



# *Green Run Tidings*



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Green Run Baptist Church

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## *Becoming a New Creation*

As Christians, we are new creations. Our hearts of stone have been turned into hearts of flesh. In this metaphor, flesh is used as a positive figure, not a pejorative one. Where once my heart was cold and recalcitrant, dead and inert to the things of God, now it throbs and pulsates with spiritual life. Once I was biologically alive but spiritually dead. Now I am biologically alive and spiritually alive as well. I am a new person.

There is radical discontinuity between my new self and my old self. This radical discontinuity, however, is not total discontinuity. A link between the old man and the new man remains. The old man has been dealt a mortal blow. His total destruction is certain, but he is not yet dead.

The conflict of the Christian life is a struggle with sin. Sin no longer has dominion over us if we are in Christ, yet sin is still in us. Regeneration liberates us from the bondage of original sin, but our corrupt nature is not totally annihilated this side of heaven.

Paul speaks of the warfare that goes on between the flesh and the spirit. “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish” (Galatians 5:17). ~ *Dr. R.C. Sproul, Sr.*

## *The Struggle With Sin*

*“I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (v. 15). - Romans 7:13-25*

Although the Methodist revival produced much good fruit in the eighteenth century, there was one aspect of the teaching of John Wesley that was very unfortunate and that led to evil fruit. That was his doctrine of sinless perfection. Wesley taught that it was possible for a believer to become so sanctified that he could become perfect in this life—though he never made any such claim for himself.

Out of this Wesleyan error sprang various “holiness” groups, often associated with old-line Pentecostalism. In his rewarding but sobering book *Holiness: The False and the True*, H. A. Ironside delineates the sad effects of this doctrine. Basically, it causes a seared conscience, because people are told that as a result of a “second blessing” they are now perfect and are not to examine themselves. They become hardened to sin.

The apostle Paul had no such teaching. In Romans 7, he describes his own struggle in the Christian life, and he writes this as an example for us. He points out that within himself there were desires for righteousness, but also dark desires for sin. Indeed, when he least suspected it, the lust for sin raised its ugly head, and he fell. His ultimate and true self was renewed in Christ and hated these sins, yet again and again he fell into them.

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# Green Run Tidings

## *The Struggle With Sin*

There is no quick-and-easy answer to this struggle. Indeed, we shall struggle with sin all our lives. As images of the infinite God, we are very profound and complex beings, and sin effects us in ways we are not even able as yet to recognize.

Thus, the struggle will go on, but there are ways to fight sin. Paul says that “in my inner being I delight in God’s law” (Romans 7:22). The way to grow in strength against sin is to feed our relationship with Christ while starving our desires for sin. We starve our desires for sin by repenting and refusing to sin (an act of our wills assisted by the Spirit), thereby building resistance. We feed our relationship with Christ by studying the Bible, filling our minds with biblical truth through prayer, and spending time with the three persons of our God. It is when we look outside ourselves and our depravity that we find hope—when we focus on our Savior (Romans 7:24–25). ~ *Dr. R.C. Sproul, Sr.*

## *Set Apart to Die and to Live*

“When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer was about thirty years old when he penned these words in his classic work *The Cost of Discipleship*. Eight years later he was executed for his crimes against the Third Reich. The prison doctor who witnessed Bonhoeffer’s execution wrote, “In the almost fifty years that I worked as a doctor, I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God.” The doctor’s words could not have been more appropriate to describe not only the manner in which Bonhoeffer submitted himself to God in death but also the manner in which he submitted himself to God in life. In his life and at his death, Bonhoeffer grasped one crucial truth: To be set apart to God is to be set apart to die, to die to sin, to self, and to life itself — to take up our crosses daily and to live unto Christ and embrace the true freedom that only comes when Christ calls a man to die and live abundantly in Him.

Sanctification is a most simple biblical doctrine, yet it is perhaps the most difficult doctrine to understand. In one sense, sanctification is as simple as understanding the biblical language of being set apart, consecrated, or holy. And in another sense, it is as comprehensive as the application of sacred Scripture to all of life and worship. The Westminster Assembly provided us with one of the more helpful and succinct explanations of sanctification (WSC 35), still questions remain as to the precise nature of God’s work and our work in the Spirit-wrought work of sanctification. By grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone we are positionally sanctified, yet in some mysterious way, God has chosen to sovereignly work in us, through us, and with us to sanctify us progressively by His free grace through repentance, faith, and obedience that we might die more and more unto sin and live unto righteousness.

