



# IPC MESSENGER

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE INDEPENDENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
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## A Tribute to John MacArthur, Jr, 1939-2025

TERRY JOHNSON

I started attending Grace Community Church my freshman year of college. A group of us drove from the University of Southern California to the San Fernando Valley to attend a Sunday night service. He was preaching through First John. The churches I grew up in were of the revivalistic Baptist type in which every service was evangelistic, concluding with an altar call. That Sunday night was the first time I ever heard verse-by-verse preaching. It was dynamic, powerful, inspiring, challenging. I walked out of the service, saying to myself, “That is what a preacher is supposed to do.” His job is not to give us updates on current events, to entertain us with stories, to share his political opinions, or even to evangelize the lost, but simply to explain the Bible and apply its message. His job is to feed the sheep. I knew from that point on that whatever church I attended would feature expository preaching, and if I ever were a minister, verse-by-verse would characterize my own approach to preaching. That is to say, beginning at that point he had a direction-setting impact on my life through both the power and pattern of his ministry.

The journey to the Grace Community Church, pastored since 1969 by “Johnny Mac” (as we irreverently called him), became a weekly outing for us. Attending there was not convenient. We would pile into one of our cars, argue who was going to pay for the gas, and drive the 45 minutes to Roscoe Boulevard in Panorama City. None of us had an

inkling about worship. We *endured* the “preliminaries.” We were there to hear MacArthur.

Remember, this is California. We were only a few months past the Vietnam war protests, the race riots, and still in the throes of the sexual revolution. Everything was in flux, and nothing seemed stable. Moral, cultural, and religious relativism was rampant. Dogmatism was out of fashion and mocked.

His preaching was direct: uncut, undilute, and uncompromising. He was not one to equivocate or accommodate. His expositions were straightforward, emphatic, and politically incorrect. Others might be tentative. Others might be half-apologetic. Others might be hesitant, circuitous, or beat-around-the-bush. Not MacArthur. He utilized several effective techniques that seemed natural to him and not contrived. He would ask, for example, “‘God so loved the world’ that He whaaaaat?” “‘He gave His only begotten Son.’” “‘That whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have’ whaaaaat?” “‘Everlasting life’” (Jn 3:16). He had a way of using cadence for emphasis. “‘You did not-choose-me-but-I-chose-you’” (Jn 15:16). He forced us to look at the text of Scripture and listen to it carefully. He also used repetition like I’d never before heard. He would say one thing five different ways in the space of five seconds. He might say, “This morning’s sermon is on eschatology. We’re going to be examining the end times, the second advent, the return

of Christ, the second coming.” His preaching was incisive yet accessible; biblical yet contemporary; deadly serious yet sprinkled with humorous insights. We loved him.

Following the service, we would drive a short distance down Roscoe to In-N-Out Burgers, order our “double-dubs” and milkshakes, and discuss, debate, and relive the sermon. A great deal of learning occurred sitting around their outside tables, enjoying the cool air of Southern California. Of course none of us worried a bit about dining out on the Lord’s Day. That Sunday might be the Christian Sabbath had not yet occurred to us.

This went on week after month after year for three years. Each Sunday I walked into Grace Community one person and walked out a different person. That is how dynamic his preaching was. Each Sunday I left church with new eyes and ears, with a new outlook, new understanding, and new priorities.

During my college summers I borrowed dozens and dozens of cassette tapes from Grace Community’s lending library, particularly of MacArthur’s sermons on 1 Corinthians. I listened to them on my daily 45-minute drive to and from my summer job at Bekins Moving Van and Storage in Santa Monica. In those days this meant plugging my trusty cassette player into the cigarette lighter while straining to hear above the noise of the traffic.

My Christian pilgrimage has been shaped by a series of Christian leaders: Martin Canavan, the Baptist preacher of my youth; Mark and Sharon Neuenschwander, Fraternity Row Bible study teacher my senior year at USC; J. I. Packer and J. A. Motyer, theologians and authors at Trinity College, Bristol, England; William Still of the Gilcomston South Church of Scotland congregation in Aberdeen; James M. Baird, my pastoral guide through the post-seminary early years of ministry; and Hughes O. Old, the great historian-theologian of Reformed worship. It’s sobering to consider that all of my heroes are now deceased, less one.

