

# the Kerygma



NEWSLETTER OF REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3 MAY/JUNE 2005

## From Ralph Erskine's Gospel Sonnets

"Though thus her new-created nature  
soars,  
And lives aloft on Jesus' heavenly  
shores;  
Yet, apt to stray, her old adult'rous heart  
Of takes her old renounced husband's  
part:

A legal cov'nant is so deep ingrain'd  
Upon the human nature lapsed and  
stain'd,  
That, till her spirit mount the purest  
clime,  
She's never totally divorced in time;  
Hid in her corrupt part's proud bosom  
lurks  
Some hope of life still by the law of  
works.

Hence flow the following evils more  
or less:  
Preferring oft her partial holy dress,  
Before her Husband's perfect  
righteousness.

Hence joying more in grace already  
given,  
Than in her head and stock that's all in  
heaven.  
Hence grieving more the want of  
frames and grace,  
Than of himself the spring of all solace,

Hence guilt her soul imprisons, lusts  
prevail,  
While to the law her rents insolvent fail,  
And yet her faithless heart rejects her  
Husband's bail.

Hence soul-disorders rise, and racking  
fears,  
While doubtful of his clearing past  
arrears;  
Vain dreaming, since her own  
obedience fails,  
His likewise little for her help avails.

Hence duties are a task, while all in  
view  
Is heavy yokes of laws, or old or new:  
Whereas, were once her legal bias  
broke,  
She'd find her Lord's commands an  
easy yoke.  
No galling precepts on her neck he lays,  
Nor any debt demands, save what he  
pays..."

## REIGNING GRACE! BY TOM GIBBS

**H**ow are we saved? It is a simple enough question. In fact, our Bibles give us a simple enough answer. Paul writes in Romans 10, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." There you go! Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved from your sins. Right. Right?

As pastor of a church in a major metropolitan city I have ceased being amazed at the many ways we misunderstand Jesus. For example, we are very comfortable with the idea that Jesus forgives sinners. All we have to do, we say, is believe in Jesus. After all, we are all sinful. We all readily qualify and we are ready to receive this *grace that he gives*. We all like grace.

Nevertheless, our familiarity with grace introduces a problem that Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Bible teacher, called "cheap grace." This view is summarized well by the comment of a French philosopher and cynic, "The good God will forgive me; that's his job." We have far too often thought that forgiveness is simply a matter of God doing his job, as if the only reason we keep God around is so that he can ease my conscience when I feel it tinge with my self-centeredness every now and again.

### Costliness of Grace:

Such a view of grace is dangerous because it trivializes the *great cost of grace*. Anselm, the scholastic theologian from the 11<sup>th</sup> century wrote, "If anybody imagines that God can simply forgive us as we forgive others, that person has not yet considered the seriousness of sin..." Trivializing the forgiveness God offers is ultimately a trivialization of Jesus—his life, death and resurrection. On the "sinful" side of sin we do not readily grasp the cataclysmic collision, which occurred between the infinitely holy and perfect God and a sinful and rebellious humanity. The chasm created by our guilt could not be rectified with a simple apology on our part or even simple forgiveness on the part of God. Only the cross of Christ could reconcile such a catastrophe. And thankfully, it has.

### Tragedy of Sin:

Furthermore, a cheap view of grace is also a trivialization of sin. Part of the wonder that a true

understanding of grace brings is that through the Lord Jesus grace actually *deals with sin*. The modern world, while no stranger to sin, is a stranger to actually dealing with it. It is far more common for us to choose between two options. On the one hand, we often *redefine sin* so that it becomes something else; something that is no longer considered sin—whether emotions, words, deeds or thoughts, we simply regard them as different or self-destructive. When God no longer defines what sin is, the only barometers left are my circle of friends, the opinions of pop culture or the secular, academic establishment. Such an approach removes what some call the "negativity" of the Gospel. But at what cost? Those who don't sin also don't need grace.

The other option available to us is more common among those of us in the church. I call it *sweeping sin under the rug*. Rather than honestly confronting and confessing our failure, we act, or those around us act as though it does not happen. When we're all dressed up in our Sunday clothes, carrying our 2.3 children and our newly released study Bibles we can look as though sin is a thousand miles away. How in the world could our marriages be teetering on separation? How in the world could racism dwell in our hearts? How in the world could we be given over to anger and violence? Of course, when sin is swept under the rug, it is painful for the sinner, because ultimately they are forced out of the church community. As a sinner, they can no longer exist with "those who do not sin."

Thankfully grace deals with sin precisely because Jesus refused to *redefine it* or *sweep it under the rug*. In His life, Jesus exercised Lordship over sin. He refused to submit to its siren call and thereby conquered its allure. On the cross Jesus submitted to God's verdict over sin—death and hell—and so received its penalty. In the resurrection, we see God's vindication of Jesus as the one who alone has conquered sin. In other words, His resurrection proves that grace really does come through Jesus!

