



## Covenant Baptist Church

*Reformed and Refreshing*

*May 3rd, 2020*

Welcome to Covenant Baptist Church. We are a Reformed church committed to three things:

- **The Exaltation of God**

We desire that the people at Covenant truly understand who God is and His rightful place in their lives as their Lord and sovereign Savior.

- **The Edification of the Saints**

We consider it extremely important to correctly teach the Bible, verse by verse, so we can properly have the Holy Spirit apply it to our lives.

- **The Evangelization of the Sinner**

We understand that God has given us the responsibility to be stewards of the Gospel and that means sharing it exactly like God gave it to us with those who need Jesus.

*<https://covenantbaptistsc.org>*

## Service Times:

Bible Education Hour (Puritans)  
~ 9:30 A.M.

Sunday Worship ~ 10:30 A.M.

Wednesday Prayer Service ~ 7:00 P.M.

*(We are not interested in traditional worship  
or contemporary worship. We are only  
interested in true worship.)*

## Order of Worship

*(May 3rd, 2020)*

Service cancelled; live-stream at  
10:30 am (Charles Swann)

<https://covenantbaptistsc.org/live-stream/>

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### Church Bookstore:

Purchases (cash only) can be made by seeing Annsley or Cristan Smoak,  
or following the instructions left near the bookstore entrance.

## Announcements

We are aware of the situation with the coronavirus and are asking that everyone take the necessary precautions (i.e. wash hands, use hand sanitizer, etc.) and monitor the church website and the texting service for announcements regarding our services. Things can change overnight as we have seen, so there may be a time when we cancel all services. If you have any questions, you can ask any of the elders or deacons. If anyone needs help knowing how to livestream the service, please see one of the elders or deacons. Also, if you need to stay home for health reasons and need anything brought to you, please let us know. We would be glad to serve you in this way.

—  
A special time of prayer in the overflow room/fellowship area will begin soon, taking place on Wednesdays at 6:15 PM. In an effort to have more prayer and to improve our Wednesday evening service, we are adding a time and place for men and women to pray for general needs. This is modeled after the men and women gathered together for prayer in the upper room in Acts 1. During the Wednesday evening service at 7 PM, we will have 2 or 3 men lead in a more directed prayer for specific topics or needs. Start date to be announced soon.

—  
The Mission Team for India has postponed their trip to June due to the spread and uncertainty of the coronavirus. Meanwhile, they are still preparing for the upcoming trip. The team will consist of Alton Crapps, Pastor Swann, Luke Swann, Spencer Allen, Andy Shumpert, and Andrew Shumpert. Each individual is responsible to raise their own funds for air tickets, hotel room, and meals. If you would like to help in this ministry please earmark checks or label the missions envelope either for the individual you wish to help or if you wish to help with the ministry cost, label checks or envelope India Ministry. Funds are also needed to provide Telegu bibles. Your prayers and your support are much appreciated.

## Covenant Baptist Church Events

**Greek Class**—*On hold*

### Other Events:

**Truth: Answers for Women, March 27-28 2020**—(Williamstown, KY)

*DELAYED UNTIL 2021*

*More at: <https://answersingenesis.org/outreach/event/answers-for-women-2020/>*

**NCFIC Singles Conference**—NCFIC is offering a Singles Conference: Holiness to the Lord October 28-29. More details can be found at: <https://ncfic.org/events/216400/overview>

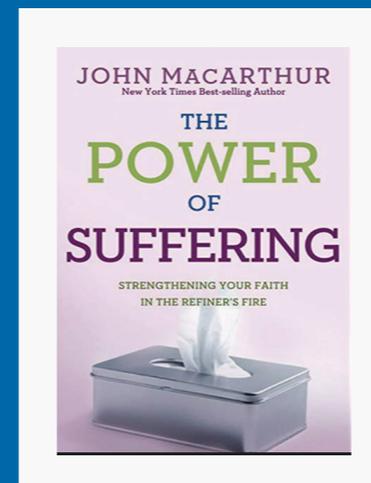
## Book of the Week: The Power of Suffering, by John MacArthur