John MacArthur is a member of this club. For 50 years he has been my primary model for preaching. Why have I preached verse-by-verse through Scripture, the *lectio continua*, for nearly 40 years, covering 50 of the 66 books of the Bible? Why are even topical sermons always based on a text of Scripture? I learned this from MacArthur. Why am

I convinced that the Bible is perpetually the most relevant, most up-to-date, most thought-provoking, most challenging, most life-changing, most life-shaping book in the whole world? Because of John MacArthur. Why do I believe that the Christian message includes the call of both law and gospel, *sola fide* and good works, *sola gratia* and obedience? Because of John MacArthur. Why am I convinced that the Bible teaches both predestination and human responsibility? To a degree, because of John MacArthur, the Calvinist. Why am I willing to say unpopular things, even controversial things when it is necessary to do so? Because I heard MacArthur do so in the most helpful and clarifying ways week after week for three years.

Later, from afar, I saw him throw down the gauntlet by publishing *The Gospel According to Jesus* in 1988, challenging the antinomian, “cheap grace” element of the dispensationalism in which he was reared and earning him the ire of the faculty of Dallas Theological Seminary, the flagship seminary of dispensationalism, and resulting in his program being dropped by the Bible Broadcasting Network. Later I saw him take on the crazy extremes of Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement. Later I saw him join forces with R. C. Sproul and challenge those who were compromising gospel essentials in the name of unity with the Roman Catholics. These are but a few of a number of unpopular, costly, but necessary stands he took over the years. He is my model of a principled yet not pugnacious Christian ministry, of a willingness to be faithful regardless of cost. MacArthur was an Elijah of our times.

I eventually arrived at different convictions regarding the sacraments, church government, and eschatology. I am a covenantal, paedobaptist Presbyterian, and he was a mildly dispensational, baptistic, congregationalist (local autonomy). Ultimately, we follow no man but Christ alone. Yet I dedicated my expository commentary on *1, 2, 3 John* (Christian Focus, 2016) to him. Why? Because no one has had a greater impact on the trajectory of my life than did “Johnny Mac.” He was my model of life-changing gospel preaching, of preaching without compromise, of preaching from “all the Scriptures.” Unknown to him, he cast a vision for me of the eternal difference a simple expository ministry could make and kindled in me, and hundreds perhaps even thousands of young men, the desire that maybe, perhaps one day, we might hope to do the same. •

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For more of Mr. Johnson’s writings visit [reformationtoday.org](http://reformationtoday.org)

# 2025 Communion Season

SEPTEMBER 19 - 21



## ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Rev. Bart Lester was born in Huntsville, Alabama, but spent his childhood and teenage years in Birmingham. He attended Auburn University where he graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering in 1992. After graduating from Auburn, Bart began attending

Reformed Theological Seminary at the Jackson campus and then finished his M. Div. at the Charlotte campus in 1996. He was an intern at IPC from 1993-1994. Bart is married to Allison Lester of Savannah, Georgia. Bart and Allison have five children: Caroline, Barton, Oliver, Thomas, and John Bennett. Bart joined the Eastwood Presbyterian Church staff in Montgomery, AL in 1996.

## SCHEDULE

### Friday, September 19

5:30PM - FREE SUPPER IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

6:30PM - SESSION 1 - JER. 23:1-6

*"The Promise the Sacraments Seal"*

### Saturday, September 20

9:00AM - FREE BREAKFAST IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

10:00AM - SESSION 2 - I COR. 10:1-13

*"The Lord's Supper Past & Present"*

### Sunday, September 21

9:00 AM - SUNDAY SCHOOL - I COR. 10:14-22

*"The Comprehensive Implications of the Lord's Supper"*

10:00AM WORSHIP - ROMANS 3:21-26

*"Reassurance & Remembrance"*

5:30PM WORSHIP - ISAIAH 25:1-12

*"Anticipating the Messianic Feast"*

SUPPER WILL FOLLOW EVENING WORSHIP

## About Our Annual Communion Season

In August of 1742, a crowd of 50,000 gathered in Cambuslang, Scotland, for an outdoor communion service amidst the revivals of religion then erupting all throughout the Western world. The setting was the Great Awakening, which burst on the scene in 1735 with the preaching of Jonathan Edwards in Northampton, Massachusetts, and the conversion of George Whitefield at Oxford.

