



M Grace Messenger

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

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GBC HOMEPAGES

<http://www.gbcmadison-al.com>
<http://sermonaudio.com/gbcmadisonal>
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"Preaching the free grace of God which brings a change of lifestyles, masters and destinies."

DEAN OLIVE, Pastor

— October 2017 Issue —

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



NURSERY SCHEDULE

October

- 01 Troy and Jessie Moseley
- 08 Nellie McFadden and Linda Olive
- 15 Melanie Myatt and Amber Solan
- 22 Lori Hewlett & Susan Gay

November

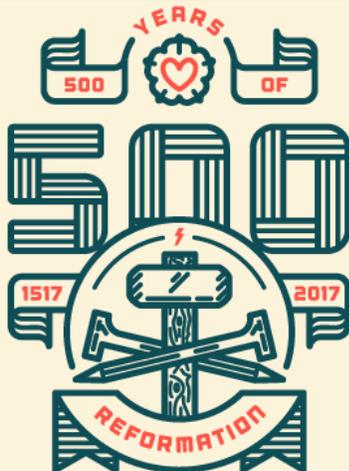
- 06 Peter and Jenny Lovassy
- 13 Vicki Johnson and Jan Furdson
- 20 Troy and Jessica Moseley
- 27 Linda Olive and Amber Solan

CHURCH CLEANING

- October - Johnsons
- November - Moseleys

LAWN CARE

- October - Troy Moseley



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

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

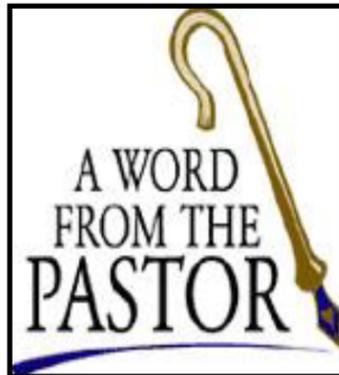
WEDNESDAY EVENING

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*



The Five Solas

I will be preaching a series of sermons this month on the Five Solas of the Reformation (dv). I am doing this because October marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. The

Reformation is usually dated from October 31, 1517. That was the day Martin Luther posted 95 theses on the door of a church in Wittenberg, Germany, to protest many of the errors of the Roman Catholic Church.

The five solas were a rallying cry for the Reformers. They are given in five Latin phrases – sola scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia, solo Christos, and soli Deo Gloria. In English it is Scripture alone, faith alone, grace alone, Christ alone, and to the glory of God alone. These doctrinal points were the foundation of the Reformation. Evangelical Christians in the 21st Century affirm them. On these five solas the Reformation stood and we stand upon them today.

The word sola, or alone, is the word disputed by many in Christendom. Critics claim to believe in Scripture, and they do, but not Scripture alone. They inject tradition and papal authority on equal par with Scripture. Opponents profess that faith is necessary for salvation but not faith alone. They add baptism and good works as necessary ingredients for justification.

The professing church of the 16th Century by-and-large had drifted away from the original teachings of Christianity. The Reformation was an awakening to the truth of God in Scripture. Men like Luther, Calvin, and Knox began to study the Word of God and then sought to live according to the light of Scripture.

The first sola is *sola Scriptura*, or Scripture alone. We put this one first because all the others doctrines are derived from this foundation. We call it the formal principle of the Reformation because the Bible alone is our highest authority. Scripture is our ultimate authority for life and godliness. Nothing can trump Scripture. The Bible is authoritative, inspired, and sufficient (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:21).

The Bible isn't the only truth in the world but it but it is without error. Every word from God is inerrant and infallible. We interpret everything else in light of Scripture. To believe the Word is to believe God. Faith is born out of understanding the Word of the living God. When Luther was once called to recant

the things he was teaching, he replied, "I am bound to the Scriptures... my conscience is captive to the Word of God."

The second sola is *sola fide*, or faith alone. The Bible teaches that we are saved and justified by faith alone apart from works. Faith has always been the way of salvation (Gen 15:6). It isn't what we do but what Christ as done which saves a sinner. We are not saved by our merits or declared righteous by our good works.

Faith is but looking to Christ. Like the snake-bitten Israelites in the wilderness, it was only when they looked to the bronze snake lifted up on a pole that they were healed. That event pointed to Jesus being lifted up on the cross and the necessity of faith in him (Jn 3:14-15).