### Reign of Grace:

Finally, we are brought to the third way in which we are tempted to "cheapen grace." Not only do we trivialize sin and the cross, we also trivialize the *demands of grace*. In a religious culture like ours where it almost seems easy to "believe in Jesus" we might think that He makes no demands

*Continued on page 3*

## REDEEMER NEW MEMBERS



*Will Judson*



*Caroline Page*



*Christopher Page*



*Mary Louise Randolph*



*Stephanie Woodward*

*Jim and Amy Anthony  
(photo not available)*

## SAN ANTONIO EVENTS CALENDAR

### REDEEMER'S SUMMER GUIDE TO FUN

#### MAY

**\* San Antonio Symphony**

May 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>  
At the Majestic Theatre  
(210) 226-5700

**\* San Antonio Museum of Art,  
Asian Art Wing Opening Celebration**

May 15<sup>th</sup>, noon- 6 pm  
(210) 978-8100

**\* Soul Food Festival at  
La Villita**

May 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>  
Fri. 5-10 pm, Sat. 11 am- midnight  
(210) 207-8610

**\* Viva Botanica, 25<sup>th</sup> B-day Bash**

May 21<sup>st</sup>  
Children's Activities  
San Antonio Botanical Gardens  
(210) 207-3250

**\* A Day of Sports at the Ranch**

May 21<sup>st</sup>, 9 am-8 pm Harvest Creek Ranch  
(Josh Day) [www.harvestcreekranch.com](http://www.harvestcreekranch.com)

#### JUNE

**\* 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Texas Folk Life  
Festival**

June 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>  
Food, costumes, arts and crafts  
Institute of Texan Cultures  
(210) 458-2390

**\* Concert Under the Stars at  
the Botanical Gardens**

June 16<sup>th</sup>, 6 pm  
Come enjoy a jazz concert as night falls  
San Antonio Botanical Gardens  
(210) 207-3250

**\* Water Works at the Witte**

June 18<sup>th</sup>  
Come play at the opening of the  
permanent outside Water Works Exhibit  
Witte Museum (210) 357- 1900

**\* Texas Trails and Tales**

June 21<sup>st</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>, 10 am – 2 pm  
Pioneer life exhibit and activities  
Institute of Texan Cultures  
(210) 458- 2390

#### JULY

**\* Contemporary Art Month in San  
Antonio**

All of July  
Check [www.camsanantonio.org](http://www.camsanantonio.org) for listings  
of art shows

**\* Brian Jobe's work at the  
UTSA Satellite Space**

July 1<sup>st</sup>- 17<sup>th</sup> (opening July 1<sup>st</sup>)  
Brian is showing with two other sculptors.  
UTSA Satellite Space  
115 Blue Star  
210-458-4389

**\* Concert Under the Stars at the  
Botanical Gardens**

July 21<sup>st</sup>, 6 pm  
Come enjoy a jazz concert as night falls  
San Antonio Botanical Gardens  
(210) 207-3250

**\* Missions Baseball**

July 1<sup>st</sup> - July 4<sup>th</sup>  
Come see San Antonio's team play the  
San Francisco Rough Riders  
[www.samissions.com](http://www.samissions.com)

# MINISTRIES OF MERCY

## SCRIPTURE EXPLANATIONS

### Chapter 1: The Call to Mercy

*But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29)*

Overview: Mercy is not optional or an addition to being a Christian. Rather, a life poured out in deeds of mercy is the inevitable sign of true faith.

### Chapter 2: The Character of Mercy

*He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper (Luke 10:34-35)*

Overview: The ministry of mercy is the meeting of "felt" needs through deeds. As agent of the kingdom, the church seeks to bring substantial healing of the effects of sin in all areas of life, including psychological, social, economic, and physical.

Ministries of Mercy by Timothy Keller

## MISSIONS MINUTE

\* Look for the Missions Minute box as a regular part of the Kerygma!

### ❖ Guadalupe Center

The Guadalupe Community Center Food Bank has received food donations from Redeemer each month this year. The April donation was the largest. The food pantry is in fairly good supply as of the 11th of April. We will continue to collect food the second Sunday of every month. Remember to bring small containers of food and they must be cans or plastic, no glass. If you have questions or want to help deliver the food next time, please contact Ann and Hobie Fatheree (824-4713)

### ❖ Agape Pregnancy Center

Agape Pregnancy Care Center: There will be a support-raising banquet for Agape on May 12th. Our current plan is to get two tables full of Redeemer folks. This will be an opportunity to hear more about Agape and it's mission. If you would like to attend or get more information, please contact Teresa McCaleb (826-7634) or Elizabeth Clement (530-0522).

