

THE TIDINGS

GOD'S MISSION FOR TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH IS TO LOVE HIM FULLY AND FOLLOW HIM FAITHFULLY.

The Pastor's Perspective

Dr. Reggie Bridges

May I make a confession? Sometimes I find it very difficult to get my mind wrapped around certain theological concepts. Terms like glory, sanctification, and redemption seem so abstract at times—even evading my superior training at the absolute best seminary, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary! Now don't get me wrong. I can often provide the textbook definition of such words, but it is yet another thing to experience their import for our lives.

Take **grace** for example. The classic summary is often given: grace is the unmerited favor of God. An accurate, but perhaps cold, definition. For grace is not a simply stated proposition but rather an overwhelming, personal encounter with living God. And how He has been showing up in my life lately with the intent of teaching me that truth! He has specifically reminded me how I stand in the need of grace and how I should extend grace to others. **In truth, I am both a desperate recipient of grace and an obligated dispenser of grace!**

My confession continues . . . I do not always think, do, or say the things I ought to think, do, or say. You may have mastered a sinless life by now, but I can readily testify that I have not. I'm just as dependent upon God's grace now as I was the day I was saved. Oh, I believe I have grown in Him through the years, but I haven't "arrived" yet. I pray and study. I ask the Lord's wisdom and His guidance. I even consult godly counsel as I believe the Holy Spirit lives in each believer. And yet with all of that effort, I can still fail. Thankfully, God's grace is abundant! He has showered me with the experience of "unmerited favor" through Jesus Christ! And what's more, I have seen every church that I have served convey grace to me through the years as well. No doubt, there were some valid, solid disagreements; but in the midst of those moments, God rubbed a lot of grace! Yes, I have benefited from grace greatly!

In turn, the Lord has pointed out my responsibility to show grace to others. God and His people have shown favor toward me when I didn't deserve it; should I not feel compelled to demonstrate that love toward others who don't deserve it? For me, I must adopt the posture of grace. It is only fitting for a disciple of

Christ. You and I ought to remember this when we look around us today. From government leaders to church leaders to school leaders to business leaders to family leaders, there will come disappointing decisions. Often, we may adamantly disagree with their assertions. But as God's children, should we not show grace? Should we not refrain from maligning their character? Should grace not reign in our hearts, in our conversations, and in our actions? Should we not be "humbly grateful" rather than "grumbly hateful"?

My friends, these have been difficult days. Weariness and stress has had its way with us and our relationships. Loneliness and isolation have visited us frequently. Even as we move forward in the reopening of our church, our businesses, and our very nation; uncertainty and concern abound. Yet, it is here we meet grace, and His name is Jesus. And what's more, He encourages us to introduce Him to others who don't deserve Him!

Temple family, thank you for the grace you show me daily. Over the past several weeks, my family and I have received texts, cards, emails, and calls that have encouraged us. To see your names pop up on my phone or signed at the bottom of a card reinvigorated my spirit. We/I didn't deserve it, but you showed your love as you always do. That is why I love the Temple congregation. There is truly no other like you, and I have never been more proud to be a part of this church. **Every day, I humbly recognize that it is God's grace (yes, His unmerited favor) that allows me to pastor you, and I do not forget to give Him praise!**

I do long to see you face to face soon, and we have put out a plan (update.temple.life) to ReGather our Temple family as quickly and as safely as we can. Certainly, the plan may change as more directives emerge, and I understand that not all can or should attend our first services back on campus, but we hope it is the initial step toward realizing the full ReGathering of our faith family. Until then, never doubt my heart for you! And while I know you tire of hearing it, I never tire of saying what I sincerely mean: I love you, Temple Baptist Church!

Youth Ministry

John Nugent

God's Work in the Quarantine

This extraordinary time has not been my favorite. I've found myself too often thinking about all the things that have been lost due to these circumstances, especially with Youth Ministry. Our graduating seniors have a special place in my mind and heart as they've ended their time in high school without so many of the special events and experiences they deserved. Our Youth Ministry had so many amazing things planned for this summer, and many of those have had to be canceled or at least modified and scaled down. I haven't been able to minister face-to-face with teenagers on a regular basis, and I've missed it terribly! I feel like so much that we had planned has been lost. However, God rarely has the exact plans that we do, and none of these circumstances or effects from this pandemic have been a surprise to Him. God had different plans.

Again, God had different plans. He is still at work. Even in our Youth Ministry, we've had one student baptized and another student who decided to make his decision to follow Christ public and be baptized as soon as we can gather again as a church family. We've had visitors to our online youth Sunday School classes. I even had one Sunday School teacher tell me about how one of our younger students was using online methods to present the Gospel to a friend. I know that God is still working because His work is extremely evident!

