



# M G 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>  
<https://www.facebook.com/GraceBaptistMadisonAL>

*"Preaching the free grace of God which brings a change of lifestyles, masters and destinies."*

**DEAN OLIVE, Pastor**

— May 2015 Issue —

*"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master."*

Matthew 10:24

### NURSERY SCHEDULE

#### May

03 Melanie Myatt and Lori Hewlett  
10 Vicki Johnson and Nellie McFadden  
17 Jenny and Peter Lovassy  
24 Troy and Jessica Moseley  
31 Amber Solan and Wilma Pinch

#### June

07 Amber Solan and Wilma Pinch  
14 Linda Olive and Andrea Page  
21 Jenny and Peter Lovassy  
28 Troy and Jessica Moseley

### CHURCH CLEANING

**May** - Amis's  
**June** - Scarboroughs  
**July** - Dean & Linda Olive

### LAWN CARE

**May** - Troy Moseley  
**June** - Peter Lovassy  
**July** - Pages

### FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF MAY 1, 2015

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 50,237.00
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 53,476.18
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 700.00
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 55,220.17
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 3,105.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 3,180.00
Benevolence (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 61,505.17
April Love offerings	\$ 150.00
April General Fund offerings	\$ 12,135.05
April Designated Missions	\$ 410.00
Building Fund balance	\$149,524.47
Missions Fund balance	\$ 1,569.97
General Fund balance	\$ 56,704.72

## What Mother is to Me

**M** is for the Many things she gave me,

**O** means only that she's growing Old.

**T** is for the Tears she shed to help me,

**H** is for her Heart of purest gold.

**E** is for her Eyes with love's light shining,

**R** means Radiant and Radiant she'll always be.

*Remember your mother on Mother's Day, May 10*

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

#### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

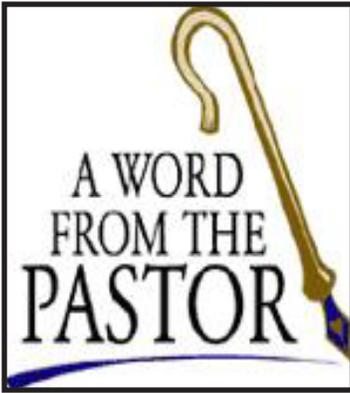
Morning Worship 9:30 AM  
Sunday School 11:00 AM  
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

#### 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 Fear of Death

fear of death.

The fear of death is real. It isn't imaginary. There is even a word that psychologists use for the fear of death – thanatophobia. Death is a terror to us because, as someone said, “Death represents the ultimate unknown, a territory in which we have no experience and no control.” In other words, death causes us to ask, What happens when we die? Is there life beyond the grave? Where do we go when we die?

The fear of death is universal. All people fear death. There is a natural fear of death in the heart of every man because his conscience tells him there is a moral governor to whom we must give an account. Even redeemed men and women have this fear lingering in them, though it ought not be there. And the reason is because our Savior came to release us from the fear of dying.

Christianity has the cure for the fear of death! We have a message that calms the soul in the face of death. The counsel from therapists and psychologists for thanatophobia rings empty but the gospel of Jesus Christ delivers men and women from this fear.

Jesus frees us from this bondage, this fear. He became a man in order to die our death. God's Word declares that Jesus came so “that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery” (Heb 2:14-15). He gave himself as a sacrifice for our sins in order to remove the penalty of spiritual and eternal death. Death has lost its grip on all who are in Christ by faith because we realize that he has taken away the devil's power over death.

But our Lord's death isn't the only truth that delivers us from the fear of death. Jesus not only died, but he also rose again! Jesus says, “I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hell” (Rev 1:18). We who are saved through faith in Jesus Christ have the sure hope of eternal life because he lives!

The reason Jesus took on human flesh was for us and our salvation. It was to destroy, through his death and resurrection, the one who has the power of death and

to deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

The gospel causes the Christian to be calm in the face of death. When Christ died we died with him and when he rose we rose with him. We have no reason to cower in the face of death. As Paul said to the Corinthians, “Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:54). He then exclaimed, “O death, where is your sting?” (55), to which came the reply, “The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (56-57). Take a stinger out of a wasp or a bee, and it can't hurt us. With the stinger taken out of death, we can't be hurt by it.

Jesus has brought life and immortality to light by the gospel (2 Tim. 1:10). Therefore, death has no hold on us. Christians die as others do “but by the pardon of that sin which gave death its sting—the sting is plucked out, and though so dreadful in form, it is harmless in itself” (John Angel James, *The Practical Believer Delineated*).

The sting of death has been removed by the death and resurrection of Christ. Death has no victory for believers because Christ has paid the penalty of sin in his death. “We may still experience some trepidation at the idea of our own death, but we are no longer enslaved to those fears” (G. Guthrie).

