



# 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**

— August 2016 Issue —

*"You have dealt well with your servant, O LORD, according to your word."*  
Psalm 119:65



### NURSERY SCHEDULE

#### August 2016

07 Melanie Myatt and Andrea Page  
14 Jenny and Peter Lovassey  
21 Amber Solan and Vicki Johnson  
28 Nellie McFadden and Lori Hewlett

#### September 2016

04 Nellie and Melanie  
11 Jenny and Peter Lovassey  
18 Amber Solan and Vicki Johnson  
25 Troy and Jessica Moseley

### CHURCH CLEANING

**August** - Amises  
**September** - Volunteer Needed

### LAWN CARE

**August** - T. Moseley  
**September** - Bob Marsh

### FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF AUGUST 1, 2016

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$107,972.10
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$102,898.00
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 1,096.23
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$105,371.00
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 5,308.69
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 980.00
Benevolence (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$111,659.69
July Love offerings	\$ 40.00
July General Fund offerings	\$ 14,292.07
July Designated Missions	\$ 400.00
Building Fund balance	\$182,742.83
Missions Fund balance	\$ 10,397.79
Adoption Fund balance	\$ 2,735.00
General Fund balance	\$ 51,570.82

## FALL BIBLE CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 2



### Jimmy Millikin

Professor Emeritus of  
Theology at Mid-America  
Baptist Theological  
Seminary

- Friday – 7:00 PM
- Saturday – 9:30 and 10:45 AM
- Sunday – 9:30 AM and 12:30 PM

Dr. Millikin will be preaching on Friday evening and twice on Sunday. The teaching session on Saturday morning is on the topic, "Testing Tongues by the Word: 1 Corinthians 12-14."

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

#### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

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

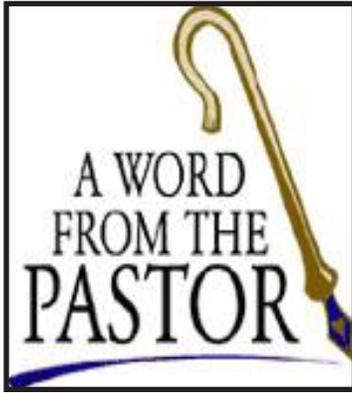
#### WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting  
7:00 PM

#### FIRST SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Worship 9:30 AM  
Meal at the Church 11:00 AM  
Afternoon Service 12:30 PM

*No Sunday School  
or Evening Service*



## Good and Perfect Gifts from Above

The book of James informs us that God is the source of all good gifts. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change”

(1:17). We make a serious mistake if we think that good gifts come from someone other than God.

What comes from God is not evil; it is good. It is good because God is good! All his works reflect his character and the fact that “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above,” is a reflection on his goodness. Calvin said, “To do good is what properly belongs to him, and according to his nature; and from him all good things come to us.”

The classical exposition of God’s goodness is Psalm 107. We are exhorted to “give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.” Four examples are then given where someone in personal need cried out to the Lord and found help. Each episode ends with the refrain, “Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (vv. 8, 15, 21, 31). Packer says, “The whole psalm is a majestic panorama of the operations of divine goodness, transforming human lives.”

The character of God is such that it is the standard that should determine all human notions of goodness. Jesus told the rich young ruler, “there is none good but one, that is, God.” Whatever goodness anyone else possesses is derived from him. Because God is good as to his Person, then all that he does is good. What he does flows out of who he is. He is altogether good and he is consistently good. R. C. Sproul says, “God doesn’t know how to be anything but good... Just as a corrupt tree cannot bear incorrupt fruit, neither can an incorrupt God produce corrupt fruit.”

Because God is good he gives good things to us. What we receive from him is not deserved, earned, or purchased. He gives to us freely and graciously. The good God is a gracious God.

James says that God’s gifts to us are good and perfect. Good is sometimes hard to define but generally in the Bible it means either pleasant or beneficent. Both are true of God’s gifts. They are pleasant and agreeable to us and they are beneficial and useful.

Perfect means without flaw. Since God himself is perfect, what he gives to us is the same. Imperfection stamps everything that we do but not so with God.

“As for God, his way is perfect...” (Ps 18:30). “The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul” (Ps 19:7).

These good and perfect gifts come to us “from above... from the Father of lights.” From above means from heaven. This is another way of saying that they come from God. When the Bible says there is joy in heaven when one sinner repents (Luke 15:7), it means that there is joy in the heart of God. The blessings that God bestows upon us originate and are prepared in heaven.