However, even though a certain degree of mystery may exist with respect to how we are sanctified in holiness, without which no one will see the Lord, we do know this: Our sanctification is established on Him who knew no sin but became sin for us and died for us that we might die in Him and live for Him in order that we might reign with Him without the power or presence of sin within us. It is only then that our countenances will reveal our genuine and uninterrupted contentment in the One who has bid us to come and die and live in Him. ~ *Burk Parsons - Editor of Table Talk Magazine and co-pastor at Saint Andrew’s Chapel in Sanford, Florida*

# Green Run Tidings

## *Submitting to Wisdom*

*“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments.” - Psalm 111:10*

### **Saving faith is obedient faith.**

The wisdom of God resulting from the fear of the Lord leads to obedience. When we fear the Lord, we submit to His wisdom and commit ourselves to keeping His commandments. In the New Testament Jesus said the same thing: “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (John 14:15). We aren’t always as obedient as we ought to be, but the pattern of our lives turns from disobedience to a submissive heart of obedience. First John 2:3 says, “By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.” A person’s claim to be a Christian is meaningless if he’s not obedient.

From a positive perspective, fearing the Lord involves obeying His commandments; from a negative perspective, it involves turning away from evil.

Job 28:28 says, “The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.” Equal to wisdom is understanding, and equal to fearing the Lord is departing from evil. Proverbs 8:13 says, “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.” Obeying the Lord’s commandments and shunning evil are dynamics that work in the soul of one who truly fears God. The fear of the Lord is not some feeling you try to generate within yourself; it’s the result of believing in the true God and living a life of love and obedience to Him. What about you? Does obedience to God’s Word characterize your life? ~ *Dr. John MacArthur*

## *Invite Him in*

Jerusalem at the time of the Passover was one great inn; each householder had invited his own friends, but no one had invited the Savior, and He had no dwelling of His own. It was by His own supernatural power that He found Himself an upper room in which to keep the feast. This is still the case today—Jesus is not received among the sons of men except when by His supernatural power and grace He makes the heart anew. All doors are open enough to the prince of darkness, but Jesus must clear a way for Himself or lodge in the streets.

On account of the mysterious power exerted by our Lord, the householder raised no question but at once cheerfully and joyfully opened his guest room. Who he was and what he was we do not know, but he willingly accepted the honor that the Redeemer proposed to confer upon him. In similar fashion we can still discover who are the Lord's chosen and who are not, for when the Gospel comes to some, they fight against it and will not have it; but where men receive it, welcoming it, this is a sure indication that there is a secret work going on in the soul and that God has appointed them to eternal life. Are you willing, dear reader, to receive Christ?

Then there is no difficulty in the way. Christ will be your guest; His own power is working with you, making you willing. What an honor to entertain the Son of God! The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, and yet He condescends to find a house within our hearts! We are not worthy that He should come under our roof, but what an unutterable privilege when He condescends to enter! For then He makes a feast and causes us to feast with Him upon His royal provision; we sit at a banquet where the food is immortal and provides immortality to those who feed on it. Blessed among the sons of Adam is he who entertains the angels' Lord. ~ *Alistair Begg*

# Green Run Tidings

## *London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*

### *Religious Worship and the Lord's Day - Chapter 22*

The light of nature shows that there is a God who has dominion and sovereignty over all. He is just and good, and He does good to all. He is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, invoked, trusted and served by men with all their heart and soul and strength. But the only acceptable way of worshipping the true God is appointed by Himself, in accordance with His own will. Consequently He may not be worshipped in ways of mere human contrivance, or proceeding from Satan's suggestions. Visible symbols of God, and all other forms of worship not prescribed in the Holy Scripture, are expressly forbidden.

Religious worship is to be given to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to Him alone. It is not to be given to angels, saints, or any other creatures. Since man's fall into sin, worship cannot be rendered to God without a mediator; and the only accepted mediation is that of Christ.

God requires all men to pray to Him, and to give thanks, this being one part of natural worship. But to render such prayer acceptable, several things are requisite: it must be made in the name of God's Son, it must be Spirit-aided, and it must accord with the will of God. It must also be reverent, humble, fervent and persevering, and linked with faith, love and understanding. United prayer, when offered, must always be in a known language.