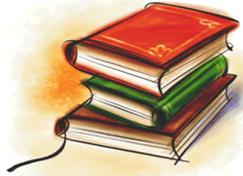
A pastor from America was visiting with Chinese pastor in the days of Mao Tse-tung. He asked the pastor if he were afraid of what might happen to him if it were known that he had met with a foreigner. The old pastor said, “What can they do to me?” He wasn't afraid of death because he had both died and risen with Christ!

The Heidelberg Catechism, one of the great catechisms of the Reformation, written by German Calvinists in 1563, begins with hope and confidence. The very first question is, “What is your only comfort in life and in death?” And the answer supplied by the catechism is:

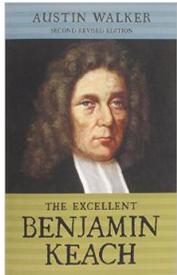
“That I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who with his precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and redeemed me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must work together for my salvation. Wherefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready henceforth to live unto him.”

Death transports us to glory. Why fear that which will usher us into God's presence? Don't let the thought of death chain you with fear. Your bondage is over.

# BOOK REVIEW



**The Excellent Benjamin Keach**, by Austin Walker, Joshua Press, 2015, pp. 496.

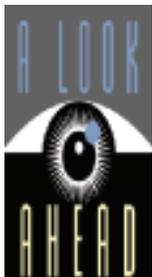


Ministering during turbulent times for Nonconformists, Benjamin Keach endured both persecution for his faith and rich blessing on his ministry. Arriving in London in 1668, Keach soon became pastor of a church in Southwark, on the south bank of the Thames, later known as the Metropolitan Tabernacle (where Charles Spurgeon was eventually to pastor).

His extensive writings—including sermons, poetry, hymns, apologetics and treatises against theological errors—alongside his preaching ministry, made Keach one of the key Particular Baptist leaders of his day. His friends included Hercules Collins, William Kiffin, Hanserd Knollys, Henry Forty and Joseph Stennett.

*The Excellent Benjamin Keach* is a major study of his life and thought and provides insight into the ecclesiastical and political turmoil of seventeenth-century England. Keach's solid character, integrity and Christian graces enabled him to defend scriptural truths while avoiding personal attacks. He is particularly known for his vigorous defence of the singing of hymns in church, the laying on of hands and the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

Keach's preaching was marked by fervency and zeal, for he said, "cold and lifeless preaching, makes cold hearing." He encouraged his hearers to flee to Christ for salvation, assuring them there was sufficient mercy at the cross for the worst of sinners. For believers, Keach encouraged them to love the truth, to get it deep into their affections, so that they could "show themselves bold and courageous in the cause and interest of God, and their souls." This is a book to invigorate your love for God and his Word. It will challenge you to stand boldly with holy men and women of the past, as you seek to live faithfully for Christ in the present day.



**MAY 3** – Communion Service in the afternoon.

**MAY 18-20** – Annual FIRE Conference at Faith Bible Church, Sharpsburg, GA.

**JUNE 12-14** – Bible Conference with David Ellis. Barbara Ellis will be coming with David and speaking to the ladies on Saturday morning, June 13.

**JULY 19** – Baruch Maoz, retired Reformed Baptist pastor from Tel Aviv, Israel, will be preaching in the morning worship hour and taking the SS class to tell us about what it is like to be a Christian in Israel.

**NOVEMBER 22** – Reagan King, son of Barry King, will be preaching in the morning service and sharing in SS about his ministry in London as a church planter and pastor.

# Spurgeon's Catechism with Scripture Proofs



**Question 11:** What are God's works of providence?

**Answer:** God's works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful [acts], preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions.

**Scriptural Proof:** Psalm 145:17; Isaiah 28:29; Hebrews 1:3, Psalm 103:19; Matthew 10:29 [also Nehemiah 9:6; Colossian 1:17]

**Commentary:** Is there such a thing as luck in a world ruled by the providence of God? No. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the decision is wholly from the Lord" (Proverbs 16:33). The world isn't governed by luck or chance. It is governed by God. He exercises absolute Lordship over His creation.

By providence, God controls the universe (Ps. 103:19); the physical world (Matt. 5:45); the affairs of nations (Ps. 66:7); human birth and destiny (Gal. 1:15); human successes and failures (Luke 1:52); and the protection of His people (Ps. 4:8).

Many of God's acts of providence may not look "holy and wise" on the surface (things like storms, earthquakes, and floods that kill thousands of people). But God has his secret purposes (Deut. 29:29). We are never great enough to see them. We can be assured, however, that the Judge of all the earth always does right (Genesis 18:25).

