

Deciding on Perspective

Some of us think that we just have a perspective and can't do anything about it. The truth is that we can decide how we will look at certain things and how we will respond to it. When we were children we always wanted to be older so that we could do this or that, and then after a while of being older we wish we could go back to the days of childhood innocence. Why? It's all about perspective.

The truth is that being a child was never as ideal as we remember. We have simply selected the good things about it and forgotten the negative side. As a child we idealized the life of adulthood and didn't know the negative side. There is no ideal situation here in this temporal world. It has good and bad in it. There is enough good in it to make it worth-

By Terry W. Benton while with moments of joy and excitement, and enough bad in it to make us not want to stay here forever. We need to learn how to "count it all joy" (James 1:2-4) when dealing with the negative because it has a way of molding our character with durability and temper us with patience if we choose to see it that way. We need to choose our perspective wisely. That is part of learning to be content and learning the best ways of dealing with what life throws at you. Some people handle things better than others simply because they choose to. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and wisdom is the basis of better perspective (Prov.1:7).



Classes This Week

Tuesday 10 AM Ladies Class at the Rouse's on "Giving God Control"	Saturday 6-8 PM 1st-5th graders at Savanna Spohn's from 6-8 p.m.	Saturday 6:30-8:30 PM 6th-12th graders at Jerkins from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
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Lisa Carter (Luke's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Virginia Box (Sarah Norman's grandmother)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Jamin Hymel (Chad's son)
Terri Moore (Joey's aunt)	Artina Hunt (Esther's friend's sister)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Ricky Tucker (Tyler's cousin)	Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Bernice Martin (Will Harris' great-grandmother)	Brian Myers (Kimberlee's cousin)	Eva Jean Cavender (Matt's grandmother)
John M. Rhodes and Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's Granddad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	

Graduating May 2016

Jon Hornback – vet school

- Dylan Bartlett
- Bethany Bradford
- Luke Carter
- Brettlyn Currier
- Kristi Garlock
- Abigail Gilbert
- Abbie Harrison
- Ali Ingram
- Dave Johnson
- Valerie Liverett
- Christian McGee
- Jessica Shaver
- Jacob Smith
- Casie Spencer
- Philip Stephens
- Hope Walker
- Chris Zeanah

News and Notes

- ☒ - Alli Luther was baptized into Christ last week!
- ☒ - Postcards are available to invite others to VBS, Aug 6-9, on the "journeys of Paul."
- ☒ - Please pray for Tyler Tucker's sister, Amy Clark, who had extensive knee surgery recently.
- ☒ - ken Sullivan is making improvements from his recent surgery.
- ☒ - Please check the table in copier room for lost and found items before the remaining items are donated.
- ☒ - Maria Aragon, Liseth's mother, had successful arm surgery on wed.
- ☒ - All audio is immediately posted on www.auchurch.com. Audio CD's are available in the foyer.

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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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Did My Generation Neglect the Grace of God?

By Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.



Thoughts to Ponder

For the grace of God ... has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age. (Titus 2:11-12)

I cannot understand how so many of the younger generation of preachers (sometimes encouraged by a few older ones) can talk about how woefully the generation before them neglected to tell people about the grace of God. They boldly speak about it as though it was a settled fact of history and that their generation is going to correct the matter by speaking more about grace and less about commandment keeping. As a qualified member of the preceding generation, as one man once said, "I deny the allegation and renounce the alligator." They have apparently not read the writings nor listened to the sermons of their predecessors.

All of my generation and those of the generation before me that I know said lots about various aspects of God's amazing grace. While they may not have specifically mentioned the word "grace" repeatedly in

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every lesson, they repeatedly preached in a way to convey the idea of grace. When they talked about God's sending his son as the savior of mankind, they were talking about the grace of God. When they talked about Christ dying and shedding his blood for us, they were talking about the grace of God. When they talked about God's eternal plan in saving all men (Jew and Gentile alike) in one body (the church), they were talking about the grace of God.

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Elders
Walker Davis (334) 703-0050
Larry Rouse (334) 734-2133

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday
Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM
E-Mail:
larryrouse@aubeacon.com

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Evangelist and Editor

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When they talked about the gospel plan of salvation, they were talking about the grace of God. When they talked about how Christians are to live soberly, righteously, and godly, they were talking about that which the grace of God teaches. When they talked about God's marvelously revealing his will for man through his chosen vessels, they were talking about the grace of God. When they even talked about keeping all the commandments of God, they were talking about the grace of God, because God has given all his commands for their good. (Cf. Deut. 10:13 – "and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?" (Italics mine -EB).