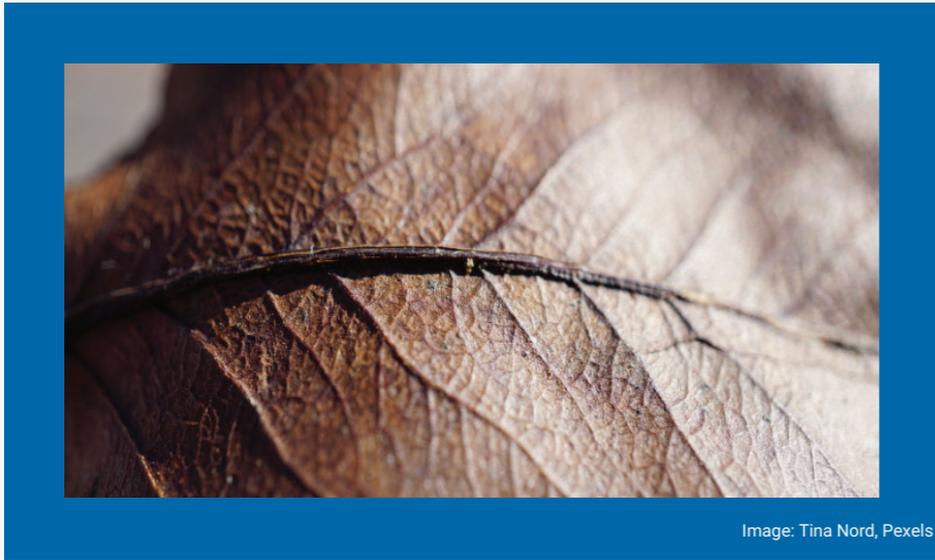
Why does God allow suffering? Where is God when I'm hurting? Can God really use pain—even tragedies—for my good?

In *The Power of Suffering*, John MacArthur takes an honest look at the reality of pain in the life of a believer. Packed with precious biblical truths and rich, practical insights, this book will equip you to experience God's glorious and transformative power—even in your most difficult trials.

Discover the tremendous encouragement, hope, and joy that comes when you embrace God's purposes in your pain.

<https://www.gty.org/store/books/452006/the-power-of-suffering>





## Atheism: Hopeless, Meaningless, Purposeless

—by Avery Foley and Ken Ham

*In our secular Western culture, the religion of atheism is on the rise, especially among the millennial generation. Young people are increasingly abandoning the religion they grew up with and turning to life without God. But all they've done is replace one religion with another one—the religion of atheism.*

### The Religion of Atheism

Now, when I call atheism a religion on social media, many atheists get very upset. They hate having atheism referred to as a religion or a belief system. But that's exactly what it is. One of the definitions of religion is:

*A cause, principle, or system of beliefs held to with ardor and faith. ("Religion," Merriam-Webster Dictionary,)*

Atheism is a system of beliefs that atheists cling to with both ardor and faith. Below are some of the tenets of this belief system. Notice that none of them are scientifically proven (and even go against science!)—that's where atheists' faith comes in. They accept these assertions based on faith that they are true.

- There is no God or gods.
- There is no supernatural.
- Everything is the result of naturalistic processes over time.
- Life evolved from a single-celled organism.
- Death is the end—when you're dead, that's it.

### Atheism—A Good Alternative?

Is atheism a good alternative religion? Does it provide its followers with hope, meaning, and purpose, something human experience shows we all crave? Or is it a religion devoid of hope, meaning, and purpose?

#### Hope?

Consider this: according to the atheistic religion, there is no God and death is the end. Because we are nothing more than animals, our fate is the same as the animals—we return to the dust. We have maybe 80 years on this planet—more if we are especially fortunate, less if we're not so fortunate—and then we are gone. We won't remember we ever lived, and eventually no one else will either.

Things are just as bleak in the cosmic view. According to evolutionary ideas, the universe will continue expanding forever, all the usable energy in the universe will be converted into a useless form, and life will be impossible. Not only is each individual human rushing headlong toward the grave, so is our very universe. Our species, just like every other species, is destined for extinction. None of our accomplishments, advancements, breakthroughs, triumphs, or heartbreaks will ultimately matter as we face extinction along with our universe. This is certainly a bleak and hopeless perspective.

#### Meaning?

"Why am I here?" is a question that every human wants answered. We innately know that our lives have some kind of meaning. But where does it come from and what is it? Does atheism give the answer?

Well, some atheists will say the meaning of life is found in helping others or making humankind better. Now this seems admirable —after all, who doesn't want

end world hunger, cure cancer, or clothe the orphaned?—until one asks, “Why?”

