

December 30, 2018

SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

Of Princeton, New Jersey

Jesus Christ

For by Him were all things created,
that are in heaven, and that are in earth,
visible and invisible ...

And He is before all things,
and by Him all things consist.
- Colossians 1:16-17

Weekly Schedule of Services

Sunday: 10:15 AM Bible Class
11:00 AM Morning Service
Thursday: 7:30 PM Mid-week
Service

*Services Broadcast Live @
www.FreeGraceMedia.com/live*

WEB ADDRESS

Be sure to bookmark our website for daily articles and audio messages:

www.FreeGraceMedia.com

WEEKLY MEETING LOCATION	MAILING ADDRESS
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If you would like to receive this bulletin sent weekly
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Articles in this bulletin are by the pastor unless otherwise noted.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

10:15	am.	Bible	Class
11:00	a.m. Service:	Hymns * Scripture Reading * Message*	Hymn.
Scripture Today:	Ben M	Scripture Thurs:	Scott K
Nursery Sun:	Kris D; Joyce M	Nursry Thurs:	Cheryl D
BDays:	Cheryl—3 rd ; Debbie Doodnath—17 th ; Anthony D--26 th ; Cyril R—30 th		
December Cleaning:	Moyer Family		

SUNDAY'S READING IN PROVERBS

Proverbs 12: 18: There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.



THANK YOU!

Brethren, thank you for your gift to my family and me. We thank God for you. You are faithful in assembling to hear the gospel and in your love toward one another. Thank you for the giving of your time and labor to keep our building looking nice and all of the needs met. Almost on a weekly basis I hear from someone in some part of the country sending their thanks for the services and sermons online and I tell them it is because of you. I am especially thankful for the unity the Spirit of God has given you in your bond for one another and for Melinda and me. My prayer for us in the upcoming year is that we grow in our knowledge of Christ and in our love toward one another. You remind me often that nothing is as important as having our families under the gospel of Christ. I pray God will grow us even more in that understanding and make us even more committed to our Redeemer, His gospel and His people. May God make it truly a happy new year for you and your families and for us together as the body of Christ.



Here we are once again on the steps of a new year. But except for a new calendar, and perhaps a few changes in our lives, most things will remain the same after one tick of the clock transports us from 2018 to 2019. Still, may the dawn of the new year remind us of the true and faithful words of he that sits upon the throne, "*Behold, I make all things new*" (Rev 21:5). As we thank God for the blessings he gave us this past year and as we ask his blessings upon us in the new, let us rejoice and be most thankful that "*if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ*" (2 Cor 5: 17-18).



A GOOD RESOLUTION

Over the next week or two we will hear people declare their new year's resolutions. "Resolution" is a noun meaning a firm determination to do something. The verb form is "resolve." Each time you hear someone mention a new year's resolution over the next few weeks remember the resolution that the apostle Paul made, "*For I determined [resolved] to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified*" (2 Cor 2: 1.) That is my resolution while among you, not just for the new year, but always.



BONDSERVANT BRETHREN

When the Apostle Paul was under house arrest in Rome he had liberty to receive all who came to him (Acts 28:30,31) and, thereby, he preached Christ to many. It seems that on one occasion a poor young man who was vaguely familiar to Paul came and heard him and the message Paul preached powerfully moved him. The young man was Onesimus whom Paul had seen some years earlier at Colosse in the house of Philemon where the local believers met. Onesimus was a servant, perhaps a slave in that society, in the house of Philemon. In those days Onesimus had heard the gospel preached by Paul and others but it had no effect on him at all. He despised the faith of his master, Philemon, and the others who gathered there for worship and he deeply resented the comfortable position that Philemon occupied. Moved with envy and a resentment, Onesimus had abused the trust that Philemon had placed in him; probably he had stolen property and escaped from the household. Just as in 21st Britain where many vagrants end up in London, Onesimus had made his way to Rome and there he had found the lowest strata of society. We have no way of knowing for certain but it is likely that he heard another vagrant saying that he or she was going to hear a preacher of marvellous divine truth. In the gracious providence of God, Onesimus, realizing that he had hit 'rock bottom' went along and heard Paul preach the message of redemption in Jesus Christ. He had probably heard exactly this message from Paul's lips years before in the house of Philemon, but this time in Rome, just as he had done with Lydia (Acts 16:14), the Lord opened his heart to hear and receive the message preached. By God's sovereign grace, Onesimus was transformed into a precious brother in Christ, useful in service to Paul. We do not know for how long he stayed with Paul, but Paul knew that the right thing was for Onesimus to return to Philemon and be reconciled and restored, even though Paul so much valued Onesimus. So Paul sent him with this little letter, written (rather than dictated) by Paul himself. In it, he asked Philemon to receive Onesimus as a faithful brother in Christ whilst respecting the need to put right in whatever way Philemon had been wronged by Onesimus. We can be sure that Onesimus returned to Philemon with apprehension as to what might happen to him, but the truth of the gospel made Philemon generous in forgiveness to Onesimus, and it also made Onesimus keen to restore all that he owed to the man he had defrauded. The reason is simple; both Philemon and Onesimus knew that God in heaven saw everything they both did, that in Christ he had redeemed them from their sins and saved them both, Onesimus and Philemon, from just condemnation, and therefore what could they both do but render due service and gracious forgiveness each to the other? Is this not a graphic illustration of the transforming power of the gospel of God's grace, irrespective of social status? *Pastor Allan Jellet, Knebworth Grace Church, Welwyn Garden City, England*

HOLY GOD WILL RESTORE

Isaiah 57: 15: For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. 16: For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. 17: For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. 18: I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. 19: I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him. 20: But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

God is holy, the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity. His name is holy. But he who dwells in the high and holy place also dwells with his children in whom he has created a contrite and humble spirit. Our sin-nature is the opposite: hard and proud. When all we had was a sin-nature we could only hear the gospel as the words of a man preaching. Hardness would not let us even consider God was speaking, much less, bow. Pride would not let us confess our sins nor ask God for mercy. But remember, even now that God has given us a new spirit there is still in us a sin-nature that is the same. That is why not only must God give us a new contrite and humble spirit in regeneration, but continually, Christ must subdue our fleshly nature and revive the new.

When our sin-nature takes us captive, God contends with us by chastening and hiding himself from us (v17). But due to our sin-nature, until God makes it effectual in our hearts, he says we go on backwards in the way of our flesh. What a terrible place for a believer to be! We act like we did when all we had was a sin-nature: preaching becomes only the words of the preacher, self-righteousness reigns, we look down on brethren who love us, we cannot submit to God, confess our sins nor ask for mercy.

But though there is change in us, there is none in God. Oh, what mercy! God says that he will not contend with us forever, else our spirit would fail (v16). Oh, what amazing, immutable grace! God says that he sees our ways. Yet, he will heal us. He will lead us also and restore comforts unto us. Not only to us who are in this state, but God says he will even restore comforts to our brethren who have been mourning for us. (v18)

So, brethren, when our own sin-nature takes us captive or when we mourn for a brother or sister in that state, remember, God is holy. He changes not! As he dwells in the high and holy place, God also dwells with his child to whom he has given a new spirit *TO REVIVE the spirit of the humble, and TO REVIVE the heart of the contrite ones* (v15) He will not contend forever. Our wise Father shall make it effectual: he will heal; he will restore comforts. God will bring us to see, once again, that were he to leave us to ourselves, we would be the wicked who are like the troubled sea, unable to rest, only able to cast up mire and dirt. But God is holy! He shall restore and revive so that we praise and glorify him for *“I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him”* (v20)