

REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

WHAT IS A PASTOR?

By Pastor Brian De Jong

Sometime late in the Spring I received an email from the “C.S. Lewis Institute” in Chicago. They were inviting me to attend a luncheon/workshop for Pastors. Usually I decline such invitations, but the speaker and the topic caught my eye. I sent in my RSVP, and on Monday, September 28 I attended. I do not regret it at all – it was entirely worthwhile and very encouraging.

The speaker was Dr. Kevin Vanhoozer, a professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. I’ve heard Dr. Vanhoozer before, and he’s an engaging speaker. His topic was “The Pastor as Public Theologian.” This is a subject I’ve long pondered, and I suspected he would shed significant light on this area.

The talk began with consideration of pastors as public figures. Dr. Vanhoozer suggested that our culture completely misunderstands the role of a pastor, and that many in the church are influenced by these cultural views. Pastors can be cast as corporate CEOs, as psychotherapeutic gurus, as business entrepreneurs, as celebrity entertainers or as political agitators. None of these views is correct.

Rather, a pastor is a shepherd who carries out functions of prophets, priests and kings. A pastor is priest-like in ministering God’s grace and interceding for God’s people. A pastor is prophetic in his proclamation of God’s truth, and application of Scripture to all of life. Pastors act like kings in personifying wisdom and providing prudent leadership to the congregation.

The heart of the presentation was the concept that a pastor is a public theologian – a servant of God who works with people in an effort to make disciples of our Savior. This is the Great Commission emphasis that unites pastoral ministry with theological integrity.

In making this case, Vanhoozer is specifically trying to correct a problem that exists within evangelical and Reformed circles. That problem says that all the “most intelligent” men should get a PhD so they can teach in an academic institution, such as a seminary or Bible college.

The less intelligent can be ordained for ministry in the church, and sent out as pastors of local congregations.

This real problem has two effects. First, it promotes a theoretical theology that has little or no connection to the church. The atmosphere in seminaries can become very abstract and impractical. The second effect is that churches are deprived of solid theological teaching, and congregations are “dumbed down” rather than theologically elevated.

Vanhoozer’s thesis – and topic of his latest book – is that we need our brightest and best in the pulpits of our churches. We need pastors who warmly embrace the title of “theologian.” That is not to say that we need pastors who are academic “scholars,” since they can tend to be out of touch with average Christians without theological training. We don’t want pulpits perched atop ivory towers, looking down to the pews far below. Rather, we want ministers who can bring God’s truth effec-



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Mnemonics...

- *Women’s Presbyterial, 3rd*
- *Worldview Movie Night, 9th*
- *Fellowship Supper, 18th*
- *Men’s Fellowship Breakfast, 24th*
- *Reformation Conference, 31st*

Continued on page 7

The Knowledge of God and of Ourselves

by John Calvin

1. Our wisdom, in so far as it ought to be deemed true and solid Wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But as these are connected together by many ties, it is not easy to determine which of the two precedes and gives birth to the other. For, in the first place, no man can survey himself without forthwith turning his thoughts towards the God in whom he lives and moves; because it is perfectly obvious, that the endowments which we possess cannot possibly be from ourselves; nay, that our very being is nothing else than subsistence in God alone. In the second place, those blessings which unceasingly distil to us from heaven, are like streams conducting us to the fountain. Here, again, the infinitude of good which resides in God becomes more apparent from our poverty. In particular, the miserable ruin into which the revolt of the first man has plunged us, compels us to turn our eyes upwards; not only that while hungry and famishing we may thence ask what we want, but being aroused by fear may learn [38](#)humility.

For as there exists in man something like a world of misery, and ever since we were stripped of the divine attire our naked shame discloses an immense series of disgraceful properties every man, being stung by the consciousness of his own unhappiness, in this way necessarily obtains at least some knowledge of God. Thus, our feeling of ignorance, vanity, want, weakness, in short, depravity and corruption, reminds us (see Calvin on [John 4:10](#)), that in the Lord, and none but He, dwell the true light of wisdom, solid virtue, exuberant goodness. We are accordingly urged by our own evil things to consider the good things of God; and, indeed, we cannot aspire to Him in earnest until we have begun to be displeased with ourselves. For what man is not disposed to rest in himself? Who, in fact, does not thus rest, so long as he is unknown to himself; that is, so long as he is contented with his own endowments, and unconscious or unmindful of his misery? Every person,

“Man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God.”

therefore, on coming to the knowledge of himself, is not only urged to seek God, but is also led as by the hand to find him.

