



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

— April 2017 Issue —

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



April NURSERY SCHEDULE

02 Jenny and Peter Lovassy
09 Vicki Johnson and Amber Solan
16 Lori Hewlett and Melanie Myatt
23 Troy and Jessica Moseley
30 Doug and Andrea Page

May

07 Linda Olive and Jan Furdson
14 Nellie McFadden and Amber Solan
21 Melanie Myatt and Vicki Johnson
28 Lori Hewlett and Andrea Page

CHURCH CLEANING

April - Scarborough and Marsh
May - Volunteer Needed

LAWN CARE

April - Volunteer Needed
May - Jon Amis

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF APRIL 1, 2017

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 46,991.75
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 39,956.14
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 5,210.00
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 46,265.24
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 3,085.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 4,000.00
Benevolence (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 53,360.24
Mar. Love offerings	\$ 3,840.00
Mar. General Fund offerings	\$ 17,257.99
Mar. Designated Missions	\$ 1,685.00
Building Fund balance	\$196,073.97
Missions Fund balance	\$ 16,620.21
Adoption Fund balance	\$ 3,155.00
General Fund balance	\$ 54,706.00

ONE DAY SPIRITUAL GROWTH CONFERENCE



**Speaker:
Donny Martin**

April 23, 2017

Schedule of Services:

- 9:30 AM
- 11:00 AM
- 6:00 PM

Donny has been pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Hartsville, TN, since 1995. He served as a missionary to Spain for several years. He is a certified by the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors. Donny and his wife Jane have seven children.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

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

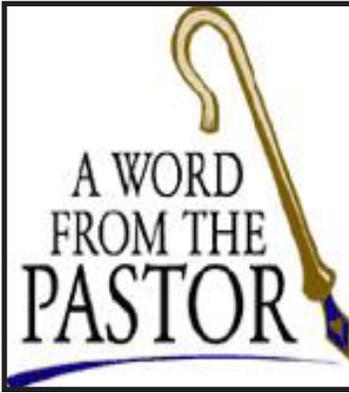
WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting	7:00 PM
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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*



My Help Comes from the Lord

Psalm 121 is the second Song of Ascent. It is part of a collection of Psalms that were sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem to worship. As these Psalms were helpful for

Jewish pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for special days of worship, so they are helpful for Christian pilgrims on their way to the heavenly Jerusalem, our eternal home.

This Psalm begins with a personal testimony. The Psalmist says, “I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth” (vv. 1-2, ESV). The KJV reads much differently, not so much in the wording but in the punctuation. “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.”

The punctuation makes a big difference! Is the Psalmist lifting up his eyes to the hills from whence his help comes? Or is he lifting up his eyes to the hills and asking where his help comes from? It is better to follow the reading of the ESV. The Psalmist is not stating that his help comes from the hills but from the Lord.

The hill of Mt. Zion was where God dwelt and it was from the Lord who dwelt in the temple there who was his help. As a worshipper came in sight of the mountains that surrounded Jerusalem, he obviously lifted up his eyes to the hills or to the mountains. But this caused him to ask the question: “From where does my help come?” That is a question everyone of us should ask! We all are in need of help but where does our help come from?

If you are a child, you might say, “My help comes from my parents.” And you would be right. But not right entirely or exclusively. They too are dependent on someone else for aid and they couldn’t help you were it not for the help they receive from outside themselves.

If you are elderly, you might say, “My help comes from my retirement account and my Social Security.” And you would be right in a sense. You have saved and invested your money and now receive the

benefits. But what happens if that runs out? What will happen when the market crashes? Then where will you receive help?

We might answer this important question in many ways, for we receive help from many sources, but we must look past temporal arrangements to the ultimate source of our help. And that is what the Psalmist did. He answered his question by saying, “My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.” His security was in the Lord! His help came from the Lord!

Is that true of us or are we looking elsewhere for help? It is a common fault for human beings to look everywhere but to God for help! But we need to look to the Lord! He can help us. He can help us because he “made heaven and earth.” Is there anything that the Sovereign Creator of the universe cannot help us with? Here is real help! Here is sure help! “The sovereign power that creates the universe in all its complexity is the power that now offers support in the difficulties in which we find ourselves” (Derek Thomas).

