



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 40, No. 25, June 24, 2014 / Southside Baptist Church & Christian School / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / The Grow in Grace Newsletter is a weekly Bible Study, plus local church news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church. It is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."

EXPLANATION: There is a very SIMPLE reason why this newsletter has some duplication from last week's newsletter, from Sunday's Sunday morning preaching, and from a newsletter of a couple of years back— WE NEED TO RECEIVE AND ACT UPON THIS...

CALL TO PRAYER!

I. A 'HEATING PLANT'

Five young college students went to hear the famed C. H. Spurgeon preach. While waiting for the doors to open, the students were greeted by a man who said, "Gentlemen, let me show you around. **Would you like to see the heating plant of this church?**" They consented. The young men were taken down a stairway, a door was quietly opened and their guide whispered, "**This is our heating plant!**" **Surprised, the students saw 700 people bowed in prayer, seeking a blessing on the service that was soon to begin in the auditorium above.**

C. H. Spurgeon had a very effective gospel ministry; and he, (The 'Tour Guide!') knew the blessing came from the 'Heating Plant!' Did you notice that the 'Heating Plant' functioned without the pastor being present!?

QUESTION: Am I a vital part of the Southside 'HEATING PLANT'?

II. ONE BEDRIDDEN WOMAN in Prayer!

D. L. Moody was over in England one Sunday morning and he was preaching. And he wrote in his journal it was one of those times when you preach and it seemed like nobody was listening. However, when he preached that night, the people were listening intently and sitting on the edge of their seats. These were evangelistic meetings; and Moody preached the gospel; and at the end and said, "If you would like to place your faith in Christ, I want to invite you to stand up where you are." And people across the room stood up. Moody was shocked.

Sunday morning, nobody was listening. He thought, "Well, maybe they don't understand what I said." So, he told them to sit back down and he shared the gospel again. Then he said, "Now that I've explained it, if you really want to give your life to Christ, stand up where you are." More people stood up this time than the first time. **Moody still wasn't convinced.** He said, "Sit back down." He went through the gospel again, and he said, "If you really want to give your life to Christ, meet me and the pastor in a room outside the sanctuary and we will share with you there how you can put your faith in Christ." So, they dismiss the service and they go to this room— it was standing room only, packed full of people.

Moody still was not convinced. He went through the gospel one more time, and this time he said, "If you want to give your life to Christ, you come back tomorrow night and meet the pastor here." Then he dismissed them. He got on a boat and sailed somewhere else the next morning. A few days later he got a telegram from that pastor, "Mr. Moody, you need to get back over here. More people showed up on Monday night than were here Sunday night. Everybody is wanting to give their life to Christ." Moody came back and preached for weeks, and hundreds of people came to faith in Christ.

What made the difference in the two meetings? In time he discovered that there was a bedridden woman in that town who had not been in that church that morning because of her illness. When her sister

came to bring her lunch, she asked her sister, "**How did church go this morning?**" **The sister said, "Oh, it went all right. This guy named D. L. Moody preached. It wasn't very exciting."** The bedridden woman's eyes lit up and she said, "I've heard of this man. I've read about him in a magazine, and I've been praying that God would bring him to our church." She said,

"Put my food aside. I'm going to fast and pray the rest of the day because I believe God wants to bring a mighty revival of his spirit through this man."

We are fools if we think we can see anything happen in our own power and our own strength. Apart from the power of God and the Holy Spirit, we can do nothing. However, with the power of God and with the Holy Spirit we will see his Word succeed and we will see needs in each other lives met, needs around the world met, and we will see the spread of God's worship. (Above illustrations edited from David Platt)

III. A CONGREGATION— DAILY in Church-wide Prayer!

Some years back, Kurt Koch, a German missionary, told of an experience he had in South Korea with a local church. **He writes:** I was invited to give a short sermon. I was glad to do so, but was surprised when told that **the meeting would start at 5AM! Who would ever show up?** At 4AM the alarm clock woke me. The rain spattered against the window. Surely the prayer meeting will be called off because of the rain. I said to myself: "You traveled quite in vain to this place. It is wet and cold, and on top of that, it is 5 in the morning! **Straining against the wind, I ventured into the church. What on earth...? My eyes nearly popped out of their sockets.** The church was packed to capacity! There were no empty chairs. Everybody squatted down or kneeled on straw mats. I was dumbstruck; the wind was out of my sails. **I went up to the pulpit and asked the brothers taking the lead: "What is this? Surely the whole congregation wasn't invited just to listen to one missionary - that is just not possible?"** **"This is our usual prayer meeting,"** was the simple answer.