Prayer is to be made for things lawful, and for men of all sorts now living or as yet unborn. But prayer is not to be made for the dead, nor for those who are known to be guilty of 'the sin unto death'.

The reading of the Scripture, the preaching and hearing of the Word of God, the instructing and admonishing of one another by means of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with heartfelt thankfulness to the Lord, the observance of baptism and the Lord's supper-these are all parts of divine worship to be performed obediently, intelligently, faithfully, reverently, and with godly fear. Moreover, on special occasions, solemn humiliation, fastings, and thanksgivings ought to be observed in a holy and reverential manner.

In present gospel days neither prayer nor any other aspect of religious worship depends for its efficacy on the place where it is performed or towards which it is directed, for God is everywhere to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; as, for instance, in the daily worship carried on in private families, in the worship in which individual Christians engage in secret, and in the worship of the public assemblies. Such assemblies are convened in accordance with God's Word and providence, and believers must neither carelessly neglect them nor willfully forsake them.

As it is a law of nature, applicable to all, that a proportion of time, determined by God, should be allocated for the worship of God, so, by His Word, He has particularly appointed one day in seven to be kept as a holy Sabbath to Himself. The commandment to this effect is positive, moral, and of perpetual application. It is binding upon all men in all ages. From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ the Sabbath was the last day of the week, but when Christ's resurrection took place it was changed to the first day of the week, which is called the Lord's day. It is to be continued to the world's end as the Christian Sabbath, the observance of the seventh day being abolished.

Men keep the Sabbath holy to the Lord when, having duly prepared their hearts and settled their mundane affairs beforehand, for the sake of the Lord's command they set aside all works, words and thoughts that pertain to their worldly employment and recreations, and devote the whole of the Lord's day to the public and private exercises of God's worship, and to duties of necessity and mercy.

# Green Run Tidings

## *4 Responses to the Challenge of Same-Sex Unions*

In the world but not of the world? From the very beginning, the church has faced the challenge of responding to external events, trends, ideologies, and controversies. By definition, the church does not get to choose these challenges, but they have been thrust upon Christians by the world. The question always comes down to this: What now?

That question seems especially urgent in light of the emergence of same-sex unions and marriage in the United States and the world over. How must the church answer this challenge?

To answer that question, we need to think about the speed of the moral revolution that has pushed this question to the forefront of our culture. In less than a generation, homosexuality has gone from being almost universally condemned to being almost fully normalized in the larger society.

We are facing a true moral inversion — a system of moral understandings turned upside down. Where homosexuality was even recently condemned by the society, now it is considered a sin to believe that homosexuality is wrong in any way. A new sexual morality has replaced the old, and those who hold to the old morality are considered morally deficient. The new moral authorities have one central demand for the church: get with the new program.

This puts the true church, committed to the authority of God's Word, in a very difficult cultural position. Put simply, we cannot join the larger culture in normalizing homosexuality and restructuring society to match this new morality. Recognizing same-sex unions and legalizing same-sex marriage is central to this project.

Liberal churches and denominations are joining the project, some more quickly and eagerly than others. The cultural pressure is formidable, and only churches that are truly committed to Scripture will withstand the pressure to accommodate themselves and their message to the new morality.

What, then, is the true church to do?

**First**, we must stand without compromise on the authority of the Bible and the principles of sexual conduct and morality that God has revealed so clearly in His Word. The Bible's sexual morality is grounded in the creation of humanity in God's image; we are created as male and female and given the gift of sex within the marriage covenant — and only within the marriage covenant between one man and one woman for as long they both shall live.

The easiest way to summarize the Bible's teaching on sexuality is to begin with God's blessing of sex only within the marriage covenant between a man and a woman. Then, just remember that sex outside of that covenant relationship, whatever its form or expression, is explicitly forbidden. Christians know that these prohibitions are for our good and that rejecting them is tantamount to a moral rebellion against God Himself. We also know that the Bible forbids all same-sex sexual acts and behaviors. Thus, we know that homosexuality is a sin, that blessing it in any way is also sin, and that normalizing sin cannot lead to human happiness.

