



# THE VISION

February 2021

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them and...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...” Amen.*  
**Matthew 28:19-20**

### “Love”

Valentine’s Day will be approaching very soon. (Just a reminder men, it comes on February 14th). In past years, I have shared the history behind Valentine’s Day. For this article, I would like to share some thoughts on God’s love to us and our love for Him. Dr. Tom Lovorn, Th.D., (deceased), guided me in this article.

God’s love is given to anyone who believes by faith in Jesus Christ. We witness God’s love through one of His character traits called grace. God’s grace in (II Peter 3:9), means He is inclined to bless those who live to His glory (Luke 2:14). Dr. Lovorn said, “However, those blessings may not be recognized by the unspiritual.”

One area of concern I have regarding God’s love is based upon several popular TV pastor/evangelists who are preaching a “health and wealth gospel.” They teach that, in Jesus’ name, we can claim anything we want if we do certain things. For example: “If we are basically good and do what we believe God wants us to do, He will give us our hearts’ desire for health, success, and prosperity. If we don’t have those things, it’s our fault and we must be sinning somehow.” I think that is a misrepresentation of God’s love!

There are 2 basic errors in their interpretation: First, we cannot bargain with God, because we don’t have anything to bargain with! God doesn’t love us because of what we can give Him! By creation, He already owns everything we have. He loves us for what He can make of us when we allow Him to be God! Any goodness we have comes from God who

decrees us righteous when we place our sins on Jesus (Romans 4:5).

Second, God does bless those who love Him, but those blessings may be spiritual in nature. Dr. Lovorn stated, “the best of them will not come in this life. Certainly, He can give health and wealth, like a Midas touch, but most of us could not handle those. When everything is going well, we would forget the One who blessed us (Deuteronomy 8:11-18). Therefore, God usually spaces out our blessings. As we learn to accept them humbly, He gives more until He’s ready to pour out the whole measure in Heaven.”

Would we be willing, if need be, to wait for God’s “whole measure in Heaven?” I will trust God’s love and His timing for His blessings!

Remember that Jesus said His followers might suffer loss and persecution in this life, and some will be killed for His sake (Luke 21:12-19). Jesus said to rejoice when that happens because our reward will be great in Heaven (Romans 8:35-39). Proverbs 30:8 teaches we should seek neither poverty nor riches. Philippians 4:11, Hebrews 12:1-2 and 13:5 say we should be content with what we have and use it to honor Jesus. This is the way we can show our love to God our Heavenly Father.

May we experience God’s love to us not in what we possess but in our Love of Him through worship - Love for Others through discipling them to know Jesus - and our Service to Jesus Christ through reaching out in His world with Christian love!

Happy Valentine’s Day,  
Pastor Bud Goude

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# Deacon's Devotional

## Thorns and Thistles Verses Life-Giving Fruit

Galatians 6:7-8 gives us a very clear warning not to sow to the flesh, or in other words, our sinful nature. As followers of Jesus, let us ask ourselves, “Do we really want to reap a harvest of corruption, shame, and death?” The works of the flesh are listed in Gal. 5:19-21.

I believe one of the keys to living a successful, God-honoring Christian life is what part of us we feed the most and what we eat. The more we feed our spirit--our inner man, the stronger we will become spiritually. We feed our inner man by reading God's Word, meditating upon His Word, walking humbly before God, praying, and meeting with fellow believers. Of course, due to coronavirus, some may only feel comfortable fellowshiping over the phone, zoom, or email, and that's understandable. All of these things are pleasing to God and are necessary for optimal spiritual growth, growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

On the other hand, we feed and embolden our sinful nature by willingly putting ourselves in Satan's playground, availing ourselves of evil influences. This is not wise. There is nothing we do or think that escapes the eyes of the Lord no matter where we are. We will either let these influences slip in and work their wiles in us, or we will put up a fierce resistance and flee those things. Paul said that “*a little leaven leavens the whole lump.*” (Gal. 5:6). On purpose and whenever possible, let us surround ourselves with healthy, noble, virtuous influences.

Immediately following the listing of the works of the flesh is a list enumerating the fruit of the Spirit. (See Gal. 5:22-23). We see at the top of the list is *love*. Through the Holy Spirit, we have access to God's kind of love—the kind that seeks the betterment of others. The Bible says whatsoever we do, we should do out of love. Gal. 5:14 says, “*For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*”

The list concludes with temperance, or *self-control*. When we depend on the Lord to help us refrain from sudden outbursts, from letting our minds run wild, from any of the works of the flesh, we will be empowered by the Spirit to demonstrate this fruit. God is so willing and desiring that we live victoriously. 2 Peter 1:3 says, “*According to His divine power hath given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, though the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue...*” Self-control is part of that, and is it so important that Paul, while in custody, reasoned with Felix the governor about it.

**So, love and self-control are the bookends of the fruit of the Spirit** Brothers and sisters, let us strive with great purpose to walk in the Spirit, to feed our inner-man, and to starve the sin nature. We can be assured as we lean on God's everlasting arms, the battle is the Lord's, and His victory is ours!