It is sin to trust in anyone or anything other than God. Alister McGrath says, “Sin moves us away from God, and tempts us to place other things in his place. Created things thus come to be substituted for God. And they do not satisfy.”

Let’s make the words of the Psalmist our words. Let’s make it personal. Say with him, “**My** help is in the LORD.” I am not responsible for what others might do, but as for me, I will serve the Lord and I will look to the Lord for help!

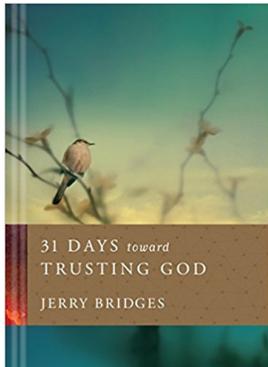
By the way, it is right for us to say this corporately as well. We find this same declaration in Psalm 124:8, but there it is plural. “**Our** help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” This verse was always used by John Calvin as a call to worship. How appropriate this text is when the assembled people of God are called to worship!

Let’s be emphatic as was the Psalmist. While others put their trust in anything and anyone, let’s put our trust in the Lord. God is the only reliable helper and he will help us in our time of need. Do you need a helper? Then look to the LORD who made heaven and earth. Look to the One who promises to keep his people at all times, in every circumstance, until the very end.

BOOK REVIEW



31 Days Toward Trusting God, by Jerry Bridges, NavPress, 2017, pp. 144.



It's easy to trust God when everything is going well. But when adversity strikes—a school shooting, a cancer diagnosis, a financial setback—do you wonder if God cares or if He's even there at all?

In this 31-day devotional, author Jerry Bridges tackles the doctrine of God's sovereignty.

These daily readings set the biblical foundation for the essential goodness of His character. In a clear and warm manner, Bridges explains how you can and should choose to trust God no matter what happens in life.

This book is essentially a condensed version of Bridge's other book, *Trusting God: Even When Life Hurts*, where he says, "Trust is not a passive state of mind. It is a vigorous act of the soul by which we choose to lay hold on the promises of God and cling to them despite the adversity that at times seeks to overwhelm us."

Jerry Bridges is one of the most widely recognized and trusted Christian writers today. His first book, *The Pursuit of Holiness*, is a modern classic with sales over one million copies. He is also the author of *I Exalt You, O God*, *The Practice of Godliness*, *Transforming Grace*, *The Discipline of Grace*, and *The Joy of Fearing God*.



APRIL 23 – We are having a One-Day Spiritual Growth Conference with Donny Martin. Donny is pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Hartsville, Tennessee, a church, which like ours, is a member of the Fellowship of Independent Reformed Evangelicals.

MAY 7 – We will observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper after our Fellowship Meal.

MAY 15-17 – The annual FIRE conference will be held in Sugar Creek, Ohio this year. It is sponsored by the Cornerstone Bible Fellowship of North Ridgeville, Ohio. Information about the conference can be obtained at www.firefellowship.org/2017.

Spurgeon's Catechism with Scripture Proofs



Question 32: What is justification?

Answer: Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

Scriptural Proof: Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:19; 8:1; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9.

Commentary: God promises to justify, or declare righteous, those who believe in Christ. Justification is "a legal declaration concerning our relationship to God's laws, stating that we are completely forgiven and no longer liable to punishment" (Grudem).

Faith in Christ is the means by which we are justified. Faith is the instrumental means of our justification; Christ is the meritorious means. Faith is the instrument through which justification is given to us, but Christ's death on the cross that is the activity that brings us into God's favor. We are justified solely on the merits of Christ's work.

The practical implications of the doctrine of justification by faith alone are very significant. "First, this doctrine enables us to offer genuine *hope* to unbelievers who know they could never make themselves righteous before God: if salvation is a free gift to be received through faith *alone* then anyone who hears the gospel may hope that eternal life is freely offered and may be obtained. Second, this doctrine gives us confidence that God will never make us pay the penalty for sins that have been forgiven on Christ's merits" (Grudem).