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# Green Run Tidings

## *4 Responses to the Challenge of Same-Sex Unions*

**Second**, we must realize what is at stake. Marriage is first and foremost a public institution. It has always been so. Throughout history, societies have granted special recognition and privileges to marriage because it is the central organizing institution of human culture. Marriage regulates relationships, sexuality, human reproduction, lineage, kinship, and family structure. But marriage has also performed another crucial function — it has regulated morality.

This is why the challenge of same sex unions is so urgent and important. Redefining marriage is never simply about marriage. It leads to the redefinition of reproduction and parenthood, produces a legal revolution with vast consequences, replaces an old social order with something completely new, and forces the adoption of a new morality. This last point is especially important. Marriage teaches morality by its very centrality to the culture. With a new concept of marriage comes a new morality, enforced by incredible social pressure and, eventually, legal threats.

**Third**, we must act quickly to teach Christians the truth about marriage and God's plan for sexuality in all its fullness and beauty. We must develop pastoral approaches that are faithful to Scripture and arm this generation of believers to withstand the cultural pressure and respond in ways that are truly Christian.

**Fourth**, and most important, this challenge must drive us to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Christians must be the first to understand this challenge in light of the gospel. After all, we know spiritual rebellion when we see it, for we ourselves were rebels before God's grace conquered us. We know what moral confusion means because without the light of God's Word, we are just as confused.

There is no rescue from the self-deception of sin except for the salvation that is ours in Jesus Christ. While doing everything else required of us in this challenge, the faithful church must center its energies on the one thing that we know we must do above all else — preach, teach, and live the gospel of Jesus Christ. ~ **Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr.** - *President of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*

## *How much weight should our opposition to abortion carry in our voting decisions?*

How much weight should our opposition to abortion carry in our voting decisions?

God calls us to think His thoughts after Him. That means all of His thoughts. That is, we ought to have a sound and biblical view on everything the Bible touches on. Where it touches on political issues, we are called, again to have sound biblical views. We need to think biblically about what is just war and what is not. We need to think faithfully about taxation, and the size and scope of government. We need to think through what obligation, if any the state has to protect property, to protect our lives.

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# Green Run Tidings

## *How much weight should our opposition to abortion carry in our voting decisions?*

That said, there are precious few things that frustrate me more about the evangelical right than its utter foolishness with respect to proportion politically. We bundle together this issue and that, everything from tax rates to school vouchers to flag burning to abortion, and call it “family values.” There is a right and a wrong answer on all these issues. But abortion is not like any of the others. It stands out all on its own. In a hundred years, the Christian church will not hang its head in shame that it did so little to pass a Constitutional Amendment against the burning of the flag. In a hundred years, no elderly Christian will be looked at with suspicion by the younger generation because they didn’t do more to lower the tax rate. In a hundred years, if God should be so gracious, we will be looked upon as that godless generation of the church that watched tens of millions of babies go to their deaths. Indeed, we’ll be remembered as those “Christians” who elected men to office who believed that the state ought to protect the rights of some mothers to murder their babies.

It is unfair to draw too tight a comparison between abortion in America and the Holocaust in Nazi Germany. There are significant differences. **First**, the Holocaust was carried out, by and large, in secret. The rank and file Germans had no idea what was going on. We, on the other hand, every last one of us, woke up today knowing that four thousand babies would die today. We, on the other hand, have four thousand mothers, every day, who knowingly do this. We, on the other hand, have four thousand fathers, boyfriends and husbands who every day encourage this. The Holocaust lasted roughly ten years, and the Nazi’s killed roughly six million people. We, on the other hand, have been at this for 35 years, and have killed more than fifty million babies. It is an unfair comparison, unfair to the Nazis. We are far worse monsters.