You see, in an atheistic worldview, we are animals headed for the grave, and our universe is spinning each day toward the end. Why does it matter if we help anyone? Why does it matter if we make humankind better? We will die, and they will die.

Other atheists seem to have made it their personal meaning in life to attack religion (except their own)—particularly biblical Christianity. They claim religion (other than their own) is responsible for war, hatred, and ignorance. But again, why does this matter? If Christians—and everyone they come in contact with—just die, and that’s it, why does it matter what they believed? If it ultimately doesn’t matter, why do they fight so hard against Christianity? (The Bible tells us they fight so hard against Christianity because they are suppressing the truth in unrighteousness [Romans 1:18] because they love darkness and sin [John 3:19], as do all men before claiming Christ as their Savior [1 Corinthians 2:14; 6:11]).

In an atheistic view, our lives have no real meaning. We are just the result of random, chance processes over millions of years, and it’s just an accident of nature that we happen to be here. How’s that for meaning for your life?

## Purpose?

Does atheism offer a sense of purpose for our short lives? To put it simply, no it doesn’t. You see, in an atheistic worldview it doesn’t matter how we live or what we do, because there is no ultimate standard for right and wrong and because everyone’s fate is the same—death.

In this view there can be no right and wrong. Since there is no God, there can be no ultimate foundation for morality. So who decides what is good and evil? Is it the individual, society, a specific government, whoever has the most power or the biggest guns?

In the atheistic view, we are simply animals doing what animals do. Animals kill, steal, abandon their offspring, practice promiscuity, and, generally speaking, just look out for themselves. If we’re just animals, then these things can’t possibly be wrong for us anymore than they are wrong for any other animal. So in this view, why does it matter what we do? Nothing is right or wrong. Why not just live

however we please and do whatever we want?

If there’s no ultimate right and wrong and no ultimate justice, then it doesn’t matter how we live our lives. It makes no difference if we live as a Mother Theresa or a Hitler—indeed who is to say one is better than the other? The things Mother Theresa did might make us smile and feel good, and the things Hitler did might make us shudder, but, really, that’s just one person’s personal opinion on what is admirable and what is detestable. In the atheistic worldview, there is no ultimate authority by which to either praise or denounce these actions; since there is no ultimate justice, it doesn’t matter how either of these people lived. Indeed, if death is the end, then the best thing to do is to live however makes you feel good—if you only live once, live it up!

Atheism offers no purpose to life because no matter how you live or what you do, your fate is the same: death.

## “All is Vanity”

Did you know the Bible agrees with this bleak view of life without God? The Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes, a philosophical look at the meaning of life, expresses the hopelessness of life void of God with the constant refrain “all is vanity” (Ecclesiastes 1:2, 14, 2:17). The author, King Solomon, writes about the seeming hopelessness and purposelessness of life when he says,

*For what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have one breath; man has no advantage over animals, for all is vanity. All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust. (Ecclesiastes 3:19–20)*

Solomon tries all the typical ways to find meaning and purpose—money, relationships, pleasure, power—yet again concludes, “All is vanity” (Ecclesiastes 12:8). Without God, life is simply vanity—meaningless. The Apostle James puts it this way: “For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away” (James 4:14). The psalmist writes, “Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow” (Psalm 144:4). Man lives, dies, and is gone—where is the hope, meaning, or purpose we all yearn for?

## “The Conclusion of the Whole Matter”

If we only look to this world and start our thinking with man’s ideas about the past, the only logical and consistent conclusion is to echo the words of Solomon, “All is vanity.” If we’re simply animals and when we die, that’s it, we’re dead, what is the point of our existence? Should we just throw up our hands and cry “vanity” and then go about pretending our short lives have meaning? No!

At the very end of his search Solomon declares,

*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:*

*Fear God and keep His commandments,  
For this is man’s all.  
For God will bring every work into judgment,  
Including every secret thing,  
Whether good or evil. (Ecclesiastes 12:13–14)*

Life has no meaning without God. But there is a God. We are not animals who happened to evolve through millions of years of random chance processes. The Bible describes us much differently:

*So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Genesis 1:27).*

*For you formed my inward parts;  
You covered me in my mother’s womb.  
I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139:13–14)*

*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you (Jeremiah 1:5).*

We have been uniquely created and formed by the Creator of the universe. We are not accidents.