The broader context of the revivals was the long-standing practice of intense communion "seasons" by Scottish Presbyterians, as well as the Puritans of England and New England, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and indeed which persist to the present day in the Highlands and on the Isle of Lewis. Revivals in Scotland were frequent in older times, and, as the Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology says, "(they) were usually associated with the celebration of the Lord's Supper." These occasions typically began with preparatory preaching services Thursday through Saturday nights. The messages were cross-centered, Christ-focused, and soul-searching. Sunday morning communion was administered and Sunday and Monday evenings thanksgiving services followed.

The theological context of intensive communion seasons is the understanding of the Lord's Supper as a sacramental meal, which as such, has signifying and sealing functions. The latter of these means that communicants "seal" their covenant with Christ at the Table. The Supper is that place in the life of the church where Christ and His people seal, in the sense of ratify or confirm, their mutual commitments and obligations, all in the context of shared fellowship.

Consequently, the Lord's Table became that place where church members would do their business with God. It is not surprising that the "Camp Meetings," usually associated with Methodism, grew out of the Scottish Communion season. What became an "altar call," summoning the children of the church, the backslidden, the unconverted, and even the faithful to affirm or reaffirm their repentance and faith in Christ, originated as a call to the Table.

Our aim each year is to return to this older, more biblical practice of making the Table the center of the spiritual life of the church. We do this not by increasing the frequency of our observance, but the intensity. This has always been the preference of the Reformed Church when choosing between observing the Lord's Supper more often or with greater care. Careful has gotten the nod, we think rightly, over frequent.

We would like this season of cross-centered, Christ-focused, soul-searching meetings to become a regular feature of our congregational life. More than that, we are praying that it will become a means of reviving our church, and reviving our community. •

# Church News

## WEDDINGS

*Mr. and Mrs. Tristan Butler* were united in marriage on Thursday, May 15, 2025, in Richmond Hill, GA.

Mrs. Butler is the former Miss Sophia Vanek.

\*

*Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Newman* were united in marriage on Saturday, May 31, 2025, at Harvest Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Lancaster, PA. Mrs.

Newman is the former Miss Laura Milligan.

\*

*Mr. and Mrs. Eric Wu* were united in marriage on Saturday, May 31, 2025, at Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens at Bamboo Farm, Savannah, GA.

Mrs. Wu is the former Miss Sarah Kay Wiggins.

\*

*Mr. and Mrs. Matthew L. Nyce* were united in marriage on Saturday, June 7, 2025, in Atlanta, GA.

Mrs. Nyce is the former Miss Adrienne Dorr.

\*

*Mr. and Mrs. Simon Isaac Steward* were united in marriage on Friday, July 25, 2025, in sanctuary of IPC by Mr. Johnson. Mrs. Steward is the former

Miss Maggie Joy Breckenridge.

\*

*Mr. and Mrs. Brandon A. Doelle* were united in marriage by Rev. David Senters at Bethesda Chapel on Saturday, August 2, 2025. Mrs. Doelle is the former Amanda Victoria Board.

## BIRTHS

*Charles Major Oswald* born Thursday, May 1, 2025, in Savannah, GA, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis

Oswald (Rachel).

\*

*Felix Valor Scharer* born Wednesday, May 28, 2025, in Savannah, GA, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jonny

Scharer (Hannah).

\*

*Lila Catherine Johnson* born Monday, June 9, 2025, in Savannah, GA, the daughter of Capt. and Mrs.

Per Johnson (Sally).

\*

## BIRTHS, CONT.

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*Maeve Elizabeth Gobel* born Thursday, June 12, 2025, in Savannah, GA, the daughter of Mr. and

Mrs. Matthew D. Gobel (Katherine).

\*

*James Austin Stone* born Friday, June 13, 2025, in Savannah, GA, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Austin T.

Stone (Kuyler).

\*

*Barrett Reeves Brodmann* born Friday, June 13, 2025, in Savannah, GA, the son of Mr. and Mrs.

William D. Brodmann III (Sarah Grace).

\*

*Phineas Chester Boatright* was born Tuesday, June 24, 2025, in Savannah, GA, the son of Mr. and Mrs.

Chad C. Boatright (Gabriela "Gabi").

