



And Also With You

CHRISTMAS-NEW YEAR'S 2016-2017

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Rearranging The Pictures



The Rev. M. Scott Davis

Someone recently told me that they rearrange the pictures in their home periodically when they quit *seeing* them. This is what has happened to many Christians concerning the Gospel. We have heard it for so long that we do not *hear* it any longer. It

is time to rearrange the pictures. This is why I frequently preach from the Old Testament since it is less familiar and retains that ability to surprise us with the age old message of the Eternal Gospel.

Savior is one of the pictures that we do not see anymore. *Jesus Saves* can be seen scrawled across abandoned walls in many Southern towns. I love the phrase, I believe the phrase, but I do not think we *see* it any longer. So let's rearrange it and put it in a different location so that we can discover again its significance.

Advent is always a bit deceptive. The word conjures up images of carolers, gentle snow fall, Lessons and Carols, Advent wreaths, and all the Dicken's trappings of this ancient and beautiful season. Then reality hits. Advent is the season where the Lord allows issues that lie just under the surface to erupt like some hidden geyser. This is called *sanctification* and there is nothing romantic about *sanctification*. Eating *too much*, spending *too much*, being busy *too much*, not getting enough rest *too much* all collide like the perfect storm that causes our coping devices to overload and cease to function. This is just

what God hopes will happen because it is at this point that we might just recognize our need for a *savior*. The moment we crack is when we are most open to receive help. Unless someone from the outside intervenes, Advent will only end in misery and frustration rather than *peace on earth and mercy mild*.

The word *savior* is the very word the angels announce to the shepherds. "Today, a *Savior* has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11)." A *savior* is one who *rescues* or *keeps safe*. This is what Jesus does best—*rescues* and *keeps safe*.

Growing up in the Bible Belt we are given the impression that *savior* and *salvation* are mostly about a person's eternal destiny. However, *salvation* is not a one package gift.

Eternal salvation is the big one that comes at the end of life, yet attached to it are many smaller *salvations* that God offers to us on an hourly basis. Christians have often only focused on the eternal salvation while ignoring or even denying the daily salvations that the Savior also gives.

Advent kicks up the dust to such a degree that we need a *savior*. The problem is that even good Christians try to save themselves rather than allowing help from the divine professional to do it for them. The default, orphan spirit within each of us raises its head, and we find ourselves in the bushes of Eden, stitching together fig leaves, while hiding from The One who can fix the problem(s).

Whatever has surfaced for you this Advent, give your fig leaves to God in exchange for the furs that He offers in return. Those furs come with a price. They cost a life, yet He is willing to pay the price in order to *save* you one more time. Rearrange the pictures so



DEC/JAN SUNDAYS

10:00 am
Worship
(nursery provided)
6:30 pm
The Union's
Workship Service

MONDAYS

10:45AM
INTERCESSORS
706-897-6381
6:30pm-Graham
Cooke Group-
Information: 455-
5940

WEDNESDAYS

10:30 am
Women's Bible
Study-Information:
990.2973

FRIDAYS

8:15 am
Men's Group-
Information:
751-5266

CHALICE BEARERS

Jan 1
Bob and Jane
Grafe

Jan 8
Becky Johnson
Jan Bogue

Jan 15
Susan Jones
Maggie Rockett

Jan 22
Janic Terry
Kitty Barksdale

Jan 29
Maggie & Julian
Carnes

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that you do not overlook the fact that He loves to help you and is waiting to be asked. God is not afraid of your sin so do not be afraid to ask for help. Saving is what the Savior does best! Have a wonderful Christmas Season, Scott +

Recent Steward Action

- Returned \$7,000 to Capital Campaign Account that had been used for contingency
- Purchased a Sound System for \$2,300 with Capital Campaign funds
- Set aside up to \$1000 in case of possible Sabbatical overage .



Use your credit card online for secure donation at visitgrace.net

2017 Officers

Receiving Treasurers

Karen & Wick Skinner



Distributing Treasurer

Sandy Sinclair



Secretary of the Stewards

Becky Johnson



Reflections on Grace Church

2016 By Scott Davis

Grace Church is now sixteen years old. Here are some thoughts about where we are—

- Grace Church Ministries better describes this work than simply Grace Church—it is a Kingdom operation rather than a denominational church.
- Grace sees itself as a seminary where those in the pews are trained to be better ministers than their teacher. "Everyone has a congregation."
- Learning to hear God speak is currently our primary focus .
- This kingdom work supports missionaries in Europe and Asia who are actively leading others to Christ.
- Grace's mission includes reaching out to clergy, especially those wounded in battle since healthy clergy make healthy congregations.
- Small groups disciple rather than merely pass on more Biblical knowledge. There are enough Pharisees already.
- Grace Ministries supports an adjunct congregation of millennials, *The Union*, and together both ministries are working to impact the spiritual atmosphere on the Eastern Shore.
- We are learning about the character of God—that He not only loves us but He also likes us.
- God has a tool box for each believer to use in ministry.
- We believe that church is meant to reach beyond itself. We are currently live streaming each Sunday and recording ongoing teachings.

Grace Church Ministries wants to reach out even farther in 2017. If you have been blessed by this ministry then we ask you to pray for it, share articles and sermons with others, and give to this Kingdom work! Merry Christmas! Online giving at visitgrace.net Snail Mail Giving: 817 Estella Street-Fairhope, AL 36532

January Retreat
Meet Victor Oliver, Sabbatical Interim, who will lead a one day retreat at Grace on Sat, Jan 7, and then preach on Jan 8.



The retreat begins at 9:30am with coffee and sweet rolls and a time to meet Victor, followed by teaching, sharing, and feed back. The retreat will end at 12:30pm in time for everyone to watch the playoffs! (No cost for the retreat.)



No church Christmas morning



Church at the regular time on January 1, 2017-10am



Happy Birthday

- 6 Jan Bogue
- 9 Hannah Roth Cobb
- 9 Howard Whittington
- 12 Sherlyn Culwell
- 19 Alan Pate