As Solomon writes, the things we do in this life, indeed our very lives, have a purpose: “fear God and keep His commandments.” We don’t obey the Lord simply as a “get-out-of-jail-free card” from some cosmic prison, as many atheists contest. We also don’t obey Him to try to somehow give meaning to our actions and lives. No,

we obey the Lord because it is the mark of those who love Him: “If you love Me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). But in obeying, we get the purpose and meaning that we so desperately crave. God has created humans to desire meaning and purpose of their life because it is only found in Him!

Our Creator also gives us hope: “For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Both the good and evil things done in the world, even those things done in secret, will eventually be judged by the perfect Judge. There is ultimate justice for everyone. So we can’t simply live any way that we please with no regard for right and wrong. Right and wrong are given to us in God’s Word, and our choices have weight and significance for more than just today. Even in the midst of evil and chaos, we can have hope that justice will indeed be served.

## “A Living Hope”

We can also have hope because of Someone who came from the lineage of Solomon’s father, King David. Jesus Christ, the God-man, stepped into history when He was born of a virgin and was laid in a humble manger. He lived a sinless life, perfectly obeyed His Heavenly Father, and chose to die on the Cross. Through His sacrificial death He took the penalty that we deserve—death—upon Himself (1 Corinthians 5:21). But He didn’t stay dead. He rose from the grave, conquering death. He now freely offers eternal life to all who will put their faith and trust in Him (Romans 10:9).

Because of what Christ did for us, death is not the end for those who believe. His death and resurrection removed the sting of death (1 Corinthians 15:56–57). Now “to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21). For Christians, death means entering the presence of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8) and dwelling with Him for eternity in a place free from death, suffering, pain, and tears (Revelation 21:4). We can have hope for eternity because of the sacrifice of our Lord. Do you have this hope? If not, I encourage you to give your life to Christ today, believing in His death and resurrection so you can have “a living hope” (1 Peter 1:3) for all eternity.

services while many members are struggling to retain and retrieve supplies, including contraceptives and HIV-related medicines.



## More than 5,600 Planned Parenthood clinics worldwide have closed due to pandemic

—by *Bryan Brammer*

More than 5,600 Planned Parenthood clinics across 64 countries have shut down indefinitely due to the financial strain caused by the coronavirus pandemic, according to the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

The 5,633 closed static and mobile clinics, including community-based care outlets, make up 14% of the total services rendered by IPPF members in 2018.

The survey revealed that Planned Parenthood-affiliated clinics in South Asia have seen the largest number of closures with more than 1,872, while the Africa region has seen the largest number of mobile clinics closed, at 477.

Countries severely affected by COVID-19 include Pakistan, El Salvador, Zambia, Sudan, Colombia, Malaysia, Uganda, Ghana, Germany, Zimbabwe, and Sri Lanka.

Dozens of IPPF clinics have had to cut sexual and reproductive healthcare

From: <https://disrn.com/news/more-than-5600-planned-parenthood-clinics-worldwide-have-closed-due-to-pandemic>

## Other News:

**COVID-19 antibody testing finds number of Bay Area infections may be 85 times higher than reported**— <https://disrn.com/news/covid-19-antibody-testing-finds-bay-area-infections-may-be-85-times-higher-than-reported>

**Google Play suspends evangelical church's app over COVID-19 'sensitive events' policy**— <https://www.christianpost.com/news/google-play-suspends-evangelical-churchs-app-over-covid-19-sensitive-events-policy.html>

**NWS: 20 tornadoes hit SC on Monday, at least 5 were EF3**— <https://www.wistv.com/2020/04/17/nws-tornadoes-hit-sc-monday-least-were-ef/>

**Woman says she survived tornadoes that killed 9 in SC by 'calling on Jesus'**— <https://www.christianpost.com/news/woman-says-she-survived-tornadoes-that-killed-9-in-sc-by-calling-on-jesus.html>

## Quote of the Week:

We talk about predestination because the Bible talks about predestination. If we desire to build our theology on the Bible, we run head on into this concept. We soon discover that John Calvin did not invent it.

—R. C. Sproul

## Biblical Counseling Resources

**Strategies for Fighting Depression Well**—by Jim Newheiser  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/fighting-depression-well/>

**Identity Language in Counseling**—by Martha Peace  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/identity-language-in-counseling/>

**The Pursuit of Peace**—by Sam Stephens  
<https://biblicalcounseling.com/the-pursuit-of-peace/>

### Covenant Baptist Biblical Counseling Class:

*A Biblical Counseling class started February 13th at 7 PM here at the church. If you would be interested in participating, please let the pastor know. We are going to livestream the class. Just go to the website at <https://covenantbaptistsc.org> and click the livestream button on home page at 7pm Thursdays.*

Biblical counseling class on hold while teacher recovers from surgery. See page 2 for more info.



