



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

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

**DEAN OLIVE, Pastor**

— March 2016 Issue —

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



### NURSERY SCHEDULE

#### March 2016

06 Troy and Jessica Moseley  
13 Jenny and Peter Lovassy  
20 Amber Solan and Vicki Johnson  
27 Nellie McFadden and Lori Hewlett

#### April 2016

03 Melanie Myatt and Andrea Page  
10 Linda Olive and Lori Hewlett  
17 Amber Solan and Vicki Johnson  
24 Troy and Jessica Moseley

### CHURCH CLEANING

**March** - Pages  
**April** - Dean & Linda Olive  
**May** - Vicki J. & Amber S.

### FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF MARCH 1, 2016

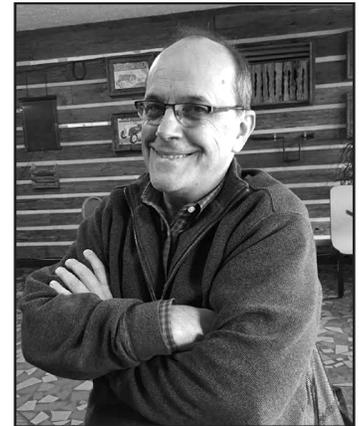
Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 30,849.16
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 23,726.92
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 0.00
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 29,876.70
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 1,215.44
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 200.00
Benevolence (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 31,392.14
February Love offerings	\$ 100.00
February General Fund offerings	\$ 13,391.70
February Designated Missions	\$ 700.00
Building Fund balance	\$172,602.73
Missions Fund balance	\$ 11,136.48
Adoption Fund balance	\$ 2,055.00
General Fund balance	\$ 57,070.64

## Easter Sunday Services March 27

Speaker – **Tom Castor**  
Director of Clear and Simple Media

- 9:30 AM Worship Service
- No Sunday School
- 6:00 PM Worship Service

Clear and Simple Media is a ministry that identifies capable writers and builds their capacity to communicate clearly using the latest research in writing for the global English reader. Their goal is to build a growing catalogue of materials that are **linguistically simple, theologically clear** and **biblically faithful**.



We are thankful to be a supporting church for Tom's mission ministry.

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

#### NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

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

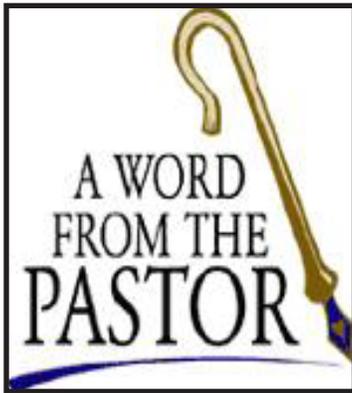
#### WEDNESDAY EVENING

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*



## Prone to Wander

One of our well-known hymns has this line: “Prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love.”

Do you ever sense the tendency to wander away from the Lord, to leave the God you love?

Most Christians do at one time or another. They may not feel that way all the time or even frequently, but occasionally most Christians are aware of a sinful inclination to throw in the towel and abandon the faith.

Psalm 107 presents a category of people who were in distress, called wanderers. “Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to a city to dwell in” (4). The word wander indicates going astray, walking in the way of deception and ruin. In the Psalm, the wanderers cried out to the Lord and he delivered them. How did he deliver them? “He led them by a straight way” (7), i.e. he put them on the right path! And they ended up praising him and thanking him for his steadfast love (8).

Paul spoke to Timothy about men wandering from the Lord and from the truth. He said, “Certain persons... have **wandered away** into vain discussion” (1 Tim. 1:6). They had lost their bearing; they had missed the primary aim of Christian ministry and fell in love with vain things. Others “**wandered away from the faith**” because they loved money (1 Tim. 6:10). Love for things of the world will cause us to turn aside!

Don’t think that wandering away from the Lord could never happen to you! You are prone to wander! I am prone to wander! If we recognize this and if we can spot the things that feed this tendency, then we can reverse the inclination and stay on the right path. Where does this “feeling” to wander come from?

The “feeling” is often the work of Satan. He messes with our mind and causes us to doubt God’s love, question God’s word, and be unsure about our saving experience. This results in a proneness to give up.

The “feeling” sometimes stems from the temptation of the world. The paint and glitter of the world beckons us. It radiates and shines; it is attractive. What happens is that the consequences of worldliness are carefully hidden from us and the life-style without God that lets us do our own thing becomes very appealing.

The “feeling” is sometimes due to the weakness of the flesh. Our nature is depraved so all our tendencies

are about pleasing ourselves. It becomes more about what we want than what God wants. The flesh cries out to be pampered. Self-denial is then thought to be too demanding. I deserve to be pampered! I want to do my own thing!

