

I Want More Freedom, Jesus

By Scotty Smith

"If the Son (Jesus) sets you free, you are truly free." [Jn 8:36](#)

"Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name!" [Ps. 142:7](#)

King Jesus, King David's prison didn't have iron bars. He was hiding in a cave, feeling trapped, vulnerable, and helpless. He was wise enough to own his condition, and abandon himself to your provision. I do the same today.

You've already freed me, (and each of us), from many chains, prisons, and entanglements. We don't fear final judgment, for you are our forever-righteousness. We don't fear where we'll spend eternity, for you have secured heaven for us. THANK YOU! But Jesus, I crave more freedom in other areas of life.

Free me from thinking too much about situations and people I can't change. Sometimes I call it "praying," but it's the opposite of prayer. It's filled with self-referential concerns, not You-centered trust.

Free me from quick, irritation-fueled reactions. Over the past 12 months, my anger-fuse has gotten shorter, and my resentment list has gotten longer. Rather than seeing everything through the lens of the Gospel and eternity, my glasses have been overly tinted with the hues of Red and Blue.

Free me (and hear my repentance in this, Jesus) from prejudices and bigotries I didn't realize I carry.

Free me to be way more preoccupied and engaged with your every-nation story, Bride, and Kingdom. Mine is merely one among 195 nations you claim and equally love.

I'll stop there, today, Jesus. But we both know there's more. So very Amen I pray, in your powerful and loving name.



January 31, 2021

10:30 A.M.

A Ministering Community

VISION

2021

Our Mission Statement

Grace Covenant Church exists to glorify God in worship and to love and serve others through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Order of Service

Announcements

Welcome

Preparation for Worship

-----God's Greatness-----

Call to Worship

Hymn of Adoration: "God You Reign". Brewster/Fieldes

Prayer of Invocation

Affirmation of Faith: The Heidelberg Catechism* , Q. #26

Hymns of Praise

"Forever Reign". Morgan/Ingram

"Great is Thy Faithfulness". Chisholm/Runyan

Children are Dismissed to Sunday School

----- God's Renewal-----

Public Confession

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon and Comfort: Titus 3:3-5

Song of Renewal

"Be Thou My Vision". Irish Folk Melody

-----God's Grace-----

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 4:7-11

Prayer

The Sermon

"A Ministering Community"

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Hymn: "Soon". . . Brooke Ligertwood

Prayer of Approach

Words of Institution: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (ESV)

-----God's Blessing-----

Parting Hymn

"Build Your Kingdom Here". Rend Collective Experiment

Benediction

Here is the encouragement. Look at verse 10 again. "Each has received a gift." The Lord has given you a gift to use for His glory in this church and in the fellowship of God's people. You have a ministry. You have a role and a vital part to play. It needn't be upfront. It needn't have a name or any of the things that make it official. But if you're a believer in Jesus, you have a ministry that God has given to you and called you to fulfill at Grace Covenant Church. Ministry is not the domain of the professionals.

In Conclusion

Peter wants the world to look at Grace Covenant Church, Pottstown PA and see an embassy of heaven, a colony of the new creation, people serving each other, forgiving one another, sharing their lives with one another, doing ministry together so that when they look at us they don't say, "Those are remarkable people." They say, "Those are people like me – ordinary, flawed, broken sinners like me – and yet look what grace is

Notes

God's Gracious Provision 1/24/2021

Offering: \$1580.00

Attendance: 33

Your offering may be place in the box at the Welcome Table.

The mark of a Christian at the end of the age is a person on his or her knees in prayer. Could it be that the strength of our private prayer life is an indication of our progress in self-control and sober-mindedness?

How We Are to Love One Another

1 Peter 4:8 (ESV)

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

When it comes to our relationships with one another inside the church, the obligation to love earnestly is a constant, urgent necessity. Keep loving.

Why should we do this? What are the benefits? Love like this, he says, “*covers a multitude of sins.*”

Love does not take the bait. Love seeks not to respond when provoked. Love covers a multitude of sins. Love, it doesn’t perpetuate the cycle of tension and division and strife by responding to hurt feelings with still more wounding words, and round and round we go. Love says, “I will be patient. I will be kind. I will keep no record of wrongs.”

How We Are to Use our Homes

1 Peter 4:9 (ESV)

Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

May our lives be filled with the grace of hospitality.

How We Are to Do Ministry

1 Peter 4:10–11 (ESV)

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: ¹¹whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Upcoming Events

TONIGHT 6-8 P.M. Youth Group (Grades 6-12) meeting at the home of the Deicherts for Bible Study and fellowship.