“In the middle of the week?” I asked, unbelievably. “Yes, we gather every day,” was the answer. “How many people are gathered here?” I wanted to know. **“About 3000— the whole congregation.”** I was speechless. One of the elders announced a song and the singing began. There were no songbooks, organ or any other musical instruments to accompany the people in this bare church building that rather resembled a factory.

THEN THE PRAYING STARTED— three thousand people praying simultaneously! I could sense the unity in the Holy Spirit through the prayers. There was no disorder. It could not be compared to the vociferous [loud, insistent so as to compel attention] type of praying in some of the extremist church groups. **They prayed for almost one hour.**

Then the elder asked me to give a message. **“Please, just a short message— no longer than one hour,” he said, “these people still have to go to work by 7 a.m.”** A short message of one hour, it went through my mind.

Where in the West will you find a church where a preacher will dare to preach at a prayer meeting for one hour? I was in awe at the dedication and spiritual depth of these people.

At the third prayer meeting I attended, I asked some of the brothers, **“How often do your Prayer Groups gather during the week?”** **“Daily!” was their answer.** Three different prayer groups gathered every morning of the week. “Since when are you having these prayer meetings?” I wanted to know. “It started about five years ago,” they answered. **They also have prayer meetings in the evenings.** Each night a group of about 100 Christians gather together in prayer. (It is not the same people every night; the group varies every night).

For the past 5 years, 100 people in this church pray every night until daybreak! **Once a week - from Saturday till Sunday there is all-night prayer attended by about 1000 people.**

I then grasped the meaning and implication of Acts 12:5: *“Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.”* **These praying Koreans illustrated to me the meaning of Revelation 5:8— “... and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”**

Here in the West: **We are causing great pain and sorrow to ourselves for not allowing in our churches the circumstances of**

the New Testament Church and not following that example. {From: http://www.prayerhouse.co.za/pdf/A_congregation_that_prays.pdf}

IV. "THEY WILL ALL BE THERE!"

Dr. David Gibbs of the Christian Law Association got surprised one Wednesday. His background is Baptist. Few Baptists are faithful to church-wide prayer meetings. But for this particular Wednesday a pastor of a Mennonite church had scheduled Dr. Gibbs to speak during their Wednesday night Prayer Service. The church family DID NOT KNOW that a guest speaker was coming. The Pastor was driving Dr. Gibbs from the airport to the church building. Dr. Gibbs was trying to prepare himself for what he is about to face, so he asked:

"Pastor, what do you expect tonight in the way of who might show up for the meeting? Pastor, I know it's Wednesday night... and folks do not know I'm coming... I just want you to be at ease, because I'm happy to come and the size of the crowd does not matter..." The pastor simply said, **"They will all be there!"** So, Dr. Gibbs translated that 'response' into his Baptist experience and figured that a few would show up for a holy huddle.

They arrived. The building was a plain, unattractive block building. The parking lot was full. Dr. Gibbs entered and found bare concrete floors and bare metal folding chairs— OVER 400 HUNDRED metal folding chairs— and they were all filled with the REGULAR PRAYER MEETING CROWD! As the pastor had earlier stated, **"They will all be there!"... And they were!**

These were farming people, with crops to plant, or tend or harvest. Their days were always long and their work was never done. **HOWEVER, EVERY WEEK on Prayer Meeting Night— THEY WERE ALL THERE!** Stunned, Dr. Gibbs turned to the pastor and asked, "Please explain this to me?"

