

GRACE FAMILY BIBLE CHURCH



E-NEWS



FEBRUARY

2006

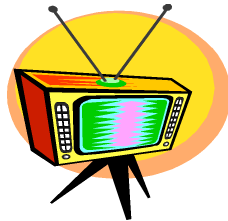
Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

We hope this month finds you well and rejoicing in your salvation. There's a lost and dying world out there that needs the hope you have; show the hope that is yours in Christ by demonstrating the joy of your salvation. Pray for the door of utterance to give a reason for the hope that is in you!

Yours in Christ,

Scott and Sandi

GFBC NEWS:



Grace Family Bible Church New Location - Grace Family Bible Church has moved to its new location at **2400 East Walnut Street** in Seguin, Texas. We praise God for the facility and the opportunity to preach the gospel of Christ and minister to the Seguin community. Thank you for your prayers, and we covet your continuance in prayer that the Lord use us and the building for Christ's sake.

Grace Family Bible Church is hosting a free concert with **Brad Davis and Berea Saturday, Feb. 18 at 7 pm**. Brad will perform songs from his latest cd, "This World Ain't No Child," and Berea will perform songs from their latest, "Frozen Lake," as well as brand new material. Join us at 2400 East Walnut for great music!

GBFC Bible Brigade meets each **Monday** night from **6:00 to 7:15 pm**.

Koinonia, a young adults ministry, meets each Monday night through the Bible Brigade semester at **6:45 pm**.

BlueGrace, our bluegrass gospel music fellowship, will meet the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month starting **Feb. 12 at 4 pm**. The 4th Sunday will be a performance each month at 7 pm. Plan to attend Feb. 26 at Grace Family Bible Church.

GFBC will plant fruit trees this **Sunday, Feb. 5** at 2400 East Walnut. A potluck dinner will be had immediately after service. Bring a shovel, food and clothes to change into!

UPCOMING EVENTS:



Florida Regional Grace Conference, February 24-26, 2006, hosted by Community Bible Church, Orlando, Fl. Contact Bro. Fred Bekemeyer for more information: 321/303-2480; fbekemeyer@bellsouth.net

North Alabama Bible Conference, March 3-5, 2006, hosted by Bro. Jack and Nancy Lockhart, in Guntersville, Al. Contact Bro. Jack for more information: 256/298-0277; jacklockhart@charter.net

Chattanooga Bible Conference, May 19-21, 2006, hosted by Bro. Steve and Mary Atwood, in Chatt., TN. Contact Bro. Steve for more information: 423/847-0768; atwood6406@comcast.net; understandingyourbible.net

Spring 2006 Bible Academy in New Braunfels, TX . March 29 through April 2, 2006. Features Bro. Steve Atwood and Mark Rumfello, as well as special music by Sealed and Armored on the Saturday night dinner fellowship at 5:30 pm. Contact Bro. Jerry Lockhart for more information: 830/620-4704.

Bro. Obed Kirkpatrick's *Limited Knowledge Series* of books had been compiled into a single book and edited by Bro. Jerry Lockhart, and it will soon be available. These books are excellent, and I've had the original printing copies for years. They've been a great blessing to me, and I know this compiled volume will be a blessing to you. Contact Bro. Jerry for information on how to obtain this book: **830/620-4704**; bereantx@sbcglobal.net.

PRAYER REQUESTS:



Obed and Linda Kirkpatrick
Nicole and Calvin Biesenbach
Alvina and John Anthony

James and Tracey Dear
Rachel and Mark Kensing and children
Brad and Rashelle Davis
Debra and Bruce Auden
Sandi and the Bible Brigade helpers
Lou Ann Laramie
Mike and Jean Schroeder
Ian Seder
Margret Seguin
Sherman Krause

FEATURED ARTICLE



Our Attitude Towards Giving

by Bro. Mike Schroeder

One of the blessings of being in a grace community/fellowship is the absence of the constant pressure to give, give, give. Those of us who grew up in a denominational church system, or belonged to one as an adult are all too familiar with this kind of pressure. The requirement to pledge a percentage of your earnings to the church at the beginning of every year, having the plate passed in front of you at every meeting, and the constant reminders to ratchet up the giving were all prevalent practices in the churches I belonged to. It's a very liberating thing to not have to be subjected to this kind of oppression.

