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"Telling the Truth"

A word from the pastor

We often hear this phrase in Christian circles today, "Marriage is under attack in America." The reality is that marriage, in every age, in every culture, has always been under attack. It began in the garden and will continue until the Lord returns. As a pastor, I find myself less concerned about policy changes concerning marriages, than I do about those marriages that I have a divine calling to shepherd and care for within our congregation. I have grown to deeply love this body, and I am continually concerned for the challenges we all face. And more to the point, the stress these challenges and conflicts bring on our marriages. It reminds me of two things. One is that gospel centered marriages are vital for our gospel ministry. And second, gospel-centered, strong

and joyful marriages exist when couples (and churches) work to cultivate them. One of the ways we will be working to cultivate gospel-growth in our marriages is through a new series on Sunday nights, beginning April 27th. The series is called "What Did You Expect?" by Paul Tripp. I want you to read what one pastor and author has said about this book.

"Tripp adeptly burrows beneath discussions of gender roles, communication mishaps, and felt needs — the driving forces of most Christian marriage manuals — to get at the root of all marital problems: who or what we worship. This is the first Christian marriage book I've read that does not use the words submission or headship. Nor does it refer to the most classic passage on marriage, Ephesians 5. Tripp is not rejecting these biblical constructs, but he is asking us to consider a more fundamental question that shapes not just our marriages but our entire lives: Whose kingdom? "We are kingdom-oriented people," the Reformed author writes. "We always live in the service of one of two kingdoms ... When we live for the kingdom of self, our decisions, thoughts, plans, actions, and words are directed by personal desire, [and] we seek to surround ourselves with people who will serve our kingdom

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"Telling the Truth" (cont'd)

purposes." A marriage of two people serving their own kingdoms will eventually end in bloody battle. But when both people submit to God's kingdom, where Christ reigns and where joy and life are found, marriage becomes an "opportunity to exit the small space of the kingdom of self and to begin to enjoy the beauty and benefits of the kingdom of God." Relational change comes only when our worship is properly aligned with the God who pursues our hearts. How does a couple repair a marriage damaged by warring kingdoms? The rest of Tripp's book/video series offers ways couples can develop a culture of ongoing reconciliation based on six biblically based commitments..."(comments from a book review by Lynn Roush titled "Grace-Filled Engagement" found in Christianity Today on August 12, 2010.)

I want to make a strong plea for our folks to join in this ten week series that will begin on April 27th. Please make every effort to not only join us but really take part in the study. Please note, all are welcome and all will benefit from this series.

With the affections of Christ Jesus,
Pastor Rick

Growing in Grace

Special Speaker on Adoption Opportunities

I want to inform you about a very special opportunity we have at GRBC on May 4 during the Bible Fellowship hour. Alyson Gibson, from Bethany Christian Services, will help us grow in our awareness of the plight of over 1300 children in Virginia. These children are in foster care and in need of parents who would love them and make them their own; they are waiting to be adopted. Ms. Gibson will tell us ways that we might have a role in the lives of these needy children and will be available to answer any questions we may have. Adoption may not be feasible for every family at Green Run, but we certainly can become more active in prayer or in some other support role of the process. We live in a world broken by sin, where children often become the collateral damage of broken relationships and tragic circumstances. These children are God's image bearers who deserve the same respect, kindness, and love as any other child in the most stable home life. We have an opportunity as believers to consider how the Lord may enable us to love our neighbor in practical ways in this regard. Please plan to join us in the fellowship hall on Sunday morning May 4 at 9:00 as we all learn how we might alleviate the suffering of others.