\*

*Plenty Groover VI* and *Miles David Groover III* were born Wednesday, July 16, 2025, in Savannah, GA,

the twin sons of Mr. and Mrs. Plenty Groover V (Emily).

\*

*Ian Benjamin Jeon* was born Friday, July 25, 2025, in Savannah, GA, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jun Jeon

(Claire).

\*

*Reuben Sinclair Soutar* was born Thursday, July 26, 2025, in Savannah, GA, the son of Mr. and Mrs.

Aaron M. Soutar (Stefani).

## BEREAVEMENT

### IN MEMORIAM

*Carolyn Evans Hodges* entered the Lord's presence on Saturday, June 21, 2025.

\*

*Mearl McArthur* entered the Lord's presence on Saturday, July 26, 2025.

BLESSED ARE THE DEAD, WHICH DIE IN THE LORD.

*Revelation 14:13*

\*

# WOC Looking Forward

## SAVE THE DATES

- *Fall Fellowship Gathering*  
Saturday, September 6, 9:30-11:00AM - Telfair Hall
- *Tuesday Morning Bible Study*  
begins on September 16.
- *Wednesday Evening Bible Study*  
begins on September 17.
- *Thursday Morning Circle* resumes  
on September 11.
- *Sunday Meals for College Students*  
start on September 7.
- Be looking for more details on these opportunities!

Continuing...

- *Tuesday Morning "Women Gather to Pray" Downtown Group* will continue through September 9.
- *Tuesday Morning "Women Gather to Pray" Pooler Group* will continue throughout the year.



**You're Invited!**  
**WOC Fall Fellowship**  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6  
9:30-11:00 AM  
TELFAIR HALL

Learn about WOC ministry opportunities, enjoy brunch provided by Silk Road Catering, and fellowship with other IPC ladies!  
All ages that are able to sit through a worship service are welcome!

SCAN HERE TO RSVP: 

If you need childcare for any nursery-aged children, reservations must be made by contacting Jane Boatright.

Questions? Contact Lucy Biemiller.

## WOC BIBLE STUDY 2025-2026

TWO OPTIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE  
TO STUDY THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

Both study options will begin the week of September 15<sup>th</sup> and continue through April, with a break from Thanksgiving-January.

**TUESDAY MORNING**  
9:30 AM - 11:00 AM

**WEDNESDAY EVENING**  
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

**MORE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION  
COMING SOON!**

# PSALMS & HYMNS

O F T H E M O N T H

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

(Year 1-10)

## #499 - Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

*Augustus M. Toplady, 1776*

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy riven side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

Not the labors of my hands  
Can fulfill Thy laws demands;  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears forever flow,  
All for sin could not atone;  
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling;  
Naked, come to Thee for dress;  
Helpless look to Thee for grace;  
Foul, I to Thy fountain fly;  
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When mine eyelids close in death,  
When I soar to worlds unknown,  
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.

TUNE: TOPLADY 7.7.7.7.7.  
Thomas Hastings, 1830

(Year 11-15)

## Psalm 93

<sup>1</sup> Jehovah reigns; He's clothed  
With majesty most bright;  
Jehovah is arrayed with strength;  
He girds Himself with might.

Established is the world,  
Its steadfast place to hold.

<sup>2</sup> And Thou from everlasting art;  
Thy throne is fixed of old.

<sup>3</sup> The floods, O LORD, lift up,  
The floods lift up their voice.  
The floods are lifting up  
their waves;  
They make a mighty noise.

<sup>4</sup> But yet the LORD on high  
More mighty far is He  
Than is the thunder of the waves  
Or breakers of the sea.

<sup>5</sup> Thy testimonies all  
In faithfulness excel;  
And holiness, forever, LORD,  
Thine house becometh well.

TUNE: ST. MICHAEL/OLD 134TH SM  
(*Trinity Hymnal*, #78)  
Based on the *Book of Psalms*, 1871

(Year 1-10)

## Psalm 78:1-8

<sup>1</sup> O ye my people, to my law  
Attentively give ear;  
The words that from my mouth proceed  
Incline yourselves to hear.  
<sup>2</sup> My mouth shall speak a parable,  
The sayings dark of old,  
<sup>3</sup> Which we have listened to and known  
As by our fathers told.

