



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

— March 2017 Issue —

"You have dealt well with your servant, O LORD, according to your word."

Psalm 119:65



NURSERY SCHEDULE

March
05 Melanie Myatt and Linda Olive
12 Peter and Jenny Lovassey
19 Vicki Johnson and Amber Solan
26 Jessica and Troy Moseley

April

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

CHURCH CLEANING

March - Tuckers
April - Scarborough and Marsh

LAWN CARE

March - Volunteer Needed
April - Volunteer Needed

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF MARCH 1, 2017

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 31,327.83
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 24,407.27
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 5,210.00
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 29,007.25
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 1,400.00
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 160.00
Benevolence (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$ 30,567.25
Feb. Love offerings	\$ 80.00
Feb. General Fund offerings	\$ 14,390.05
Feb. Designated Missions	\$ 700.00
Building Fund balance	\$193,569.39
Missions Fund balance	\$ 19,408.71
Adoption Fund balance	\$ 3,095.00
General Fund balance	\$ 52,395.35



Now may the **GOD OF PEACE**

who brought again from the dead

OUR LORD JESUS,

the **GREAT SHEPHERD** of the sheep,

by the blood of the eternal covenant,

equip you with everything good

THAT YOU MAY DO HIS WILL

HEBREWS 13:20-21



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

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

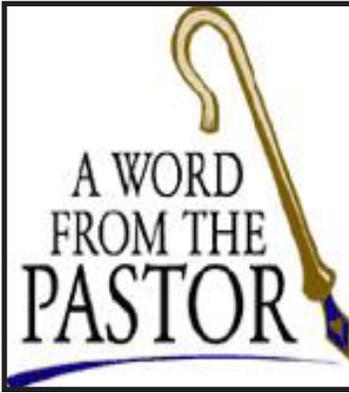
WEDNESDAY EVENING

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*



The Patience of God

One of the amazing attributes of God is his patience. God is patient with us even though we insult him and reject him. God bears patiently with the stubborn and obstinate. Isaiah recorded a patient plea that is quoted by Paul

in Romans 10:21: "All day long I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people" (from Isaiah 65:2-3). God is likened to a parent who stretches forth hands to a prodigal child. It is the gesture of supplication and invitation (Hodge). It is an indication of great patience.

As God was with Israel so he is with you and with me. The quality of patience or longsuffering is an extension or an outworking of the mercy, grace, and goodness of God. Because God is merciful, he is patient; because he is gracious, he is patient; because he is good, he is patient.

Patience with God means that he is slow in bringing judgment upon sinners (Rom 2:4; 9:22; 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 3:9; 1 Tim 1:16; 2 Pet 3:15). Referring to God as patient means he is not quick-tempered. He does not fly off the handle or fly into a rage. God is in full control of himself. He never loses his cool, as we might say it today. He deals with us patiently and kindly.

We bless God for his patience but let's not presume on it. He is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but judgment will eventually come. However, now is a time of grace and God pleads with sinners to be reconciled. He says things like, "Come now, and let us reason together... though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18), and "Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live..." (Isa 55:3).

The parable of the wicked tenants spoken by Jesus reveals the attribute of divine patience (Mark 12:1-12). A landowner planted a vineyard. He took good care of it. He then leased it to tenants who would work it. But in this case, the tenants were wicked. When it came time to pay the rent, they reneged on the contract and kept the all the profits. The landowner sent servants to collect what was owed but the servants were treated horribly, being beaten and sent shamefully away. Finally the landowner sent his son, his only son. Surely they would respect the son. But receive him they did not. They killed the son, the heir, and attempted to claim the inheritance for themselves. The parable ends with the owner of the vineyard destroying the tenants and leasing it out to others.

The parable reveals that God is patient. He is more patient than anyone might expect. We ask, how could

the owner of the vineyard continue to send servant after servant, even though they were all mistreated? How could he then send his own son? After the harsh treatment of his servants, surely he would not send his son, but he did. He sent him in hopes that they would treat his son differently.

This parable screams to us that God is longsuffering and patient! As Psalm 86:15 says, "But you, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth." The owner of the vineyard could have quickly brought down judgment on the tenants but he exercised patience instead. What a picture of God himself, who bears with men in sin. Paul asked the Romans, "Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?" (2:4). Peter states, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet 3:9).