But it can also happen by a series of substitutions that we make in our mind (suggested by Paul Inns, Words of Grace Blog).

We wander when we substitute rationalization for repentance. That’s what Simon did in Acts 8:17-24. He didn’t have a change of heart. He lacked true repentance and in its place was a rationalizing mindset.

We wander when we substitute our desires for God’s desires. But our desires are always mixed with sin, so we must rightly distinguish between our sinful desires and God’s righteous desires. James addresses this when he says, “your passions are at war within you.” He goes on to talk of coveting but not obtaining and desiring but not having (James 4:1-2). The Bible tells us, “Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart” (Ps 37:4). The heart must be changed. If it is, then we will delight in the Lord and his desires will be our desires.

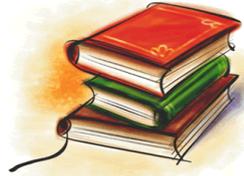
We wander when we substitute superficial obedience for substantive life change. This is how the Pharisees were. They maintained a form of outward religion, a strict form, but they substituted performance of religious duties in the place of real life and godliness. Note what Jesus said to them: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others” (Mat 23:23).

What does God desire? “For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings” (Hosea 6:6). We must pay attention to all the Scriptures. Outward conformity alone is insufficient. Matters of the heart are most vital.

Sadly, it is possible to wander away from the Lord even when we are faithful in attending church and regular in reading the Scriptures. Many people who sit in pews on Sunday morning have wandered from the Lord!

To keep from wandering, we must have Christ at the center of our lives. Are you prone to wander? Then lay aside the deeds of the old man and lovingly embrace Christ as the great motive of your life, not in order to impress yourself or others, but that you might be pleasing to him.

# BOOK REVIEW



**Family Worship,**  
by Donald S. Whitney,  
Crossway, pp. 64



Many Christian families have never experienced the joy and spiritual benefits of family worship—a practice rooted in history but largely neglected in our day. In this down-to-earth book, Donald Whitney offers parents a practical guide for leading their families in daily worship, walking readers through three crucial elements: reading Scripture, praying together, and singing songs in praise of God's

name. He then responds to common “What if?” scenarios, such as “What if the father is not a Christian?” and “What if the children are very young?” Looking to the Bible and church history, this guidebook promises to help parents establish a pattern of daily, God-honoring, spiritually uplifting worship in their homes.

“We have removed the worship of almighty God from the home and we are reaping the whirlwind. Family Worship is a biblical, accessible, and indispensable call to arms. It is perfect for the scores of Christian parents who want to impact their families, but have no idea where to start. Praise God for men like Don Whitney who love the Lord and the church enough to speak such truth without apology” (Voddie T. Baucham, Jr.).

“Family Worship by Don Whitney is priceless. Starting with the Bible, Whitney makes a compelling case for family worship and illustrates it richly with historical examples. He even answers the frequently asked questions and responds to common objections. This book is persuasive, practical, and most of all, doable” (Tedd Tripp, President, Shepherding the Heart Ministries).



**MARCH 6** – We will observe the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper in the afternoon service. Prepare your hearts as we come together to remember our Lord’s death.

**MARCH 11** – Ladies of Grace meeting at the church at 7:00 PM.

**MARCH 13** – Daylight Saving Time begins. Set your clock forward one hour before you retire for bed on Saturday night.

**MARCH 27** – Tom Castor will be the preacher for Easter Sunday. He will be preaching in both services, 9:30 AM and 6:00 PM.

**MAY 6-8** – Creation Conference with Dr. Andy McIntosh.

## Spurgeon’s Catechism with Scripture Proofs



**Question 21:** How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

**Answer:** Christ, the Son of God, became man by taking to Himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

**Scriptural Proof:** Hebrews 2:14-15; Matthew 26:38; Luke 1:31, 35; Hebrews 7:26 [Luke 2:52; John 1:14; Colossians 2:9]

**Commentary:** That Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man, is the teaching of Scripture. He who was God from eternity, one with the Father, became a man. But how did this happen? He was born of Mary. Mary, being a virgin, brought forth the Son of God, who was supernaturally conceived in her womb by the Holy Spirit. He was not conceived by ordinary generation.

That doesn’t mean that Mary is the mother of God. She is the mother of Jesus, who is God. Jesus Christ is both God and Man. He is one Person with two natures. According to his human nature, Jesus was born of Mary. The Son she brought forth was the God-Man. The Son of God became the Son of Man. His body was truly human. He took to himself the same kind of body that we have, yet without sin. Man didn’t become God but God became Man.

