

## **A Word from Our Preaching Pastor:**

Sunday, October 11, 2009

My heart overflows with gratitude as I consider this past week and the kindness of God I have experienced in so many ways. First of all in the faithfulness of our elders who serve you (and me) so well and who had the wisdom to encourage me to take a long-delayed retreat. I did not realize how badly I needed an undistracted time alone with the Lord until I got there. But oh what joy to spend unhurried hours hearing God speak through His Word and lifting up my needs and those of this church family before Him in prayer.

And that is the second blessing of the week: to be able to spend a long time lifting each family and individual in our church up before the Lord. Church, you have all been prayed for this week, that God's grace would be opened to you, that you would grow deeper in your experience of His love and firmer in your confident assurance of His salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

A third blessing I must mention is the safe arrival of little Autumn Ray. It reminds me how kind God has been to us lately, Rockport! Hardly a month goes by that we don't get to rejoice in the birth of a child, the celebration of a wedding, or the grace of God displayed in baptism. Such are the deep mercies that are ours, even in the midst of a sorrow-filled world. And from the looks of things, there will be many such blessings for us to share in the days to come.

A fourth blessing is found as I am in Kentucky this weekend, as many of you know, taking part in John Parker's ordination. What a joy to watch young men like Johnny come through our church on their way to serving Christ in a place of Gospel ministry. You've been an important part of that as you have nurtured and prayed for and encouraged these young men and their wives as they have sought to pursue that calling. I know they love you for what you have poured into their lives, and will forever be grateful to God for you.

And finally, I rejoice in you, my church family and my physical family. Here, above all, God has displayed an undeserved mercy in my life as you have loved me, put up with me, and made allowances for my many shortcomings so that it has been a joy to serve you these (almost) twenty years. May God grant that the next twenty will be even more grace-filled as we continue to pursue Him together.

*Soli Deo Gloria (To God Alone Be the Glory),*

*Pastor Scott*