



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

— July 2019 Issue —

*"He who calls you is faithful;
he will surely do it."*

1 Thessalonians 5:24



NURSERY SCHEDULE

July

- 07 Troy and Jessica Moseley
- 14 Amber Solon and Angie Williams
- 21 Susan Gay and Janet Marsh
- 28 Melanie Myatt and Vicki Johnson

August

- 04 Troy and Jessica Moseley
- 11 Linda Olive and Lori Hewlett
- 18 Jenny and Peter Lovassey
- 25 Melanie Myatt and Vicki Johnson

CHURCH CLEANING

- July - Various
- August - Williams & Myatts

LAWN CARE

- July - Troy "Mower" Moseley
- August - Steve Page

CHRISTIAN PATRIOTISM

Is there an appropriate place in the Christian life for patriotism? Yes, there is. Christians ought to be patriotic while recognizing that not everything their country does is right. God means for us to love him supremely and obey him wholeheartedly. God means for us to be in the world but not of the world.

Let us not confuse the gospel with patriotism. Christ is our Lord, not a man, political party, or nation. Christ's kingdom is our ultimate allegiance.

Whatever form our patriotism takes, it is to be with the understanding that we are in a spiritual union with brothers and sisters in Christ in other countries that we are not in with fellow citizens of our own country who are unbelievers.

It is right to be thankful to God for our country and thankful to all who have paid a high price to preserve it.



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

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

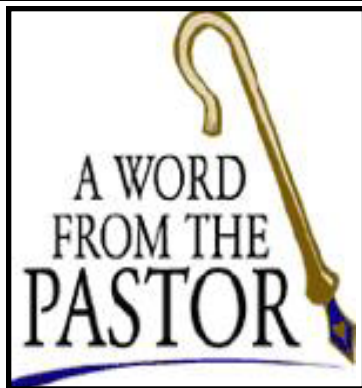
FIRST SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Worship	9:30 AM
Meal at the Church	11:00 AM
Afternoon Service	12:30 PM

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting
7:00 PM

*No Sunday School
or Evening Service*



Freedom and Servitude

The apostle Peter writes in chapter 2, verse 16 of his first epistle, “Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.” Peter

tackles the subjects of both freedom and servitude.

It is difficult for us to talk of freedom and servitude together. If you are free, you are not a servant; if you are a servant, you are not free. That’s how we think naturally. But Scripture puts these two thoughts together without contradiction. Peter associates the two as companions, not enemies.

Peter writes first about freedom. “Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil...” One of the most cherished treasures we possess as Christians is freedom (cf. Jn 8:32; Rom 8:2; Gal 5:1). But how are we to understand this freedom?

Freedom for the Christian must be qualified. Our freedom is not that of the libertine who disregards moral law in order to satisfy his selfish desires. The great freedoms of the Christian life are: (1) freedom from the ruling power of sin in our lives; (2) freedom from guilt because our sins have been forgiven by God; and (3) freedom from the impossible obligation of attempting to earn favor with God through perfect obedience.

Our freedom is a freedom from sin and the law. We are no longer condemned for sin because we are in Christ (Rom 8:1-2). We are no longer under the law for Christ’s satisfied the just requirements of the law (Gal 4:14). Peter recognized that Christians might misunderstand talk of freedom, so he issues a strong warning. He says not to use freedom as a cover-up for evil, as a cloak for vice.

For some, freedom has become a slogan for wickedness. Many Christians have twisted and distorted the Biblical notion of freedom in order to justify licentiousness (cf. Phil 3:18-19). Some professed Christians try to conceal their wickedness by crying freedom. But with Christian liberty comes responsibility. We do not have freedom to do wrong.

Freedom in the Biblical sense is not being independent and autonomous in order to do as we please. It is

freedom to serve God. Freedom is not the desire to do what you want, but the power to do what you ought.

Peter not only says, “Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil,” he also adds, “but living as servants of God.” There is a paradox between liberty and servitude. We are free but not free. Christian liberty consists in serving God. We are free from sin’s condemnation and we are free from the bondage of the law, but we are entirely subject to God.

In this verse of Scripture, Peter actually uses the word for slave (*doulos*). Applied in that day the term signified that a man or woman was completely owned by another and that they had no rights. Christian freedom does not release us from servitude to God. When we are removed from the bondage of sin and of the law, God releases us to serve him. That is true Christian freedom. And it really isn’t bondage to serve God for the heart set free longs to serve the Savior. Our bondage is really freedom.