"God exercises purposeful management and control over everything everywhere all the time, and nothing happens without His being involved. 'The Lord reigns.' We should believe, even when we cannot as yet see, that all events will eventually appear to us, from one standpoint or another, as matter for praise. God knows what He is doing, and is in the process of achieving something wise and good every moment. The glory of God through praise for His manifested praiseworthiness is God's goal throughout, and is guaranteed to be the final result" (J.I. Packer).



## Richard Sibbes Puritan Quotes

### CHRIST IS THE VERY JOY OF HEAVEN

"Heaven is not heaven without Christ. It is better to be in any place with Christ than to be in heaven itself without him. All delicacies without Christ are but as a funeral banquet. Where the master of the feast is away, there is nothing but solemnness. What is all without Christ? I say the joys of heaven are not the joys of heaven without Christ; he is the very heaven of heaven."

# Blessed Are the Pure in Heart...

Kevin Tucker

We come now in our series to the sixth Beatitude where our Lord says, *'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'* (Matthew 5:8) Here, Jesus disavows those who promote an outward, superficial and legalistic notion of holiness. Once again He exposes the world's error for what constitutes true happiness.

The first three Beatitudes are concerned with our great need. We are poor in spirit, mourning because of our sinfulness and meek as the result of a true understanding of the nature of self and its great pride. Having realized our need, we hunger and thirst, and then God comes with His wondrous provision of our satisfaction. *'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.'* (Matthew 5:6) In the remaining Beatitudes, Jesus describes the results and blessings of that satisfaction. The citizens of His kingdom are merciful, pure in heart and peacemakers.

*'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'* John MacArthur says Jesus' incredible statement is among the greatest utterances in the entire Bible. To see God is the great purpose and end of the Gospel. We are on high and hallowed ground here. In reverence, we must ask the Holy Spirit to teach us.

One way to understand what our Lord meant here is to look at the key words individually. Recall that *blessed* translates the Greek word 'makarios.' It is an inward contentedness unaffected by outward circumstances. It is the happiness God desires for His children.

*Heart* is used metaphorically in Scripture to represent the inner person, the center of our personality. It is the control center of our mind and will. Accordingly, it governs our motives, attitudes, feelings, and emotions.

*Pure* translates 'katharos.' This Greek word was often used of metals that had been refined until all the impurities were removed, leaving only pure metal. In that sense, purity means unalloyed or unmixed. Applied to the heart, it has the idea of pure motive—of single-mindedness, undivided devotion, and true righteousness.

So, in utter contrast to a fallen world's view, Jesus teaches that it is in the heart of man, at the core of his very being, that God requires purity. We see this great truth throughout Scripture. An example from David's life illustrates the point. When he had confessed his sin with Bathsheba, David said to God, *'Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.'* Then he prayed, *'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.'* (Psalm 51:6, 10)

But we also know from Scripture that there is nothing pure in the heart of the natural man. Jeremiah wrote, *'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?'* (Jeremiah 17:9) In teaching his disciples Jesus said, *'For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.'* (Matthew 15:19)

A person's heart can only be made pure by the shed blood of the One who is perfectly and eternally pure. The moment we trust in Jesus Christ as Savior, God imputes to us Christ's own purity, Christ's own righteousness. Every believer has been given a new heart and a new, holy nature. Paul says of the one who *'...believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.'* (Romans 4:5)

Then, in the process of sanctification, the Holy Spirit aids the believer to mortify his flesh and progressively purify his heart as he lives for God. The true believer has a sincere desire and resolve to purify himself so that he might please God in all things. Paul says, *'... beloved, let us cleanse*

*ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.'* (2 Corinthians 7:1)

We must also understand that purity of heart does not mean sinless perfection in this life. At best, our gold will be impure, mixed with iron and clay. We will suffer temptation and fall into sin. But, *'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'* (1 John 1:9)

By His grace God has provided the means for our continuing purification. First, as noted above, we have the Holy Spirit. By Him we have access to our Lord's enabling guidance and power. Second, God has given us His perfect Word. Here we find everything necessary for faith and life. Thirdly, He has given us prayer. Prayer lifts us up into God's presence for worship and confession and communion.

Jesus' promises the *'pure in heart'* that *'they shall see God.'* His great promise has both a present and future fulfillment. We see God in this life by faith. We can see God only because He has brought us near to himself by the blood of Christ. Only the pure in heart can see God's perfections. But in this life, as our heart is not completely pure, neither is our view of God perfect. Paul says, *'For now we see in a mirror dimly... Now I know in part...'* (1 Corinthians 13:12)

Jesus' promise is ultimately fulfilled in our glorification. Not till then, with the cloud of our sin completely removed, we will see God clearly, *'...face to face.'* Not till then we *'shall know fully.'* (1 Corinthians 13:12) Not till then will we have full understanding of the words of the Psalmist when he wrote, *'As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.'* (Psalm 17:15)