We're making new plans for the summer, mission trips, senior trip, and more. Our events and experiences may not be what we originally planned, but we're trying our best to follow God's leadership into remaining opportunities to serve and minister this summer. You can check out our ministry adjustments at www.templebestudents.org

I'm looking forward to doing ministry side-by-side and face-to-face again with our whole youth group family; but until then, I'm grateful to serve God who is never taken by surprise and is constantly working to bring students to know Him and grow in Him.



**LATEST UPDATE
ON THE
CORONAVIRUS**
UPDATE.TEMPLE.LIFE

WAYS TO GIVE

IN PERSON ONLINE AND TEXT

CHURCH OFFICE: Mail or Dropoff

ONLINE: giving.temple.life

TEXTING: Text any amount to 84321 to give



Congratulations to:

Brody and Alli Grace Johnston on the birth of their daughter, **Molly Frances Johnston**, proud grandparents are Mitchell and Stormy Maxwell.



the family of **Susan Clark**, mother of Wes Clark, grandmother of John Wesley Clark; the family of **Danny Gray**, brother of Mark Murphey.

Would you like to join a Sunday School Class?

Classes are meeting virtually, and we want you to be a part.

Jason Walsworth is here to help!
jason@temple.life | 255-3745

**Vacation Bible School is now
Staycation Bible School**

June 22-26

Join us for a virtual Vacation Bible School experience.



Participate through:
Neighborhood Block Parties
Small Group Gatherings
Family Events

**Register online at
sbs.temple.life**

Registration Deadline: June 13

Supply packets will be available for registered participants in *The Journey Place* on June 20.

MUSIC MINISTRY
Jeremy Asher

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. (Psalm 122:1, KJV)

If there was ever a time in my life when the above Scripture has been true, this is that time. My dear church family, I have missed seeing you in worship and Bible Study each week during this strange time in which we find ourselves. I know that I am not alone in this, but I cannot wait until we can join together again in person to fellowship with one another, and to rejoice - exuberantly rejoice! - together in worship. As you have heard from Dr. Reggie, our plan is to ReGather on Sunday, May 17, in both 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services (both times will be in the Sanctuary and in the Gathering Space). As eager as I am to get back to normal, please understand that it will be a slow process to phase in our Music Ministry. For instance, under the current social distancing guidelines, I'm not sure how the choir could meet for now. I know you are eager to return, and please know my heart is right there with you! But it will be a little while longer, it appears, before Sanctuary Choir will resume. As far as Orchestra, I will be reaching out to you to see who would be comfortable to return and play. I understand if any of you aren't comfortable to return yet. I will be consulting with Dr. Reggie as we navigate our ReGathering beginning May 17 and beyond.

In closing, I do pray that each of you is doing well, and I would love to hear from you. Some of you have given me great pointers on gardening, and I greatly appreciate your advice! Our family is eager to enjoy the fruits (or veggies, in our case!) of our labor when the time comes to harvest. As an aside, how do you know when to harvest potatoes? I love you all, and look forward to seeing you soon. Stay safe, and keep looking to Jesus!

How can we help? Our staff is here to serve. You can contact them by calling the Church Office (255-3745)!

We are navigating unprecedented times and not able to gather physically, but we believe our God is still in control and can use us to share the Gospel in creative and powerful ways!

Church family, we LOVE you and are here to serve you!

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LUKE 5:17

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Website: temple.life

Week-at-a-Glance

Sunday, May 10

10 a.m. - Livestream at live.temple.life, or on Facebook and YouTube

To stay within the guidelines given by the CDC and our government leaders, we have made the decision to suspend all on-campus church-related activities until further notice. This closure includes all Wednesday night activities, Sunday evening services, the use of *The Journey Place* playgrounds, and the Family Life Center. The Church Office is open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, but we encourage you to come to the office only if it is completely necessary.

More information about our ReGathering efforts can be found at update.temple.life

Vision:

To become authentic, loving followers of Jesus,
who are experiencing life transformation through God's Word,
For the purpose of impacting our world.



TEMPLE
BAPTIST CHURCH

COME GATHER AROUND THE WORD

Core Values:

Authoritative Truth • Strengthening Worship
Authentic Community • Intentional Transformation
Hands-On Missions • Relational Evangelism
Compassionate Servanthood

Broadcast Hours: Sundays: 9 a.m. Channel 11 (KAQY); 9:30 a.m. 94.1FM (KRLQ); 10 a.m. Livestream (live.temple.life)