Surely, these critics of the earlier generation do not think that those before them thought or implied that any of the above blessings came from themselves. Or, that God did them for man because he had earned or deserved them. I never heard anyone say or imply it. Surely, they do not think that when one responds to these actions of God by obeying him, they were claiming to be the author and finisher of their own salvation and were seeking to glorify themselves. My generation taught that it is essential that man respond to God's acts of grace by believing and obeying his commands – that he is the Author of eternal salvation to all that obey him. In fact, were it not for the grace of God we would have nothing to obey – no commandments to keep – no salvation to work out with fear and trembling.

Admittedly my generation may not have mentioned the word "grace" in nearly

every breath (though it was mentioned far more that we have been given credit for by these folks), but that does not mean that we did not teach or even emphasize that we are saved by grace. We did it by teaching the various things that God has done to give us salvation from sin and to give us hope of eternal salvation in the world to come. The hearers understood that none of these things come by man's own efforts but by the grace or mercy of God.

By the way, when one sees believers "turning to the Lord" he sees the grace of God (cf. Acts 11:21, 23). Yet believers are the ones who do the turning (1 Thess. 1:9). The Thessalonians had been active and not passive in the turning. The text says, "you turned" not "you were turned." When one sees people turn to God, by their obedience, they see both the grace of God and the faith of man at work (cf. James 2:18)

Yes, my generation did emphasize obedience and commandment keeping in our preaching. We may have even mentioned it more often than we did grace. Why? Because we knew our hearers already understood that they could not be saved without God's grace. While we reminded them of this fact, they generally already believed it. It was obedience that many did not get and needed the detailed teaching about.

We suspect had if these young critics had followed more closely what my generation did say about God's grace they might not have become so fascinated with the brand of grace most of them think they have discovered by reading the writings and studying at the feet of theologians – especially Calvinists.



"Keep It Between the Ditches"

By Eric Reynolds

We can avoid crashing by watching the Scriptural warning signs carefully. If we find ourselves latching onto one Scriptural principle and ignore those that provide a counterbalance, we are sure to swerve off course.

"Keep it between the ditches," Grindaddy used to say as I pulled out of the driveway. As a teenager, I ended up in more ditches than I'd like to recall.

Very often, in life, there are ditches on both sides of the road. The more I study the Bible, the more I find this to be true in spiritual matters as well. Veer too far to the right or the left, and you're in trouble. Consider a couple of examples.

Grace vs. Works:

In one ditch is the idea that since we are saved by God's grace, what we do doesn't matter. Obedience is good, and sin is bad, but neither are connected to one's salvation. Open to pretty much any page of the Scriptures, and you'll find this idea refuted. (1 John 4:4 will suffice.)

On the other side of the road is the ditch that says "it's all up to you!" You can only be saved if you have perfect understanding and perfect obedience. Again, from cover to cover the Bible is full of examples of people of faith who were pleasing to God, and yet only One was perfectly sinless. (1 John 1:8)

The truth is between the ditches, our salvation is not of our own doing, and yet obedience and sanctification are essential. These two ideas are in tension, and defining exactly how they interact and where the boundaries are is not easy. The road is not necessarily marked with thick, solid yellow lines on either side.

Judging vs. Rescuing:

On one side of the road is the ditch of "every man for himself." It's not your place to say that someone else is wrong or in the wrong. Everyone should mind their own business and see to

themselves and leave others alone to make their own choices and find their own way. The problem with this ditch, however popular it may be, is that we are, in fact, "our brother's keeper." Not only duty but love demands that we speak up when someone is veering off course. (James 5:19-20.)

The opposite ditch is trap of being judgmental. In this ditch, it becomes my busi-

ness and duty to examine, critique, and point out every perceived flaw in everyone around me, even in matters of opinion. Jesus himself, as well as Paul and James, specifically instruct us that we are not to take God's place as Judge over each other. (Matt. 7, Rom. 14, 1 Cor. 4, James 3:12).

Staying between the ditches requires first and foremost judging myself and working on the logs in my own eye, but also having the compassion and concern to help my brother with his problems (Matt. 7). We also must have the courage and boldness to speak up when a brother is caught up in sin, yet doing so with gentleness (Gal. 6:1). And we also have to be okay with brethren having different opinions from ours, recognizing that we are fellow servants and not the Judge.

This "keep it between the ditches" principle applies to other Biblical issues as well. We can avoid crashing by watching the Scriptural warning signs carefully. If we find ourselves latching onto one Scriptural principle and ignore those that provide a counterbalance, we are sure to swerve off course. We must embrace all that the Lord reveals, which will shine a bright light on the true and safe course.

