



M Grace Messenger

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

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GBC HOMEPAGES

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

DEAN OLIVE, Pastor

— July 2018 Issue —

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



NURSERY SCHEDULE

July

01 Troy and Jessica Moseley
08 Peter and Jenny Lovassy
15 Susan Gay and Amber Solan
22 Melanie Myatt and Vicki Johnson
29 Lori Hewlett and K. Scarborough

August

05 Troy and Jessica Moseley
09 Melanie Myatt and Amber Solon
12 Peter and Jenny Lovassy
26 Susan Gay and Linda Olive

CHURCH CLEANING

July - Volunteer needed
August - Williams

LAWN CARE

July - Dean and Linda
August - Steve Page

Welcome to

TOM CASTOR



*Founder and Director of
Simple & Clear Media*

Sunday July 22

- Preaching in the 9:30 AM Worship Service
- Mission Report in the 11 AM SS Hour

Clear and Simple Media is a ministry that writes and publishes materials that are linguistically simple, theologically clear and biblically faithful.

CLEAR & SIMPLE
MEDIA

SIMPLE TRUTHS
for the new believer

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Worship	9:30 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM
Evening Worship	5:00 PM

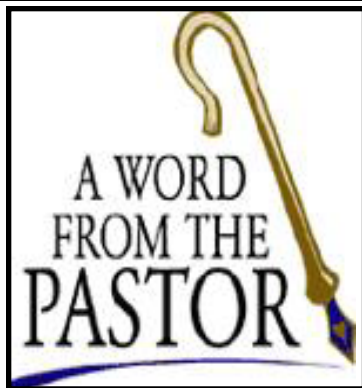
WEDNESDAY EVENING

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*



A Praying Woman

Hannah, mother of the prophet Samuel, was a woman of earnest prayer. Her story is told in the first chapter of 1 Samuel. She is introduced as a wife of Elkanah. He also had another wife,

Peninnah. We are told that “Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children” (2).

Hannah isn’t the only woman in the Bible that was barren. There are many others. We remember in particular Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Elizabeth. Hannah’s barrenness was the reason she prayed earnestly. She wanted children but had none. We are told twice, once in v. 5 and once in v. 6, that “the LORD had closed her womb.” The Lord prevented her from getting pregnant. “Hannah’s infertility was no accident of nature; it was a deliberate work of the Lord” (Bergen).

A woman who wants children but is unable to bear them must recognize that the matter is in the Lord’s hands. For his own purposes God often closes the womb of a woman. What was Hannah to do? The only thing she could do was pray. She couldn’t go to a fertility clinic. She couldn’t adopt a baby (there is no instance of adoption among the Israelites in the OT, though Pharaoh’s daughter adopted Moses). Her only recourse was to pray.

Hannah had a longing that God puts in the heart of every woman. That longing is for children (cf. Gen. 1:28; Ps 127:3). She wanted to be a mother. Since it was the Lord that had closed her womb, she knew that the Lord could open her womb. She was dependent on God alone for reversing her barrenness. So she prayed. God used this situation to drive her to prayer. Only God could help her so she prayed.

Being barren wasn’t a small thing. “She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly” (10). We later hear her say, “I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD” (15). She even said that she was praying out of “great anxiety and vexation” (16). Her need was great so she prayed earnestly. Her heart was heavy; her pain was deep. Her heart ached because she was childless.

Hannah’s prayer took place at the tabernacle. She had gone with her husband, and his other wife Peninnah and her children, to worship the Lord at Shiloh. While there she poured out her heart to God. “... she vowed a vow and said, ‘O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your

servant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life...’” (11). Hannah promised the Lord if he gave her a son, she would give him up for service in the Lord’s kingdom.

Eli, the high priest, observed Hannah praying. But he didn’t think she was praying. That’s because she didn’t pray out loud. Her lips moved but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk and rebuked her but Hannah explained that she had been pouring out her soul to the Lord. She had been speaking in her heart. Eli then bid her to “go in peace” and rendered a blessing. He said, “The God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him” (17).

