



Watch your hands.

By Alexander S. Brown, Minister

LAST week as the internet was exploding with discussion and debate concerning the Same-Sex Marriage question and the potential repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act, Russell Moore, professor of ethics at the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, tweeted, **“Those in Christ raise hands in prayer, or maybe fold them. But we don't wring hands in panic or clench them in fury.”**

It was the wisest comment on the current situation that I read all week, and I think it is important for us to look at what he is saying a little more closely.

First, it is vital that Christians do not wring their hands in panic or clench them in fury when confronted with the actions of a sinful world. Dr. Moore did not come up with that thought – it is one that is found throughout our Bibles. We have seen it recently as we have been preaching through Daniel, and we saw in his visions the vital message that God remains in control even when it *appears* that the world is in a tail-spin.

There are a great many confusing things about Daniel’s visions, but that is not one of them – the core message was to reassure the Judeans that although they will come up against some pretty severe opposition, including ungodly Emperors who will desecrate the Temple and attempt to destroy the people of God, the Judeans were never to panic because they were to know that God is in control and is using even the most wicked of men for His own purposes and for His own glory. Sinclair Ferguson commented on the end of chapter 11, and the demise of the ‘antichrist’ who puffs himself up and rails against God and his people -

“Christ will simply blow him away. It will be anticlimactic as that. If we may parody T. S. Eliot’s ‘The Hollow Men’:

*This is the way that the antichrist ends
Not with a bang, but a whimper.”*

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*The belief in a
Sovereign God
prevents hand
wringing or fist
clenching.*

April Calendar

Sunday

9:30 a.m. Sunday School
Knowing Scripture

10:30 a.m. Morning Worship
Exodus: God, our Savior

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship
Ezra

Children’s Church, Nursery available

- Wed 4/3 Women’s Book Group
(9:30 a.m., Brown home)
- Wed 4/3, 10, 17, 24
Midweek Prayer Meeting
(6:30 p.m., GIPC)
- Fri 4/5 Ladies Spring Fellowship
(7:00 p.m., Haza home)
- Sun 4/7 Communion, AM
- Sat 4/13 “Second Saturday” Men’s
Breakfast & Bible Study
(8:00 a.m., Brown home)
- Wed 4/16 Savannah River
Presbytery (Sylvania, GA)
- Thu 4/18 Stated Session Meeting
(5:00 p.m., GIPC)
- Sun 4/21 Guest Missionary Visit—
Pastor Imbumi Makuku
of Nairobi, Kenya
- Wed 4/24 Women’s Bible Study
(9:30 a.m., Brown home)
- Fri 4/26 Men’s Fellowship Supper
(Southern Soul BBQ;
6:30 p.m., Currier home)

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Watch Your Hands.

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This message is repeated through the New Testament, as Jesus warns His disciples that they will face great opposition from the world, but reassures them with the knowledge that not a hair of their head would perish (Luke 21: 18). It is the message that saturates the book of Revelation. As someone once put it, the whole message of Revelation can be summed up in the phrase “the Lamb wins!” The whole point of that book is to show us the end of the story, and to show us that no matter how bad things get, we can have tremendous confidence that God is in control and that He is working out all His purposes according to the counsel of His own will. (Eph. 1: 11)

The belief in a Sovereign God prevents hand wringing or fist clenching.

HOWEVER, this does not mean that we just sit back with a fatalistic view of the world and declare that “whatever will be, will be.” There is something that our belief in a Sovereign God drives us to, and that is to clasp our hands in prayer.

This is the great command of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount,

“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.” (Luke 6: 27)

Jesus forbids us from returning like-for-like when facing those who are hostile towards us. We are not to hate those who hate us, but rather are to love those who hate us, and that love is to manifest itself in doing good to them, blessing them and, ultimately, praying for them. Now this can at times seem like an impossible standard — one that we simply can never live up to, but reading further we realize that we must, because this command is rooted in the Gospel.

Jesus continues and in verses 35-36 states:

“Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, *for* he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.”

What Jesus is saying is that when we love our enemies we are imitating our heavenly Father — who constantly shows mercy to His enemies, and especially to those whom He called to Himself.

Christians have no moral high-ground to stand upon. We owe everything to the mercy of God. We owe everything to God loving those who hated Him and in doing good to them and blessing them, and we demonstrate how much we owe to the grace of God, when we show His grace to others — that is what Jesus means when He says “and you will be sons of the Most High.” Bearing the family likeness of our heavenly Father means that we are merciful and loving to our enemies.

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Finance Committee

GIPC Update: Loan Balance

Loan Balance 1/1/13	\$807,308
Principal Paid YTD	\$ 8,866
Loan Balance 3/31/13	\$798,442
2013 Average Payment:	
Interest	\$ 2,574
Principal	\$ 2,678
Total Payment	\$ 5,252

Men's Ministry

“Second Saturday” Men's Breakfast & Bible Study April 13th, 8:00 a.m.

Brown home
Current Study: *Disciplines of a
Godly Man*

“Men's Fellowship Southern Soul BBQ Supper” Friday, April 26th, 6:30 p.m.

Currier home
All men are encouraged to attend.

