

Green Run Tidings



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Message from our Pastor



This has been an incredibly busy year. In many ways, that is an understatement for me and my family. One of my goals for next year is to be very strategic in what I do with my time. The wear and tear of this year's schedule definitely took its toll on my spiritual life and too often, my moods. Instead of waking from night's sleep feeling rested and refreshed, I often awoke with a slight sense of dread because of the new day's demands. Yet, all of those demands were ordained by my loving Heavenly Father and designed for my good. Sometimes we need a heavy work load to learn discipline and perseverance. Ease is not always as beneficial as it appears. Yet, waking with a bad attitude is never pleasing to God. And trying to pray immediately after waking, with a cloudy mind and tired body, proved to be unfruitful. So, some time ago, I wrote a short morning liturgy I keep by the bed so that I can grab it first thing in the morning. ***My goal is to lift my soul to the Lord before I lift my body.*** The liturgy helps organize my thoughts and saturate my inner-man with Scripture. It's written to be brief, yet filled with truth that renews my soul. It

only takes about 15 minutes to work through once you become familiar with the themes. It's not meant to be recited thoughtlessly. In fact, the point of liturgy is to put great and prolonged thought into how we approach God. But at 5:00am, I no longer do my best thinking (even though I used to). Remember that the design behind a liturgy is that it is an ascent into God's presence by a prescribed, biblical path. He calls, we respond. We confess, He forgives, cleanses and assures us of our place in His family. We lay ourselves on the altar, He takes the sword of the Word, cuts into our soul, and "rearranges" our inner-man to please Him and make us fit for service. We submit; He communes with us in Spirit, Word and Sacrament. We are now renewed, so He commissions us, sending us out to do the work (the hard work) to which He has called us. So here is the liturgy and the Scriptures that guide my early morning prayer for the end of the busiest, and most productive, year of my life.

STEPS BEFORE RISING:

A LITURGY FOR LIFTING MY SOUL TO GOD BEFORE LIFTING MY BODY (Isaiah 50:4-10)

4 The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple. 5 The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not disobedient Nor did I turn back. 6 I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting. 7 For the Lord GOD helps Me, Therefore, I am not disgraced; Therefore, I have set My face like flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed. 8 He who vindicates Me is near; Who will contend with Me? Let us stand up to each other; Who has a case against Me? Let him draw near to Me.

9 Behold, the Lord GOD helps Me; Who is he who condemns Me? Behold, they will all wear out like a garment; The moth will eat them. 10 Who is among you that fears the LORD, That obeys the voice of His servant, That walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.

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Message from our Pastor (Continued)

GOD CALLS ME

1 “Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the LORD has risen upon you (Isaiah 60:1).

GOD CLEANSSES ME

Behold, You were angry, for we sinned, We continued in them a long time; And shall we be saved? 6 For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. 7 There is no one who calls on Your name, Who arouses himself to take hold of You; For You have hidden Your face from us And have delivered us into the power of our iniquities (Isaiah 64:5-7)

8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. 9 He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. 10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. 14 For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust (Psalm 103:8-14).

GOD CONSECRATES ME

10 And if you give yourself to the hungry And satisfy the desire of the afflicted, Then your light will rise in darkness And your gloom will become like midday. 11 “And the LORD will continually guide you, And satisfy your desire in scorched places, And give strength to your bones; And you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail (Isaiah 58:10-11).

GOD COMMUNES WITH ME

28 Your God has commanded your strength; Show Yourself strong, O God, who have acted on our behalf (Psalm 68:28).

We expect God to bless his own work. He has never left any work unfinished yet, and he never will. "When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly; "and now, being reconciled to God, we may look to him to perfect that which concerneth us, since he never forsakes the work of his own hands. ~ *Spurgeon*

14 O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness, That we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. 15 Make us glad according to the days You have afflicted us, And the years we have seen evil. 16 Let Your work appear to Your servants And Your majesty to their children. 17 Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; And confirm for us the work of our hands; Yes, confirm the work of our hands (Psalm 90:14-17)

And yet, in so far as it was to have any success or enduringness, it must be God's work. "The work of our hands" do thou establish; and this God does when, in answer to prayer, he adopts the work of his servants, and makes it his own "work", his own "glory", his own "beauty." ~ *James Hamilton*.