Our Lord's parable is a shocking story because the owner does not immediately punish the wicked tenants. He sends servant after servant and finally sends his own son, whom he dearly loves. Who is real life does this? Yet the owner symbolizes God! The quality in God that causes him to endure the sinner's persistent obstinacy and wickedness and tirelessly calls him to repentance rather than to visit him with immediate judgment is his patience!

God will eventually bring judgment upon those who refuse his gracious invitations, but because he is longsuffering, he gives men space and time to turn to him. God commands all men everywhere to repent and he gives the opportunity to repent! He is giving you and me the opportunity now. Do not despise his patience. Come to him now and be saved!

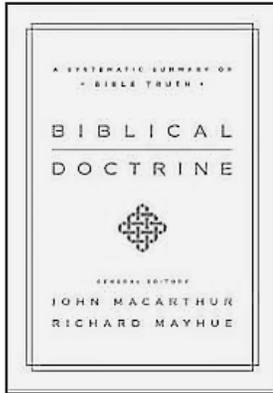
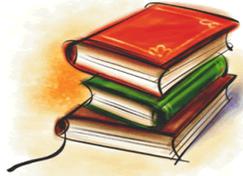
Remember, God's patience does not last forever. Those who abuse it and remain unrepentant will be cut off and destroyed. The parable teaches that the seemingly endless patience of God, while extended toward those who oppose him, will ultimately end. When the Son of God is rejected finally and ultimately, there remains no more sacrifice for sin. Final rejection of the only way of salvation is trampling the Son of God underfoot, counting the blood of the covenant a common thing, and insulting the Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29).

If you turn away from Christ, where else will you go to find salvation? There is no other way to God. God's patience is a most compelling reason to seek him for mercy, but when you finally and conclusively say no to him, your doom is sealed. In light of this subject, I hope you will remember the words of Hebrews 10:31, "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"

BOOK REVIEW

Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth,

by John F. MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, Crossway Books, 2017, 1,024 pp.



A theological tour de force. A magnum opus. A breath-taking panorama that leaves the reader in awe. These are only a few descriptions of *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth*. The book is arranged as one might expect, according to the various branches of systematic theology. A comprehensive glossary is included which helps beginning students with cumbersome theological language. Also included is an excellent topical and Scriptural index for

instant access to this treasure trove.

Each branch of theology is carefully explained and biblically defended. Opposing views are highlighted and refuted with grace and tact. MacArthur and Mayhue never leave the reader guessing. As such, there is never a hint of ambiguity here. It is fully biblical, evangelical, orthodox, and reformed.

I cannot recommend *Biblical Doctrine* highly enough. It is an outstanding addition to the growing number of books committed to teaching systematic theology. Students will be challenged and stretched; spiritual growth will no doubt occur as they pour over the many pages of this tome. But most significantly, their hearts and minds will be drawn to worship and glorify the Triune God. Soli Deo Gloria!

Dr. David Steel

Remember to set your clocks forward one hour Saturday evening, March 11, so you will be on time for Sunday morning worship, March 12.



MARCH 8 – Chris Mnugi, a friend and fellow worker with Scott Kemp in South Africa, will be updating us on the work of Africa Pastor’s Conference.

MARCH 12 – Troy Mosley will be sharing about the ministry of Bible distribution by the Gideon’s for a few minutes in the morning worship hour. An offering will be received for the work of the Gideon’s.

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 31: What benefits do they who are effectually called, partake of in this life?

Answer: They who are effectually called, do in this life partake of justification, adoption sanctification, and the various benefits which in this life do either accompany, or flow from them.

Scriptural Proof: Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:5; 1 Corinthians 1:30

Commentary: Effectual calling is to be distinguished from the general call of the gospel. The effectual call “creates what it commands” (Piper). It is a call to salvation which “effectively evokes from those addressed the response which it invites” (Packer).

Many blessings flow from being effectually called. One of the blessings granted to those who hear the gospel and believe is justification. Justification is a legal act of God whereby he declares righteous all who believe in Christ. The one who is justified is no longer under condemnation. He is forgiven of all his sins and is counted righteous in God’s sight because of Christ’s death on his behalf.

Another blessing is adoption. All who are united to Christ in faith become part of God’s family. Spiritual orphans are graciously brought into the family divine. They are regarded as sons and daughters and thus enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to members of God’s eternal family.

Another blessing is sanctification. The work of sanctification is the work of God, especially performed by the Holy Spirit, in separating the believer from the world to himself. It is a progressive work whereby the child of God increases in holiness and is more and more transformed into the image of Christ.