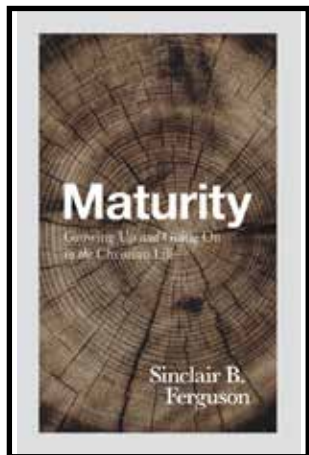
What Peter says about freedom and servitude isn’t easy for American Christians to heed. Our history is one replete with the sound of liberty and freedom. We are brought up to love liberty. From our childhood we are taught the history of our country and about the fight for freedom (Sons of Liberty, Paul Revere’s freedom ride, the Bill of Rights, Patrick Henry’s speech where he said, Give me liberty or give me death).

But even our freedom as Americans doesn’t mean we can live as we want. We are not free to act as we please. We live under laws and are responsible as citizens to obey them for the good of the public as well as for ourselves. Yet a spirit of anarchy is running rampant in our land. And why is that so? Because people have forgotten that there are limits to freedom! Every man is doing that which is right in his own eyes and thinks he has the constitutional right to do so.

Some in the Christian community look at liberty in the same way. They think God has freed them from sin and the law so they can live any way they like. But that is not freedom — that is slavery. Freedom is being released to serve God. The true Christian is the person who desires to obey God. His new, heaven-born nature wishes to be and do all that God wants of him. That is Christian freedom And that is Christian servitude.

BOOK REVIEW

Maturity: Growing Up and Going On in the Christian Life, by Sinclair Ferguson, Banner of Truth, pp. 248, 2019.



What are the most important lessons the New Testament has to teach us about being a Christian? Sinclair Ferguson shows that a deep-seated concern of the writers of the New Testament was to see Christians grow to spiritual maturity—and if that was the concern of the first believers, then it should be our concern too. The author shows what Christian maturity is, and how it is to be obtained. It was the apostle Paul’s desire to present those to whom he ministered ‘mature in Christ’—for such a maturity would lead to stable, servant-hearted Christians, and healthy, fruit-bearing churches.

Steven Lawson says, “As Christians, we have a great need to be continually growing into spiritual maturity. But how do we realize such a worthy goal? In large measure, the answer is found in this new book by Sinclair Ferguson, *Maturity*. This master theologian and nurturing pastor gives us a comprehensive overview of this vitally important subject. Profound in its strategic grasp, yet easily read and digested, this is a rare book that every believer—whether new to the faith or a seasoned saint—should live with and live out.”



AUGUST 11 – Missionary David Vaughn will be preaching both morning and evening and giving a report in the SS hour about his work in France.

AUGUST 18 – Chris and Liz Adams will be reporting on their mission work in Africa in the evening service.

SEPTEMBER 15 – Missionary Justin Beach will be preaching in the morning service and speaking about his upcoming ministry in England in the Sunday School hour.

SEPTEMBER 22 – We will be going to Camp Helen for the day. There will be a morning worship service, followed by a meal and then activities. We will finish the day with homemade ice-cream, singing and testimonies.

OCTOBER 20-22 – Fall Bible Conference in conjunction with the southeast regional FIRE conference. Dr. Tom Nettles will be the featured speaker.

Spurgeon's Catechism with Scripture Proofs



Question 55: Which is the sixth commandment?

Answer: The sixth commandment is, “You shall not murder.”

Scripture: Exodus 20:13

Commentary: It is important to translate Exodus 20:13 properly. It should read, “You shall not murder,” not “You shall not kill,” as the KJV has it. There are times when it is necessary to kill a human being or when death is accidental. Such a death is not murder and therefore, is not the subject of the sixth commandment.

Murder is the subject of this commandment. Murder is the unjust killing of a human being. Murder “is the crime of unlawfully killing a person especially with malice aforethought” (Merriam-Webster). It is the ultimate act of personal violence. It is to be distinguished from what is known in our law system as manslaughter. Manslaughter is unintentional or accidental (it is still considered as criminal homicide, but it is not premeditated). Murder is deliberate and marked by premeditation, or what our legal system calls “malice aforethought.”

