



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 41, No. 7, February 17 , 2015 / 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."***

Yielding Rights and Expectations + Embracing Responsibilities = Defeating Destructive Anger + Experiencing Love, Joy, and Peace!

[THIS ARTICLE IS GREATLY NEEDED, FAR AND WIDE... AGAIN AND AGAIN!!]

THE CALL OF GOD to salvation results in daily Christian living because of **an infusion of divine life** (Romans 5:5) by the Holy Spirit! Our new master passion becomes as Paul's own testimony: ***"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*** (Galatians 2:20) Thus, by the grace of God we HEAR (Receive and act upon) the call of JESUS: ***"Deny yourselves, take up your cross daily, and follow Me!"*** (Luke 9:23)

In Real Christianity We Experience TRIPLE CRUCIFIXION: 1. Christ was crucified in our place— ONCE and for all, fully paying our sin debt! 2. We are CRUCIFIED— even as stated in Galatians 2:20 and in Galatians 5:24! 3. The world crucified to us and we to the world— as stated in Galatians 6:14! In another place, Paul testifies, "I die daily!" Again, Jesus calls His followers to, 'Deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Me!' In Christ, we are DEAD to sin's dominion— Romans 6:14-22!

BUT HOW DOES THIS WORK OUT IN RELATIONSHIPS IN DAILY LIFE?



In all human relationships there are 3 issues: Rights, Expectations, and Responsibilities. Sometimes rights and expectations may overlap. Sometimes rights and expectations are based on what is good, honorable, and Biblical. On the other hand, they can be based on tradition, on how I was raised, or even upon selfishness, etc. As to RESPONSIBILITIES— they are God defined, ordered, and yield miracles and blessings!

AS TO ANGER: Probably 99.999999% of all anger in relationships is in direct proportion to the tightly held position that someone has VIOLATED or neglected our rights and/or expectations— OR at least we believe that they have... OR... they believe that we have violated their rights and/or expectations! **TRANSLATED: MOST fussin' feudin', fightin', resentments, bitterness, and etc... are about UNMET rights and expectations!**

In such settings every time someone dishes out an accusation of real or imagined unmet needs, rights, and expectations— usually the only thing accomplished is that the other party now has more ammunition to shoot back! THIS BATTLE OF OPPOSING ACCUSATIONS will provide enough ammo to shoot against one another until hell freezes! COMMON to these tragic wars are the battle tactics of, (1) Accusing others and defending self; defending self and accusing others; **(2) Blame-shifting and putting up smoke-screens to hide/excuse our own failures; **(3)** Confessing the real or imagined sins/faults of the other person **instead of** obeying Scripture and only confessing OUR OWN faults, (James 5:16; 1 John 1:9); **(4) Gathering an army of supporters to promote 'our side'**— thus, it is no wonder that 'emotional blood and guts' lie everywhere! **(5) Furthermore, the longer these sin-filled, satan-pleasing tactics are** used there will be growing hardness of heart, resentments, bitterness, hopelessness, destruction of families, destruction of churches, the name of Christ will be blasphemed among the heathen, and above all there will be a deepening REJECTION of Jesus Christ!**

UNSEEN/UNCONFESED REALITY: When we are fighting such wars with such tactics— No one is focused on heeding their God-given responsibilities! Moreover we feel fully justified for not carrying out our God-given responsibilities— for, after all, ‘the other person’ - (spouse, fellow church member, relative, neighbor, or whoever) - is not carrying out theirs!

MANY ‘CLAIM’ that they are EXCUSED because he/she/they are not meeting MY needs. “**He/she/they** are not loving me the way I NEED to be loved. IN FACT, **he/she/they** are being down-right evil toward me. I have it all documented! **Therefore, I AM EXCUSED** from my God-given responsibilities! **He/she/they** need counseling— I don’t... except to share how **he/she/they** have deeply wounded me! Of course, I am not perfect; but **he/she/they** are the ones with serious problems— not me!”

YES, from time to time, **others in our world do and say bad things** and those bad things can wound and HURT. Legitimate rights and expectations are not met. **However, none of this excuses us from our own God-given responsibilities!**

REALITY: WARS escalate. Love and hope dies. Divorces are filed. Churches split... or worse— ALL BECAUSE WE MIS-HANDLE RIGHTS, EXPECTATIONS, and RESPONSIBILITY!

JESUS MODELED the RIGHT WAY!!

