


 GraceLine

right now counts forever

Metaxoi Memorandum:

To Those Who Will Rule With Jesus in the World to Come

Volume IV - January 2011

Greetings to the Metaxoi men and women of our Lord Jesus,

I assume this is your busy time of the year. For most of you who are pastors you are busy getting ready for the New Year. I am sure that you have a full schedule filled with goals and objectives, not to mention opportunities and obstacles. Make sure you schedule your priorities and not simply prioritize your schedule. As your schedule fills remember to make time to meet with God. It is the only way that you will be able to genuinely meet the needs of the people whom you seek to serve.

Resources

Let me bring to your awareness some new resources.

The Church Awakening: The Urgent Call for Renewal by Chuck Swindoll; Faith Words, published 2010. This is a helpful book that is five years too late. In it Swindoll uses the pastoral letters of Paul to challenge us to walk with God and to resist the cultural forces from both the secular and sacred arenas. Some of what he speaks about has been dealt with by a variety of authors. The benefit of the book is his honesty concerning the fact that his church is not perfect and in fact needed a major overhaul. To that end, it is helpful to see the honesty from one of the "big dogs" in the ministry. The book can also provide some good sermonic material if you are teaching in the pastorals. The culture material is good, but if you read much you will have seen it before. So, look before your leap or buy.

Salvation and Sovereignty: A Molinist Approach by Kenneth Keathly; Broadman & Holman, 2010. Many of you know that I have benefited from the teaching of Alfred de Molina a.k.a. Molinsim as well as from Balthasar Hubmaier, who taught these truths fifty years before Molina. I have found it quite helpful in dealing with the issue of election and free will. This is a great book dealing with the topic. It is also a great supplement to some of the work done by William Lane Craig and others regarding Molinism. If you have people who struggle with free will and sovereignty or the doctrines of election and predestination then this is a must.

Whosoever Will; edited by David Allen and Steve Lemke; Broadman & Holman, 2010. This is a collection of talks given at the John 3:16 Conference. As you may know there is a major division in the Southern Baptist Convention over the role of five point Calvinism. The Dortian Calvinists reside at Southern Seminary Louisville. Al Mohler leads the charge with Bruce Ware to articulate a strident five point Calvinist view and a hyper lordship salvation doctrine. This is also the view of John Piper, who is often used to support the school. In the other camp, which is more dispensational and hence not as reformed, is Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth. The President, Page Patterson, and Vice President, Craig Blasing, are clearly dispensational and are more in favor of non- lordship doctrine, although I would not say they are total free grace. But, we must find friends wherever we can. This book is from the Southwestern side of things and the messages are very stirring. In fact, the first chapter is a transcribed sermon by Jerry Vines on John 3:16. I have already selected parts of it for use in a variety of ministry venues. (I have a feeling you will too.) It is a great sermon that blends great theology with wonderful homiletical skill. Jerry Vines does a superb job and it alone is worth the price of the book.

In terms of websites, let me remind you of some of the resources that can be found on www.FreeGraceAlliance.com. Each month new articles of interest are posted. This month there is a great chapter from a book that reveals more of the weaknesses of lordship salvation theology. You can also purchase DVD's of the 2010 FGA conference and listen to

past years' conference speakers for free. The FGA site also has a blog that you will want to keep up with, if not also participate in, and post some of your thoughts. John Correia is the blogmaster and easy to work with. Also, you may find my website www.GraceLine.net of help. It contains some articles, sermon series and some videos, as well as the dates of upcoming events.

Upcoming Events

- April 16th is the date of the 5th Annual Grace Line Spiritual Life Conference. This year we will have Dr. Jody Dillow and his wife, Linda, who is also an author and sought after conference speaker. It is a great privilege to have both of them speak to us this year. We will also have Dr. Dave Anderson, President of Grace School of Theology, as well as Bob Kerrey, Bible teacher extraordinaire. We will have a variety of ministry booths for conference attenders to check out as well. It is going to be a great conference. I hope those of you who live in the Phoenix area can come and bring many of your leadership team members, as well as people from your church or organization, and your friends. Last year we had over 300 people come and this year I hope to have 400 people come to hear from these great speakers! If you live outside the Phoenix area it would be great to have you come if your schedule will allow. Please check the GraceLine website frequently for conference registration information. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to email me at GraceLineMinistry@cox.net.

- The Free Grace Alliance will have its national conference in October, 2011 in Phoenix. We have not selected the site or the date, but I will let you know as soon as the information becomes available.

State of the Union

It comes as no surprise to many of you that in our nation there is a huge surge toward reformed theology among evangelicals. The issue of Christianity Today magazine with a person wearing a sweat shirt that said on the front, "*Jonathan Edwards is my Home Boy*" says it all. From R.C. Sproul to John Piper leading the charge, we have seen a major movement explode. Part of the reason is that the fear in our society of governmental change and moral dry rot causes people to find a system that claims power and dogmatism to keep one safe in the sovereignty of God. We also believe in the sovereignty of God, and these are good and godly men who lead this movement, but the reformed system has some dangers in it if taken too far. However, on the local front in the Phoenix metropolitan area, there is a new movement of the reformed camp. As you know "Acts 29" in Seattle under the guidance of Mark Driscoll (who is under the tutelage of John Piper) has created an association that is also in league with "The Gospel Coalition" and "Together for the Gospel". All of these groups are led by and follow strong Calvinists and strong Calvinism. In Phoenix there is a new association of two mega churches, East Valley Bible Church and Praxis Church, to form a three site mega - mega church that is under the "Acts 29" banner and follows the documents of "The Gospel Coalition". The new name of the combined church is Redemption Church. (Go to the web to see some of the videos that explain the philosophy. Their stated goal is to "plant many missional reformed churches in Phoenix and all of Arizona." I believe that the goal is a good one - planting Bible teaching churches that exalt the glory of the Lord. But as we know some of the extremes of reformed theology lead to lordship salvation and an unbalanced view of assurance.

In addition to this development, two large, major and historical dispensational and free grace churches have changed senior pastor leadership, and the new pastors have adopted the doctrine of Covenant Pre Mill - Post Trib. Some are also charismatic and all are now articulating a form of lordship salvation. The sad thing about this is that the congregation and in some cases the elders were not even aware of the changes in theology.

What does all this mean? I am not a prophet or the son of a prophet, but I do say this: It might mean that we had better make sure we are training our leaders and members in the theology we say we believe. What is your plan to protect the church that the Lord Jesus has allowed you to be serving? (You will give an account of "your" church and your people, Hebrews 13.) How will you bullet-proof your people from the pressure that will come upon them to be like the other churches? You can count on the fact that many of the "big dogs" will be visiting to speak and inspire people in Phoenix and this will cause some of your people to ask questions. I hope that you have given them answers so they will not become confused.

On a personal note:

One of the dangers in the ministry, as Francois de La Rochefoucauld put it, "is that we become so accustomed to disguising ourselves to others that in the end we become disguised to ourselves." The only remedy for this is to not disguise ourselves, but seek to be transparent at least to someone. I hope that you have such a person. It might be

your spouse and I hope that is the case. But it may be helpful to have at least one other or a small group of others to whom you can take off the pretense and be who you are---a glorious ruin.

Now unto Him who is able...

Serving Him with you
Until He comes for us,

Dr. Fred Chay
President, Grace Line

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