GOD COMMISSIONS ME

7 “While I was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, And my prayer came to You, Into Your holy temple. 8 “Those who regard vain idols Forsake their faithfulness, 9 But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from the LORD (Jonah 2:7-9).”

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Powerful Ways to Deal with Temptation

Temptation is Not From God

Here's the first principle. God is never, ever the source of temptation, so we can't lay the problem at His feet if we fail. After Joseph fled from Potiphar's wife, she tried to lay the blame for her lust first at Joseph's feet, and then at the feet of her husband (Genesis 39:13-18). She told the other servants Joseph had tried to rape her, and then insinuated to Potiphar that he was at fault for bringing Joseph into their home.

While neither of those accusations was true, she was under the gun and searching for anything to justify herself. We all do this when we're on the spot; we'll blame others, and may even try to blame God. But James says, "God cannot be tempted by evil nor does he tempt anyone" (James 1:13).

God tests us, but the difference between God's testings and the devil's temptations is this: God sets up His tests for His students to pass; the devil sets up temptation so that students will fail. God is never the author of temptation, so we'll have to place the blame elsewhere.

Temptation Comes from Within

So where do we place the blame? According to James 1:14-14, temptation begins with our own individual desire. "Each one is tempted when, by his own desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown gives birth to death."

In thinking about temptation, I have in mind the picture of a hook with bait on it. The mother fish warns her babies not to be tempted by the worm they see dangling in the water, for if they bite into it, they are going to be supper for the fisherman. But little Freddie fish decides his mother is getting old and losing it, and takes a bite of the worm, the hook grabs him and he's history.

We, like dumb fish, get ourselves hooked by sin because we want the worm and do not heed the warnings that were given.

Temptation Demands the Right Response

God's Word promises us that we will never face a temptation for which He does not provide an exit, or an escape route (1 Corinthians 10:13).

However, this is not a promise we can apply passively. It's a promise of power to escape and overcome any temptation, but we still have to look for the exit. We need to deal decisively with temptation, therefore these five words come to mind:

- Deal with temptation immediately.
- Deal with temptation realistically.
- Deal with temptation ruthlessly.
- Deal with temptation consistently.
- Deal with temptation confidently.

The old adage rings true, sow a thought, reap an action, sow an action, reap a habit, sow a habit, reap a character, sow a character, reap a destiny. Don't wait until the little stream of temptation becomes a raging river of sin that will sweep you away in the end. The moment we become conscious of any sinful thought or desire, we need to ask God to help us reject the suggestion and dismiss it.

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Powerful Ways to Deal with Temptation (Continued)

God told Cain, 'sin is crouching at your door, it desires to have you' (Genesis 4:7). So, in dealing with sin, we must understand the gravity of sin and its power. Jesus understood the reality of sin, which is why his response to temptation is so ruthless (Mark 9:43-47). He knew that to resist sin, was to respond radically to temptation, not to flirt with it, therefore he established for himself a pattern of resistance, which enabled him to resist the second, third and fourth time he was tempted (Matthew 4).

Our confidence in dealing with temptation ultimately comes from Christ (1 Corinthians 10:13). None of us have ever given into temptation because there was no way of escape. God always has a way out. The problem comes when we close our eyes to the escape route because we have allowed our desires to overwhelm our reason and dismiss it.

A Word of Hope

If talking about temptation is a painful experience for you because of mistakes and failures in your past, here is a word of hope: it's never too late for repentance. With God's help we can chart a new course and set our sails in the direction of obedience to God.

The Lord says, 'I will forgive [your] wickedness and will remember [your] sins no more' (Jeremiah 31:34). No matter what has happened, you can leave your life of sin by the enabling the Spirit of God through the Word of God. His power to overcome temptation is available to us all. ~ *Alistair Begg*

Joseph was Safe in God's Hand

Remember that Joseph's grandfather was Isaac. As that old man sorted through his memories, he would have recounted the story told in Genesis 22 of how his father Abraham had been commanded by God to offer him as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah.

Isaac must have told Joseph about his feelings as Abraham raised the knife, the miraculous provision of the ram caught in the thicket, and how it was that he, who was to be the sacrifice, walked free on account of God's provision.