1. JESUS experienced far worse things done to Him than we have had done to us! **2. Unlike us, JESUS** did not deserve any of them! **3. Yet, Jesus was NOT** destroyed by such evil— His hope never died! His JOY was never diminished! **4. JESUS was not EVER** sidetracked from His God given RESPONSIBILITIES. **WHAT WAS JESUS’ SECRET? *** JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHTS!**

Through His life, death, and resurrection, **Jesus Christ gives us a striking example of complete obedience and surrender to God.** In the Book of Philippians, we read that although Jesus was equal with God, He humbled Himself to live among men and to redeem them from the bondage of sin. In order to fulfill the direction of God the Father, **Jesus yielded His right to** wealth, to a good reputation, to be served, to enjoy physical comforts, and to make His own decisions.

The evil that was dumped on Jesus was unspeakable— yet He never took His eyes off His responsibilities! **BUT I'M NOT JESUS! Well, don't be shocked— but I knew that! Neither am I!** HOWEVER, Christians possess the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit! We have divine life and divine power from Jesus enabling us to walk in His steps:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:5-8).

***** JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHT TO WEALTH:** In order for Jesus Christ to redeem men and women from sin, He left the splendor, beauty, and majesty of heaven. Jesus is God, the Creator of all things. He had a right to enjoy all wealth and riches (see Colossians 1:15-17), yet **He confined Himself to the limited means of a carpenter's household.**

***** JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHT TO A GOOD REPUTATION AMONG MEN:** In heaven, Jesus is continually worshiped and His name highly honored. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. When Jesus came into the world, however, He *“made himself of no reputation”* (Philippians 2:7). Rather than being born into wealth and prominence, **Jesus was born into poverty and obscurity. Religious leaders claimed that Jesus was born of fornication.** Wonderfully, JESUS only went about doing good— even so, He lost popularity and his character was maliciously slandered. **Christ's ultimate humiliation came when He was arrested, falsely accused, and crucified. He was made a curse for us!** *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree”* (Galatians 3:13).

Regardless of the cost, Jesus lived on earth to please His Father. He did not come to be served. **He did not come to demand His rights. He did not react in anger when He was violated.** He remained focused on doing His Father's will. **THUS, HE WAS ANOINTED WITH THE OIL OF**

GLADNESS ABOVE ALL OTHERS! From the ‘model’ of Jesus we see that Joy and Happiness are NOT Dependent upon others treating us right!

1 Peter 2:19-21: “For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. **For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God.** For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:..” (NKJV) **1 Peter 4:12-16:** “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; **but rejoice** to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

If you are reproached for the name of Christ, **blessed are you,** for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters. Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.” (NKJV)

A SPECIAL WORD TO LADIES WITH HUSBANDS WHO DO NOT KNOW OR WHO ARE NOT PRESENTLY FOLLOWING JESUS— 1 Peter 3:1-4: “... even if some refuse to obey the Good News, your godly lives will speak to them without any words. **They will be won over by** observing your pure and reverent lives. Don’t be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. **You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God.**” (NLB)

REALITY: When I do not have joy, gladness, and peace it is because of my own failure to walk in the steps of JESUS. Yes, I may or may not have grief and sorrow from the wrong of others toward me— but even when I do, those are ‘clean wounds’ and they will heal as I walk with Jesus. **THE ONLY THING that destroys me and weighs me down with UNHAPPINESS and HOPELESSNESS is my own response of**

REFUSING my God-given responsibilities and replacing them with defensiveness and/or accusations and/or with a pity party! — thus, causing self-created **'dirty, infected wounds' which breed resentment, bitterness, depression, hopelessness, and hardness of heart.**

***** JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHT TO BE SERVED:** As the Creator of every living person, Christ has the right to have others serve Him. However, when Jesus came to earth, He did not demand the service of others. Instead, **He took opportunities to demonstrate humble service.** Jesus was sensitive to the needs of those around Him. He healed the diseased, delivered those possessed with evil spirits, restored the disabled, provided food for the hungry, and more. On the evening of Jesus' betrayal and arrest, He washed the feet of His disciples, who were shocked by His actions. **Jesus said to them... and to us...**

*“. . . He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For **I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.** Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, **happy are ye if ye do them**” (John 13:12-17).*

Happiness is not in having my rights and expectations met! Happiness is in serving UNWORTHY others because we want to please Jesus in gratitude for all JESUS has done for us! The attitudes and actions of 'others' may or may not deserve that we serve them— however, JESUS ALWAYS DESERVES that we heed his Word and walk in His SERVING footsteps!