“From the Father of lights” means that God is the Giver of light. This was an ancient Jewish title for God, referring to him as Creator, as the great Giver of light, in the form of the sun, moon, and stars. The expression points to the creation of the lights in the heavens but it also signifies that God is the source of spiritual light as well. He is the source of all light, physical and spiritual.

And these gifts come down to us. James doesn’t say “falling down” but “coming down.” Manton says, “This shows that we do not have blessings by chance, but through the normal channels.” The verb is a present participle and that describes an unending succession of good gifts.

Even when we experience difficulties and trials, God is good. “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom 8:28, NAS). God is good all the time!

George Müller of Bristol knew that God was good all the time. He was a man of great faith who built orphanages and cared for the needy in 19th Century England. When his wife died of rheumatic fever in 1870, he preached her funeral. His text was Psalm 119:68, “Thou art good, and doest good...” He had three points: 1) The Lord was good, and did good, in giving her to me, 2) the Lord was good, and did good, in so long leaving her to me, and 3) the Lord was good, and did good, in taking her from me.

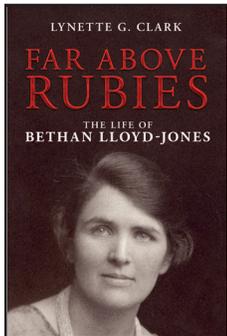
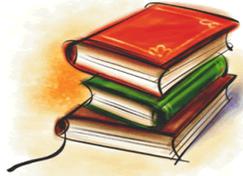
George Müller was convinced that when things go wrong in our lives, and when our faith is put to the test, God has not changed his attitude towards us. He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

God’s greatest gift is his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave him to us and for us that we might be reconciled to him. And being the eternal Son, Jesus embodied giving himself. He loved us and gave himself for us. He shed his blood that we might be redeemed!

## BOOK REVIEW

### Far Above Rubies: The Life of Bethan Lloyd-Jones,

by Lynette G. Clark, Christian Focus, 2015, pp. 256.



The galleries of the great heroes of faith contain many inspirational women. Although not always placed in as prominent a position for all to see, their service has been invaluable in God's kingdom. The wife of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones was such a woman. Bethan Lloyd-Jones' portrait has long been hidden in a part of the gallery known only to her family and certain close friends. Lynette G. Clark brings this portrait into view, capturing the wit, wisdom and faith of a godly wife, mother and friend.

"They say that behind every great man there is a great woman and this book on Bethan Lloyd-Jones would tend to support that thesis. This is a relatively small book but it is written in an expansive way and really brings out the humanity of the Lloyd-Jones marriage, which was no doubt a key element in the blessing that the Doctor was to so many..."

Didactic in style, the book is very thorough. It necessarily leans on a lot of material already in the public domain but there is a lot of fresh stuff here that will fascinate and provoke to thought. Some of the anecdotes are quite something! The temptation to hagiography is there from time to time but is resisted and what we get is a rounded picture of a godly woman not without her frailties...

Chapter 10 is one of the most interesting chapters, looking at the couple's differing and sometimes changing views on the Sabbath and infant baptism; at Bethan's devotional life and giving and at her wisdom. A real treat" (Gary Brady).



**AUGUST 21** – Doug Page will be preaching in the evening service (dv).

**SEPTEMBER 4** – We will be honoring one of our own during our first Sunday meal. Joe Scarborough is a policeman with the city of Huntsville and we are going to show our appreciation to him for the work he does and commend him to the Lord in a season of prayer.

Communion will be observed in the afternoon service at 12:30.

**SEPTEMBER 11** – The Adult Sunday School class begins a series of lessons entitled, Behold Your God: Rethinking God Biblically. The course will last for 22 weeks. A work book will be distributed and classes will alternate from instruction one week followed by a DVD presentation the next week, and so on.

**SEPTEMBER 30—OCTOBER 3** – Dr. Jimmy Millikin will be preaching our Fall Bible Conference. He will preach on Friday evening and twice on Sunday and teach two sessions on Saturday morning on 1 Corinthians 12-14.

## Spurgeon's Catechism with Scripture Proofs



**Question 25:** Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

**Answer:** Christ's humiliation consisted in His being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

**Scriptural Proof:** Luke 2:7; Galatians 4:4; Isaiah 53:3; Matthew 27:46; Philippians 2:8; Matthew 12:40

**Commentary:** The Son of God, being of the same substance as the Father, humbled himself by becoming man. This was voluntary. He was equal with God the Father but took on himself lowly human nature.