World Missions

Save the date! Guest Missionary Visit

Pastor Imbumi Makuku of the Kibera Reformed Presbyterian Church, Nairobi, Kenya, will be speaking at GIPC the weekend of **April 19-21** to share a report on the work God is doing through the various ministries of KRPC. Details forthcoming.

Significant Sessional Actions

- Approved an adjusted schedule for Easter Sunday.
- Approved Mr. Brown preaching at the Community Sunrise Service.
- Approved the 2013 Faith Promise Budget.
- Set Thursday, April 18th as the next Stated Session Meeting (5:00 p.m. at GIPC).
- Set Sunday, April 28th as the date for a Congregational Meeting to elect Church Officers.

Watch Your Hands.

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So, what should we pray? There are a number of things that we can pray for those with whom we find ourselves at odds.

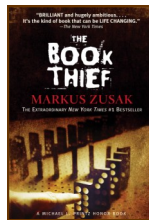
- We can pray that God would move in their hearts to redirect their actions, or to cause them to cease from a certain way of thinking or acting. We certainly see precedence for that in Scripture in how the Lord deals with Pharaoh in the release of Israel from Egypt and with Cyrus in the return of the Judeans from exile.
- We can pray that God would protect His people, praying with David in Ps. 51, “Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; protect me from those who rise up against me; deliver me from those who work evil, and save me from bloodthirsty men.”
- But our primary prayer must be that God would so work in the hearts of our enemies that they would come to a saving knowledge of Christ. To truly love our neighbor as ourselves is to seek their salvation – you cannot love someone and desire that they go to hell. And so we must be praying for the salvation of our enemies, that God would soften their sin-hardened hearts, and call them to Himself.

As we look at our current political climate, there is a lot to be concerned about. As citizens of America, we must be informed and involved in the current debates and discussions. But as citizens of heaven, our involvement must always be done in a spirit of love and self-sacrifice, not seeking simply to win the argument but to win our opponent as we show them the grace that we have been shown. ▪

Women in the Church

Women’s Book Group: Wednesday, April 3rd (9:30 a.m., Brown home)

The story in *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak is told by an unexpected narrator and you will be surprised when you find out who it is. The author grew up hearing about stories of Germany during World War II and about Jews being marched through his mother’s small German town. The main character is a child, Liesel Meminger, who grew up in Germany and stole her first book even before she had learned to read. Across the years of the 1930s and 1940s she collected more stolen books from Nazi book burnings, as well as a peculiar set of friends. This is a fascinating read and *USA Today* notes that this book “deserves a place on the same shelf with *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank.”



**“Past, Present, Future — Ladies Spring Fellowship”
Friday, April 5th (7:00 p.m., Haza home)**

All women of GIPC are invited! Please bring a dessert to share along with a brown paper bag containing one item representing your past, one item representing your present, and one that represents your future.

Women’s Bible Study: Wednesday, April 24th (9:30 a.m., Brown home)

This study (the only one in April) marks the conclusion of the book of *Hosea*.

Building and Grounds



The Building and Grounds Committee has been overseeing the following projects for the Church:

- a new HVAC unit was installed for the church office area due to the failure of the old system.
- the exterior painting work on the concrete block walls at the rear of the building was completed. This will help reduce rainwater seepage into rooms at the back of the church.

Our next project will be roof flashing repair to prevent rainwater seepage at points along the office corridor ceiling.

The committee is considering a Work Day later in the Spring. *Details will follow.*

Congregational Meeting— Sunday, April 28th

The Session of Golden Isles Presbyterian Church has called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, April 28th, immediately following the morning worship service, for the purpose of electing church officers. *Details forthcoming.*

**GOLDEN ISLES
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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APRIL

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me."
(Psalm 43:3)

Family Worship

Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Leviticus</i>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		11,12	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		26	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		27	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	<i>Numbers</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		7	<input type="checkbox"/>

APRIL

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Family Worship

Psalms Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Psalms</i>	1,2	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		3,4	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		5,6	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		7,8	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		11,12	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		13,14	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		15,16	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		20,21	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		23,24	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		26,27	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		28,29	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		30	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		31	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		32	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		33	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		34	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		35	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		36	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		37	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		38	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		39	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		40,41	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		42,43	<input type="checkbox"/>

APRIL

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me."
(Psalm 43:3)

Private

Old Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Proverbs</i>	19	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		26	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		27	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		28	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		29	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		30	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		31	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	<i>Ecclesiastes</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	<i>Song of Solomon</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		5	<input type="checkbox"/>

APRIL

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me."
(Psalm 43:3)

Private

New Testament Reading

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Colossians</i>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<i>I Thess.</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	<i>II Thess.</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	<i>I Timothy</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	<i>II Timothy</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	<i>Titus</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	<i>Philemon</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	<i>Hebrews</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		5	<input type="checkbox"/>

Week beginning MARCH 31

Matthew 22:37b-39

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Week beginning APRIL 7

Proverbs 15:1 and 16:24

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.

Week beginning APRIL 14

Romans 12:9-13

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Week beginning APRIL 21

Romans 12:14-16

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be conceited.

Week beginning APRIL 28

Romans 12:17-19

Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the Lord.