2. On the other hand, it is evident that man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God, and come down after such contemplation to look into himself. For

(such is our innate pride) we always seem to ourselves just, and upright, and wise, and holy, until we are convinced, by clear evidence, of our injustice, vileness, folly, and impurity. Convinced, however, we are not, if we look to ourselves only, and not to the Lord also —He being the only standard by the application of which this conviction can be produced. For, since we are all naturally prone to hypocrisy, any empty semblance of righteousness is quite enough to satisfy us instead of righteousness itself. And since nothing appears within us or around us that is not tainted with very great impurity, so long as we keep our mind within the confines of human pollution, anything which is in some small degree less defiled delights us as if it were most

pure just as an eye, to which nothing but black had been previously presented, deems an object of a whitish, or even of a brownish hue, to be perfectly white. Nay, the bodily sense may furnish a still stronger illustration of the extent to which we are deluded in estimating the powers of the mind. If, at mid-day, we either look down to the ground, or on the surrounding objects which lie open to our view, we think ourselves endued with a very strong and piercing eyesight; but when we look up to the sun, and gaze at it unveiled, the sight which did excellently well for the earth is instantly so dazzled and confounded by the refulgence, as to oblige us to confess that our acuteness in discerning terrestrial objects is mere dimness when applied to the sun. Thus too, it happens in estimating our spiritual qualities. So long as we do not look beyond the earth, we are quite pleased with our own righteousness, wisdom, and virtue; we address ourselves in the most flattering terms, and seem only less than demi-

The Knowledge of God Continued...

gods. But should we once begin to raise our [39](#) thoughts to God, and reflect what kind of Being he is, and how absolute the perfection of that righteousness, and wisdom, and virtue, to which, as a standard, we are bound to be conformed, what formerly delighted us by its false show of righteousness will become polluted with the greatest iniquity; what strangely imposed upon us under the name of wisdom will disgust by its extreme folly; and what presented the appearance of virtuous energy will be condemned as the most miserable impotence. So far are those qualities in us, which seem most perfect, from corresponding to the divine purity.

3. Hence that dread and amazement with which as Scripture uniformly relates, holy men were struck and overwhelmed whenever they beheld the presence of God. When we see those who previously stood firm and secure so quaking with terror, that the fear of death takes hold of them, nay, they are, in a manner, swallowed up and annihilated, the inference to be drawn is that men are never duly touched and impressed with a conviction of their insignificance, until they have contrasted themselves with the majesty of God. Frequent examples of this consternation occur both in the Book of Judges and the Prophetical Writings;⁵³ so much so, that it was a common expression among the people of God, "We shall die, for we have seen the Lord." Hence the Book of Job, also, in humbling men under a conviction of their folly, feebleness, and pollution, always derives its chief argument from descriptions of the Divine wisdom, virtue, and purity. Nor without cause: for we see Abraham the readier to acknowledge himself but dust and ashes the nearer he approaches to behold the glory of the Lord, and Elijah unable to wait with unveiled face for His approach; so dreadful is the sight. And what can man do, man who is but rottenness and a worm, when even the Cherubim themselves must veil their faces in very terror? To this, undoubtedly, the Prophet Isaiah refers, when he says ([Isaiah 24:23](#)), "The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign;" *i.e.*, when he shall exhibit his refulgence, and give a nearer view of it, the brightest objects will, in comparison, be covered with darkness.

But though the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves are bound together by a mu-

tual tie, due arrangement requires that we treat of the former in the first place, and then descend to the latter.

Calvin, John., Institutes of the Christian Religion, Chapter 1, The Knowledge of God and of Ourselves Mutually Connected— Nature of the Connection.



Malawi Students at Eschol Theological College

By Ivan De Master

Here is an update on the four men whom we are supporting at the theological college. The names of the students are Misheck Dennias, Paul Nyamalubwe, Lyson Dzimaso, and Chimwemwe Mangani. They began their studies in April, 2015 and are continuing with their classes. Two of the students are at the certificate level and two are working on a bachelor degree. The certificate requires 10 subjects and the bachelor's, 40 subjects.

The five areas of study are systematic theology, biblical studies, ministerial studies, church history and missions, and liberal arts. In these areas there will be the study of apologetics and soteriology, the study of Acts and the Pentateuch, pastoral care and practical preaching, history of the church in Africa and Malawi, early church history and science and scripture.

