in a world of change. The weather and the seasons change; the moon waxes and wanes; the planets change their positions in the sky. The public concept of morality has changed. It is no longer shocking to live together before marriage. Fashions change, hairstyles change, popular music changes, the foods we eat have

changed... Aberystwyth has changed, and all of us are changing. We are growing older and our hair is whiter, and our eyesight is poorer, and our hearing weaker and we walk more slowly and our shoulders are rounder.

We sing in the hymn 'Abide with me' those words, "Change and decay in all around I see." But God is perpetually the same. He never changes. His being, and nature, and perfections can't be altered. Nothing can be added to the infinite God and nothing can be taken from him. What God is today he always was. What God is today he shall always be. He is immutable; that is his state, and he is eternal; that is the measure of his state.

It is essential that God is unchangeable. Without it he could not be God. This is one of the excellencies of God which distinguishes him from all his creatures. It distinguishes him from the angels. Yes, they are as sinless as he is, but they are not omnipotent and there was a time when they were not. They began; they changed from nothingness to something; God never began. He is from eternity to eternity, changeless in his attributes and purposes and character. He is everlastingly, "the Father of lights with whom there is no variability, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

Because he is immutable then the Scripture calls him the Rock. If I should put a large pebble from the beach into your hands and say to you, "Now mould and change the form of that pebble," and you began to wrestle with this stone and to press it and twist it and shake it then you would quickly see how impossible it is to change that pebble. Your hands would certainly change; they would quickly become raw and would bleed and then be calloused by the rough stone, but the pebble would remain the same. Christ is the Rock of Ages; the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

In the prophecy of Malachi 3:6, God says, "I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed." Oh, the blessed consequences for me and you of

God's immutability when we know ourselves to be the descendants of Jacob!

1. Jacob was an elect son of God. So are we who believe. God says that if we believe in Jesus Christ we shall not perish but have everlasting life. God will not consume in hell those whom he has chosen.
2. Jacob had great privileges, a new status, the divine blessing, a settled birthright. And so too the descendants of Jacob have been given the right to be called the sons of God.
3. Jacob passed through special trials. He had a cheating taskmaster in Laban his father-in-law. He had the threats of his brother Esau. He had heartaches from the behavior of his sons. But God kept him and God will keep you.
4. Jacob was not a perfect man. He was a cheat and a liar yet he came to trust in God and he was not destroyed.
5. Jacob was a man of prayer. He wrestled with God and prevailed. "I will not let you go unless you bless me," he said.

Jacob's descendants will not be destroyed. May the Lord help us to take home this text! "I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed." May he help us to digest it well and feed upon it, that he is our unchangeable heavenly Father.

Your friends may betray you, your husband may leave you, your minister may be taken away, everything may change, but God does not. He will love you still. Let your station in life change, all you possess be taken from you, let your whole life be shaken and you become weak and frail, yet there is one name that never changes, one place which change cannot touch, one heart that never alters. That heart is God's. That name is love. Great is his faithfulness!