### ❖ VBS at the Guadalupe Community Center: August 1-4

We are excited to host a Vacation Bible School at the Guadalupe Community Center this summer. The kids, ages 4 years through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, will come from the communities that surround the Guadalupe and Tobin Community centers. Both centers are excited to participate. The VBS will be from 9 AM – 11 AM Monday-Thursday. We will have a party Thursday evening at the center where we will invite the kids and their parents. We will give the parents an overview of what we did during the week, and the kids will sing a song and do the hand motions to a verse they learn during the week. This is a great opportunity to share the love of Jesus with these kids and their parents and for us to develop new relationships. We will need lots of volunteers (the center is private, but it's staff is city-funded, so they won't be able to help while we are there) to help man the stations, direct traffic, love on these kids, and help with the party Thursday night. Mark your calendars and please contact John Fitch (824-5973 or email: jfitch@pol.net) if you can help out.

## REDEEMER Vacation Bible School

### Mark Your Calendars!

VBS is coming on  
**June 27th - July 1st**

Your children will be embarking on a *Faith Expedition* filled with singing, activities and crafts. We will be learning about how God gave faith to the people of the Bible and how He gives us faith today.  
*Invite friends!*

Call Amy Miller for info.  
(210) 232-0119

## REIGNING GRACE (CONTINUED)

on my life. Grace without the cost of discipleship seems great! But is this really what Jesus (or Paul) means when he calls us to faith? Absolutely not.

In fact, because of Jesus we no longer have to go easy on sin. Jesus has freed us to be ruthless with it, because he is a rescuing and reigning Savior. In fact, the only real reason I have to obey the Lord is because Jesus has proven that he is really Lord over sin and its consequences. When I choose to obey, I am showing that I am a participant in grace. In other words, when I say Jesus is Lord, I am saved. That salvation means that I am living

under the reign of Jesus and *his grace*. Far from trying to "earn" grace, my obedience is a living testimony to the Jesus who has "earned" grace for me.

For this reason, we should more and more seek to listen to the commandments of our Lord and to do his will. So, does Jesus have a right to speak into our lives and to give shape to every corner of them? Absolutely! We should expect that Jesus wants to change our attitudes about money, sex, marriage, work, recreation, dating, parenting, retirement and church. Of course he does. To be under Jesus means to be under the reign of his grace, which means that we joyfully submit to its demands.

Therefore, the next time you or I are tempted to give Jesus the "Heisman", when we sense that he is pulling us toward greater obedience and submission, let's remember that it's because of grace that we even have the privilege of obedience. Rather than running from his commands, let's delight in them. As the Psalmist reminds us, "Give me understanding that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart. Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I *delight in it.*" (Psalm 119:34-35)

# PRESBYTERIAN REDEEMER

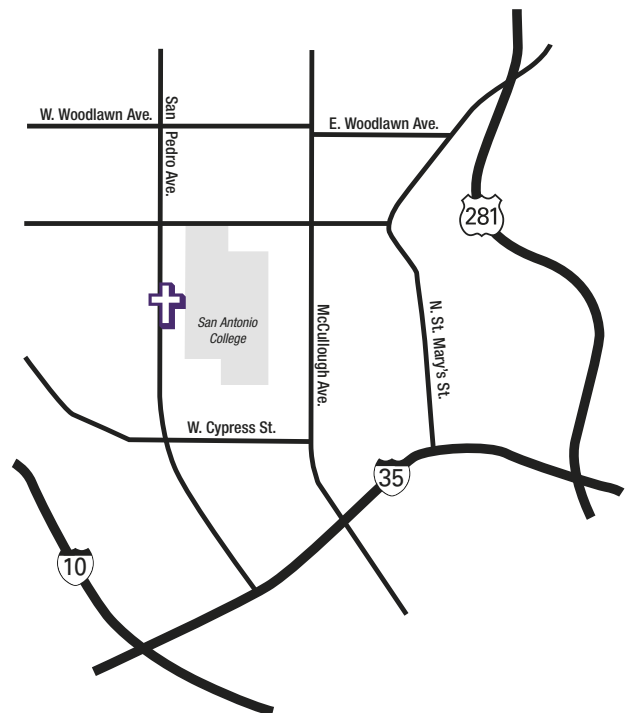
3737 Broadway, Suite 285  
San Antonio, TX 78209  
Phone: 210-930-4480 Fax: 210-930-4481  
www.redeemersa.org

**Join us**  
**at our new**  
**worship location,**  
**the McAllister**  
**Fine Art Center,**  
**on Sundays**  
**at 9:30 a.m.**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 13-14** Intro To Redeemer  
Membership Class
- May 19** Redeemer Men's  
Fellowship at the  
Flying Saucer
- June 12** Redeemer Ice Cream  
Social
- June 16** Redeemer Men's  
Fellowship at the  
Flying Saucer
- June 27-  
July 1** Vacation Bible School

## MAP



✚ Sunday Morning Worship Services are now held at the McAllister Fine Arts Center