Hannah went away joyful. The sadness was gone. The words of Eli, coupled with her own prayer, gave her assurance that God would give her a son. She embraced hope that her petition would be granted. The sadness was gone from her countenance because faith had triumphed in her heart. And it happened just as Eli said. They returned home and in the course of time, “Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her. And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, ‘I have asked for him from the LORD’” (19-20).

She fittingly named her son Samuel. That name means “asked from God.” His name would always be a reminder that he was given to his mother in answer to prayer. What a notable example of prayer! A barren woman cries out to God for a son. God answered her prayer. She named him Samuel and gave him to the Lord. Samuel was God’s gift to her and now Samuel was her gift to God. He was on loan to the Lord for the rest of his days.

And her son became a great prophet, the one who anointed the first king of Israel, Saul, and his successor, David. And David was, of course, in the line of the coming Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Samuel’s birth is thus a major event in redemptive history. And his birth was the result of a woman who earnestly prayed. She longed for a son. She cried out to God. The Lord heard and answered her petition.

We learn from Hannah’s life that need drives prayer. She petitioned the Lord and would not let go. She prayed earnestly for something her heart longed for. And it pleased the Lord to hear her cry and answer her petition. God doesn’t always answer our prayers like he did hers, but when in need, we must go to the Lord. Often we have not because we ask not. Let’s remember the words of Jesus, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you” (Mt 7:7).

THE BOOK THAT

A series of questions Geoff Thomas asked pastors and other church leaders.



This interview is with **Stephen Turner**, a retired Baptist pastor in Auckland, New Zealand..

The Book that I am currently reading... Rico Tice's *Honest Evangelism*. The best thing I've read on this subject in the past few years.

The Book that changed my life... Bonar's *Memoirs and Remains of R.M. M'Cheyne*. There is nothing like it! It's still changing lives! One of the five greatest books I've read in my life..

The Book that made me say Amen... S. Ferguson's *The Whole Christ*. Many in the church have read this book this year. This will become one of the truly great Christian books of the century.

The Book that I most often give to new church members and young Christians... Iain Murray's *The Forgotten Spurgeon*. It was a wondrous book to me in my twenties and I still want people to hear of the greatest thing about God; that he reigns!

The Book that I give to people thinking of becoming Christians... C. J. Mahaney's *Living the Cross-Centered Life*. I like its brevity. I like its focus. I like its simplicity.

The best Book for children... S. Lloyd-Jones' *The Jesus Storybook Bible*, which my wife thinks is wonderful and gives away as presents to needy parents..

A graphic with a colorful border and a tree illustration. It features a starburst with the date August 5 and text about Sunday services at Camp Helen.

August 5 **Camp Helen Church Picnic**

Sunday services at Camp Helen. Worship begins at 9:30. Join us for worship, food and fellowship!



JULY 4 – No mid-week meeting.

JULY 18 – Instead of our mid-week meeting, the church will be joining our friends at Prosperity Presbyterian Church in Taft, TN, for their Summer Bible Conference with Dr. Robert Cara. The conference runs from July 15-18. Dr. Cara will be preaching on, “Applying Leviticus.”

OCTOBER 19-21 – Creation Conference with Dr. Jason Lisle.

Spurgeon's Catechism with Scripture Proofs



Question 44: What is the second commandment?

Answer: The second commandment is, “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments” (Exodus 20:4-6 NKJ).

Commentary: The second commandment is closely connected with the first. The first commandment concerns the object of worship; it tells us who is to be revered and served. The second commandment concerns the manner of worship; it tells us how God is to be revered and served.

The second commandment protects true worship. God prescribes the way he is to be worshiped. The great lesson is that we must worship God as he himself commands. We are not to add to our worship what may seem right to us, nor are we to subtract any requirement imposed by God.

Worshipping the true God in a false manner is forbidden. The second commandment forbids making of images and bowing down to images. “The second commandment forbids liturgical idolatry, which involves using any created thing in worship as a medium between God and us” (Sproul). God “will not have His legitimate worship profaned by superstitious rite” (Calvin).