Is it not reasonable to assume Isaac must have said to Joseph, 'My son, if you will trust in the God of your great-grandfather Abraham, your grandfather Isaac and your father, Jacob, you will discover that no matter what happens to you, no matter where you go, no matter how difficult life becomes, God Himself will provide for you.'

Now whether or not it happened like that, there has to be an explanation for the way his boy went through his troubles and turned out as he did. Somehow, despite his extreme distress, Joseph must have been aware that God was still in control of his life. He was learning to say with the psalmist, 'I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living' (Ps 27:13).

Joseph understood that even in the exercise of his brothers' hatred, God was working. Perhaps on his ride to Egypt Joseph recognized that God had already provided for him through the intervention of Reuben that saved his life and through Judah's suggestion that he be brought up alive out of the pit.

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Joseph was Safe in God's Hand (Continued)

Perhaps Joseph realized it was only by the hand of God that his brothers had complied with those proposals. Nor was it by chance that a caravan of Ishmaelite merchants had arrived at just the right time for Judah to see them and suggest an alternative to the cruel plot the brothers had had in mind initially. Those traders had been there by divine appointment and God had determined they would make the decision to buy the lad.

The center of God's will may lead us into the eye of a storm. We should not seek to confirm God's will by the absence of adversity. Consider the staggering words written about Jesus in Isaiah 53:10: 'yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer.'

God will accomplish his purposes even though for the time being it might appear that everything has gone awry. There is no denying Joseph's distress at being sold and at anticipating the years of slavery and suffering that lay ahead of him. Those events are a reminder to us that, as the great pastor and author A.W. Tozer once said, 'It is doubtful that God ever used anybody greatly without first hurting him deeply.'

It takes the test of trials to make us useful to God. Some of us are not as useful as we might be, for in shunning the trials we have missed the blessings. We do not have the tender hearts that come from nights of tears. We don't seek tears, but they will indeed come from the Father's Hand. And they will come so that we might be prepared to accomplish His will in our lives and in the lives of others. ~ *Alistair Begg*

Bearing the Reproach of Christ

Moses considered "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen" (Hebrews 11:26-27).

How could Moses, who lived 1,500 years before Christ, bear His reproach? Christ is the Greek form of the Hebrew title Messiah, the Anointed One. Many Old Testament personalities were spoken of as being anointed for special service to the Lord. Some have suggested that Moses was thinking of himself as a type of messiah, for he delivered his people from the Egyptian bondage. They would translate verse 26 as, "Considering the reproach of his own messiahship as God's deliverer."

However, it seems best to see this verse as a reference to Jesus Himself, the future great Deliverer. We don't know how much knowledge Moses had of Jesus, but certainly it was more than Abraham, of whom Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad" (John 8:56).

The Messiah has always been identified with His people. When they suffer for righteousness' sake, they suffer in His place. That's why David said, "The reproaches of those who reproach Thee have fallen on me" (Psalm 69:9). Speaking from a New Testament perspective, Paul made a similar statement: "I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus" (Galatians 6:17).

There's also a sense in which Christ suffers with His people. When Jesus confronted Paul, who was heavily persecuting the church, He said, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? . . . I am Jesus whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9:4-5).

Moses chose to turn his back on Pharaoh's household and identify with God's people because he knew that suffering for Christ was far better than enjoying the riches of Egypt. At some point in time you too will be persecuted for Christ's sake (2 Timothy 3:12), so be prepared. When that time comes, follow Moses' example of faith and courage, knowing that God will be your shield and your reward (cf. Genesis 15:1). ~ *Dr. John MacArthur*

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Dealing With Disappointment

A lesson we learn from Joseph's time spent in the dungeon deals with disappointment and unfulfilled hopes. Have you ever been disappointed by events or people? Ever had desires and dreams and hopes that went unfulfilled? We've all had them. They are part of the package called life.

From the human standpoint, Joseph's life up to this point could be viewed as a series of crushing disappointments and shattered dreams. And in the dungeon in Egypt, he was about to suffer yet another setback: "The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him" (Genesis 40:23). I imagine that on the day of his release, the man grabbed Joseph by the hand and said, "Joseph, thanks for what you did for me. You can expect to hear from me, I'm your man, Joe."