Dr. Ed Wheat, author of LOVE LIFE FOR EVERY MARRIED COUPLE, reveals that at the beginning of his Christian life his wife and children were unresponsive to both the gospel and to him. **He states that, “prolonged rejection... drove me to the Word of God to learn exactly what I should do.** I learned that it was my responsibility to love my wife the way Christ loved me. Many times I did not feel like loving her, for rejection, even quiet, courteous rejection is hard to handle.

BUT I DID IT OUT OF OBEDIENCE TO GOD! I found that as I put the principles of the Bible into practice and as I really learned how to love my wife, **this became PLEASURE as well as responsibility. OBEDIENCE TOOK ON THE BRIGHT COLORS OF JOY!”**

***** JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHT TO PHYSICAL COMFORTS:** Jesus met the demands of a heavy daily schedule by practicing personal disciplines. His lifestyle of traveling, teaching, and ministering to the needs of people along the way did not include many of life’s basic comforts. When a man told Christ that he wanted to become His disciple, Jesus warned him, *“The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head”* (Matthew 8:20). The Gospel of Mark records **the strenuous schedule of a typical day in Jesus’ public ministry.** (Mark 1:32–35).

***** JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHT TO MAKE HIS OWN DECISIONS:** Perhaps the most difficult right to yield is that of making final decisions. **Yet, if we do not fully yield this right to God, we will not develop a spirit of meekness or walk in true humility before God. Jesus lived in complete surrender to God’s direction.** When Christ was twelve years old, He understood His calling and expressed His desire to be about His heavenly Father’s business. (Luke 2:49.)

He yielded to God’s direction through His IMPERFECT parents and waited until He was thirty years old to begin His public ministry. (Luke 3:22–23.) During His ministry years, Jesus made no decisions independently but did only what His heavenly Father directed Him to do. (John 8:28.) Continually, His attitude was **“not my will, but Thine be done”** (Luke 22:42). When Christ was arrested and placed under civil authorities, God carried out His ultimate will through their decisions. (John 19:11, 28–30.)

Jesus’ obedience to the directions of His Father enabled Jesus to complete the work He was called to do and to fulfill the Scriptural prophecies about His life. (Philippians 2:9–11).

Jesus gave two specific words as to the disposition/attitude He maintained while on earth— MEEKNESS and LOWLINESS of heart! Every step of the way as He YIELDED HIS RIGHTS, He was revealing

meekness and lowliness. Being channels for MEEKNESS and LOWLINESS is the grand and open secret of happiness and peace in relationships!

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

MEEKNESS: “I yield all of my personal rights and expectations to God, SO THAT I am ‘clay in His hands’ for Him to accomplish His will in my life! **THUS, like Dr. Ed Wheat, I totally embrace my God-given responsibilities to do them as an act of worship to you, regardless of what others in my life may or may not be doing, leaving all results in your hand. LORD JESUS, you are worthy that I serve and worship you in this manner!**”

OWNERSHIP: “I am not an owner. I am a steward. I belong to God by right of Him being my Creator and REDEEMER. I am BOUGHT with a price — the precious blood of Jesus! **I belong to JESUS. JESUS has exclusive right to manifest HIMSELF in and through me for His glory.** I must reject any attitude, word or deed which does not manifest CHRIST and please Christ! **I must die to my supposed ‘rights’ and embrace my God-give responsibilities!**

[Portions of article edited from a booklet, *YIELDING RIGHTS*]

Grace, Joy, and Peace in Christ! James Bell

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES... this week:

**** WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18 ☐ YOUTH MEETING and PRAYER SERVICE CANCELED DUE TO WEATHER!**

☐ **LADIES BIBLE STUDY— February 26, 11:00am, The Life of David! - 1 Samuel 18 - Cindy Bell, teaching.** {Meet in Ladies Sunday School Room: Come in FRONT doors of the church auditorium or the SIDE door at the top of the IRON STEPS!}

* **EVERY SATURDAY MORNING @ 8am: Men's Fellowship/Bible Study!** {Study in 1 Thessalonians}... Come to back of Church building... Come in under the drive-thru awning... walk forward... till you smell the coffee!}

SUNDAY— February 22

- 1. 9:30am** Sunday School
- 2. 10:45am** Worship Service
- 3. Noon—** Fellowship, Covered-dish lunch
- 4. 1:00pm—** Early afternoon worship service