As I consider this opportunity, I cannot help but to think about the place of adoption in our lives as believers. The concept of adoption is a profound reality packaged in our salvation in Christ. We who were lost in our sins, in fact spiritually dead, alienated from God, and hostile in our mindset toward God (Eph. 2:1-3; Col. 1:21), have been chosen by grace to be reconciled to God. God sought us who were lost, helpless, needy, and without hope in the world to be his own sons and daughters. He did not only save us from the penalty of our sins; he also gave us the right to become the children of God, the younger brothers and sisters of his own Son, fellow heirs with Christ of all the riches of his kingdom. There is more to our story as believers than just the simple forgiveness of sins by the sacrifice of Another. Conversion is just the beginning in the life of a believer: as we come to more fully understand how deeply good the "good news" really is, we recognize that in knowing Christ a door has been flung open to an entirely new world in which we find complete acceptance, perfect belonging, and the tender affections of a kind and always good Father. Even all of the shame and rejection dealt to us through the sins of others in this life find their end in the beauty of the Gospel, as we see that "surely [Jesus] has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Is. 53:4 ESV). Now in our lives we have solid hope in a God who loved us before we ever knew him, and brought us into his own home saying to us, "Child, you are mine!" So as we think about the opportunity for the adoption of a child, let us remember that we know what it is like to be taken in when we had no other hope. Let us, as much as is possible, extend the same grace to others that has been extended to us by our Father. May God use us at Green Run Baptist Church to show the love of Christ to those who are needy in our world.

-- Pastor Stephen

C.O.R.E. Connection

Over the past several months our students have finished up looking at a God-centered Worldview. We then started looking at how the Lord has established a tapestry and pattern of redemption throughout the Atonement in the Old and New Testaments. We have looked at this in the Garden of Eden, Abraham's "almost" sacrifice of Isaac, the Passover in Egypt, and even started a two week series on the Lord's patterns as it relates to the sacrificial system in Leviticus! I am truly excited about this series because it will help our students to recognize God's consistency and faithfulness in pursuing and providing for mankind's forgiveness!

In the upcoming weeks we will examine God's faithfulness in connection to the Atonement with the Water from the Rock, Bronze Snake, Sign of Jonah and the Suffering Servant (Jesus) from Isaiah 53! After this we will transition to an examination of the Atonement in the New Testament. I expect the Lord to do some great things through our time together!

In the coming weeks we are also looking to see how God will work as the students are combining with the adults during the Wednesday night men's and women's mid-week meetings. This is a great way for both the young and old to join together and fellowship around what is most important and unites us the most: Jesus!

There are also a few more events planned for this school year. We have a "Hollywood Game Day" scheduled and an all-nighter before the end of May! After this, the students will join with the rest of the church in a missions-minded emphasis as we will work this year's Sports Challenge VBS just after the school year ends. Beyond this, we will have the opportunity for some of the students to possibly be a part of what the church is doing with the NYC Missions trip this year!

In the past few weeks our students have begun to meet together outside of Sundays and Wednesdays to read, pray and talk about the Bible on their own! This is tremendously exciting to hear. We are looking forward to how the Lord will look in and through this group over the next weeks, months, and year!

Pray for our students as they close out the school year. Not only will they have finals to prepare for, but they are learning obedience to the Lord. Satan would desire to distract them and keep them from fellowship with the body to get them weak and have a chance to devour them.

Thanks,
Brian Tooley & the Student Ministry Team
brian@greenrunbaptist.com

Extra Reading

7 Things A Good Dad Says

By Tim Challies

I think I may be leaving one phase of fatherhood behind even while I enter into another. My youngest child is just about to turn eight, which means that we are not only past the baby and toddler stages, but even nearing the end of the little kid phase. Meanwhile my oldest child has turned fourteen and is just months away from high school. All this change has caused me to think about fatherhood and the new challenges coming my way. I have found myself thinking back to the many models of fatherhood I have seen and admired through the years. What made these fathers admirable? What set them apart? What was it that they said to their children? From these models I have drawn seven things a good father says.