<sup>4</sup> We will not hide them from their sons  
But tell the race to come  
Jehovah's praises and His strength,  
The wonders He has done.  
<sup>5</sup> His word He unto Jacob gave,  
His law to Is-ra-el,  
And bade our fathers teach their sons  
<sup>6</sup> The coming race to tell,

That children yet unborn might know  
And their descendants lead  
<sup>7</sup> To trust in God, recall God's works,  
And His commandments heed,  
<sup>8</sup> And not be like their fathers were,  
A race of stubborn mood,  
Which never would prepare its heart  
Nor keep its faith with God.

TUNE: ELLACOMBE CMD (78C)  
("Hosanna, Loud Hosanna")  
Elements from *Scottish Psalter*, 1650

## ABOUT THE PSALMS

### Psalm 93

This is the first of a group of Psalms that celebrate the LORD reigning as King (e.g. Pss 93-100) or King equivalent ("judge"). Spurgeon calls it, "The Psalm of Omnipotent Sovereignty." The floods and waves of verses 3-4 are metaphors of enemies and opposition, of which the Lord is more mighty (v 4).

### Psalm 78

Psalm 78 is a historical Psalm. From this we learn that

there is much of value in the study of the history of Israel. It provides "a narrative of the great mercies God had bestowed upon Israel, the great sins wherewith they had provoked him, and the many tokens of his displeasure they had been under, for their sins," says Matthew Henry. It is put in poetic and singing form, Henry continues, "that it might be better remembered, and transmitted to posterity, that the singing of it might affect them with the things here related, more than they would be with a bare narrative of them."

# PSALMS & HYMNS OF THE MONTH MEMORIZATION

*The following children completed their  
Psalms and Hymns of the Month for January–June 2024:*

*Clara Crowe*

*Margaret Milling*

*Faith Espinosa*

*Annie Shaw*

*Jobe Gear*

*Levi Shaw*

*Maisie Gear*

*Claire Toly*

*Sarah Hazeltine*

*George Toly*

*Hannah Kate Howard*

*(Year 11-15)*

## Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

*(Charles Wesley vv. 1-2, 4-5;) John Cennick (u. 3)  
alt. Martin Madan*

Lo! He comes, with clouds descending,  
Once for favored sinners slain;  
Thousand thousand saints attending  
Swell the triumph of His train.  
Alleluia! (x3)  
God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold Him,  
Robed in dreadful majesty;  
Those who set at naught and sold Him,  
Pierced, and nailed Him to the tree,  
Deeply wailing, (x3)  
Shall the true Messiah see.

Every island, sea, and mountain,  
Heav'n and earth, shall flee away;  
All who hate Him must, confounded,  
Hear the trump proclaim the day:  
Come to judgment! (x3)  
Come to judgment, come away!

The dear tokens of His passion  
Still His dazzling body bears;  
Casuse of endless exultation  
To His ransomed worshippers;  
With what rapture, (x3)  
Gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, amen! Let all adore Thee,  
High on Thine eternal throne;  
Savior, take the pow'r and glory,  
Claim the kingdom for Thine own:  
O come quickly, (x3)  
Alleluia! come, Lord, come.

TUNE: HELMSLEY 87.87.444.7  
18th-century English melody  
Version adapted from *The English Hymnal*, 1906

## CHOIR INVITATIONS

Each August, the adult choir splits into a Women's Chorus and a Men's Chorus, each of which sings for two Sundays as the summer winds down. This is a great way to dip your toe into the water of choir without needing to make a long-term commitment—though of course if you subsequently decide to stick around for the full adult choir, we are happy to have you! If you're interested in joining the choir, or in singing for these special weeks, please write Jacob Fuhrman or simply show up for our Wednesday evening rehearsals!

We meet for rehearsals on Wednesday evenings, 6:30–8:00pm. We warm up for services in the choir room on Sunday mornings at 8:30am and finish in time to get you to Sunday school. Here are the dates:

Women's Chorus dates:

Wednesday, August 6

Sunday, August 10

Wednesday, August 13

Sunday, August 17

Men's Chorus dates:

Wednesday, August 20

Sunday, August 24

Wednesday, August 27

Sunday, August 31

Full choir dates:

Rehearsals resume Wednesday, September 10

First Sunday morning is September 14



# Teaching Children Theology

## PART THREE: Formal and Informal Methods of Instruction

LUCY BIEMILLER

In the previous two issues of the *Messenger*, we have explored the definitions of theology, why it should be an integral part of what we are doing with our children in the home and in the church, and began looking at ways to use theology intentionally to help shape our children's world-view. We explored two components of a framework for teaching theology to our children: keeping who Jesus is and what we know about God at the center of our teaching and praying for and with our children. We will complete this article series by looking at the last two components of the framework: providing opportunities for formal teaching and incorporating informal teaching in the daily lives of our children.