David Crummett

# Where are they now?

Reverend Richard Shaw  
Music, Youth, and Children's Minister at GPBC  
1988-1995



- **After foreign ministry in Macedonia, Rick and Martha Shaw moved to Plainview, Texas where he became a Christian college professor and church minister. Martha taught in elementary school.**
- **September 2020 the Shaws moved to Venice, Florida. Rick is now Senior Pastor at South Venice Baptist Church. They are both very pleased to be closer to their daughter Faith and in a “green” climate.**
- **James, their oldest son, is a U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander. He is completing his Master's degree in Security Studies at Kansas State University. He and his wife Elizabeth have two children, Sophia and George. They will be stationed in Bremerton, Washington.**
- **Faith, lives in Hattiesburg, Mississippi with her husband Andrew and two girls, Abigail and Anna. Faith is doing Ph.D work in Educational Psychology. This compliments Andrew's career as a clinical psychologist.**
- **Rick and Martha's two younger children, Ben and Grace, are both attending Texas colleges.**

# WMU Happenings



Thank you to all who contributed to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Through your generous giving we collected \$3,751.00, surpassing our goal of \$2,500.00 by \$1,251.00.



## **WMU Souper Bowl**



Even with the world in chaos and so many closures and cancellations ...the all crucial football season has continued!?! Imagine that...could our priorities be askew!?! But, I digress.

As we have in past years, we will again vote for our favorite team with soup! Please bring in lots of cans of soup and indicate your team pick with a note on or in the bag. You may leave your bags in the WMU bulletin board area. We will tally the results then deliver the soup to the Salvation Army. Perhaps your team will be the souper winner even if not the bowl winner!?!

Many people right here in our community face food shortages and our Souper Bowl collection will help to alleviate hunger. So please be generous and bring your soup in from now through February.

Thank You 🙏



### Deacon of the Week

2/7—Buddy Hogge  
2/14—Sandy McElfresh  
2/21—Gus Saunders  
2/28—Al West

### Nursery Workers

2/7—Howard Warren/TBD  
2/14—L. Walton/B. DeRosa  
2/21—Jamie & Bailey Moore  
2/28—H. Warren/A. Zepeda

### February Ushers

Leslie Belvin  
Chris Hutson  
Barbara Mangrum  
Howard Warren



## CHURCH WORKERS

### February Tellers

Helen Spence  
Bill Breeden

### Sun. Sch. Nursery

Sharon/Howard Warren

### Older Children's Church

2/7—TBD  
2/14—Jennifer Hall/S. McElfresh  
2/21—Madison & Denise Gandee  
2/28—TBD

### Younger Children's Church

2/7—Mike & Sarah Zipf  
2/14—Nancy Dyson & Sonya Anthony  
2/21—Donna Goude & Joyce Marshall  
2/28—Rachel Wells & Mallory Wagner

### Sunday Morning Flowers



If you would like to provide flowers for a Sunday Morning Service, please sign-up for a specific Sunday on the Flower Signup Sheet in the Narthex. If you are placing the flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one, contact Sue to provide the information so it can be included in the bulletin.

What a great way to recognize a birthday, anniversary, etc. and help to decorate the sanctuary.



**Sunday Schedule**  
(during COVID)

Sunday School (All Ages)—cancelled  
Worship Service—11:00 am  
C.A.R.E. Ministry—cancelled  
Youth Ministry—5:00 pm

**Wednesday Schedule**  
(during COVID)

6:00pm: Children's Ministry  
Online Bible Study & Prayer Meeting  
7:00pm: Choir Practice

# February 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Bldg & Grounds Mtg 7:00pm	2	3	4	5	6
7 Deacon Mtg 3pm	8 American Heritage Girls 6:30pm	9	10 TeamKid Valentine's Day Celebration 6—7pm	11	12	13
14 Youth Bible Study 5pm	15 <b>Vision Articles Due</b> American Heritage Girls 6:30pm	16	17	18 Acree Circle 10am	19 Youth Activity 6:30-8pm "Inspired Art"	20
21	22	23 Armstrong Circle 6:30pm meeting	24	25	26	27
28						

**February Birthdays:**

Kaiden Williams 2/1  
Al West 2/2  
Mallory Wagner 2/5  
Sandy McElfresh 2/11  
Brenden Greggs 2/12  
Hope Hutson 2/13  
Bill Hall 2/15  
Ann Hogge 2/18  
Martha Robbins 2/19  
Catherine Smith 2/20  
Bonnie Ogden 2/20  
Kent Smith 2/20  
Seth Gandee 2/21  
Kayla Arquette 2/22  
Joyce Marshall 2/22  
Jo Green 2/24  
Carol Hall 2/28  
David Crummett 2/28

**Anniversaries:**

Paul & Tammy Greggs 2/20  
Bill & Pennie Hall 2/25