I love you. Few things are more important to a child than knowing where he stands with his parents. As I think back to my childhood, I remember several friends who lived with uncertainty in their relationship with their parents, and their fathers especially. They longed to hear words of love and approval. But I saw other kids who had total confidence in that love and approval. Often the difference was little more than three simple words repeated regularly: “I love you.” Men can be so petty, so prideful, and hold back those words. Yet there is no good reason for it. The more awkward it feels, the more urgent it is. From the dads I admire I’ve learn that a father needs to say, “I love you,” and he needs to say it often.

Let me kiss it better. Even as a young child I remember observing two different kinds of fathers in my church. When children fell and scraped their knees, there were two ways I saw dads react. Some fathers would pick up their children, set them back on their feet, and tell them to get over it. “You’re fine. Walk it off!” They wanted their soft children to toughen up. There were other fathers who would pick up their children, hold them in their arms, make a show of extending comfort, and say, “Let me kiss it better.” These were fathers who wanted their hard children to soften up. Sure, there are times to tell your child to walk it off, but there are far more times to extend love and concern through those childhood bumps and bruises and through the bigger sins and mistakes that come with age. From the dads I admire I’ve learned the value of saying, “Let me kiss it better” (though, obviously, as the children get older the wording changes!).

Come with me. There is so much in life that can be better caught than taught. Often the best way to train up a child is to let that child into your life. One father I admire taught me the distinction between being face-to-face with my children and being shoulder-to-shoulder. I saw this shoulder-to-shoulder parenting in my own father who often brought me with him on his errands or, even better, to his work. This allowed me to see the value of putting in a hard day’s work, and the value of building relationships with clients, suppliers, and so many others. It allowed me to see that work was an extension of the rest of life, and not a part of life that exists all on its own. The fathers I have admired are the fathers who say to their children, “Come with me,” and who welcome them into their day-to-day lives.

Please forgive me. Every father sins against every one of his children. He probably does it every day.

Sadly, sin is every bit as inevitable as death and taxes. Fathers need to be in the habit of identifying their sin to their children and asking forgiveness. But as I think back, I saw this and heard of this in so few fathers. There are only a few I knew to consistently identify their sin and seek forgiveness for it. As I consider my fourteen years of parenting, I see far too little of it as well. The practice seems so much more difficult than the theory. The good dad is the one who humbly, carefully says to his children, “Please forgive me.”

You’re forgiven. Just as every father sins against every one of his children, every child sins against his father. The father who asks forgiveness also needs to be willing to extend forgiveness. Every father punishes his child at times, but too many fathers punish in the worst way—by holding a grudge or by letting the child suffer as dad withholds forgiveness and reconciliation. Our children need to be forgiven and they need to experience the joy of reconciliation. Here I think of a father I know—a father I admire—who taught me that a good dad doesn’t just say, “It’s okay,” but always goes further to say, “You’re forgiven.”

Let’s pray. There is one father I admire whom I have only met in the pages of books he has written. Of all he has written, what has gripped me most is the ways in which he prays with his children. He reserves special time each week for each child and in that time he inquires about their souls and prays with them. That sounds like a wonderful practice. And in the rhythm of daily life with all its ups and downs he is also quick to lead them in seeking God’s strength, God’s help, God’s wisdom. Here he teaches them the best and deepest kind of dependency on the best and greatest Help in the world. I have learned from him that the good dad is quick to say, “Let’s pray.”

You can’t do it. We live at a time when parents are known for being extravagant in their praise for their children and assuring them, “You can do anything.” But the good dad assures his children that in the most important area, they can’t do it. They simply can’t. One of the great challenges every Christian father faces is in showing his child that behavior is a reflection of the heart and that the child cannot simply will himself into heart change. And this is where the gospel becomes so precious, because it begins with that inability, leads straight to the blood and righteousness of Christ, and then to the enabling of the Holy Spirit. The dads I love and admire are the dads who assure their children, “You can’t do it,” and who quickly lead them to the gospel and to the Savior who can.