The third sola is *sola gratia*, or grace alone. Grace is the cause of faith. By grace are we saved through faith (Eph 2:8). It isn't by personal merit but by grace. It isn't by a contribution we make but by grace alone. The house of salvation is built entirely on God's undeserving grace freely given to hell-deserving sinners. It is all "according to the riches of his grace" (Eph 1:7).

The fourth sola is *solo Christos*, or Christ alone. Jesus is the only Savior. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. We are saved by Christ. He saves us through faith on the basis of grace, but he is the only Savior (Acts 4:12).

When expounding on John 3:16, Luther said, "God gave his Son to the lost so that they might be saved. Then what should you do? Nothing! Don't go on pilgrimages. Don't do this or that good work. Instead, simply believe in Christ alone." That is why we joyfully sing, *In Christ alone my hope is found*.

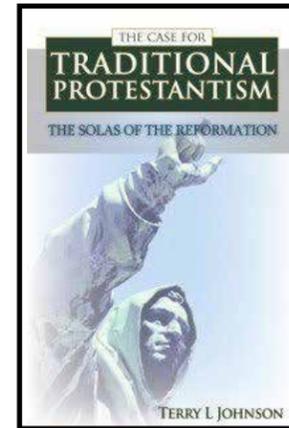
The last sola is *soli Deo Gloria*, or to the glory of God alone. Glory belongs to God alone. The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. The goal of life is to give glory to God alone (1 Cor 10:31; Rom 11:33-36). Glory belongs to no one but God. Glory is to be rendered to God the Father, God the Son, and to God the Holy Spirit.

As you can well see, the five solas are inseparable. One cannot be comprehended without the others. These are the truths that brought about the Reformation. These are the truths that will make our church strong. Reformed Baptist pastor, Earl Blackburn, says, "Let us never forget them, forsake them or cease to proclaim them. May we, as long as God gives us breath, preach from the housetops: Scripture alone, by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, to God alone be the glory!"

BOOK REVIEW

The Case for Traditional Protestantism: The Solas of the Reformation,

by Terry L. Johnson, Banner of Truth, 2004, pp. 192.



A timely piece of writing, arguing passionately and persuasively for a serious reconsideration of the great scriptural principles that undergirded the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth-century, the Five Solas – Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Solo Christo, Soli Deo Gloria. Far from being outdated and irrelevant to the church today, the author shows that these very principles are the essence of biblical Christianity.

Sadly, the term Protestantism has been rendered virtually redundant by years of misuse and abuse. It is seen as being antiquated and irrelevant in this present age of open-mindedness and political correctness. But Terry Johnson demonstrates that there is a powerfully strong case to be made for the church to rediscover what this 'unpopular and unfashionable' term really stands for. Using the great 'reformation watchwords' he focuses our attention on Scripture, Christ, faith, grace and the glory of God in all aspects of daily life. A well-written book, attractively presented and full of rich Bible teaching interspersed with thrilling illustrations from church history.



OCTOBER 8 – Tom Castor will be preaching in the morning service and giving a mission report in SS on what is happening with Clear and Simple Media.

NOVEMBER 5 – Daylight Saving Time ends. Be sure to set your clocks back an hour on Saturday evening.

DECEMBER 17 – We will be joining our friends at Providence Presbyterian Church this year for our annual Christmas meal and service. The meal will be at 5:00 PM and the service at 6:00.

APRIL 6-8 (2018) – Geoff Thomas of Aberystwyth, Wales, is scheduled to preach our Spring Bible Conference.

Spurgeon's Catechism with Scripture Proofs



Question 37: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?

Answer: At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed both in soul and body in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

Scriptural Proof: 1 Corinthians 15:43; Matthew 10:31; 1 John 3:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:17

Commentary: One of the blessed truths taught in Scripture is the resurrection. Jesus was raised to life after his death and we who are redeemed, will be raised up in glory. We are not complete apart from the body. At death, our souls pass immediately into glory, but when Christ comes again, the bodies of those who died in the Lord will be raised and reunited with their souls.

Skeptics mock the idea of resurrection. That's nothing new. When Paul preached the resurrection in Athens, men laughed and mocked (Acts 17:32). They didn't believe it was possible. Dead bodies decay and ultimately return to dust. Nothing happens after death, they thought. But God raised his Son from the dead and he will raise us. Hundreds of Jesus' disciples saw him alive.

Our hope is that we shall be raised to life. The resurrection body will be the same body we now have as to substance and identity, but it will be different as to qualities and powers (G. I. Williamson). We will have a renewed body in the resurrection. We will put on incorruption and immortality on that day.

