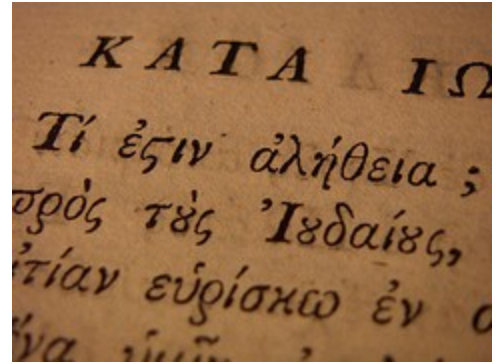


The Pastor's Study: A New Section in the GBC Connection...

Starting this year, we will be featuring a new section in our monthly newsletter, the GBC Connection. This new section has been entitled "The Pastor's Study" and will be composed of media reviews (books, movies, magazine articles, music, etc.) of works that are current (i.e. published within the last 6-8 months) or significant (for works older than 8 months) to Christian thought, Christianity in America, and other such topics. It is our hope that by providing accurate, careful reviews you will be better able to use your time determining if a book is worth purchasing or a movie is worth watching. We will primarily focus upon newer works that are out in stores now or are on the verge of becoming popular, however significant works that touch upon something we as a church are studying, that have become popular once more, etc. will also occasionally appear for your consideration.



For this first month, we are presenting a "mini-review" of Pastor Tim Keller's *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope that Matters*. Keller is a pastor in New York City and, until this point, is probably best known for his previous books *The Prodigal God* and *The Reason for God*. In *Counterfeit Gods*, Keller presents us with a picture of American society in which we have turned many good things on their head. Keller then shows us with a mirror of our own worldview in which all too often money, power, possessions, and other such things have - in effect - become our Gods in a materialistic society. Keller's observations are solid and grounded in Biblical truth as he pairs each of his points with a Biblical example (Abraham is one example that Keller uses from the very start amongst others) to help us better grasp the reality of each "idol" and how it affects not just us, but those in the past as well. Truly there is "nothing new under the sun" and idolatry - though we like to think it has long since departed from our lives - is alive and well today.

Throughout the work, Keller repeatedly compares our heart to an "idol factory," which is his way of saying that we can take nearly anything under the sun and create something sinful or evil if we put it in the ultimate place of honor and worship in our lives, rather than the True God who rightfully belongs in that place. Oftentimes, Keller contends (and I would be inclined to agree) that we fall into idolatry without even realizing that we've made the switch and so we must be ever vigilant if we are to rid ourselves of any hindrances to the worship and service with which we, as Christians, have dedicated ourselves to.



Overall verdict: high recommended. Pick this book up - you won't regret it and Keller's relaxed yet direct to the point style is both refreshing and greatly challenging. For additional works on idolatry throughout Biblical history and it's impact in our own lives, see my previous comments on G. K. Beale's *We Become What We Worship* in the August 2009 GBC Connection.

-Pastor Kevin

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH CONNECTION

JANUARY 2010

Chasing the Wind: Solomon's Wisdom for Life

Starting in January we will begin a new sermon series which will carry us through the Spring. Ecclesiastes is a book that has puzzled people for centuries and has caused them to spend much time in reflection upon the topics and thoughts that it addresses - what is Solomon talking about? And why does he keep referring to things as vanity or a chasing after the wind?

Is Solomon depressed? Has his great wisdom driven him mad? Does anything in Ecclesiastes apply to our lives here today? If so, how?

These and many other questions will form the basis for our new series in Ecclesiastes. Make plans to join us and invite your friends along for the journey as we explore together the wisdom and the folly found throughout Solomon's message in Ecclesiastes.

Strong & Courageous: The Study of Joshua

Beginning on January 3rd, we will begin to study the Book of Joshua in Larry's Sunday morning class. This will be an exciting and informative time of working through the Book of Joshua to see how God worked in ancient times and to draw parallels with how He is working today and what He requires of us as Christ-followers. Joshua's life provides much food for thought as to what it looks like to seek the fulfillment of our own desires versus seeking after what God has in mind for our lives. Please join us on Sunday mornings in the sanctuary at 9am.

THIS IS GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

"THIS IS GRACE BIBLE CHURCH" IS A NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL ELECTIVE THAT IS BEING OFFERED AT THE CONCLUSION OF OUR GBC FORUM SERIES. THOUGH THE FORMAT WILL REMAIN RELATIVELY SIMILAR, WE WILL BE SHIFTING OUR ATTENTION TOWARDS EXAMINING, QUESTIONING, AND WRESTLING WITH THE HISTORIC POSITIONS OF GRACE BIBLE CHURCH WITH REGARDS TO BAPTISM, COMMUNION, TRADITIONAL VS. CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP MUSIC, ETC. ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND - PLEASE MAKE PLANS TO JOIN US IN THE NEW YEAR STARTING ON JANUARY 10TH AT THE PARSONAGE.



New Decade, New Surprises and Opportunities!

As we close out 2009, we reflect on the past year and the past decade. It has been ten years since the Y2K threat. Who would have thought that “hanging shads” would decide a presidential election. An event like 9/11 seemed like an impossibility. We have had three presidents in 2000’s. We have experienced the tragedy of war for eight years and a major economic collapse. All and all not the greatest decade in the history of the United States.

With these challenging times has come great joy for many of us. As an example, Cheryl and I have had the privilege of serving in two wonderful churches. We have seen both daughters married, gained two wonderful son-in-laws, and two grandchildren (plus one on the way).

Through all things God has been faithful!

God has also been faithful to *Grace Bible Church*. He has called and preserved this church to be a testimony for the Gilbert/Ames area and we to must be faithful to His calling on us. As we look forward to the coming years ahead we do not know what God has in store for us, but I am excited to see the future and to experience God’s continued faithfulness. One of my favorite verses is Jeremiah 29:11-13:

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

While we may not know the future we can proceed with confidence knowing that our God loves us and has a future of blessing for us. Let’s spend 2010 continuing to seek Him together with all our hearts!

Have A Blessed 2010!

Pastor Larry Rupp

Thinking about baptism? Wondering about church membership?

Have you ever wanted to be baptized? Maybe you haven’t even thought about baptism and have some initial questions? Great! We’re here to help you consider making that step!

Or perhaps you are wondering about church membership - is it important? Should you become a member? Why should you think about taking this step? Those are all great questions and we’d love to explore the answers with you. See

Larry or Kevin for additional information and details.



**CHANGING LIVES
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST**

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*CONNECTING TO THE GILBERT AREA
WITH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST*



Larry Rupp - Lead Pastor

Kevin Miller - Discipleship & Community

Engagement Pastor

Amanda Jennings - Worship Director

Service Times:

Sunday morning prayer: 8:30am

Sunday School : 9:00 a.m.

Church Service: 10:30 a.m.

E.K.G. - Wednesday 6:00pm

Ministering to the Lord, the Church, and Others

Worship Coordinator: Annette Miller

| Week Date | Nursery | Ushers/Greeters | Treats | Cleaning |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 01-03-10 | Carol L. & Blair | Trent & Joseph | Edith | Cindy & Annette |
| 01-10-10 | Heather & Edith | Rachael & Lindsey | Holck's | Lorntson's |
| 01-17-10 | Cindy B. & Tina | Wade & Annette | Dunshee's | Dunshee's |
| 01-24-10 | Anita & Holly B. | Marvin & Dick F. | Fincham's | K & M Miller |
| 01-31-10 | Lindsey B. & Michelle | Jill & Galen | Lorntson's | Eubank's |