Thanks be to God! "There is therefore now no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1). "This fact should give us a great sense of joy and confidence before God that we are accepted by him and that we stand before him as 'not guilty' and 'righteous' forever" (Grudem).



Richard Baxter Puritan Quotes

SENSUAL PLEASURE

"Though selfishness hath defiled the whole man, yet sensual pleasure is the chief part of its interest, and, therefore, by the senses it commonly works. And these are the doors and windows by which iniquity entereth into the soul."

I Am the Door...

Kevin Tucker

The third of Jesus' self-declared 'I am' titles is recorded in the tenth chapter of John's gospel. Jesus' proclamation is part of a discourse with the Jews, especially the Pharisees, which followed His healing of the blind beggar in the previous chapter.

After Jesus healed the blind man, the Pharisees questioned him as to the circumstances of his newfound sight. He told them it was Jesus who had healed him. Though he did not yet realize Jesus was the Messiah, he told the Pharisees that Jesus was from God. They immediately put him out of the synagogue.

When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and told him who He was. The man immediately said, "*Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.*" (John 9:38) As some near-by Pharisees began to question Jesus again, He challenged them with their spiritual blindness, guilt, and illegitimacy.

Jesus continues the confrontation in Chapter 10, now in the form of an extended allegory. Speaking to the Pharisees, Jesus said, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers. This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.*" (John 10:1-5)

Here, Jesus portrays Himself as the true shepherd of the sheepfold that is Israel. He has come by the door, by the road marked out in countless Old Testament prophecies. Jesus called the elect

sheep of Israel unto Himself. As they responded to His voice, they came out of the fold of Judaism and followed Him into the Kingdom of God.

Jesus referred to the Pharisees as false shepherds. They did not come through the door into the sheepfold. They, as thieves and robbers, had climbed in by another way. They were strangers to the true sheep, aiming not for their good, but for their harm. In stark contrast to the true sheep (like the blind beggar) who hear the true shepherd's voice and follow Him, the Pharisees *did not understand what he was saying to them.*

Speaking of Himself now as 'the door,' Jesus focuses on the main point of His allegory saying, "...*Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.*" (John 10:7-9)

Here Jesus says that He is the *door of the sheep*. He is the door through which the sheep God has given Him enter into the eternal safety of God's fold. It is only through this door, through Christ and His finished work on the Cross of Calvary, that sinners can come into God's high and holy presence. Jesus is the only door, He is '*... the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through [Him].*' (John 14:6)

Verse 8 is somewhat difficult. Obviously, not all of the shepherds of Israel had been thieves and robbers; think of Moses, Joshua, David, the prophets, and others. J. C. Ryle provides a helpful qualification. He says Jesus was referring to all who had come professing to be teachers, but claimed honor either for themselves or anything else over Jesus. This included the Pharisees to whom Jesus was speaking.

Why did our Lord refer to the Pharisees (and by extension all false shepherds and teachers) as thieves and robbers? They kept people from entering the Kingdom of Heaven by

robbing them of the truth about their sin and their urgent need for a savior. Speaking to Pharisees and lawyers in Luke 11, Jesus said, "*Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.*" (v 52)

Jesus concludes this part of His parable by saying "*I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.*" We are, by our nature, children of wrath, separated from God because we are sinful and He is holy. But Jesus has bridged that awful gulf by taking our place and being made a curse for us.

'For our sake [God] made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.' (2 Corinthians 5:21) Now, we who were once far from God '*...have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*' (Ephesians 2:13) Jesus is the door to our salvation.

Those who enter by Christ *will go in and out and find pasture*. The expression to *go in and out* is a Hebraism. It speaks of the manner of a person's life. Here, Jesus speaks of habitual communion with God and continual access to His blessing and protection.

Finally, Jesus tells us of the gracious provision He has made for His sheep. He says those who enter by Him *will find pasture*. David wrote, "*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.*" (Psalm 23:1-2) Christ's pasture has both ample food and glorious rest for us.

In summary, Jesus is *the door* in the highest sense. He has opened the way into heaven. Through His blood, we can now draw near to God with boldness. Jesus is able to save completely and eternally those who come to God by Him.