The most obvious method of teaching theology is through time set aside for formal teaching. This can be accomplished through a variety of means. Reading Scripture regularly as a part of family worship, before bedtime, or when your child first wakes up are all opportunities to hear and discuss who God is and what He has done and continues to do for us. Working on memorization of Scripture, the Creeds, and Catechisms provides a formal framework for our children to learn theological concepts. Singing hymns and psalms during family worship, riding in the car, or while doing chores around the house is another "formal" tool that instills theological concepts. Making family worship, Scripture reading, memorization and singing hymns/psalms a part of our families' routines will provide a formal "program" of theology instruction in our homes. Focus on consistency as it's about developing habits in our children. It is the formative power of consistency that creates the larger changes in children through small habits practiced over time. For more details on incorporating family worship, memorization and hymn singing into your family's routine, see Terry Johnson's *The Family Worship Book* and *Texts that Transform: Marriage & Family*.

In addition, as parents we need to take advantage of the assistance provided to us through the formal instruction provided through the ordinary means of our church. That means making attendance at Sunday School and morning and evening corporate worship a part of our family's routine.

One of the most crucial components of informal teaching actually begins with our own hearts as adults. Our children are watching us. Are we actively participating in worship services? Are we making our personal reading of Scripture and prayer a priority? Are we "in step with the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25b)? As parents, there are many distractions during a worship service and much competition at home for how we allocate our time each day, but we must be vigilant about what our children see us actually do as adults. In *Texts that Transform: Marriage and Family*, Dr. Johnson suggests: "A godly example is foundational for all that parents do to transmit faith to their children."<sup>1</sup> The baptismal vows that parents take include this commitment to setting a Godly example. J.C. Ryle in *The Duties of Parents* states that "the parent who tries to train without setting a good example is building with one hand, and pulling down with the other."<sup>2</sup> What children see adults do is certainly an informal means of teaching our next generation. However, as Hunter Williams and Sam Luce remind us in their book, *How to Teach Kids Theology: Deep Truths for Growing Faith*: "The goal of parenting is not perfection but to be a faithful undershepherd of the Great Shepherd."<sup>3</sup> As parents, we will make mistakes, but we can nurture, protect and lead His "flock," the children that He has entrusted to us, and relentlessly point them towards Christ.

Finally, one of the most effective ways to informally incorporate theology instruction into your time with

your children is through just talking to your children about God, His Word, and how it applies to our lives. Williams and Luce state that: “Teaching theology through conversation means taking the elements of everyday life and discussion and directing them toward Christ.”<sup>4</sup> This is the same idea of on-going spiritual conversation that Moses is commanding the Israelites to do in Deuteronomy 6:7: “You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in the house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” How do we create this ongoing spiritual conversation? Having this type of conversation with our children first points us back to our own hearts. If as adults our hearts and minds are focused on the Lord and we are filtering all that we think, say and do through Scripture, this will allow our conversations with our children to naturally happen from a biblical world-view.

How do we take this idea of conversation from our hearts to our children’s? Ask open-ended questions, such as “Why do you think God is real?” Help them make connections. For example, use a growing garden to talk about how God provides for His people through giving us an earth and plants to grow things to eat. Talk about how to apply theological principles in their lives. For example, ask your child something like: “How can you show sacrificial love to someone on your soccer team at tomorrow’s game?” Williams and Luce say that our goal should be “to do more than just acquire knowledge; we want them to apply the right knowledge in the right way at the right time.”<sup>5</sup> This idea of application to everyday life brings us back to the whole point of using theology to intentionally shape our children’s world views to be able to evaluate what they think, say and do with God at the center.

Our ultimate goal is to equip our children with the tools needed to live in this world as confident and bold disciples of our Lord. This is only accomplished through the firm foundation that we provide through imparting an understanding of God and Man through the lens of Scripture that will, with God’s grace, build in our children an unshakeable faith. •

<sup>1</sup> Ryle, J.C. (2014). *The Duties of Parents*. Ichthus Publications, 42.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson, T. L. (2024). *Texts That Transform: Marriage & Family*. The Banner of Truth Trust, 99.