The students' progress is good. They will sit for final exams in October and November. (I assume this

is the first semester exams.) We are keeping them in our prayers.

Doctor Joster Jumbe, who is the MINTS Malawi coordinator, writes that he is concerned for the Christian leaders who cannot study in English due to low education but they preach and teach in churches. He is hoping to develop a program to help train these leaders. The courses would be free.

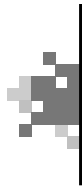
In August, there was a graduation ceremony for those who completed last year's work. Nineteen students graduated with either BA or MA or DNIM degrees.

I am grateful for the help from the churches and individuals in the presbytery who helped support these four men at the college. There may be a need for further support for the two students continuing to seek an advanced degree.

Women's Auxiliary Texas Roadhouse Fundraiser

The Pine Haven Women's Auxiliary invites you to attend the Texas Roadhouse Fund Raiser on Thursday, Oct. 15 from 4-10 pm. Bring in a flyer and 10% of your total food purchase will be donated to benefit the residents of Pine Haven Christian Communities.



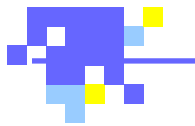


October Birthdays



Wedding Anniversaries





Grace OPC

October 2015

Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ



Church Office:
4930 Green Valley Ln
Sheboygan, WI 53083

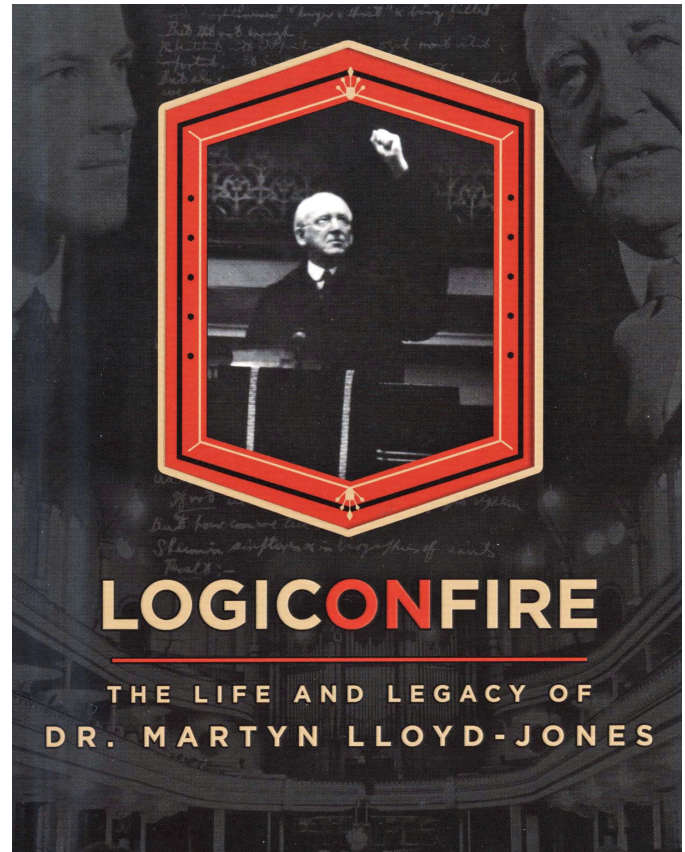
Phone: 920-565-2160
Website:
graceopcsheboygan.com
Email:
graceopc@tds.net
revbriandjong@gmail.com

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4	5	6	7 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM	8	9 Worldview Movie Night 7:00 PM	10 Women's Presbyterial
11	12	13 Session Meeting	14 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM	15	16	17
18 Fellowship Supper	19	20	21 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM	22	23	24 Men's Leadership Breakfast
25	26	27	28 Prayer Meeting, 7:00 PM	29	30	31 Reformation Conference with Dr. Godfrey

Fall Worldview Movie Night

Night

Our Fall Worldview Movie Night will be held this Friday, October 9th at 7:00 pm. We will view and discuss a new film, “Logic on Fire,” on the life and legacy of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, a great Welsh preacher of the early 20th century. Popcorn and drinks are provided, other snacks are welcome!



Front Page Concluded

tively to God’s people, making them disciples who obey whatsoever Christ has commanded.

To this I can say “Amen!” That is what I’ve strived for in my ministry, and what I seek to promote within our Presbytery. May the Lord give us many Pastor Theologians!



