

Privileged to Serve

Morning Worship

Announcements: Sibio Farrington

Song Leader: Chad Futrell

Opening Prayer: Frank Thompson

Lord's Table:
Presiding: Ron Austin

Assisting: Jacob Clark
Tyler Christian

Sermon: Byran Hatcher

Closing Prayer: Cameron Christian

Those serving Wednesday

Song Leader: Chad Futrell

Opening Prayer: Chad Futrell

Teacher: Chad Futrell

Announcements: Byran Hatcher

Closing Prayer: Phil Byrd

Pantry Item
Evaporated Milk

Sermon Notes

Grow Your Faith

I. No _____

II. No _____ Away

III. No _____

December 17, 2023

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Welcome!

Cape Fear
Church of Christ

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Fayetteville, NC
28304

Phone:
(910) 425-1108

Website:
capefearcoc.org
Find us on
Facebook!

Service Times

Sunday:
B. C. 9:00am
Worship 10:00am

Wednesday Night:
B. C. 7:00pm

Ladies' Class:
Tuesdays 10:00am

Elders
Wade Hedgepeth
Byran Hatcher

The
Cape Fear Crier

“Cry aloud and shout...for great in the midst of thee is the Holy One of Israel.” Isaiah 12:6

Saved By Grace

Parents often give gifts to their children on their birthday or the holidays. The gift is given freely out of love and favor from parents to their child. It is not given out of necessity because the child earned or merited the gift. It is not based upon the child's works, but by the grace (favor) of the parent that the child is given the gift. But the child is not necessarily without conditions of action in the reception of the free gift either. The child must still take the package in which the gift is contained, untie the bow which binds the wrapping, unwrap the box, open it, and take the gift out in order to truly enjoy the benefits of the freely, graciously-given gift. Yet, did the child, in opening the gift himself, somehow nullify the fact that the parent gave the gift out of love and grace and not merit? No, not at all! The gift was given by grace, not by works, even though a kind of work still contributed to the reception of the gift (after all, you can not have a gift without first *receiving* it!).

Paul says we are saved by grace, not by works. Many distort Paul's passage to mean that *nothing we do* contributes to our salvation. We play *no part at all*. God does it all. And so, baptism is excluded, living faithfully is excluded, and, by this logic, personal faith is excluded. The argument is made, however, that belief and prayer saves the sinner. Where is the logic in the assertion that baptism cannot save because, allegedly, *no works whatsoever* save us, and yet in virtually the very same breath claim that *believing and praying* (both *works* done by the mind and mouth of man) *are* activities that *can and do* save! Inconsistency is the birthplace of all lies! If baptism is precluded from salvation on the basis of Ephesians 2:8-10, then so is prayer! To ignore this logical truth is to be spiritually blind.

In Ephesians 2:8-9 and Romans 4:4-5, Paul specifies that he is writing about works that give grounds *for boasting* (v.9). Paul is talking about the *basis* of our salvation or the reason for which we are saved; not about the *conditions* or the specific requirements pertaining to an individual's salvation. In other words, God is the one who pardons, not man. Salvation is not of ourselves (Eph. 2:8). The

grace of God is the *basis* of our salvation. The Bible student will readily agree that we are not saved by works of merit or human righteousness (cf. Phil. 3:9; Rom. 10:1-3). For then, our salvation would not be of God, but rather ourselves and our own striving. A merit-based salvation would make God indebted to us. That is an impossible dilemma.

What one needs to know, is that not every work done by men gives grounds for boasting. There are works which cause us to say “*We are unprofitable servants: we have only done that which was our duty to do*” (Luke 17:10). When we engage in *these* activities, we are unable to proclaim boldly to the Throne, “We are profitable servants: we’ve done great things that ought to bring glory to my name.” Just because God has required that we do something to *receive* his gift of salvation, does not mean that we save ourselves *without the grace of God*, and hence have opportunity to “*boast*.” God’s grace, coupled with our humble obedience and reliance upon that grace, is how God saves the sinner “*by grace through faith*”.

So what does that have to do with baptism? The phrase “*not of works*” in this passage, does not refer to baptism (obeying the Gospel). There is nothing in baptism or obeying the Gospel to cause anyone to boast! How can anyone see any grounds for boasting in believing in one who died for us (John 8:24), humbly repenting of sins (Luke 13:3), confessing faith in Jesus (Rom. 10:10) and in surrendering one’s will to God in baptism *for the remission of sins* (Acts 2:38)? Such acts are acts of humiliation, not exaltation! Besides, when we read Colossians 2:12-13, we find that baptism is an “operation of God” in which God forgives us of all trespasses. So if baptism could be argued to be a work of any kind, it would have to be affirmed that it is God’s work, and not man’s, and, certainly, there’s no glory for man in that!

This proves all the more that Paul did not have baptism, nor any other work of faith in mind when he wrote that we are saved “*not of works, lest any man should boast*.” Indeed, we are saved by grace through faith, but “the faith that saves is the faith that obeys,” meriting nothing, and yet gaining everything.

-BTH

Bible Reading for week of December 24th (no bulletin next week)

Dec 24	Dec 25	Dec 26	Dec 27	Dec 28	Dec 29	Dec 30
Rev 6-7	Rev 8-9	Rev 10-11	Rev 12-13	Rev 14-15	Rev 16-17	Rev 18-19
Pr 24	Pr 25	Pr 26	Pr 27	Pr 28	Pr 29	Pr 30

By the Numbers

Attendance week of 12/10/23

B.C.: 42

A.M.: Worship: 66

Wed.: 37

Family News and Notes

Carolyn Wiles broke her leg and is in CFVPMC. **Margaret Langston** is in Village Green for rehab. **Paula Perrin** is continuing her chemotherapy. **Carlton Norris, Jeanette Freshley’s** dad, had a setback, her mother is also ill. **Linda Jenkins’** son, **Shannon**, is struggling with mental health issues . **John Patchell’s** brother is doing much better. **Kim Perkins’** father is doing a little better. **Chuck Perkins** is having some health challenges right now. **John Williams** is having trouble with inflammation in his neck. Wade Hedgepeth’s two brothers, **Mark & Dwight**, have some health challenges. **Frances Salaz** is going through chemo for her cancer. **Linda Hernandez** is shut in at home. Her husband, **Tony**, had a heart attack and is in ICU at CFVPMC.

Pray for our world leaders at this time. Active military: Pray for all active duty military members; they could be called to a conflict area at a moment’s notice. Remember to pray for their families as well. We have 6 active duty members here at Cape Fear.

Also remember: **Margaret Langston, Vicky Carver, Sandra Hedgepeth**, and the **Davis** family. Please pray for those in Bible Studies - teachers and students!

Bible Reading Plan

Dec 17	Dec 18	Dec 19	Dec 20	Dec 21	Dec 22	Dec 23
1 Jo 1-3	1 Jo 4-5	2 John	3 John	Jude	Rev 1-3	Rev 4-5
Pr 17	Pr 18	Pr 19	Pr 20	Pr 21	Pr 22	Pr 23

Events

LBC: Holiday break Dec. 19 - Jan 2. Return January 9th.

New Years’ Eve: Dec 31st. Fellowship meal, games & singing after morning worship.