How much weight should our opposition carry? I have purposed in my heart that I would never vote for a man for any office that is not committed to using every power at his disposal to protect and defend every unborn child. Never! Ever! If every Christian would simply make that simple pledge, then we would win this battle. As it stands, at best we vote for candidates who might nominate or support judicial candidates who might vote for this small impediment or that to abortion on demand. At worst, we vote for the guy with the R by his name. We need to get rid of our strategies, and get on our knees in repentance. We need to stop negotiating with candidates over the bodies of dead babies. ~ *Dr. R.C. Sproul, Jr.*

## *The Controversy over Free Will*

When the learned Erasmus of Rotterdam was commissioned by the Pope to write against Martin Luther, Erasmus chose a subject upon which he felt completely safe. In September 1524, Erasmus published “Diatribē seu collatio de libero arbitrio” (Discussion, or Collation, Concerning Free-Will). He was not expecting the thorough trouncing he would receive when Luther, in response, wrote “De Servo Arbitrio” (The Bondage of the Will) in December, 1525. Luther himself called The Bondage of The Will his magnum opus (greatest work) and B. B. Warfield and others have called it The Manifesto of the Protestant Reformation. Luther once said, “Others who have lived before me have attacked the Pope’s evil and scandalous life, but I have attacked his doctrine.”

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# Green Run Tidings

## *The Controversy over Free Will*

At first glance the concept of “Free Will” seems like a no-brainer. We make choices every day. When the alarm clock goes off in the morning, will we arise or hit the snooze alarm? Will we begin our day with prayer and devotional exercises, or by reading the sports page and Wall Street Journal? Will we speak lovingly to family members or display grumpy irritability? If we buy our lunch will we choose to eat at McDonalds or the Olive Garden? Every person makes decisions every day, many little decisions, and we alone make them. They form the habits that reveal our true nature and character. We are not robots. We can’t control all of the circumstances that touch our lives, but we must all choose how we’re going to respond to them. Then, as Robert Louis Stevenson once wrote, “Sooner or later every person sits down to a banquet of consequences.” That is why I say again, “At first glance the concept of free will seems like a no-brainer.”

But in several areas of our lives our wills are not free. In the physical realm, for example, I may will to become an NBA basketball player, even to become another Michael Jordan. I may earnestly will it, but my will is powerless to accomplish it. “Which of you”, said Jesus, “by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?” Likewise, I may will to run a mile in three minutes or win the Tour de France. But my will is powerless to achieve what I may will. The sailors on Jonah’s ship “rowed hard to bring it to land” to avoid throwing him overboard “but they could not.”

In the intellectual realm, I may will to become a scientific genius, a great orator, or a musical prodigy. Within the limits God has ordained for me, I may be able to make certain improvements, but I cannot break free from those limits. One man is given five talents, another two, and another one, by the predestined will and design of God. Any plans we make must be humbly prefaced with, “If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that.”

Likewise, in the moral realm, our wills are restricted. We cannot, by willing, make ourselves truly “good.” Joseph’s brothers “could not speak comfortably” to him. Why not? Because, although Joseph had done nothing wrong, they hated him for his dreams. Thus their wills were powerless even to be polite to him. Nor can we ever do anything truly good in the sight of God, by willing it.

In the realm of soteriology (the study of salvation), a proper understanding of what our will can and cannot do is most critical. We learn in sacred Scripture that, unless a person is regenerate (born-again), he cannot by willing see or enter the kingdom of God (John 3:3-5); understand the mysteries of that kingdom (Matthew 13:11); love God (Romans 8:7-8); come to Christ (John 6:44); or grow to maturity (Hebrews 6:1-3). “This will we do”, wrote the inspired writer of the letter to the Hebrews, “if God permit.”

Others have since written about the nature of man’s will. Charles Haddon Spurgeon wrote an excellent little pamphlet entitled “Free Will – A Slave.” A century earlier, to instruct people who tended to fatalism, the great Jonathan Edwards wrote “The Freedom of the Will.” But, aside from Scripture itself, Luther’s work is the standard by which all others must be judged. As Dr. James I. Packer wrote in his preface to Luther’s great work, “No opposing scholar has ever yet offered a serious refutation of Luther’s Bondage of the Will.”

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# Green Run Tidings

## *The Controversy over Free Will*

In trying to explain the nature of man's will to younger believers, I like to say that there is no external force controlling our wills. We are not robots. There is nothing stopping a person from choosing to love God and come to Christ. The gospel is freely offered to every person. But we are not free from our own internal disposition. Had God left us to ourselves, no sinner "*dead in trespasses and sins*" and controlled by "*the prince of the power of the air*" (Ephesians 2:1-2) would ever come to Christ. Thankfully, God did not leave his elect to their own devices. He convicted us of our sin; he gave us faith; he granted us repentance (2 Timothy 2:24-26); he gave sight to our blindness; he raised us from spiritual death; he set us free to come to him "most freely." Because we know this by faith and personal experience, we give all glory to God ... not only for our salvation, but for everything good thing we do thereafter ... "*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" (Philippians 2:13) ~ *Pastor Joe Gwynn*

***"So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." (Romans 9:16)***

## *What Is Reformation Day All About?*

On November 4th Green Run celebrated reformation Sunday. Because of inclement weather on October 28th our celebration had to be moved to the following Sunday. In our time of celebration we had a chili bowl, pie contest and a cake walk...to mention a few.