Comments on Finance

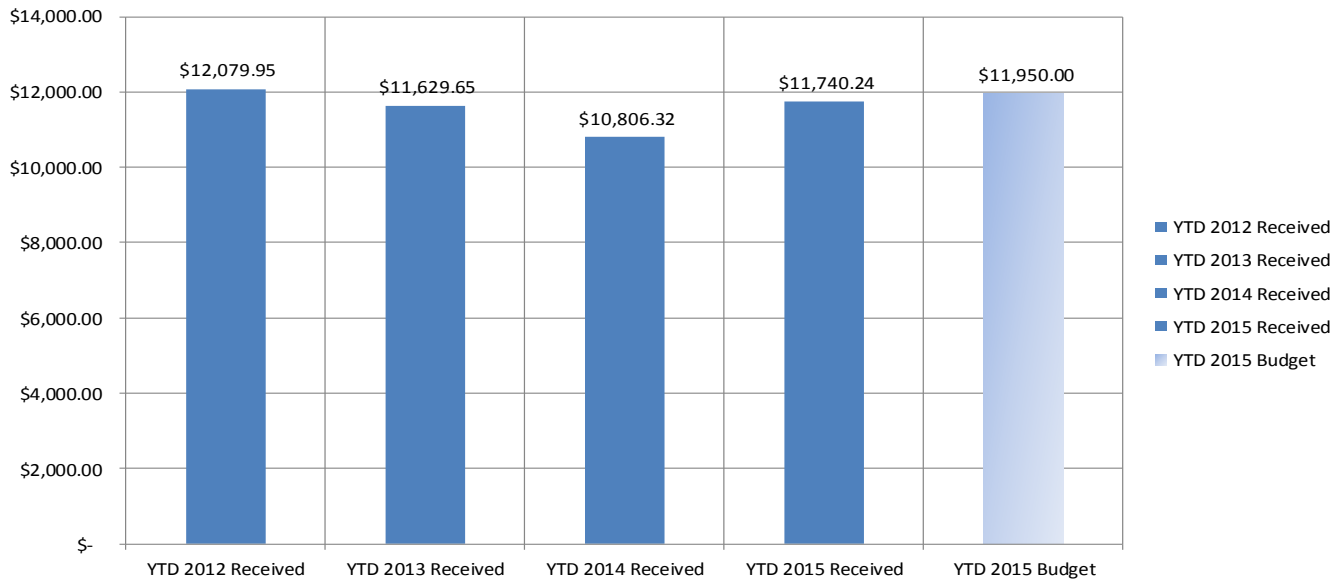
by Joel Moody

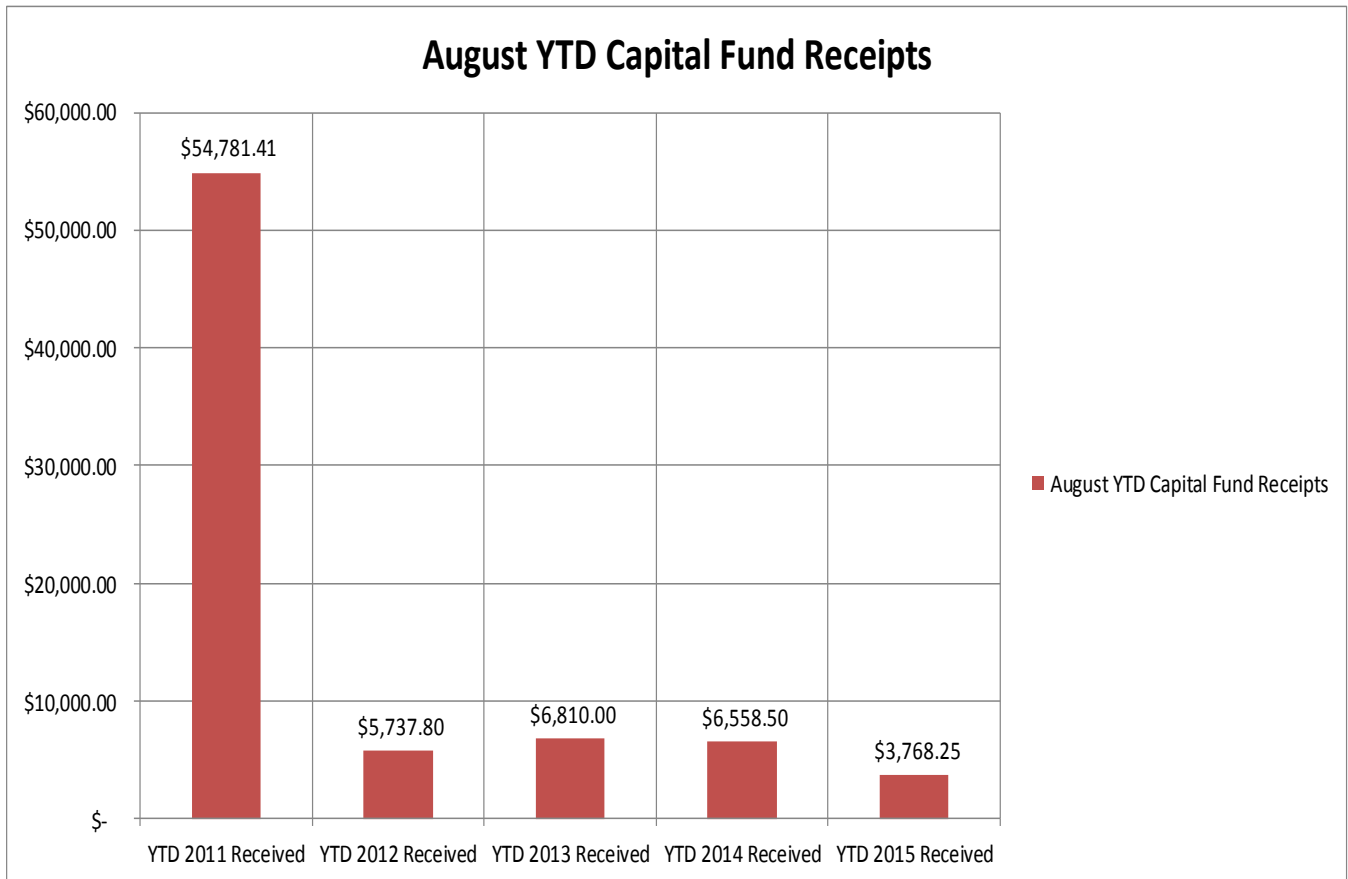
General Fund receipts for August totaled \$14,057.48 as compared to the budget of \$16,159.24, while General Fund disbursements for August totaled \$12,821.44. August year to date General Fund receipts totaled \$102,836.18 as compared to the budget of \$113,114.62 (a shortfall of \$10,278.44), while August year to date disbursements of \$105,488.14 were \$7,626.48 below budget. Through the end of August, the General Fund has decreased by \$2,585.54. Year to date General Fund receipts for August were 2.3% below last year's total on an average Sunday while disbursements were 3.3% above the prior year.

Benevolence Fund Receipts for August totaled \$1,441.00 as compared to the budget of \$1,493.75 (a shortfall of \$52.75). Year to date Benevolence Fund Receipts through August totaled \$11,740.24 and were below budget by \$209.76. Please refer to the graph for a historical trend of benevolence receipts as well as the current benevolence budget August Year to Date giving for the **Capital Fund** was \$3,768.25. Please refer to the Capital Fund Graph that shows the historical giving

for the years indicated in the graph. You may contribute to the Capital Fund by marking your gift as "Capital Fund" and placing it in the offering plate. Please note that the Capital Fund is used to pay for current and future needs that may exist to purchase additional equipment (such as computers, the sound system, tables and chairs, etc.) or building-type items (such as a parking lot, driveway, furnace boiler, etc.). Since some capital needs are quite substantial in nature, resources to finance and pay for these projects can take years to pay for them. Even though capital needs may not be large in the current year, we should wisely allocate our giving not only to current needs, but also to these future needs as well.

August YTD Benevolence Receipts Actual vs. Current Budget





Leaf Fest 2015

A Presbytery Youth Rally will be held on Oct. 10 from 3:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. at Falls OPC in Menomonee Falls. There will be games, fellowship, and a bonfire. Rev. Shane Lems will speak on “Commitment to Christ.” For more details, please see the bulletin board.