Have you ever heard those words from somebody, and six months later your phone still hasn't rung? Perhaps someone you thought loved you told you, "I'm yours," and then left, never to be heard from again.

How do we deal with the disappointment of unfulfilled dreams? How do we deal with the fact that people just flat out let us down sometimes? Let's learn something important from Joseph.

We can only assume that there was a great expectation in Joseph's heart as the cupbearer was restored to his position. In those first days after the cupbearer's release, Joseph's spirit probably quickened every time he heard a rattling at the door of the dungeon. 'They're coming to release me.'

Putting it in contemporary terms, Joseph would have been saying, 'if the phone rings, don't touch it. It'll be for me.' But the first call wasn't for Joseph. Neither was the second or the third. And as the days lengthened into weeks and then months, Joseph came to realize there was not going to be a call from the cupbearer.

We know from Genesis 41:1 that 'two full years' passed before anyone came for Joseph. What a disappointment! But disappointments happen all the time. It's an axiom of life that people fail us and let us down. Things we hope will happen and expect to happen don't go as we anticipate. Even the best of persons will prove to be a disappointment to us at times.

Why should we be surprised? After all, we in turn fail and disappoint others. We leave projects incomplete and promises unfulfilled. This brings home graphically the words of Jeremiah 17:5: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength, and whose heart turns away from the Lord."

If you're relying on other people for your hopes and plans, your trust is in the wrong place—even more so if your confidence in yourself or others causes you to cease trusting in the Lord! People can be secondary causes of God's provision for us, but our ultimate confidence must be in Him. Anything less than this will lead us to great disappointment and pain.

How did Joseph handle the bitter disappointment of the cupbearer's faulty memory? Judging by Joseph's conduct two years later, he kept his confidence anchored in God. If anyone had learned that people often disappoint, it was our man in Egypt. ~ *Alistair Begg*

The Mystery of the Holy Spirit

The flesh is not merely weak with respect to the power of rebirth. It is utterly impotent. It has no power whatever to effect rebirth. It cannot aid or enhance the Spirit's work. All that the flesh yields is more flesh. It cannot yield an ounce of Spirit. The nothing is not a little something. ~ *Dr. R.C. Sproul, Sr.*

Green Run Tidings

Living in Evil Days

“Making the most of your time, because the days are evil.” - Ephesians 5:16

Evil days call for good behavior.

The days we live in are certainly full of evil. Read any newspaper, and you’ll know what I mean. Can you imagine how it breaks God’s heart to create a perfect world, filled with every good thing, and then see it become as corrupt, debauched, and vile as it is today? Can you imagine how it must be for God to watch Christians who, in the midst of this evil world, are given opportunities to do good, yet bypass them without notice? The days are evil, and God gives us these opportunities to make things happen that matter—to fill up at least one moment of every day with something good, something righteous, something for Him.

“Because the days are evil,” the apostle Paul says in Ephesians 5:16, it’s important to walk wisely and make the most of our time. When opportunities for goodness do come, we should seize them. When God gives us an occasion to glorify Him (which in turn will bring a blessing on us), we must take the opportunity for His name’s sake. We must seize it in the midst of an evil day.

When I think of how God’s heart is broken over the evil of a world that He made for His own glory, I say to myself, If God gives me one small opportunity in the midst of an evil day to do something good, something to honor Him, or something to glorify Him, I’m going to grab that opportunity. Since the days are evil and it seems as though goodness is so scarce, you and I need to take every opportunity we can for manifesting goodness. ~ **Dr. John MacArthur**

Ever Ready

...and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. — 1 Peter 3:15

We are told always to be ready. In a sense, Peter’s motto is much like that of the Boy Scouts—“Be prepared.” Our preparation is to make us ready to give a defense and a reason for the hope that is in us. If we are dragged before magistrates, if we are on trial for our faith, we are to be prepared to say why we believe what we believe. If your neighbor says, “I notice that you are a Christian. What is it that you believe?” are you ready to explain not only what you believe but why you believe it?