Not all will be raised to glory. Unbelievers will be raised and judged by God and then cast into hell, both soul and body, for eternity. All who are in the grave will be raised but some will be raised to everlasting joy and others to everlasting misery. All who have been justified by faith in Christ will be openly acknowledged and acquitted by Christ in glory.

What does your future hold? There is a resurrection of life and a resurrection of judgment. Which one awaits you?



Richard Baxter Puritan Quotes PERFECTIONS OF GOD

Remember the perfections of that God whom you worship, that he is a Spirit, and therefore to be worshipped in spirit and truth; and that he is most great and terrible, and therefore to be worshipped with seriousness and reverence, and not to be dallied with, or served with toys or lifeless lip-service.

I Am the True Vine

Kevin Tucker

Just hours before His death on the cross, Jesus made the last of His seven "I AM" proclamations recorded in John's Gospel. After an evening of great tension and high drama in the Upper Room, Jesus said to the eleven, "... Rise, let us go from here" (Jn 14:31). Then Jesus taught them more about Himself and their relationship to Him.

He told His disciples, "I am the true vine and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned" (John 15:1-6).

In verse 1, Jesus says, "I am the true vine." Here, as in each of the other six "I am" statements John recorded, Jesus affirms His uniqueness and His deity. Israel is often portrayed as God's vine in the Old Testament. In Jer 2:21 we read of God's gracious intentions for Israel and their sad apostasy. God said through Jeremiah to Israel, "... I planted you a choice vine wholly of pure seed." Israel was to be the channel by which God's blessings flowed to the world. But Israel proved to be an unfaithful, fruitless, and useless vine. "How then have you turned degenerate and become a wild vine?" It is in this context that Jesus is the true vine, the perfect as distinct from the imperfect.

Jesus uses the word abide five times in these six verses. It implies a constant remaining or continuing in a place. Jesus' direct instruction to His disciples, including us, is to remain, or to continue, in Him. Jesus teaches us four essential lessons about abiding in Him in this extended metaphor.

First, He instructs us about the nature and the importance of the believer's union with Himself. In verse 5, Jesus says, "*I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*" From an agricultural standpoint, the union between the vine and the branch is the whole secret of the branch's life and strength. The sap that flows from the vine to the branches supplies all that is needed for buds, blossoms, and fruit. Apart from the parent vine, the branch has no life of its own and is fruitless.

The union between Christ and believers is just as real and close. Believers are joined to their Lord by faith and united to Him in mysterious union by the Holy Spirit. Martyn Lloyd-Jones characterizes this union as vital, organic, and indissoluble. Christians are what they are and do what they do because Jesus, the *true vine*, supplies all their needs. They continually draw on Jesus' infinite supply of grace, help, and ability. Because He lives, believers will also live.

Second, we see there are false Christians as well as true Christians. Jesus says His *Father is the vinedresser* in verse 1, the one who tends and cares for the vine. In verse 2, Jesus says, "Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away." False Christians appear to be joined to Christ, the *true vine*, but are not. Their union with Christ is only outward and formal. They may have been baptized and be members of the local church, but they have no grace in their hearts and no living faith in Christ. They are distinguished from real Christians by the fact they bear no fruit.

Leon Morris notes that grape vines

are grown to produce grapes, not foliage. So, God, the vinedresser removes the fruitless branches. Jesus says in verse 6, "If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned." Those who have no vital union with Christ are useless like branches with no fruit. Unless they awake and repent, the end of those who do not abide in Christ is eternal destruction.

Third, Jesus teaches fruit is the only satisfactory evidence of an abiding, living, saving union with Himself. Like a branch joined to the vine, the disciple who abides in Christ will bear fruit. What is this spiritual fruit? We know from Gal 5:22-23 that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control..." The Bible also identifies praise offered to God and sacrificial love in meeting the needs of others as fruit. Fruit is also holy, righteous, God-honoring behavior; "the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true" (Eph 5:9).

Fourth, Jesus teaches us God often providentially deals with true Christians, those who abide in Christ, to make them more holy and bear more fruit. Jesus said in verse 2, "every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit." J. C. Ryle notes just as the vinedresser prunes the fruitful branches of a vine so they produce even more fruit, so God purifies and sanctifies believers, often by trials and afflictions. By these means He drives them to the Bible and to prayer. He weans them from the world while simultaneously drawing them to Himself for His glory. The writer of Hebrews assures us, "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Heb 12:11)