## Covenant Baptist Church

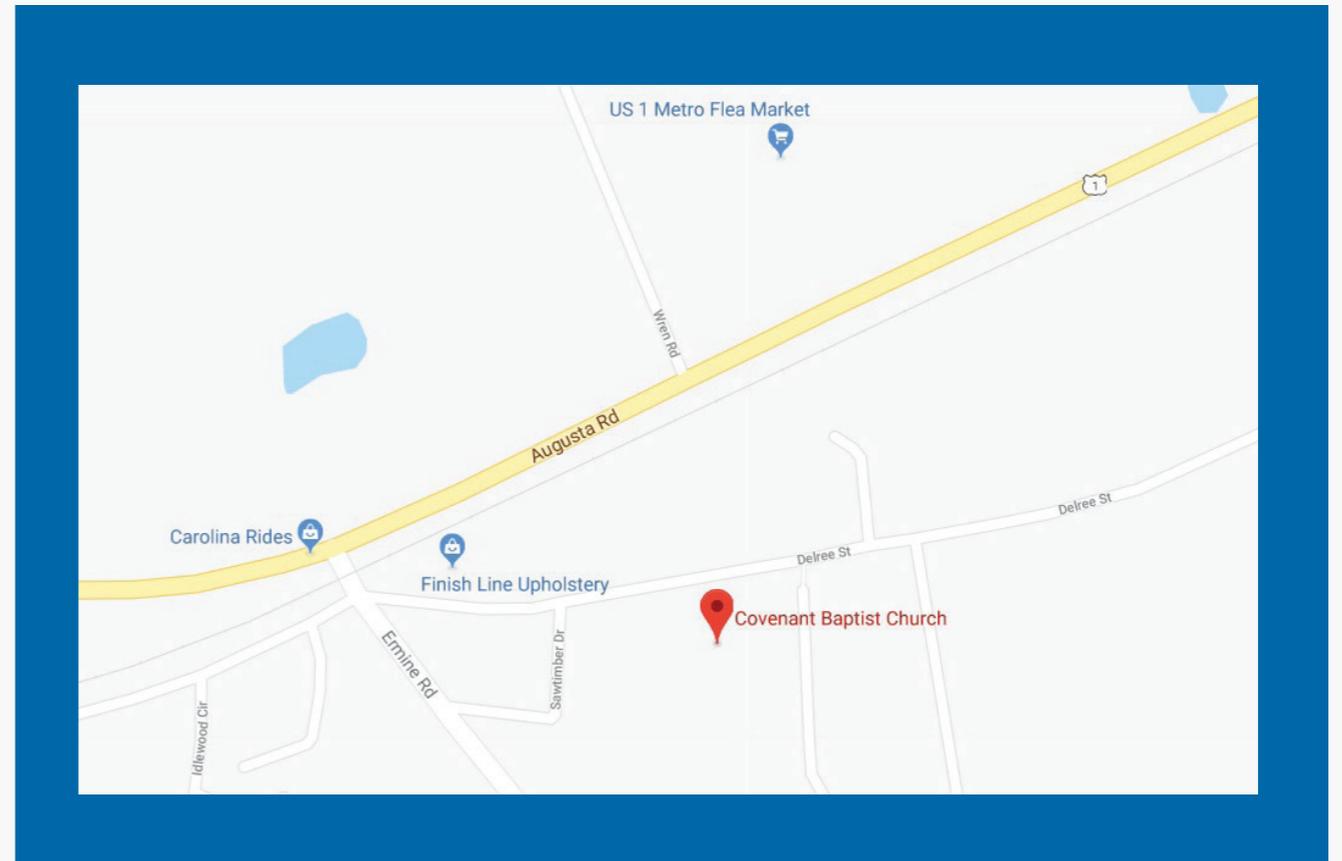
*Reformed and Refreshing*

*3535 Delree Street*

*West Columbia, SC 29170*

*<https://covenantbaptistsc.org>*

## Location:



*If you are interested in joining our church, please speak to one of our elders or deacons.  
They will be happy to give you the information you need.*