Sunday, February 7 6:15-7:15 P.M.

GCC Prayer Gathering at the House of Prayer
1300 High Street, Pottstown, PA

Friday, February 19—Sunday, February 21

Youth Winter Retreat at Camp Sankanac. Join us for an exciting weekend full of fellowship, worship, games, and a practical study on relying on God in daily life. Pick up a flyer at the Welcome Table.

Prayers for Those Not Communing

Prayer of Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth and the life. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Believing on Jesus

Lord, Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but through you, I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared to hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my savior. Amen.

Prayer of Struggling Against Sin

Lord, Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my needs, and may turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely to me and run with perseverance the race that you have set before me, looking only to you, the pioneer and champion of my faith. Amen.

“God can achieve his purpose either through the absence of human power and resources, or the abandonment of reliance on them. All through history God has chosen and used nobodies, because their unusual dependence on him made possible the unique display of his power and grace. He chose and used somebodies only when they renounced dependence on their natural abilities and resources.” —Oswald Chambers

Prayer/Praise. January 31, 2021

- Pray for Ben Steinmetz's wife, Toni Steinmetz. She has pain and issues from diverticulitis. Pray for healing and relief from pain for Toni.
- Pray for safety for Nic Collins. The new variant of Covid-19, from South Africa, just entered South Carolina.
- Praise that Bob Priest's first grandchild was born on Thursday! Lyra Celeste Prowant, 7lb. 13 oz.-20 in. Chris and Jillian (Priest) Prowant are doing well.
- Praise that Daisy Roth's mother is feeling better after Covid, but she has a congested cough and is tired. Praise that Daisy is feeling better but is still tired. Praise that Bob is still symptom free.
- Pray for Rindy Lee's family. Her father passed away this week.
- Pray for Justine Schumaker. She has cancer that has metastasized. Pray for God's healing and comfort for her and her family.
- Pray for Dr. Hsu, Jill Aument's employer. Dr. Hsu's father passed away this past week. Please pray for Dr. Hsu and her family.
- Pray for healing for the father of Koreen Mace and Gwen Conrad, due to an infection. Pray for Gwen as she has been caring for their father, who lives with Gwen and her family.
- Pray for Mike Row, who has a bruised rotator cup on his left side. He is receiving physical therapy. Pray for healing and relief from pain for Mike.
- Pray for Jonnie, friend of Donna Jenkins, whose husband passed away. Please pray for Jonnie and her family.
- Pray for peace and a quick recovery from Covid for Tiff, a friend of Barb Hunter, and that her daughter remains symptom free.
- Praise that Dawn Fleetman's foot surgery was successful. Pray that she will be not be out of work long.
- Pray for all our college students as they head back to school: Lulu Bocci (Bob Jones University); Nic Collins (S. Carolina School of Leadership); Brandon Crothers (Lock Haven); Tim Deichert (MCCC); Cassie Frame (Eastern); Macie Frame (West Chester); Marissa O'Connor (Pace University); Brenna Pritchard (Cedar Crest College); Dominique Viola (Penn College); Carena Williams (MCCC); Tyler Yensan (Military).
- Pray for Nic Collins, who will be going to Quito, Ecuador for a mission trip at the end of March. Pray for travel, safety, and no COVID. Pray for funds to be raised, as they will be helping in the capital with special needs children and teens.
- Pray for Jeremiah Mace, who is in a 9-month internship program. Please pray for continued healing for Koreen's family.
- Pray for Tyler and Kaci Yensan, as Kaci prepares to join Tyler in North Carolina.
- Pray for Donna Plowfield's son-in-law, David, who is seeking employment in physical therapy.

Message

Grace Covenant Church Vision 2021

A Ministering Community

We are to be "Living in Light of the End of All Things"- we need to have a robust, present awareness that the end of all things is at hand and to live – today, right now, and in the days that remain to us – in light of that glorious fact.

A Discipling Community

We are to be a disciple-making culture, people are moving towards Jesus, through means of the word, so that ministry of GCC expands outward toward outsiders.

A Conversion Community

We are to be a Church that in its core identity is simultaneously sent and sending. Our God is a missionary God who sends the church into the world.

This Sunday's Sermon and Vision Point

A Ministering Community

How We Are to Handle Ourselves?

1 Peter 4:7 (ESV)

The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

If you have a clear sense of the certainty of the end, there ought to be a sobriety and a self-control, a self-possession that marks a Christian; not governed and dominated by the enslaving lusts and passions that characterize the world, but clear-minded sobriety, knowing that the end of all things is at hand.