From Tim Challies, “challies.com”, “Informing the Reforming blog (March 31, 2014)



Theological Reserve

GRACE. We hear the word. We sing of its amazingness. We speak of its fullness and its riches. Yes, it is a beautiful word. But how often do you stop to ponder its depth? If you stop to think about it, the word has been at the heart of countless debates and it has undergone attack after attack from those who wish to use it to cater to their own ideas. Why?

First, we need to understand what grace is. We've all heard of people trying to get in someone's good graces. When it comes to God, this couldn't be further from the truth. Grace is not something we can earn nor is it something we can ever work toward. Scripture makes it clear that God decides to whom He will be gracious and show compassion (Exodus 33:19; Romans 9:15). Does this mean people should fear for their life? Should we all live in terror at the thought of our destruction looming over us with nothing we can do about it? To this I would say yes and no. Yes, it is true that our very existence is held in God's hands. He could easily destroy the entire earth as you are reading this. Job understood that it is the Lord who gives and the Lord who takes away (Job 1:21). While it is true that he feared the Lord, it was a reverent fear and not a fear based in terror or dread. Whereas he understood His awesome power and might, he also understood that his God is a gracious God who is full of compassion (Nehemiah 9:31). So again I say to fear the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matthew 10:28) but always remember that God is with us and He will strengthen us (Isaiah 41:10). He is our help in time of need (Psalm 46:1).

Many have tried to twist grace in various ways throughout history. Some have stated that there is a prevenient grace that God has applied to all without exception. Their reasoning for this ultimately boils down to the idea that God desires the salvation of each individual person. In an effort to maintain the doctrine of the fall of man, they state that God gives a measure of grace to each person so that they now possess the ability to choose God of their own free will. Unfortunately, this goes against the very teaching of man's depravity and deadness in sin. Not to mention it's found nowhere in Scripture. Furthermore, if God truly showed grace to each and every person, how is there still room to be gracious to whom He will be gracious? The response is that there are varying degrees of grace. I can't argue this point. After all, Scripture does show examples of God being extraordinarily gracious to some more so than others. However, when referring to salvation, we simply cannot make a solid case for this claim. God will be gracious to whom He will be gracious and He will show compassion to whom He will show compassion. However, we must always remember that God is good and worthy of our praise.

Another way in which grace has come under attack is in the form of abuse. There are many out there who readily see grace as inexhaustible yet seem to be making every attempt to tap the bottom of the barrel. They say salvation is the free gift of God that is given by grace alone (Ephesians 2:8). They say nobody can snatch us out of the Father's hand (John 10:28-29). While these two statements are very profound and very biblical, we must be careful not to cross into the realm of hyper grace. Such people come in varying degrees ranging from those who believe they can live like the devil to those who claim nothing they do really matters. After all, if God is sovereign and His grace is sufficiently given out to all whom He decrees to give it to, can our actions really affect anything? Thankfully, just as God's Word is clear on the nature of grace, it is equally clear on how we are to live with grace. Paul battled much of the same assaults in his day. There is truly nothing new under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Just as there are now, there were then people claiming they could sin with no ill effects so long as they were covered by grace. Unfortunately, they were missing the entire point! Paul states it plainly when he says, "Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be!" (Romans 6:1-2a).

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"Theological Reserve" (cont'd)

We are to cherish the biblical teachings of grace, not because we are to abuse it but because it should humble us. Romans 5:6 tells us Christ died for those who were helpless. In verse 8, it goes on to say that God demonstrated His love toward us. He graciously gave his Son as the atoning sacrifice for those whom He chose to show compassion. Let us never forget this. Apart from the perfect work of Christ, his death on the cross, and his defeat of death in the resurrection, there is no newness of life. Apart from God's grace in orchestrating this act of mercy, there is nothing but death. However, in His grace, He lavishes His love upon us that we could be called sons of God (1 John 3:1). Why would we ever desire to abuse such a gift?