Some Christians tell those who inquire that we simply take a leap of faith with no bother about the credibility or the rational character of the truth claims of the Bible, but that response goes against the teaching of this text. The only leap of faith we are to take is out of the darkness and into the light. When we become Christians, we do not leave our mind in the parking lot. We are called to think according to the Word of God, to seek the mind of Christ and an understanding of the things set forth in sacred Scripture. The Bible is a big book, and every bit of it, I believe, has been inspired by God the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, the author of this Book is God. He gave it to us to be understood, and we cannot understand it if we close our mind to the careful study of it.

Peter says that we are to stand ready to give what the English translation calls “a defense” to everyone who asks for a reason for our hope. The Greek word translated “defense” is *apologia*, which may be translated as “apology.” Every Christian is to be prepared to give an apology to all. This does not mean that we are to apologize to people—“Please, excuse me for being a Christian; I’m sorry that I’m so irrational; I just can’t help it”; it means that we are to give a defense. ~ **Dr. R.C. Sproul, Sr.**

Green Run Tidings

Ex Nihilo Nihil Fit ("Out of Nothing, Nothing Comes")

Either there is a God who created the universe and sovereignly rules His creation, or everything was caused by blind chance. The two ideas are mutually exclusive. If God rules, there's no room for chance. Make chance the cause of the universe, and you have effectively done away with God.

As a matter of fact, if chance as a determinative force or a cause exists even in the frailest form, God has been dethroned. The sovereignty of God and chance are inherently incompatible. If chance causes or determines anything, God is not truly God.

But again, chance is not a force. Chance cannot make anything happen. Chance is nothing. It simply does not exist. And therefore it has no power to do anything. It cannot be the cause of any effect. It is an imaginary hocus-pocus. It is contrary to every law of science, every principle of logic, and every intuition of sheer common sense. Even the most basic principles of thermodynamics, physics, and biology suggest that chance simply cannot be the determinative force that has brought about the order and interdependence we see in our universe—much less the diversity of life we find on our own planet. Ultimately, chance simply cannot account for the origin of life and intelligence.

One of the oldest principles of rational philosophy is *ex nihilo nihil fit*. Out of nothing, nothing comes. And chance is nothing. Naturalism is rational suicide.

When scientists attribute instrumental power to chance they have left the realm of reason, they have left the domain of science. They have turned to pulling rabbits out of hats. They have turned to fantasy. Insert the idea of chance, and all scientific investigation ultimately becomes chaotic and absurd. That is precisely why evolution does not deserve to be deemed true science; it is nothing more than an irrational religion—the religion of those who want to sin without guilt.

Someone once estimated that the number of random genetic factors involved in the evolution of a tapeworm from an amoeba would be comparable to placing a monkey in a room with a typewriter and allowing him to strike the keys at random until he accidentally produced a perfectly spelled and perfectly punctuated typescript of Hamlet's soliloquy. And the odds of getting all the mutations necessary to evolve a starfish from a one-celled creature are comparable to asking a hundred blind people to make ten random moves each with five Rubik's Cubes, and finding all five cubes perfectly solved at the end of the process. The odds against all earth's life forms evolving from a single cell are, in a word, impossible.

Nonetheless, the absurdity of naturalism goes largely unchallenged today in universities and colleges. Turn on the Discovery Channel or pick up an issue of National Geographic and you are likely to be exposed to the assumption that chance exists as a force—as if mere chance spontaneously generated everything in the universe.

One Nobel laureate, Harvard professor George Wald, acknowledged the utter absurdity of this. Pondering the vast array of factors both real and hypothetical that would have to arise spontaneously all at once in order for in-animate matter to evolve into even the most primitive one-celled form of life, he wrote, "One has only to contemplate the magnitude of this task to concede that the spontaneous generation of a living organism is impossible." Then he added, "Yet here we are—as a result, I believe, of spontaneous generation." How did Wald believe this impossibility came about? He answered: "Time is in fact the hero of the plot. The time with which we have to deal is of the order of two billion years. What we regard as impossible on the basis of human experience is meaningless here. Given so much time, the 'impossible' becomes possible, the possible probable, and the probable virtually certain. One has only to wait: time itself performs the miracles." Given enough time, that which is impossible becomes "virtually certain." That is sheer double-talk. And it perfectly illustrates the blind faith that underlies naturalistic religion. There is no viable explanation of the universe without God. So many immense and intricate wonders could not exist without a Designer. There's only one possible explanation for it all, and that is the creative power of an all-wise God. He created and sustains the universe, and He gives meaning to it. And without Him, there is ultimately no meaning in anything.