At the time, few would have suspected that the sound of a hammer striking the castle church door in Wittenberg, Germany, would soon be heard around the world and lead ultimately to the greatest transformation of Western society since the apostles first preached the Gospel throughout the Roman empire. Martin Luther's nailing of his ninety-five theses to the church door on October 31, 1517, provoked a debate that culminated finally in what we now call the Protestant Reformation.

An heir of Bishop Augustine of Hippo, Martin Luther is one of the most significant figures God has raised up since that time. This law student turned Augustinian monk became the center of a great controversy after his theses were copied and distributed throughout Europe. Initially protesting the pope's attempt to sell salvation, Luther's study of Scripture soon led him to oppose the church of Rome on issues including the primacy of the Bible over church tradition and the means by which we are found righteous in the sight of God.

This last issue is probably Luther's most significant contribution to Christian theology. Though preached clearly in the New Testament and found in the writings of many of the church fathers, the medieval bishops and priests had largely forgotten the truth that our own good works can by no means merit God's favor. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone, and good works result from our faith, they are not added to it as the grounds for our right standing in the Lord's eyes (Ephesians 2:8-10). Justification, God's declaration that we are not guilty, forgiven of sin, and righteous in His sight comes because through our faith alone the Father imputes, or reckons to our account, the perfect righteousness of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21).

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# Green Run Tidings

## *What Is Reformation Day All About?*

Martin Luther's rediscovery of this truth led to a whole host of other church and societal reforms and much of what we take for granted in the West would have likely been impossible had he never graced the scene. Luther's translation of the Bible into German put the Word of God in the hands of the people, and today Scripture is available in the vernacular language of many countries, enabling lay people to study it with profit. He reformed the Latin mass by putting the liturgy in the common tongue so that non-scholars could hear and understand the preached word of God and worship the Lord with clarity. Luther lifted the unbiblical ban on marriage for the clergy and by his own teaching and example radically transformed the institution itself. He recaptured the biblical view of the priesthood of all believers, showing all people that their work had purpose and dignity because in it they can serve their Creator.

Today, Luther's legacy lives on in the creeds and confessions of Protestant bodies worldwide. As we consider his importance this Reformation Day, let us equip ourselves to be knowledgeable proclaimers and defenders of biblical truth. May we be eager to preach the Gospel of God to the world and thereby spark a new reformation of church and culture.

## *The Dawn of Reformation*

It is one thing to believe that the Bible is the Word of God, but it is another to believe, or trust, the Bible as the Word of God. We're called not only to believe in God and His Word but to believe God—to trust God—and His Word. Throughout history, the visible church has always professed her belief that the Bible is God's Word. Yet, a cursory study of church history reveals that many popes, priests, and parishioners neglected to read the Bible themselves, and many didn't believe, or trust, the Bible as the final, authoritative Word of God.

Such widespread unbelief didn't happen all at once, but gradually. As men gained political and ecclesiastical power throughout the medieval period, they established themselves as the only authoritative interpreters of God's Word and, eventually, albeit inevitably, as authoritative equals with God's Word. As a result, God's Word was deemed superfluous, chained to the pulpit, and recited solely in Latin, ensuring that common, uneducated (poor and powerless) Christians could never access God's Word for themselves and, therefore, never question the authority of the powerful elite. Nevertheless, men cannot silence God's Word, nor can they contain the Holy Spirit or extinguish the power of the gospel. God's truth will always shine, however dark the age.

The light of the sixteenth-century Reformation was the reflection of the light of the Word of God as our final, infallible authority. The great Reformation slogan, *post tenebras, lux* ("after darkness, light"), captured the heart of the Reformation—the light of God's Word and the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the light of the world. This light of the gospel that shone brilliantly in Wittenberg and Geneva and throughout Europe in the sixteenth century had been steadily shining throughout all of history through the faithful remnant of those whom God had raised up to proclaim His Word and His gospel to His people.