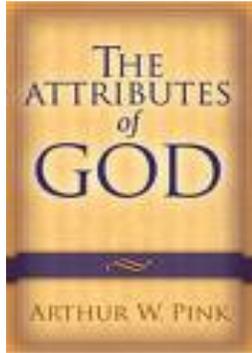
Romans 6:5-7, NASB

For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.

In Christ,
Travis Rogers



Recommended Reading



The Attributes of God

by **Arthur W. Pink**

Baker Book House (1975)

Reviewed by: Travis Rogers

God is love but He is so much more than just that.

This book focuses in depth on those attributes of God that we rarely think about. Filling these pages, Pink covers the solitariness, decrees, foreknowledge, supremacy, sovereignty, immutability, holiness, power, faithfulness, goodness, patience, grace, mercy, love, wrath, and contemplation of God. While only being a relatively small list in light of all of God's attributes, don't be confused into thinking this book is not worth reading.

Every attribute of God is important. We cannot just pick and choose the God we want to worship. God is absolute and unchanging. The more we know God, the stronger our walk with God will be. While there is no substitute for Scripture, this book greatly compliments those truths found in the Word. Rather, it is a strong companion that will show exactly who God is in the Scriptures. In classic Pink fashion, you won't be able to put the book down and will be amazed at how much one can learn while still being so easy and fluid to read.

Quotables

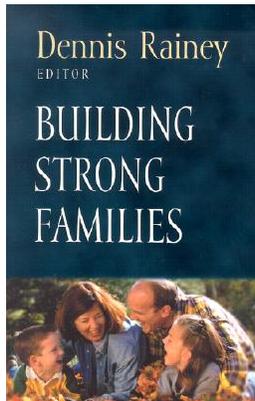
"All men are equally condemned in sin but, for reasons unknown to us and to the praise of His grace, God does not deal equally with those who are equally undeserving." -- *Iain H. Murray* (Spurgeon v. Hyper-Calvinism, pg ix)

"You may rest quite certain that, if God honours any man in public, he takes him aside privately, and flogs him well, otherwise he would get elevated and proud, and God will not have that." -- *Charles Spurgeon* (MTP, vol 52, pg 165)

"The apprehension of his omniscience ought to bow us in adoration before him. Yet how little do we meditate upon this Divine perfection! Is it because the very thought of it fills us with uneasiness?" -- *Arthur W. Pink* (The Attributes of God, pg 22)

Off the Shelf

(GRBC bookstore notables)



Building Strong Families

by Dennis Rainey

Crossway Books (2002)

The stresses of modern society are slowly eroding the foundations of American family life. What can we do to stop the decline? Offering a biblical blueprint for rebuilding our families, trusted teachers and noted authors offer vital insights into marriage, spiritual renewal, mentoring strategies, and more. Contributors include Dennis Rainey, John Piper, and Susan Hunt.



Corporate Worship

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!" (Psalm 122:1)

As we continue yet another year at GRBC, let us be reminded that we are here to worship a God who always makes good on His word. In Jesus Christ, God has promised us renewal, freedom from the hold of sin and eternal salvation.

Our main gathering for corporate worship happens on Sunday mornings. However, we have begun a new Sunday evening service which begins at 6pm. This service is a great way to book end the Lord's Day with worship and offers those who, for good reasons, cannot make the morning service an opportunity to worship with the church family. Our passion is to encounter the Great and Glorious God through Christ exalting, gospel centered singing, prayers, giving, and preaching. Our worship should inform the mind with biblical truth and inspire the heart to live for the glory of God.

If you have questions about our services, or would like to find out how you can serve in our worship gatherings, please contact Alyson for information about music ministry or one of the elders about helping with any other roles.

Sunday Morning Bible Fellowships

Biblical education is essential for the life of a healthy, growing congregation. In order for GRBC to better equip our congregation, we offer what we are calling Bible Fellowship Classes from 9-9:50am every Sunday Morning. These groups are intended to increase the opportunities we have to biblically educate people in every stage of life.