Without Him, we are left with only the notion that everything emerged from nothing without a cause and without any reason. Without Him, we are stuck with that absurd formula of the evolutionist: Nothing times nobody equals everything. ~ *Dr. John MacArthur*

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What is the Regulative Principle of Worship?

The Regulative Principle of Worship is simple enough. It affirms that Christians ought only to incorporate into their worship those things that God has expressly commanded. The locus classicus for this perspective is Leviticus 10, where Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Levi are struck dead by God for offering “strange fire” before the Lord. The principle is both historical and sound. Its application, however, has often proved to be problematic.

The Bible does indeed give a detailed explanation on exactly how God demands to be worshipped. The challenge is that this explanation is given in the Old Testament, prior to the coming of Christ. The Bible tells us what sacrifices should be brought, how they should be killed, how they should be cut up, how they should be cooked, and who should eat what. In the New Testament all we have are scattered mentions of what the saints actually did when they gathered together.

Because we rightly affirm that Jesus was the once for all sacrifice, and to go back to the shadows would be to deny His coming (see the book of Hebrews), we are left in something of a pickle. We can't follow the Old Testament requirements, and the New Testament doesn't contain a clear order of worship. Some solve the dilemma by building what might be called a Frankenstein model of worship. Like Dr. Frankenstein's monster, a part of the service is taken from here (where the saints are said to take up a collection) another part from this other text (where they saints are said to celebrate the Lord's Supper), and still another from this third place, where we see preaching going on.

This patchwork approach, for all there is to commend it, has a few disadvantages. First, like Frankenstein's monster, it is clumsy. There can be precious little beauty and flow from a service of disparate parts forced together. Second, while it happily avoids the bloody shadows of old covenant worship, it lacks the unifying theme of the sacrifice. Old Testament worship was sacrificial. Though the once for all sacrifice has come, He left us with a fitting ways to remain sacrificial, while not going back to the shadows, while no longer spilling blood- we touch sacrifice when we praise, when we give, and most of all, at the Lord's Table.

Just as in the Old Covenant, we come to worship because we are called, commanded to appear by the Lord of Hosts. Just as in the Old Covenant we come in ourselves still sinners, and so confess our sins. On this side, however, the sacrifice has already come, and so we who trust in that once for all sacrifice are assured of our pardon. Out of this flows a sacrifice of praise, as we sing the glory of the Redeemer. Having been redeemed, we are in need of direction, instruction from our commander. And so the Word is preached. Just as in the Old Covenant we respond with sacrifice, standing to return to God His tithe, not because the tenth is His, but because all that we have, and all that we are are His. We respond to the call of His sermon with “Here I am. Send me.”

And then He feeds us. Then we share the fellowship meal, wherein we are welcomed to His table, not as soldiers, but as friends. Not as servants, but as children. Finally, just as in the Old Covenant He pronounces His blessing on us, and we depart to make known His reign, until we can come again. Here then we dance, we feast, just as we will at the marriage feast of the lamb.

The Regulative Principle of Worship is a wonderful gift from our fathers. We need to remember, however, that our fathers include not just the Puritans, but Calvin and Luther, as well as Aaron and Levi. ~ *Dr. R.C. Sproul, Jr.*

Persevere in Your Calling

Persevere in your Christian calling, if you are a child of God, and press forward more and more. Be careful to lay aside every weight, and the sin which most easily besets you. Keep your eyes steadily fixed on Jesus. Abide in Him. Remember that without Him you can do nothing, and with Him you can do all things. Watch and pray daily. Be steadfast, unmovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord. Settle it down in your heart, that not a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple, shall lose its reward, and that every year you are so much nearer home. ~ *J.C. Ryle*