<sup>3</sup> Luce, S., & Williams, H. (2025). *How to Teach Kids Theology*. New Growth Press, 159.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 163.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 53.

# Children's Sunday School for Fall 2025

## PRE-KINDERGARTEN

*Theme: God Created All Things:  
Discover the Creator through His Word  
and His Creation*

Axson Building, Room 11

## KINDERGARTEN

*Theme: God Created All Things:  
Discover the Creator through His Word  
and His Creation*

Axson Building, Room 10

## 1ST/2ND GRADE

*Theme: Obeying God: Stories about the  
Prophets*

Axson Building, Room 33

## 3RD/4TH GRADE

*Theme: God's Grace in the Law:  
Applying the Ten Commandments – a  
study in Exodus*

Axson Building, Room 32

## 5TH GRADE

*Theme: Exodus to Ruth: The  
Redemptive Acts of God in Dealing  
with His Covenant  
People*

Axson Building, Room 36

EXCERPT FROM THE  
INCOMPARABLENESS OF GOD  
BY GEORGE SWINNOCK

# WHAT DO WE HAVE WHEN WE HAVE GOD?

All the sheets in the explication of the doctrine speak somewhat of him, but not the thousand thousandth part of that excellency that is in him. Reader, I may tell you, when God is offered you, the greatest good that ever was, that ever will be, that ever can be, is offered you; there never was, or can be, the like offered you; more than heaven and earth, than both worlds, than millions of worlds, is offered you. This God who is offered you is the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the God of gods, the blessed and glorious potentate, the first cause, the original being, self-sufficient, all-sufficient, absolutely perfect, incapable of any addition or diminution. This God who is offered you is the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity every moment, to whom a thousand years, yea, millions of ages, are but as one day, as one moment, whose duration is incapable of the least accession, who is boundless in his being, omnipotent in his power, unsearchable in his wisdom, inconceivable in his grace, and infinite in all his perfections. He dwells in that light that is inaccessible; before him angels, the highest of creatures, veil their faces; to him the whole creation is less than nothing, and vanity. This God who is offered you

made all things of nothing, supports all things, influences all things, and is all things, and infinitely more than all things... Again, the God who is offered you is the well of salvation, the Lord of life, the God of all consolation, a hive of sweetness, a paradise of pleasure, a heaven of joy. He is the richest grace, the dearest love, the surest friend, the highest honour, the vastest treasure, the exactest beauty, the chiefest good, and the fullest felicity. He is one that can enlarge and suit all your faculties, relieve and answer all your necessities, fill up and satisfy all the capacities of your heaven-born soul. God is a good which Christ died to purchase for you, Eph. 2:13; 1 Pet. 3:18. And surely if Christ thought him worth his blood, he is worthy your acceptance. God is a comprehensive universal good, not one, but all good; riches, honours, pleasures, friends, relations, health, life, earth, heaven, this world, the other world, all the good of both worlds, and infinitely more; and are you not covetous of such wealth, that is better worth than both worlds?<sup>1</sup> •

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<sup>1</sup> George Swinnock, *The Incomparableness of God* (1868; Edinburgh, UK: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2020), 170-171.

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## NOTE TO THE CHURCH

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Dear Saints of IPC,

I have just graduated with my Master of Divinity degree from Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, NC. Thank you for your many prayers and faithful support over the last few years. The Lord has used you all to help and encourage us through this season, and I am grateful to God for you all.

God has directed our steps to Northern Ireland, and I have accepted a pastoral assistant position with the Presbyterian Church there.

Thanks again to each you who, as Christ's body, have had a role in helping me begin pastoral ministry.

