

## Our Debt of Gratitude: The Ministry of John MacArthur: Part 1: Steve S.

July 27, 2025

2 Corinthians 3:18 – 4:1-6

- It is important to remember those who labored to proclaim the word of God to us and remember their life and example, Hebrews 13:7.
- Throughout the last number of centuries, every 50 years or so, God raises up another man to shepherd the body of Christ who impacts more than just his immediate congregation. In the 1700s Matthew Henry was succeeded by George Whitefield. In the 1800s, Charles Spurgeon was succeeded by David Martin Lloyd Jones, who faithfully expounded the word of God for the church. In 1969, John MacArthur preached expositively and did so for 56 years.
- **Why We Owe John MacArthur a Debt of Gratitude:**
  1. John Founded Master's Seminary and trained hundreds of pastors to exposit God's word.
  2. Thousands of churches have a similar *Statement of Faith* to Grace Community Church.
  3. Church Planting Ministry of Grace Advance
  4. He Trusted in the Sufficiency of Scripture – the preaching of the word is relevant not the preacher.
  5. Rapid personal growth due to expository preaching and sanctification due to sound doctrine.
  6. 56 years of faithful ministry at Grace Community Church
- **Looking at the Face of Jesus**—2 Cor. 4:5, “For we do not preach ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for the sake of Jesus.” How we are changed by seeing the face of Christ:
  1. **Clarifying Look:** V18, a new covenant believer can look at Jesus face to face. They can see justification by faith in Christ (Rom. 5:1), sanctification by His Word and Holy Spirit (Heb. 12:2, 1 Cor. 2:16, 1 John 2:6), and glorification (Phil. 3:21, Rom. 8:30).
    - John was called into the ministry as a young man and trained by Charles Feinberg to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus and to hold fast to authorial intent in his preaching.
  2. **Transforming Look:** V18, “are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory.” This work continues until “we all attain... to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ,” Eph. 4:13. Conforming us to the image of His Son, Rom. 8:29.
    - John felt a deep calling to study 30 hours per week in preparation to preach. He saw the power of God in Christ to transform lives by expository preaching and had a deep concern for the lost within the walls of the church.
  3. **Strengthening Look:** 4:1, “Therefore since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart.” God granted pastors the privilege to be used to deliver the word of God.
- **Moments that Impacted the Ministry of John MacArthur:**
  1. When John denied doing the wedding ceremony at Grace Community for a believer and an unbeliever who attended.
  2. When preaching the Sermon on the Mount and showing clearly that a believer repents of sin and turns from sin as a result of salvation. Easy-believe-ism isn't found in Scripture.
  3. When confronting a brother who refused to repent of sin in the church and needed to receive church discipline according to Matthew 18:15-20. Holiness is God's call to the church.
  4. The church are those who are redeemed, not just attending. Worship cannot be entered into by unbelievers. Worship is not for everyone.
  5. In 1979 when John biblically defined the roles of women. His staff opposed him and left, but eventually they all repented of their error.
  6. Utilizing cassette tapes to expand Grace-To-You ministry and send the gospel message by mail.
- 4. **Purifying Look:** 4:2, “but we have renounced the hidden things of shame.” Believers turn from sin and turn to Christ. Repenting from sin is the mark of a believer.
- **Stands John MacArthur took:**
  1. Salvation is complete submission to Christ. Lordship vs Jesus as Savior alone is not biblical salvation, Rom. 10:9-10, 2 Pet. 2:20 (Lord and Savior). Lordship salvation is **not** the second step in salvation and obedience to the Lord. Fruit comes from obedience to Christ's commands.
  2. Biblical view of male leadership in Scripture, 1 Tim. 2:11-12, 1 Cor. 14:35, 1 Tim 3:2.
  3. Stand against charismatics. Writing Charismatic Chaos (1992) and Strange Fire (2013).

### **Further Discussion and Application**

The church should expect that no one in the world will support the work of the church unless it helps them achieve their own goals or ambitions. Why does the standing firm on Scripture require courage? Why does the culture want to bend and stretch the word of God to suite itself? As you think about the effect of preaching on your sanctification, what Scriptures have brought great assurance of salvation and strength in trials to your life?

The role of women in our society will likely be a hot topic until the Lord returns. Genesis 3:16 lays out a resultant curse of the fall. Paul in 1 Tim. 2:9-15 adds additional understanding to the command for the churches. Why are the biblical roles of men and women the proper ones? According to Titus 2 what are the older men and women to teach the younger ones?

The work of Christ in our life is a blessing that we enjoy as we are made more into the image of Christ. 2 Cor. 3:18 is a great hope that as we look into His word, we become more like Him. What truths do we need to be taught and teach so that the man and woman of God can be mature? Colossians 1:28 is the call to proclaim Christ with a warning to us to get it right. What must we teach about Christ? (Feel free to look at the teachings of Paul in Colossians and Romans 12).

Expositional preaching benefits the preacher by going verse by verse through God's word and allowing the text to say what God wants said. It also forces the preacher to study God's word to know the context and authorial intent of the passage they preach so they can share that with the congregation, and they too also know what God has said. The results show in the fruit of salvation and sanctification. Why must pastors and teachers hold fast to what Scripture says even though the experiences of others and the wisdom of this world might contradict? If they don't hold to Scripture what is the use in their ministry? When does the work of a pastor stop being a mercy of God?