C.S. Lewis says this was like a shepherd becoming a lamb in order to sacrifice himself to save the rest of the flock. What humility if a man could become a lamb. But the Son of God becoming a man was a greater act of humility for there is significant degree of difference between God and man than there is between man and beast.

Wherein did his humiliation consist? It began with his birth. He wasn't born in a high position but in a low position; he was not born in a palace but in a stable. He then lived under the law, keeping every precept without sinning. He also endured many miseries in life and then he died the accursed death of the cross, having God's wrath poured out on him. His humiliation also consisted in being buried and remaining in the grave under the power of death for a time.

The Son of God entered into this state of humiliation for you and for me. He laid aside the prerogatives of deity to become a man for our sake. In order to redeem man, the Son of God became man. He was not ashamed to call us brethren.



## Thomas Manton Puritan Quotes

### HE PURCHASED

"Christ is first the ransom for, then the fountain of life to, our souls; and so the honor of our entire and whole recovery is to be ascribed only to our Redeemer, who, as he satisfied the justice of God for our sins, so he also purchased a power to change our hearts; and he purchased this power into his own hands, not into another's, and therefore doth accomplish it by his Spirit."

## Keeping the Faith in a Faithless Age: The Church as a Moral Minority

*Albert Mohler*

“The greatest question of our time,” offered historian Will Durant, “is not communism versus individualism, not Europe versus America, not even East versus the West; it is whether men can live without God.” That question, it now appears, will be answered in our own time.

For centuries the Christian church has been the center of Western civilization. Western culture, government, law, and society were based on explicitly Christian principles. Concern for the individual, a commitment to human rights, and respect for the good, the beautiful, and the true—all of these grew out of Christian convictions and the influence of revealed religion.

All of these, we now hasten to add, are under serious attack. The very notion of right and wrong is now discarded by large sectors of American society. Where it is not discarded, it is often debased. Taking a page out of Alice in Wonderland, modern secularists simply declare wrong, right, and right, wrong.

Quaker theologian D. Elton Trueblood once described America as a “cut flower civilization.” Our culture, he argued, is cut off from its Christian roots like a flower cut at the stem. Though the flower will hold its beauty for a time, it is destined to wither and die.

When Trueblood spoke those words over two decades ago, the flower could still be seen with some color and signs of life. But the blossom has long since lost its vitality, and it is time for the fallen petals to be acknowledged.

“When God is dead,” argued Dostoyevsky, “anything is permissible.” The permissiveness of modern American society can scarcely be exaggerated, but it can be traced directly to the fact that modern men and women act as if God does not exist, or is powerless to accomplish His will.

The Christian church now finds itself facing a new reality. The church no longer represents the central core of Western culture. Though outposts of Christian influence remain, these are exceptions rather than the rule. For the most part, the church has been displaced by the reign of secularism.

The daily newspaper brings a constant barrage which confirms the current state of American society. This age is not the first to see unspeakable horror and evil, but it is the first to deny any consistent basis for identifying evil as evil or good as good.

The faithful church is, for the most part, tolerated as one voice in the public arena, but only so long as it does not attempt to exercise any credible influence on the state of affairs. Should the church speak forcefully to an issue of public debate, it is castigated as coercive and out of date.

How does the church think of itself as it faces this new reality? During the 1980s, it was possible to think in ambitious terms about the church as the vanguard of a moral majority. That confidence has been seriously shaken by the events of the past decade.

Little progress toward the re-establishment of a moral center of gravity can be detected. Instead, the culture has moved swiftly toward a more complete abandonment of all moral conviction.

The confessing church must now be willing to be a moral minority, if that is what the times demands. The church has no right to follow the secular siren call toward moral revisionism and politically correct positions on the issues of the day.

Whatever the issue, the church must speak as the church—that is, as the community of fallen but redeemed, who stand under divine authority. The concern of the church is not to know its own mind, but to know and follow the mind of God. The church’s convictions must not emerge from the ashes of our own fallen wisdom, but from the authoritative Word of God which reveals the wisdom of God and His commands.

The church is to be a community of character. The character produced by a people who stand under the authority of the Sovereign God of the universe will inevitably be at odds with a culture of unbelief.

The American church is faced with a new situation. This new context is as current as the morning newspaper and as old as those first Christian churches in Corinth, Ephesus, Laodicea, and Rome. Eternity will record whether or not the American church is willing to submit only to the authority of God; or whether the church will forfeit its calling in order to serve lesser gods.

The church must awaken to its status as a moral minority and hold fast to the gospel we have been entrusted to preach. In so doing, the deep springs of permanent truth will reveal the church to be a life-giving oasis amidst American’s moral desert.