Thomas Brooks Puritan Quotes HUMBLING

“Nothing humbles and breaks the heart of a sinner like mercy and love. Souls that converse much with sin and wrath, may be much terrified; but souls that converse much with grace and mercy, will be much humbled.”

Reweaving the Culture?

Al Baker

Have you noticed the many sermons, the many books and blogs telling the church of Jesus that our purpose is to reweave the culture? Behind these statements is the idea that our world, as we know it, is permanent. While they readily admit the world's fallen state, they still say the church's role is to labor for the redemption of culture. That is, we are to make this world a better place. This is to come, they say, by practicing social justice, racial reconciliation through progressive, statist, identity politics.

To be fair, some who are teaching this also speak of the importance of evangelism, but they nonetheless are urging a two-fold kingdom initiative. More specifically, they are urging us, as the church of Jesus, to seek justice, reconciliation, and reparations for victims of violence, oppression, or racism; to preserve God's creation through Green energy initiatives; to transform social and cultural systems, and to labor for the removal of what they call systemic racism and oppression of minorities.

... There is no doubt that the Scriptures speak of the necessity for justice, feeding the hungry, and caring for the widow and orphan. We are not to retreat from the world. We are to be engaged in our community. Jesus told us that we are the salt of the earth (salt slows down putrefaction) and the light of the world (bringing the light of truth into a darkened world). The question, however, is to what degree should the church be involved in these issues? Are these the stated purpose of the church?

What is the purpose of the church?

Of course we are to be concerned about the poor and needy. Of course we are to seek justice in the land. These are what individual Christians are to do as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Paradoxically, as David Wells has noted, "Churches that actually do influence the culture distance themselves from it in its internal life. They do not offer what can already be had on secular terms in the culture. They are an alternative to it."

In answering the question, what is the purpose of the church, we should not ask, "What would Jesus do?," but rather, "What did Jesus do?" Is there any indication that Jesus worked to remove injustice, to eradicate the slavery of the day, to stop the Roman practice of killing young children? Did Jesus institute a massive "Feed the Hungry" program? Did Jesus heal everyone with whom He had contact? He did feed the 5000 and He did heal some people of diseases, but why? His compassion was a sign of His Messiahship. He came, He said, to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). Jesus commissioned His disciples to make disciples of all the nations (Matthew 28:18-20). He told them to preach repentance for the forgiveness of sins to all the nations (Luke 24:47). There is not a word demanding the Roman Empire abolish slavery, oppression, poverty, or injustice of any kind...

So, bottom line. The church of Jesus has one task, not two. It is not to reweave or redeem the culture. This world and the various cultures will be destroyed (2 Peter 3:10). Our task, given to us by the glorified and resurrected Christ, is to disciple all the nations. We do so by going to the lost, by directly evangelizing them, and by teaching them to obey all that Jesus and His apostles and prophets have

taught us. Individual Christians, living out their faith in the world, are to be salt and light. As we move into the world with the tsunami of Biblical truth, we are to do what we can to alleviate the problems we find in the world. But even then the driving force must be the evangelization of the nations to the praise and glory of God's grace.

Think of it this way, anyone can work for justice and feed the poor, but only the Christian has the bread of life. To spend our time and resources on seeking to redeem or reweave our culture is like embalming fluid. A corpse can temporarily be made to look good by the injection of embalming fluid, but it only slows down the inevitable putrefaction which comes to everything dead. We will always have the poor with us. We will always have injustice until the Lord Jesus returns and ushers in the new heaven and earth. Only two things last forever, the word of God and the souls of men.

Therefore we are to invest our lives in these two things. There are only two destinations for everyone. Jesus said that to believe on Him means eternal life. To not obey Him means that the wrath of God is on him, now and forever. Justice, racial reconciliation, feeding the hungry, while all commendable pursuits, will save no one. A well-fed person living in peace with others, who remains in his lost state, will surely suffer an eternal hell away from the presence of the Lord and His glory.

Let's get back to the main thing.

(Al Baker is an Evangelistic Revival Preacher with Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship; this article was edited to fit the space)