Children's Bible Fellowship Classes—we have five children's classes; Newborn's through age 1, 2's and 3's, Pre-K through K, 1st through 3rd grades and fourth through sixth grades. Our CBF classes all meet upstairs in the education building. Our curriculum for the classes is "The Gospel Project for Kids." This is three year overview of the entire bible.

Student Bible Fellowship Classes include students from 7th through the 12th grades and meets in the student room in the front of the worship center. Our student curriculum is "The Gospel Project for Students." They are currently working through the doctrine "The Thread of Atonement."

Adult Bible Fellowship Classes--The **Cornerstone Class** is currently working through the Beatitudes, and is lead by Roy Ammons. They meet in the Multi-Purpose Room #1. Pastor Joe leads an adult class which is studying the Pastoral Epistles. They meet in the Fellowship Hall. Doug Applegate leads the other adult class and they are working through the Gospel Project curriculum study on "The Thread of Atonement." They meet in the Multi-Purpose Room #2.

Community Groups

At **GRBC**, we seek to genuinely practice 'doing life together'. Our small groups are made up of 8-15 individuals who meet at various times throughout the week, with the primary purpose being the practice and pursuit of genuine Biblical friendship & fellowship. Here, we meet with our friends and neighbors to wrestle with and apply the truth of God's Word, to experience gospel grace, to care for one another and to serve our church and community. These groups also provide opportunity to care for one another's practical needs.

Doug & Katie Applegate's group meets on Thursday nights at 6:30pm. Ken & Nancy Butler's groups meets on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month at 7pm. Quinton and Jackie Rowe's group meets at 11am each Wednesday. Fred and Mary Preston's group meets on the 2nd & 4th Sunday of each month at 1pm.

If you would like more information about any of our groups please contact the church office at 427-5087.



BIRTHDAYS

Ildiko Baugus	4/5
Travis Rogers	4/5
Ryan Nelson	4/13
Christopher Kraus	4/14
Harmanie Thomas	4/15
Harley Mehaffey	4/18
Amanda Jones	4/20
Eryk Kurtz	4/21
Fred Preston	4/21
Rob Beasley	4/27
Aviryne Rogers	4/29
Nancy Butler	4/29
Kelly Watkins	4/30

BIRTHDAYS

Jeremiah Kugler	5/1
John Nemier	5/6
Grayson Veldkamp	5/11
Malik Stephen	5/15
Sheleen Mathews	5/16
Marla Miller	5/19
Cindy Beasley	5/19
Janis Blimling	5/20
Aubrey Krause	5/20
Rich Lipscomb	5/25
Dorothy Kelly	5/27
Rick Crews	5/30

ANNIVERSARIES

Dave & Kim Veldkamp	4/21
Steve & Kelly Watkins	4/27
Rob & Cindy Beasley	5/2
Doug & Katie Applegate	5/6
Willie & Margaret Thomas	5/23
Robert & Crystal Barnett	5/25

Important Dates

Every Wednesday	Ladies study (6:00 p.m.)
Every Wednesday	Men's book study (6:00 p.m.)
Every Wednesday	RA's, GA's, and Mission Friends (6:00 p.m.)
Every Wednesday	C.O.R.E. Community Group (6:00 p.m.)
April 20	Easter Service / Easter Egg Hunt
May 3	Ladies Tea (11:00 a.m.)
May 4	Alyson Gibson speaking (9:00 a.m.)
May 21	Haygood Homeschool Skate (1:00-3:00 p.m.)
June 6	GRBC Homeschooler's Celebration (4:00-6:00 p.m.)
June 16-20	Vacation Bible School
August 2-7	New York Mission Trip

The Green Runnings is a bi-monthly publication of Green Run Baptist Church.

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Submit information to Travis Rogers by the second Sunday of the month preceding publication by e-mail, in person or at the church office. The editor reserves the right to edit for content or space. May the Father be glorified in every word.