

Partners In Grace



January 2009

Happy New Year!

Grace Chapel

Orange, California

December 21 & 28

Speaking on back-to-back Sundays I decided to do a mini-series with two messages from John's Gospel. The first was entitled, "Christmas in the Fourth Gospel." I showed that while there is no birth narrative in John, no mention of the virgin birth or Bethlehem, there are indications that both the disciples and unbelievers were relatively ignorant about these things and John didn't care to clue his readers in either. This suggests that while these things have wonderful apologetic value, the signs and sermons in John's Gospel are more than sufficient without those truths to lead a person to faith in Christ. Indeed, the Lord Jesus didn't even correct people.



On the second Sunday I spoke on "Jesus' First Words in Evangelism." We looked at six places in John (Chapters 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, and 11) where Jesus evangelized an individual or a crowd. In each case Jesus began with a focus on Himself and/or His promise of eternal life to all who simply believe in Him. While He didn't have some fixed way to start evangelistic presentations, He did talk about Himself and the gift of life. That modern evangelistic presentations almost never start that way is puzzling. We often asked, "What would Jesus do (WWJD)?" In this case, we know. We should ask, "What Did Jesus do," and then when we see that what He did, follow His example.

We enjoyed the people at Grace Chapel so much. Ricardo and Laurie, Jack and Irene, Frank and Babbette, Bob and Judy, Brad and Jill, Lester and Johnnie Marie, and so many other wonderful saints made us feel right at home.

Sharon and I were also able to visit with my Sister Pam, my nephew Bob, my cousin Michael and his wife Catherine and their kids, Andja and Nick. On Friday Dec 26th we had a graveside service for Mom's burial just for the immediate family. It was a special time.

Christmas wasn't the same without Mom. But it still was a remembrance of our Lord's birth and of His soon return. Come quickly, Lord Jesus.

My Mom's Death

December 6, 2008

We had Zane's funeral and burial on Tuesday, December 2nd. Then just three days later I got a call that Mom was dying. I flew out to Southern California, arriving at 10PM. I was able to be with Mom Friday night and Saturday morning before she died at 1PM. She didn't appear to be conscious, but we spoke with her and it is quite possible she heard us.

About a month before she died she commented on my article, "Some Essentials about Our Savior." The conversation went like this as best I recall. "I read your latest article," Mom said. "Is it really that simple?" "Yes, Mom, it is. Anyone who simply believes in Jesus has eternal life that can never be lost." "Well," she said, "I believe in Jesus, but I don't believe all that other stuff." "The point is, Mom, that anyone who believes in Jesus for his eternal destiny is guaranteed he will go to heaven and spend eternity in Jesus' kingdom. It really is that simple." "I believe I'm going to heaven," she said.

That isn't as clear of a testimony as I'd have liked, but it is so much better than what Mom had said previously. For years she had pointed to her works and said that good people go to heaven. A few years ago she stopped saying that. And then finally she indicated she believed in Jesus and she said nothing about any contribution her works would make.

I'm not sure she is with the Lord. But I think it is quite possible. She had a very full life and was in relatively good health and of sound mind and sense of humor right up to the end of her 96 years. I miss her much. I find I am in a sort of fog. But I have many happy memories and I hope to see her again soon.



GES's 14th Annual Grace Conference:

March 30-April 2, 2009
SWBTS, Fort Worth

This will be our second year at the fantastic conference facilities at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth. For those of you there last year, you know this place is fantastic for a conference.

The conference center has sixty excellent guest rooms, with most \$75, \$85, or \$95. There are even six rooms in Barnard Hall, a dorm right by the conference center, with antique furnishings for just \$55 a night.

If you prefer to stay in a hotel, there are many within 5 minutes of the conference center that offer a great special conference rate.

This year we hope to have people carpool together to and from the airport. If you plan to come and need a ride, or if you plan to come and will be able to take some people with you in your car or rental car, please go to our website and click on the link for the forum. Once there, you can post your need or availability.

You may get more information and register online at the SWBTS website, which you can get to via a link on our site in the conference area (www.faithalone.org). The registration fee is \$85 (or \$35 for students). We hope to see many of you there. We'd appreciate your prayers that we have a good attendance, that the speakers remain healthy, and that the messages are outstanding.

If you haven't reserved your guest room, we suggest you do so now. Call the conference center directly at 817.923.1921 ext. 8800. Make sure you indicate you are with the GES conference.

If you have any questions, please call or email us at ges@faithalone.org.



Notes and Letters

Mom's Passing

I was very sorry to hear of your Mom's passing. With Zane's death and now your Mom, you are dealing with a lot of grief and sadness. You can be sure of my prayers for you and Sharon. At times like this it is good to know that living by faith really works. God's grace is so amazing...

—DP, email

It was with sadness that we just read of your mother's passing on the GES website. We have appreciated your many newsletter updates of your visits with her when you got to the West Coast.

—HH, email

Zane's Passing

You are blessed to have had such a close relationship with Zane over the years. May God continue to bless your ministry of Grace in the years to come.

—MM, email

Nailed It In Last GIF

Blessing to you and yours! Great article (*Essential Truths about Our Savior*) in the Nov/Dec 2008 issue of *Grace in Focus*. You nailed it! Salvation cannot be any easier. Simply believe in Jesus and He will give us eternal life that we can never lose.

—RL, email

Grace on the Go

January

Jan 4	Free Grace Bible Church, Richardson, TX
Jan 11	Victor St Bible Chapel, Dallas, TX
Jan 16-18	GES Board Meeting, Fullerton, CA
Jan 18	Coast Bible Church & Church of Hope Dana Point & Laguna Hills, CA

February

Feb 28-Mar 1	Jansen Bible Church, Jansen, NE
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March

March 27-28	SW ETS Conference, Dallas, TX
March 30-Apr 2	GES Annual Conf, Fort Worth, TX

December Financial Report

December Budget	\$27,740	YTD* Budget	\$166,440
December Revenue	\$56,945** +29,205	YTD Revenue	\$161,609 <-\$4,831 >

* Our fiscal year runs from July to June

** All gifts postmarked by Dec. 31, 2008 will count as 2008 gifts. Thus final figures are not available at press time.

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