Inside-Out Pumpkin Muffins

Muffins

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 cup pumpkin puree | 1 1/2 tsp pumpkin spice |
| 2 large eggs | 1 tsp baking powder |
| 1/2 cup brown sugar | 1/2 tsp baking soda |
| 3 Tbs vegetable oil | 1/3 cup milk |
| 1/4 cup boiled cider or maple syrup | 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour |
| 1/2 tsp salt | |

Filling

- 8-oz package cream cheese
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- A few drops Fiori di Sicilia, optional (or vanilla)

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Line or grease a standard 12-cup muffin pan.
2. To make batter, whisk together pumpkin, eggs, brown sugar, oil, boiled cider, salt, spices, baking powder, baking soda, and milk. Scrape down sides of bowl.
3. Add the flour and mix until well combined.
4. To make the filling, place the cream cheese in a microwave-safe bowl, and heat on low for 40 seconds. Stir in the sugar and flavoring.
5. Drop about 2 Tbs of the batter into each muffin cup, spreading it over the bottom. Dollop on a heaping Tbs of filling, then cover with another 2 Tbs of batter.
6. Bake the muffins for 18 to 20 minutes, until a cake tester inserted in the center comes out crumb-free. (Watch really closely at the end. If you over-bake, the top will crack and filling will start bubbling out—unsightly!)
7. Remove muffins from oven. After 5 minutes, transfer to a rack to cool.

To make streusel-topped muffins, combine 1/2 cup flour, 1/4 cup brown sugar, 1/4 cup oats, and 1/8 tsp salt. Work in 4 Tbs butter, mixing until a coarse streusel forms. Scatter streusel over the unbaked muffins, and bake according to instructions.

Samantha Nyhof

“The eyes
of all look
to You,
And You give
them their food
in due time.
You open
Your hand
And satisfy
the desire of
every living
thing.”

Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church's 2015

Reformation Conference

Saturday, October 31st

9:00 -10:15 am "Under the Cross: Foundations of the Dutch Reformation"

10:30-11:45 am "Crisis and Confession: Meeting the Challenge of Arminius."

Sunday, November 1st

9:00 am Perseverance: God is Faithful

5:00 pm Limited Atonement: Christ is Effective.

sessions are free & open to all

- Dr. Robert Godfrey has taught church history at Westminster Seminary California since 1981. He taught previously at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Stanford University, and Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. He

is the third president of Westminster Seminary California and is a minister in the United Reformed Churches in North America.

- He is the author of *John Calvin: Pilgrim and Pastor, An Unexpected Journey, Reformation Sketches, Pleasing God in Our Worship, God's Pattern for Creation* and coauthor of *Westminster Seminary California: A New Old School*.

- Dr. Godfrey and his wife, Mary Ellen, have three grown children who all reside in California.





Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

Church Office:
4930 Green Valley Ln
Sheboygan, WI 53083

Phone: 920-565-2160
Website: graceopcsheboygan.com
Email: graceopc@tds.net
revbriandejong@gmail.com

CHECK OUT THE AUDIO:

**SERMONAUDIO.COM/
GRACESHEBOYGAN**

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE:

GRACEOPCSHEBOYGAN.COM



Spurgeon Corner

*“He will give grace and glory.”
(Psalm 84:11)*

Bounteous is Jehovah in his nature; to give is his delight. His gifts are beyond measure precious, and are as freely given as the light of the sun. He gives grace to his elect because he wills it, to his redeemed because of his covenant, to the called because of his promise, to believers because they seek it, to sinners because they need it. He gives grace abundantly, seasonably, constantly, readily, sovereignly; doubly enhancing the value of the boon by the manner of its bestowal. Grace in all its forms he freely renders to his people: comforting, preserving, sanctifying, directing, instructing, assisting grace, he generously pours into their souls without ceasing, and he always will do so, whatever may occur. Sickness may befall, but the Lord will give grace; poverty may happen to us, but grace will surely be afforded; death must come but grace will light a candle at the darkest hour. Reader, how blessed it is as years roll round, and the leaves begin again to fall, to enjoy such an unfading promise as this, “The Lord will give grace.”

The little conjunction “and” in this verse is a diamond rivet binding the present with the future: grace and glory always go together. God has married them, and none can divorce them. The Lord will never deny a soul glory to whom he has freely given to live upon his grace; indeed, glory is nothing more than grace in its Sabbath dress, grace in full bloom, grace like autumn fruit, mellow and perfected. How soon we may have glory none can tell! It may be before this month of October has run out we shall see the Holy City; but be the interval longer or shorter, we shall be glorified ere long. Glory, the glory of heaven, the glory of eternity, the glory of Jesus, the glory of the Father, the Lord will surely give to his chosen. Oh, rare promise of a faithful God!

Two golden links of one celestial chain:
Who owneth grace shall surely glory gain.

Morning, October 1st, by C. H. Spurgeon

