

# Pastor's Pen

Was it worth it?

**"The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13**

When my twin boys were about 16, I remember telling them before they were heading out one night, "Before you do anything, ask yourselves would Dad think this was a good idea? How many times I wish I had listened to my own advice. If only I had asked what God, my Father, would think.

King Solomon was the son of David, and God allowed him to build the temple. He loved the Lord (1 Kings 3:2-3). The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night, and God said, "Ask what you wish me to give you." (1 Kings 3:5). What would you have asked God to give you? Solomon asked for wisdom. This is how God responded:

And God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself discernment to understand justice, behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you. And I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days. And if you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and commandments, as your father David walked, then I will prolong your days." 1 Kings 3:11-14

If the story ended there, it would have had a happy ending. However, Solomon disobeyed God in many areas of his life. Deuteronomy 17 says that a king must not acquire too many horses, have a heart that goes after Egypt where Israel was once enslaved, marry too many wives, or accumulate for himself too much silver or gold.

The Bible tells us he disobeyed God in all these areas: Solomon had many horses. (1 Kings 4:26-28, 2 Chronicles 9:25-28), He married an Egyptian princess. (1 Kings 3:1, 2 Chronicles 8:11), He had over 700 wives and 300 concubines, all of whom were pagan. (1 Kings 11:1-4, 2 Chronicles 9:7), He had one of the richest deposits of gold on earth. (1 Kings 9:11, 14, 28, 10:2, 10-25).

All of this came to a head when the Bible tells us that his wives persuaded him to build temples to the pagan gods when he was old. We are even told that he worshiped these gods, even building a temple to Moloch, a god that his followers sacrificed children. The Lord became angry with him and punished Solomon. God took the kingdom away from Solomon's son because of the sins of the father. Was it worth it, Solomon? We have his answer from the book of Ecclesiastes, "Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity." That Preacher is none other than Solomon. He wrote the book of Ecclesiastes at the end of his life. With deep regret and, I believe, a heart of repentance, he reflected on the sin in his life. He closes out the book with these final words, "The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

What say you, will you fear the one who can cast a man's soul into hell. Will you keep His commands? Do you love the one who sent His Son to die for you?

Your shepherd,

Pastor Mark

## Quote of the Week

"No man is really saved unless he is in his heart obedient to Christ."  
-C.H. Spurgeon

# Grace Gems

Christ's sword!

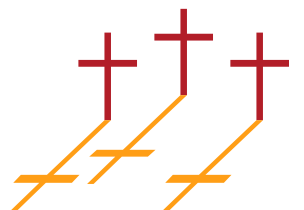
-(Alexander Smellie, "The Hour of Silence" 1899)

**"I did not come to bring peace, but a sword!"  
Matthew 10:34**

Not peace, but a sword! Lord Jesus, this is a hard saying! Teach me to believe it, and to submit to the ordeal — sharp and piercing and painful though it may be. Between me and my world, Christ's sword may pierce with its remorseless edge. He separates me . . . from old sinful habits, from old sinful employments, from old sinful pleasures, from old sinful friendships.

He divides me from the society in which I was accustomed to move. "Your home is no longer there!" He says. And I go out from the familiar surroundings, into an untrodden region and realm. Between me and my nearest and dearest — Christ's sword may pierce pitilessly. Perhaps the loved ones of my own house will have nothing to do with my Redeemer and Lord. Perhaps they see no beauty in Him, that they should desire Him. Then, in the deepest and noblest things, they and I will stand apart — a sundering tide rolling between us. And how immeasurably sad that will be!

Between me and myself — Christ's sword is sure to pierce with a blade that does not spare! The I, the self — which used to be so vain, so confident, so proud — must be slain outright! Its days of pride, pleasure and selfishness must end — until I can say, "It is no more I who live — but He — my Prophet, my Priest, my King — who lives in me!" What a change that is! What a martyrdom! It is painful, this stroke of Christ's sword. But the old confessor was right: "The nearer the sword — the nearer Heaven!" If I am victim — I am victor too. Smitten down by Jesus — I am not destroyed, but crowned!



# Weekly Gatherings



## Bible Classes

New Testament  
Sunday School  
Sunday Morning @ 9AM



## Weekday Meetings

Mondays | 7PM  
Men's Bible Study



## Family Groups

Thursdays @ 7PM @ Royall's  
Every other Thursday @7PM  
@ Patrick's & Cox's



## Build the Body Teams

If you would like to serve on a BtB Team and forgot to sign up, please contact the team leader at the appropriate email address.



## Youth Study

Wednesdays @6:30PM  
Youth Study  
AWANA @6:30PM-8PM



## Service Times

Sunday Service 10:30AM  
Children's Church @10:30AM

### Giving from service on 04/25/2021

General Offering .....	7,808.29
Building Fund .....	688.35
Annie Armstrong .....	250.00
Uganda .....	40.00
Benevolence .....	50.00
Total .....	\$8,836.64

Annie Armstrong Goal: \$1750. Donated: \$1750.

Attendance .....206  
Sunday School ..... 132  
Online.....21

## Build the Body Ministries

Women's Ministry-women@ghbcva.org  
AWANA-awana@ghbcva.org  
Outreach Ministry-outreach@ghbcva.org  
Worship Ministry-worship@ghbcva.org  
Men's Ministry-men@ghbcva.org  
Children's Ministry-children@ghbcva.org  
Youth Ministry-youth@ghbcva.org  
Prayer Team-prayer@ghbcva.org  
Maintenance-maintenance @ghbcva.org  
Fellowship-fellowship@ghbcva.org  
Communications-communications@ghbcva.org  
Front Line-frontline@ghbcva.org  
Security-security@ghbcva.org



Grace Harvest  
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# Grace Harvest Baptist Church

May 2, 2021