Green Run Tidings

London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689

Effectual Calling - Chapter 10

1. Those whom God has predestinated to life, He is pleased in His appointed and accepted time to effectually call by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death which they are in by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. He enlightens their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God. He takes away their heart of stone and gives to them a heart of flesh. He renews their wills, and by His almighty power, causes them to desire and pursue that which is good. He effectually draws them to Jesus Christ, yet in such a way that they come absolutely freely, being made willing by His grace.
2. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not on account of anything at all foreseen in man. It is not made because of any power or agency in the creature who is wholly passive in the matter. Man is dead in sins and trespasses until quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit. By this he is enabled to answer the call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed by it. This enabling power is no less power than that which raised up Christ from the dead.
3. Infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, Who works when, where, and how He pleases. So also are all elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.
4. Others are not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may experience some common operations of the Spirit, yet because they are not effectually drawn by the Father, they will not and cannot truly come to Christ and therefore cannot be saved. Much less can men who do not embrace the Christian religion be saved, however diligent they may be to frame their lives according to the light of nature and the requirements of the religion they profess.

Take Comfort in Christ

Are there any among you who have tasted of this blessed change—who have put off the old man which is corrupt, and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness—who mourn over your own daily shortcomings, and sigh after more holiness, more self-denial, more mortification of the flesh with all its lusts? We bid you take comfort, and remember that Christ is still the same: He called you and gave you the witness of the Spirit, and He will not forsake you. You may waver and tremble: go forward in faith, and He will still support you. ~ *J.C. Ryle*

The Mystery of the Holy Spirit

When we speak of the being of God or the essence of God, we are talking about what God is. We believe that God is His attributes. He is a simple, unified being in the sense that there are no component parts that, when added together, make up His being. God is not made up of two or more parts. He is essentially one. That is why the church insists on the trinity of God. The plurality of persons in the Godhead does not negate the essential unity of God. ~ *Dr. R.C. Sproul, Sr.*

Green Run Tidings



Green Run Baptist Church

GREEN RUN BAPTIST CHURCH – SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

Anniversary and Birthday Celebrations for December!

Anniversary

Birthday

Quinton and Jackie Rowe - 12/11
Moses and Janet Culbreath - 12/22
Alan and Sandra Bullard - 12/23
Sheleen and Brady Mathews - 12/25
Roger and Sharon Elmore - 12/26
Robert and Lula Sawyer - 12/29

Ron Miller - 12/1
Peter Mitchell - 12/2
Donald Kurtz - 12/6
Jennifer Holley - 12/8
Doug Applegate - 12/9
Linda Hill - 12/11
Jennifer Allesandro - 12/13

Janet Culbreath - 12/17
David Applegate, Sr. - 12/18
Mary Preston - 12/23
Stephanie Kollock - 12/23
Sandra Bullard - 12/30

Making Church Attendance a Priority

We shall all do well to remember the charge: “Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is.” (Heb. 10:25). Never to be absent from God’s house on Sundays, without good reason – never to miss the Lord’s Supper when administered in our own congregation – never to let our place be empty when means of grace are going on, this is one way to be a growing and prosperous Christian. The very sermon that we needlessly miss, may contain a precious word in season for our souls. The very assembly for prayer and praise from which we stay away, may be the very gathering that would have cheered, established, and revived our hearts. We little know how dependent our spiritual health is on little, regular, habitual helps, and how much we suffer if we miss our medicine. ~ *J.C. Ryle*

What is the local church’s mission according to the Bible?

Proclaim the gospel. Jesus charged the apostles with proclaiming the gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:18-20), and he established the church to carry out that task. Preaching the gospel is central to the church’s mission (2 Timothy 2:15, 4:2)

Preserve the gospel. Paul calls the church a pillar and buttress of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). The church is charged with the task of preserving the true gospel throughout the ages (1 Timothy 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 1:9). It does this through faithfully preaching the gospel, refuting false teaching, and maintaining doctrinal and moral purity among its members.

Display the gospel. Paul says that through the church God makes known his wisdom to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places (Ephesians 3:10). Through the holy lives of its members and its unity-in-diversity (1 Corinthians 12:12-26), the church is called to be a vivid, living color display of the gospel it preaches.

<http://www.9marks.org/answers/what-local-church%E2%80%99s-mission-according-bible>



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Submit information to Walt Lawrence 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

Green Run Baptist Church be glorified in every word.