There are other benefits that accompany or flow out of these blessings. And they are ours now if we have been effectually called.



Richard Baxter Puritan Quotes

AN AWARENESS OF DEATH

“The face of death, and nearness of eternity, did much convince me what books to read, what studies to prefer and prosecute, what company and conversation to choose. It drove me early into the vineyard of the Lord, and taught me to preach as a dying man to dying men.”

I Am the Light of the World

Kevin Tucker

If you lived in this area in 2011, you surely remember the awful tornadoes of that Spring. One of my abiding memories of that time was, with all the power out, how utterly dark it was at night. To borrow a phrase, it was so dark you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. The profound physical darkness of those nights is an apt picture of the spiritual darkness of the world. It was into such spiritual darkness that God sent His beloved Son. It was in such spiritual darkness that Jesus proclaimed *'I am the light of the world.'*

The Temple in Jerusalem was the setting for Jesus' declaration. Jesus was there for the Feast of Booths; a time of commemoration and celebration of God's deliverance and provision and protection during the Israelites' journey from slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land. Part of the celebration was a nightly ceremony in which four very large brilliant candelabra were lit. The great light served as a vivid reminder of the pillar of fire by which God had guided Israel in the wilderness.

At this point in Jesus' ministry, the Jewish leaders' simmering resentment of Him had finally boiled over. The chief priests and Pharisees had gone so far as to send officers to arrest Him so they could kill Him. It is against this dark backdrop that we hear Jesus boldly proclaim, *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* (John 8:12)

This is the second of Jesus' seven self-declared 'I am' titles recorded in John's gospel. Each one reveals a different facet of His nature as God and His work as Savior.

Jesus' pronouncement of Himself as *the light of the world* was in full accord with the Old Testament prophesies about the coming Messiah. For example, we read in Isaiah 49:6, *"...I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."* Isaiah 49, one of Isaiah's four Servant songs, speaks of the Servant's mission. Jesus came as the Messiah of Israel, but even more, He is the Savior of the world.

David, in one of the best-known Psalms, speaks of God as light. He says, in Psalm 27:1, *'The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?'* So, by proclaiming to be the light of the world, Jesus was claiming to be God.

John spoke clearly of this fact in his Prologue when he wrote of Jesus as the Word. *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'* (John 1:1) Then John used light as a metaphor to describe Jesus in the verses that followed. In verse 4, John described Jesus as *the life* and *the light of men*. In verse 9, John said Jesus is *the true light, which gives light to everyone*.

What does Jesus mean when He says *"I am the light of the world?"* Christ's statement implies that a great darkness exists. By nature, we are all blind, stumbling in the darkness with no means to find our way out of sin and Satan's bondage. But Christ offers everyone, the whole world, His light. He makes no distinction between Jew and Gentile, learned and ignorant, or exceptional people and ordinary people. Christ, as the light of the world, is the only remedy to the world's great darkness.

John MacArthur says, "Jesus Christ brings the light of salvation to a sin-cursed world. To the darkness of falsehood He is the light of truth; to the darkness of ignorance He is the light of wisdom; to the darkness of sin He is the light of holiness; to the darkness of sorrow He is the light of

joy; and to the darkness of death He is the light of life."

How can blind sinners have this light? Jesus said, *"Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* He makes it clear that though He offers light to all men, not all men are willing to receive it. Earlier in His earthly ministry, Jesus told Nicodemus *'the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.'* (John 3:19)

Since the light of Christ is given only to those who follow Him, we must be clear about what He means by *'whoever follows me.'* He offers an inclusive invitation. His light of salvation is available to everyone, to *whoever*. But the terms of Jesus' invitation are exclusive. He only gives His light to those who follow Him.

To follow Jesus is to believe in Him as both Savior and Lord. It requires one to turn away from the darkness and its error, its guilt and depravity. It requires one to take hold of Jesus as Savior by faith in His finished work for sinners. It is not a half-hearted following, but a complete submission to Christ as Lord.

Jesus promises that all those who follow Him *will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life*. Those who follow Christ will not be left in the darkness, groping their way to final destruction. All those who follow Christ are promised *the light of life*. They will know within themselves the light of God's face shining on them. They will find in their conscience and understanding a living light that nothing will ever completely extinguish. *The light of life* leads the believer to his eternal home.