"Well, Bro. Gibbs, we are all family and we are responsible for one another and we are commanded to pray for one another; and we also realize that we need God's wisdom and power if we are to make a difference in our community in reaching others for Christ— So, we have just as many for **Prayer meeting as we do for other Church-wide services... And, at our Prayer Meeting, the main agenda is PRAYER. We**

actually spend most of the time praying for each other and for those in the world to whom we seek to reach and minister!”

CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER MEETING REALITY: The issue is (1) not lack of time, (2) nor how tired we are, (3) nor a thousand other excuses— the issue that each of us has to face up to is this: *What is the level of my LOVE, VISION, PRIORITY and DEPENDANCE UPON GOD!*

V. GODLY PURPOSE and Church-wide Prayer!

In our world, the ‘heathen’ are raging and getting bolder! There are growing indications that persecution may be coming for Bible Christians in America. There are FEARS that the ‘American way of life’ as we have known it may become history. **In a world of** frightening instability, where greedy humans jockey for world power and domination —

In such a world, what should be the FOCUS of SOUTHSIDE Christians?

QUESTION: How many of us live our lives, grounded in strong belief in Biblical revelation as to God’s activity in our present world? **CONSIDER:**

1. As a result of sin— **man’s ‘FREE WILL’** is radically ENSLAVED to sin! AND, a part of God's sovereign control is that He has ordained "sowing and reaping." **Thus, men and nations make choices, chart courses and reap consequences.** (Galatians 6:7-8) **The wrath of God is not merely ‘future tense’— it is now: Romans 1:18-32!**

2. In the midst of it all, God still rules and overrules. **Example:** Joseph’s brothers thought and did evil out of the wickedness of their own hearts with no enticement from God; but God over-ruled and brought good— Genesis 50:20; Psalm 105:17-19! **This is not just true in ancient history!**

3. Revelation 17 tells us that there is coming a day when TEN KINGS/Ten nations- (who have previously been supportive of a worldwide apostate religious system) - **shall turn on**, attack and destroy that same religious system. **Why will they do it?**

Because God will place this task in their hearts! (Revelation 17: 15-18) Almighty God is STILL in Sovereign control of and over all nations! He

is carefully working out His purposes and His agenda and not ours! No one can stop Him!

4. THEREFORE, let us KNOW and REST in the Great News Behind all the News: Psalm 22:28— GOD is THE GOVERNOR among the nations; Psalm 75:6, 7— GOD is THE JUDGE and He puts one down and sets up another; Psalm 103:19— The LORD'S kingdom rules over all; Psalm 115:3 / 135:6— GOD has done whatsoever he pleased in heaven, in the earth, in the seas, and all the deep places; Proverbs 16:9 — A man's heart deviseth his way; but the LORD directeth his steps; Proverbs 19:21— The counsel of the LORD shall stand; Proverbs 21:1— The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water; He turneth it whithersoever He will; Isaiah 43:13— God: There is none who can deliver out of my hand; I work and none can reverse it; Lamentations 3:37— Who is he that saith, and it comes to pass, when the LORD commanded it not? Daniel 2:20-21— GOD: He removes kings and sets up kings; Daniel 4:17; 4:34-35; 5:21— The MOST HIGH GOD rules in the kingdom of men, and He appoints over it whomsoever He will. **The point of all these Scriptures and many more is that Almighty God is in sovereign control of all men and nations and satan too!**

CRITICAL NOTE: He is also in total control of China, Russia, ALL and every aspect of Islam, the UNITED NATIONS and all of the 'secret' power elite who might be trying to move to one world government, one world religion, etc. Satan, men and nations do all manner of RAGING. However, they cannot frustrate the plans and purposes of God.

In spite of current appearances, the 'heathen' and satan don't win! **The saints of God in Christ win! Furthermore, all of the wicked will be held accountable and judged for their rebellion. Jesus is sovereign, supreme and sufficient!**

Read and heed the glorious Unveiling of JESUS CHRIST— Revelation 1-22!

THEREFORE: Regardless of the headlines and/or regardless of coming wars, REGARDLESS of economic depressions, persecution of Christians or whatever— Jesus STILL has a master passion to save the lost and to KEEP ON building His Church!