However, that doesn't mean the Lord doesn't want us to give of our **carnal things** to those who **teacheth us in all good things**. Part of becoming perfect or mature in the faith is to have a right attitude concerning giving and supporting preachers and grace ministries. This kind of attitude can only come from being aligned—as is the case in every area of our walk—with the word of God on this matter. All too often grace believers develop attitudes towards giving that are more in line with their feelings than they are with Scripture. The following are five that seem to pervade the grace community concerning giving (or the lack thereof) to preachers and their ministries.

Attitude #1. The protest attitude: “I don't give to my preacher (or give sparingly) because I believe he ought to support himself and his family from a source (like a secular job or business) other than ministry contributions.”

This attitude is probably more prevalent in grace circles than most think, which isn't surprising because it's obviously presented in some places as being Scripturally correct. I attended and preached at a men's conference in Louisiana last year at which a man who preached there implied that any preacher who attempted to live off contributions to his ministry was tantamount to being a thief. His primary substantiation was I Corinthians 9 where Paul speaks of the “**power**

to forbear working” and to partake of the **“carnal things”** of the Corinthians, (verses 5-11) but states, **“we have not used this power,”** implying that he and those in his ministry group did not use the Corinthian’s contributions to provide for their living expenses. Later in the sermon this preacher went on to proudly boast that he did not take money from those he taught, but worked for his living in a business he owned.

This teaching is a good example of one who determines beforehand what he believes about something, and plucks a verse of Scripture out of its context in a vain attempt to prove it. Whatever a man preaches, he should always present the entire counsel of Scripture concerning the subject, rightly divided, in making his case—something this man failed miserably to do. In applying this principle, we can see that Paul taught just the opposite of what this preacher contended. In that same part of Scripture Paul goes on to say—using the OT priesthood as a precedent (verse 13)—**“that they which preach the gospel *should* live of the gospel.”** (verse 14) The word “should,” as it is used in a third person application here, is “nearly equivalent to *ought*...and denotes obligation, duty or determination.” When a man who makes the commitment to preach, i.e., to make his life’s work the ministering of the gospel, according to this verse, he is called to live of it.

Attitude #2: Another protest attitude: “I don’t give to my preacher (or give sparingly) because it appears to me that he’s living a little to well.”

Folks who take this position are always on the lookout for any largess in the lifestyle of the preacher. If this is detected, they cut back on their contributions accordingly or stop giving altogether.

In addressing the notion that a preacher who lives on his contributions ought to be poor, may I ask, where in Scripture does this idea come from? From Paul’s epistles? I’m afraid I haven’t been able to find any such charge from the Apostle. Sure, he had times in which he, no doubt, suffered deprivation (Philip. 4:12), but that was primarily due to those to whom he ministered—like the Corinthians and the Galatians--failing in their responsibility to supply his need, and he shamed them for the attitude that lead to their negligence.

In taking this position, I’m not approving those preachers who enrich themselves by perverting the gospel of Christ. By doing this these men (and now women) are guilty of filthy lucre and should certainly be opposed. Nor am I saying preachers should provide themselves and their families from their ministry contributions with lavish lifestyles and possessions. Are we not all called to moderation in all things? Certainly, preachers should **“abstain from all appearance of evil”** in their lifestyles. Having said this, I am not familiar with one grace preacher who is guilty of these errors, therefore this attitude—in most every instance—is absolutely unwarranted.

Attitude #3: I don’t give to my preacher (or give sparingly) because his doctrine is not up to snuff.

If a preacher is preaching something other than the gospel of Christ for salvation, or attempting to mix it doctrinally with the gospel of the kingdom, you shouldn't be exposing yourself to his teaching at all, much less contributing to it. (See Gal. 1:7-9) This isn't to say that you have to be in agreement with absolutely everything that comes out of his mouth to be under his teaching authority. What he believes about the gap theory of Genesis 1, or whether he believes the heavenly city of Revelation 21 comes down at the beginning or the end of the millennium, should not be determining factors in your decision to support his ministry. This is petty nitpicking.

Attitude #4: I don't give to my preacher (or give sparingly) because I just don't have anything left over to give (or, I'm too poor to give anything)

The problem here is one of when one gives. Is your contribution the first check you write, or the last? The principle of giving established under the law is that the giver was to give to the LORD the *firstfruits* of the increase of his land, not the last. This principle is not lost in the grace dispensation. God is not interested in your leftovers—He wants the cream of the crop, not the chaff. When you give, you should give off the top, and then trust the Lord to provide for your needs. When you give off the bottom, you are making the statement that you don't trust the Lord with your money. It's just this simple.