Murder was the first crime committed after the Fall. Genesis 4:8-15 records the crime of Cain who murdered his brother Abel. Cain committed his wicked deed under the beguiling work of Satan.

Among men there is no greater crime than murder, which we define as “the unjust taking of life.” Life is very precious and once it is gone there are no enjoyments left to experience in the present world and there is no further time to hear the gospel and make preparations for the next life.

Murder is a great source of evil in the world; it is murder that the sixth commandment forbids. God says, “You shall not murder.” God has given this commandment as a fence around life that it might be protected and preserved. He forbids the unjust taking of life, and all the sins that lead to murder and are occasions for it.



John Bunyan Puritan Quotes SIN IS

Sin is the dare of God’s justice, the rape of His mercy, the jeer of His patience, the slight of His power, and the contempt of His love.

Let the Church Seek God's Honor, Not this World's Acclaim

Phil Johnson

“Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (James 4:4).

Scripture forbids believers to imbibed the world's values (cf. 1 John 2:6; Romans 8:5-6; Matthew 6:19-21) or set their affections on things of the earth rather than on heavenly things (cf. Colossians 3:2; 1 John 2:15; Matthew 16:23). Christians do not belong to this world. We are not beholden to the world. We cannot legitimately court the world's admiration or approval. And it is wrong to think otherwise. Jesus told His disciples, “If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you” (John 15:9).

That truth is ignored or rejected by multitudes of 21st-century evangelical Christians who wrongly believe that if the church does not first win the world's friendship and admiration, we have no hope of reaching anyone for Christ. Some of today's largest and most influential churches even take surveys to find out the desires and ambitions of unbelievers in their communities. Then they plan their Sunday services accordingly, putting on a performance that caters to what people say they desire.

Popular televangelists follow a cruder version of the same strategy, promising people health, prosperity, and riches in return for money. They are today's equivalent of the medieval indulgence-sellers. These religious charlatans make their appeal blatantly and directly to “the lust of the flesh,

the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life”—the same carnal cravings that 1 John 2:16 says are “not of the Father but... of the world.”

Churches are full of people who are sinfully obsessed with the whims and entertainments of this world. They are desperate to keep up with various worldly fads and secular celebrities. They wrongly believe that if they embrace the icons of pop culture, the world will also embrace them and therefore be more open to Christ. So they wear the badges of worldly fashions; they echo the key elements of worldly wisdom; and they immerse themselves in worldly amusements. They cultivate an unhealthy appetite for attention, popularity, and worldly approval, convincing themselves that this is a valid evangelistic strategy.

Even in the highest echelons of evangelical academia certain scholars seem driven by an unhealthy yearning for academic renown. They become so desperate to win the admiration of their counterparts in the secular academy that they willingly compromise the truth and sometimes even apostatize completely.

The wish to be noticed and admired by other people is itself a carnal, illegitimate lust. Jesus condemned the Pharisees because, “They [did] all their deeds to be seen by others” (Matthew 23:5). They made a show of public piety to give the impression they were holier than anyone else.

Like the Pharisees, today's stylish evangelicals fancy the praise and recognition of other people. But unlike the Pharisees, most of them want to be noticed for being hip, not holy. It dishonors Christ when Christians try to fit into the fraternity of those who hate Him. Scripture is very clear about this: “Friendship with the world is enmity with God.”

According to Jesus, the *only* business

the Holy Spirit has with the world outside the church is to “convict [unbelievers] concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8). Those are precisely the themes that are typically omitted when churches become too interested in winning the world's approval.

The church must get back to preaching the gospel, remembering that the message of the cross, when faithfully preached, is *by God's own design* “a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:23-24). The gospel alone is “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16). Christians should not be ashamed to proclaim it.

It's true that if we are faithful, many in the world will view us with contempt as enemies—and we must be prepared for that. “Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you” (1 John 3:13). The world put Christ to death, and He said, “A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:20).

Furthermore, our Lord Himself didn't shy away in shame or retaliate in anger. Indeed, “to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps... When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly” (1 Peter 2:21-23).

[Pyromaniacs, <https://teampyro.blogspot.com/2018/12/let-church-seek-gods-honor-not-this.html>]