Being a real man, Jesus had “a reasonable soul.” Like us, he had a body and a soul. Having a body he was hungry, thirsty, grew tired, and felt pain. Having a soul he knew sorrow, grief, joy, and love. Jesus also had a human will distinct from his divine will. The Man Christ Jesus increased in wisdom. He had all the faculties that we have.

How important is the virgin birth of Christ? It is vitally important. Without it, Jesus could not be a true human. Apart from the virgin birth, Jesus could not be sinless. There is no gospel apart from the virgin birth. It was required that the Savior of sinners be a man but he must also be without sin. We are ever thankful that Jesus willingly became a man in order to save us from our sins.



## Thomas Manton Puritan Quotes

### ROOT CORRUPTION

“The Scripture representeth man as blind in his mind, perverse in his will, rebellious in his affections, having no sound part left in him to mend the rest; therefore we must be changed.”

## The Obedience of Faith

*Ian Hamilton*

Paul's Letter to the Romans is a pastoral tour de force. It is of course richly theological. Nowhere does Paul more deeply and beautifully open up to us the gospel of God's saving grace in Christ. But Paul's theology of grace is not an abstract exposition of doctrine. He is concerned to explain to the church in Rome the gospel he preached and to establish them in that gospel. The apostle's doctrine always has a pastoral edge to it. True theology is for living (Martin Bucer), it is never a brute chunk of fact.

That said, it is striking that Paul bookends this Letter to the Romans with an identical phrase, 'the obedience of faith' (1:5 and 16:26). He begins his Letter telling the church in Rome that he had 'received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his (Jesus') name among all the nations'; and he ends his letter telling them that God's revelation in the 'prophetic writings' was 'to bring about the obedience of faith' among all nations.

What is 'the obedience of faith'? Faith, self-renouncing trust in Jesus Christ, is obedience to the gospel command to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. But it is doubtful if this is quite what 'the obedience of faith' means. More likely, this phrase is telling us that faith in Jesus Christ initiates a believer into a life of obedience to Jesus Christ. Where there is no heart obedience to Christ, there can be no saving faith in

Christ. This should be obvious to all of us. Faith is not mere notional assent to biblical propositions. Faith, what the Bible means by faith, takes you into Christ, brings you into living personal union and communion with Christ.

But Jesus Christ is not held out to us in the gospel only as a Saviour from sin. He is set forth as Prophet and King as well as Priest. As Priest, he made atonement for our sin and now intercedes at God's right hand to bless, defend and protect us. As Prophet, he stands before us as the heavenly Father's last and best word. As King, he rules over us as our sovereign. He has bought us with his own blood and we are not our own (1 Cor. 6:19-20). The three-fold offices of Christ impress on us the nature of the salvation that is ours through faith alone in God's Son. He has saved us to be his treasured possession (Exod. 19:5; 1 Pet. 2:9). He has saved us to make us his faithful, loving, obedient servants. We are not our own. We have been saved to glorify God in our bodies.

There is another aspect or dimension to 'the obedience of faith'. The Christian's obedience of Christ is to be a believing obedience. All we do we are to do in faith. This is what distinguishes evangelical obedience from legal obedience. Legal obedience is fuelled by a desire to earn merit with God. It is born of fear not love. It is duteous without being truly dutiful. In contrast, evangelical obedience is fuelled by love and thankfulness. It is prompted by a desire to please the Saviour. It sees obedience to God's commandments not as a duteous chore, but as a true delight (Psa. 119:24, 35, 47, 70, 97; John

14:15). Love truly does make obedience sweet.

The obedience of faith: How does your life and my life measure up? Is our faith a truly biblical and saving faith, that is, a faith that loves and pursues obedience? Is our obedience to Christ fuelled with thankfulness and love? Is our obedience partial and selective? Or is our obedience 'all round?' Do we grieve over our failures in obedience, above all because our failures grieve our beloved Saviour who died that we might live?

It was common in some church circles in years past to say that Jesus could be your Savior but not your Lord. That first you receive him as Savior and then, at some later time, receive him as Lord. This thinking led to the astonishing notion that there could be such a thing as a Christian who lived in disobedience to Christ. It is true that all Christians sin and sometimes very badly. But if we say that we know Christ but do not keep his commandments, we are liars and the truth is not in us, so said the Apostle John (1 John 2:4). One of the 'birthmarks' of a Christian is a heartfelt sorrow and grief over disobedience and a daily resolve, dependent on the Lord, to live more obediently to his commandments.

The Psalmist wrote, 'O how I love your law.' We who live this side of Calvary have even greater cause to say, 'O how I love your law.' Do we?