The Lord bless you,  
Andrew Gibson  
With Jennifer, Millie Jean,  
Sarah Katherine, Finlay Dale,  
John Peter, and Anders

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# AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

|                    |                         |                       |                        |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Ann Chisholm     | 8 Boone Johnson         | 18 Will DeMott        | 25 Steve Stone         |
| 2 Sally Jackson    | 9 Marc Chester          | 18 Isaac Harris       | 26 Jun Jeon            |
| 2 Nick Kootsikak   | 11 Kay Dean             | 18 Robert Johns       | 26 Don McLaurin        |
| 3 Isaac Espinosa   | 11 Kendra Miller        | 18 Brandy Trout       | 27 Hannah Field        |
| 3 Matt Haddad      | 11 Dottie Mitchell      | 19 Ty Robinson        | 27 Leah Nyce           |
| 3 Jan Johnson      | 11 Debbie Shaw          | 19 Taylor Smith       | 28 Ragen Pavlo         |
| 3 Alec Melville    | 12 Rhett Mathews        | 20 Laura Jackson      | 29 Caroline Brodmann   |
| 3 Ellis Reid       | 13 Rachel Carpenter     | 20 Larry McAlpine III | 29 Ella Brown          |
| 3 Claire Webb      | 13 Evan Gear            | 20 Asher Ward         | 29 Greg Brunson        |
| 4 Grace McAllister | 13 Paul Johansen        | 21 Simon Steward      | 29 Frank Koechlein     |
| 6 Patrick Brodmann | 13 Debbie Laing         | 22 Kirstie Brodmann   | 30 Nate Brunson        |
| 6 Leila McAllister | 14 Matthew Burt         | 22 Tommy Reid         | 30 Micah Miller        |
| 6 Claire Toly      | 15 Emily McLeroy        | 23 Mollie Cribbs      | 30 Ron Morris          |
| 7 Reid McKee       | 15 Charlotte Sutherland | 23 Cindy Fletcher     | 31 Sam Christopher III |
| 7 Bob Meng         | 16 Kip Chisholm III     | 23 Dale Johnson Sr.   | 31 Sue Hinely          |
| 7 Ginny Shaw       | 16 David Gross          | 25 Reese Brown        | 31 David Parrish       |
| 8 Elizabeth Busch  | 16 Greta Martin         | 25 Santi Clavijo      | 31 Anders Ward         |
| 8 Anthony Howard   | 16 Jim Shields          | 25 Tom Maganini       |                        |

# SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

|                      |                         |                      |                    |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Doug Patterson     | 7 Katie MacMillan       | 17 John Garnett      | 24 Brenna Michaels |
| 1 John Woods         | 8 Nelia Grills          | 17 Roy Thompson IV   | 24 Jackson Stone   |
| 2 Walter Field       | 8 Ashley Lanier         | 19 Sarah Martin      | 24 Reagan Williams |
| 2 Kari Thompson      | 10 Marsha Oliver        | 19 Kodie Shull       | 25 Emily Groover   |
| 2 Steve Thompson     | 11 Roger Dean           | 20 Manny Hernandez   | 26 Gus Morgan V    |
| 2 Pam Wiggins        | 12 Alden Melville       | 21 Jay Carpenter III | 26 Benjamin Ward   |
| 3 Norah Corbitt      | 12 John Parrish         | 21 Tyson Gross       | 27 Lucy Corbitt    |
| 3 Jimmy Dugal Jr.    | 12 Jeff Sutton          | 21 Laura Reid        | 27 Cynthia DeLoach |
| 3 Cameron Fuhrman    | 13 Diane Deegan-Slotke  | 22 Evie Espinosa     | 27 Jo Hart         |
| 3 Haley Gravitte     | 13 Lois Dugal           | 22 Faith Espinosa    | 28 Abby Blevins    |
| 4 Will Brodmann Jr.  | 14 Mary Kendrick Oliver | 22 Thomas Huncke     | 28 Jadya Crowley   |
| 5 Maddie Oliver      | 14 Bill Trout Jr.       | 22 Lucy Kelly        | 28 Will Oliver Jr. |
| 5 Mary Lawrence Shaw | 16 Kim Breland          | 22 Olivia Rosenfeld  | 28 Barbara Rustine |
| 6 Adair Woods        | 16 Caroline Johnson     | 23 Alli Corbitt      | 29 Luke Hazeltine  |
| 7 Tom Cooper         | 16 Carey Murns          | 23 Drew Johnson      | 30 Dillon Jones    |
| 7 Jacob Fuhrman      | 16 Ken Wood             | 23 Frank Lake        | 30 Allison Kelly   |
| 7 Brittney Howard    | 17 Sharon Brown         | 23 William Warren    | 30 Elijah Oliver   |

# IPC MESSENGER

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