[A look at the last chapters of the Bible reveals the bottom line ultimate purpose of all human history— All the redeemed- Jew and Gentile: Ephesians 2:11-22; Revelation 21:9-14- as the Bride/wife of

the Lamb, seeing Him, serving Him, reigning with Him for eternity. (Revelation 22:1-7)]

Acts 4:23-33: The early disciples of Jesus understood and embraced God's primary agenda! **Thus, When persecuted for the gospel's sake— they made the right response:**

1. Acts 4:24— they began with Praise to God— which is the Primary focus of Biblical Praying! **Acts 4:25**— they 'prayed Scripture'... which gave them a right perspective: The heathen are raging! Realized or not the lost world's rants against and persecutions of Christians are in reality expressions of hatred against JESUS! (Acts 4:25-27)

2. Acts 4:28— they embraced the over-ruling sovereignty of God in their prayer! **Acts 4:29-30**— **they did not pray for personal safety.** They did not take a 'survival course'. They did not buy weapons or take 'self-defense' courses! They did not run to 'Prophecy Hobby' preachers.

3. Acts 4:29-30— **they prayed for the LORD to behold the threats of their enemies; they prayed that the LORD grant them ALL boldness in speaking the Word of God;** and they asked that the LORD send forth healing power, signs and wonders to be done in the name of Jesus.

4. Acts 4:31-33— **they were all given a FRESH FILLING of the Holy Spirit! As a result,** they went forth boldly preaching God's message; and great generosity, love, power and grace was upon them all! Their singular passion was for BOLDNESS to preach the gospel!

VI. QUESTIONS WE MUST ASK AND ANSWER: What is my passion? IN THE MIDST OF THE DEEPENING DARKNESS— HOW CAN WE IMPACT OUR COMMUNITY WITH THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST?

1. LOOKING through the Acts of the Apostles— how did the New Testament Church impact their world?

2. What do the New Testament Epistles call for from believers?

3. What do the special letters of Jesus in Revelation 2-3 call for from believers?

4. How does one 'ADORN' the Gospel?

5. What causes the Gospel to be BLASPHEMED?

6. What direction and wisdom can we glean from: Acts 2:37-47; Acts 4:5-33; Acts 5; Acts 6; Acts 8:1-4; Acts 12:1-12??

7. Let us pay close attention to Acts 4:18-33; Acts 4:23-31; Acts 12:12; Acts 21:5!

8. TRUE REALITY: The congregations in the Book of Acts often gathered **for united prayer! SHOULDN'T WE DO AS THEY DID?**

1. We must REST in God and His sovereignty and be focused on His agenda even as was the New Testament Church.

2. We must pray TOGETHER as a congregation because a FOUNDATIONAL ESSENTIAL for genuine Christianity is to RETURN TO OUR OWN GROUP AND CRY OUT TO GOD— Acts 4: 23-33!

Grace and blessings to one and all! James Bell

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES!

TUESDAYS: Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care nursing home. Meet at the front door at 5:30PM. Questions call Bradley Pennington at 615-804-3054.

**** WEDNESDAYS: PRAYER SERVICE at 7:00PM; IN THE CHURCH AUDITORIUM! ****

NOTE: Jody Allen is ministering to young Children, up to about age 10 during Prayer Service. Older children, but not old enough for the Youth Group... will be with their parents in the Prayer Service. YOUTH GROUP: Wednesdays 6-8pm... led by Byron Smith

☐ **NEXT LADIES BIBLE STUDY— Thursday, JULY 17, 11:00AM,** led by Cindy Bell

*** SATURDAY MORNINGS @ 8am: Men's Fellowship/Bible Study! ***

***** SUNDAY SCHEDULE FOR JUNE 29 *****

1. 9:30am- Sunday School Bible Study and Small Group Fellowship

2. 10:45am- Morning Worship / Children's Church

**** JUNE 29—** No meal or afternoon service at church. **CHURCH-WIDE SINGING, PRAISE, SCRIPTURE READING, and TESTIMONIES AT 6:00pm**

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**SOUTHSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL!** Children are like young plants in a garden— while young and tender they must be protected. Southside Christian School works in harmony with the local Church and empowers parents!

<http://www.aceministries.com/curriculum/?content=presentingACE>