Almost everyone goes through some spare times. All the preachers I know who experience reductions in their contributions understand this is part of the territory, and adjust their lifestyles to accommodate the situation. Their primary concern is to keep the ministry going. For those who have the "I can't afford to give attitude," it is not so. When tough times come, the first cut made is usually the ministry contribution.

Attitude #5. I don't give to my preacher (or give sparingly) because I'm under grace, and there is no necessity for me to give.

This attitude comes from a wrong application of 2 Cor 9:7, which says, **"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."**

This simply means that, under grace, there is no necessity for you to perform your way to salvation, but there are certainly necessities in this life. Giving to the ministry is a "work of righteousness," and Romans 4:5,6; Eph. 2:9; Titus 3:5; et.al, plainly say that works aren't required in the salvation equation under grace. But this doesn't relieve us, as believers, from the responsibility of doing good works. Following right behind these verses in Ephesians and Titus are charges to do good works!

The Responsibility of the Body of Christ to its ministers and teachers

What is the responsibility of those in the body of Christ who partake of the teaching of the ministers of Christ, the stewards of the mysteries God, (1 Cor. 4:1), i.e., those men who occupy the offices of Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Tim. 3:1? Sighting another one of Paul's letters, Galatians, it is quiet clear from chapter 6 that it is expected of those who are taught in the word to "communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." (verse 6). The word communicate in this passage does not mean to only tell the preacher he's doing a good job, or that you are edified by his preaching (but by all means do!), but to show that you truly believe this by giving in a pecuniary (monetary) fashion. Indeed, those who are the partakers of the **spiritual things** the minister of the gospel imparts to them are to prove their sincerity through their pecuniary gifts.

But how much should one give? God only knows I would like nothing better than to give you a tidy little mathematical formula to calculate what your gift should be, but I can't do that because there isn't one in Scripture—not in the part that's written to those of us in the body of Christ,. There is only, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give...."

We are not under the law, so we can't extract a formula from the OT (as so many of today's Christian religions attempt to do), and then declare a curse on those who don't comply. It is children that have to be given exacting, tight little formulas to live by, and then be threatened with retribution if they don't comply. But those of us who are saved by God's grace are called to grow up and stop behaving like children who must be constantly chastised and reminded of their responsibilities.

I believe Scripture teaches that we need to have the following four attitudes in our giving if we are to "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" in our lives:

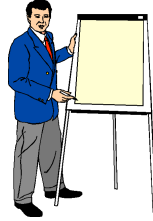
1. Give with a grateful and thankful spirit, thanking God for his abundant grace and the opportunity He gives you to participate in this great cause; **2.** Give heartily, that is, with your whole heart. If your heart's not in it, Folks, you'll fall out at the first hurdle you come to; **3.** Give cheerfully. Again, this won't be possible if your heart's not right; **4.** Give continuously and faithfully, not just when you're "fat."

We exist in a world that loves money, and the Bible says this is the root of all evil. Those of you who are presently holding on to one of those first five attitudes need to admit this is your real problem: you love your money. The best way I know to get over having a death grip on your money is to start focusing on your heavenly reward instead of what you have and don't have in this life. "**Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth.**"

Finally, your gift and your attitude towards it may or may not make or break the ministry you support, but keep this in mind: it will most definitely have a bearing on what you reap, now and for eternity. "**But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.**"

Mike Schroeder

BIBLE CLASS SCHEDULE:



Here are the current classes
I'm teaching in Texas:

TUESDAY NIGHT, 7:30 PM

4050 Fischer Store Road
Wimberley, Texas


WEDNESDAY NIGHT, 7:30 PM

2400 E. Walnut St
Grace Family Bible Church
Seguin, Texas

THURSDAY AFTERNOON, 4:00 PM

Care Inn
1219 Eastwood Drive
Seguin, Texas

THURSDAY NIGHT, 7:30 PM

Bawdsey Manor British Tea Room
in Bracken Village
18771 FM 2252 (Nacogdoches Road)
San Antonio, Texas

SUNDAY MORNING, 10:00 and 11:00 AM

GRACE FAMILY BIBLE CHURCH

Children's classes taught by Sandi Mitchell
2400 E. Walnut St
Seguin, Texas