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# Green Run Tidings

## *The Dawn of Reformation*

We can trace the dawn of the Reformation back through the centuries, from John Hus in the fifteenth century to John Wycliffe in the fourteenth century to Peter Waldo in the twelfth century. Waldo preached the authority of Scripture and worked diligently for a common translation of the Bible and its use among all people; for the ability of all Christians, not just the clergy, to teach the gospel to their children; and for the right of all men to obey God and His Word as their final, infallible authority for all of faith and life. By God's grace, he strove to live all of life *coram Deo*, looking to God's Word as the lamp to his feet and the light to his path, a path that led to excommunication but, eventually, to reformation. ~ *Burk Parsons - Editor of Table Talk Magazine and co-pastor at Saint Andrew's Chapel in Sanford, Florida*

## **LADIES BREAKFAST and COOKIE EXCHANGE SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2012 10:00AM GREEN RUN BAPTIST CHURCH**

Please RSVP to Alyson by December 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will once again take cookie trays to some of our community service providers. Ladies should bring a breakfast dish to share and 5 dozen baked cookies.

## *Above and Beyond*

Since the beginning of our project 'Above and Beyond' (June 10, 2012) our adjusted cost for renovations has been \$20,000. Our original estimate was \$25,000 - \$30,000. The first phase of the renovation of the rooms on the second floor which included an additional toilet and several air conditioner units has been concluded. As of September 2012 we have raised approximately \$9,600 for the project.

As of November 2012 approximately \$12,200 has been raised for our 'Above and Beyond' project. The majority of the electrical work has completed in the fellowship hall and work in two of the rooms downstairs has begun. Much of the sheetrock has been removed in preparation for extending the fellowship hall.

## *Members' Meeting*

Please mark your calendar for our next members' meeting which will take place on December 9, 2012 at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

## *Christmas Eve Service*

Our Christmas Eve service will be on Monday December 24th at 6 pm. There will be the reading of Scripture, a reading on the Incarnation, the singing of favorite Christmas songs and a time of meditation led by Chaplain Rob Nelson.



# Green Run Tidings

GREEN RUN BAPTIST CHURCH – SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Anniversary and Birthday Celebrations for December 2012!

### *Anniversary*

### *Birthday*

Fred and Mary Preston - 12/7  
Quinton and Jackie Rowe - 12/11  
Moses and Janet Culbreath - 12/22  
Brady and Sheleen Mathews - 12/25  
Roger and Sharon Elmore - 12/26  
Robert and Lula Sawyer - 12/29

Ron Miller - 12/1  
Donald Kurtz - 12/6  
Doug Applegate - 12/9  
Jennifer Allesandro - 12/13

Janet Culbreath - 12/17  
David Applegate, Sr. - 12/18  
Mary Preston - 12/23

## *Tracing the Development of Sin*

“You will be like God” (Genesis 3:5). This was the original temptation, the archetypal seduction aimed at our first parents by the Serpent. Created as vice-regents with dominion over the earth, Adam and Eve wanted more. They reached for autonomy, stretching greedy arms toward the throne of God, only to fall headlong into the abyss of evil.

Expulsion from Eden was their fate. They could not go back. Paradise was lost. An angel with a flaming sword stood guard at the gateway to the garden. This is the first reference in Scripture to a weapon of any sort. Before God gave the “power of the sword” to men, He gave it to the angel to patrol and guard the border west of Nod.

With the fall came a rapid expansion of sin. One son of Adam and Eve murdered his brother, introducing fratricide to human history. Then came Lamech, who celebrated warfare in his famous “sword song” (Genesis 4:23–24). Man used his nascent technology to turn the tools of farming into implements of war. The plowshare became a sword, and the call to subdue the earth was distorted into a conspiracy to conquer one’s brother. The means of production became the means of destruction, and human technology and scientific discovery were used not to honor God but to assault Him, by attacking His creation and His image-bearers.

Then God said no to the expansion of corruption and brought the flood, a storm of judgment upon the earth, a deluge to clean the planet. ~ **Dr. R.C. Sproul, Sr.**



Green Run Baptist Church

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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 be glorified in every word.