



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 41, No.14, April 7 , 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."***

GREAT BLESSINGS SYMBOLIZED BY THE SEVEN FEASTS OF THE LORD!

“Blessed/happy/fortunate, to be envied are the people who know the joyful sound, who understand and appreciate **the spiritual blessings symbolized by the feasts**; they walk, O Lord, in the light and favor of your countenance.” (Ps. 89:15, Amp. Bible)

In Old Testament times— **the celebrations of the seven feasts of God, (Leviticus 23), pointed to what God would do when He sent His Son.** These feasts and all the blood sacrifices of the Old Testament era were designed to convey one primary message— namely that God is holy and that only by the shedding of innocent blood can sin be forgiven and fellowship with God be restored and experienced. **Like a lighthouse**, the Feasts of the LORD, shine forth to remind all of God’s redeemed children **of God’s ‘SO GREAT’ salvation— a salvation** that has a definite beginning, a definite process, and a definite climax which lead into eternity with God!

REALITY: It is so easy to get entangled in the cares of this life and lose a proper sense of purpose and destiny. We can easily find ourselves like a ship off course and **CRASHING ON THE ROCKS OF SIN. WE NEED A COMPASS, WE NEED A MIGHTY LIGHTHOUSE!** The seven feasts of the

Lord set forth in Leviticus, Chapter 23, (**when received in New Testament fulfillment and application**), unveil full salvation and call us to delight ourselves in God Himself!

Leviticus 23:1-3— but first, God has ordained a weekly celebration of worship. Here is the Biblical principle of God having designed man for work and rest. True, for the New Testament Christian— every day is a sabbath rest! And yet, the Biblical call **to work and to rest** is still with us and greatly needed. **QUESTION: How can I avoid the extremes of both paganism and Pharisee-ism?**

ANSWER: Jesus is our perfect example on how to observe the **sabbath rest principle**: (1) He worshipped. (2) He **did good to others** . (3) And He allowed for necessary work. THE WORD OF GOD and the Holy Spirit will keep us from the futility of the Pharisee's bondage-filled ways of Sabbath observance and empower us into the glorious liberty of WALKING IN THE STEPS OF JESUS! **Moreover**, it seems clear that the New Testament Church usually worshipped on the First day of the week. **It is also true** that Romans 14 and other New Testament verses show us liberty as to what specific day is our day of rest. **In the New Testament the 'principle' of rest is preserved.**

In Isaiah 58:13-14, God gives us the essence of what the Sabbath Rest principle is all about— **delighting in God!** **Isaiah 58:13-14 (NKJV)**- “ If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, *From* doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy *day* of the LORD honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking *your own* words, **Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD**; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth,... The mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

NOTE: **In God's economy, the Sabbath was NEVER** about a set of rules **but about cultivating a relationship with God. Cultivating relationships took time in the Old Testament era and we are no different!** ONLY ONE WHO IS GREATLY DECEIVED WOULD CLAIM THAT THEY CAN CULTIVATE A GROWING RELATIONSHIP on any level WITHOUT COMMITTING SPECIFIC TIME! Yes, we are to delight in God in our work, in our families, and in all areas of life! Nevertheless, one day in seven is a

unique provision for rest and to delight in God Himself! (Matt. 6:33; John 14:15, 23; Isa. 58:13-14)

Likewise, the Feasts unto the LORD encourage us to DELIGHT in GOD!

I. LEVITICUS 23:4-5— PASSOVER: For the Old Testament Israelites, Passover was a remembrance of the night when the death angel passed over their homes sparing their first born. For New Testament Christians, the Passover equates to the beginning of salvation. The Passover lamb beautifully pictured Christ –John 1:29... *“Behold the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world.”* I Cor. 5:7— **“Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.”** **God’s message in the Old Testament and the New Testament is the same:**

Not when I see your good works or your golden rule living; **NOT WHEN I SEE YOUR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE—** **but “When I see the blood, I will pass over you!”**

NEVER FORGET THIS: The Israelite deserved death as much as the Egyptian; AND WE deserve death and Hell as much as anyone! Do you see that? Only when you do, will you flee to Christ for His blood to pay your sin debt!

When Israel took the blood of the lamb and applied it in faith— God then sent the plague of death on Egypt, God PASSED OVER ISRAEL, and Pharaoh released Israel. IN A FAR GREATER WAY, when we receive Christ’s blood, God acts! His holy wrath is satisfied! Sin’s penalty is paid— for God so loved the world that He paid our debt. God the Father satisfied His own holy wrath by the blood of His Son! Moreover, SIN’S penalty is not only paid; but sin’s power is broken!

CRITICAL QUESTION: Have you ever come to Jesus with all of your sin; and cried out in similar fashion as the tax-collector: **“O God, be merciful to me a sinner?”**

II. LEVITICUS 23:6-8: UNLEAVENED BREAD— In Scripture, leaven usually refers to sin. This feast pictured that those who were delivered from death, (by the shedding of and the applying of INNOCENT blood), have their sin forgiven and sin's rule put away! LET US RECEIVE THIS REMINDER FROM THE WORD OF GOD: **God has a claim on the regenerated life!** [I Cor. 5:6-8; 2 Cor. 6:17-18; II Tim. 2:19; I Thess. 5:22 —abstain from appearance] **ALSO:** When Israel went out of Egypt by the power of God, Pharaoh and his armies pursued. However, God stepped in to overcome the impossible! When a person becomes a Christian, Satan and his armies pursue. They call you back. They will try to force you back to Egypt, back into the world of sin, self, and society! Christian friend, in our own strength we cannot conquer sin or self or Satan! IN OUR OWN STRENGTH, We cannot keep God's holy commandments. But Christ in us can! **And so it is by Him, our High Priest, that we conquer (Ex. 13:14 & 14:14). Therefore:** (1) In obedient faith, let us put away all leaven of malice and wickedness (I Cor. 5:6-7). (2) In obedient faith, let us live a life of feeding on Christ who has no leaven. (3) In trusting faith, let us live a life of total dependence. **The LORD'S TABLE reminds us of these things!** DON'T MISS COMING to the LORD'S TABLE!
(Our next opportunity, scheduled for 4/19)

III. LEVITICUS 23:9-14: FIRST FRUITS— The Israelites could not harvest their early grain crop until the first bundle of grain was cut and brought to the priest. The priest would wave it before the Lord to be accepted of God. **For New Testament saints:** The resurrected Jesus Christ is the first fruits of them that slept (I Cor. 15:20-23). He arose from the dead. He was accepted by God. And because He, the first fruits, was accepted— so we the rest of the harvest are accepted in Him! [James 1:18 — of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.] Moreover, Romans 8:23 tells us that we have the first fruits of the Holy Spirit! It is by the Holy Spirit that even now we have the resurrection life of Christ and the blessed hope of future resurrection! **Now, the Feast of First Fruits was always held the third day from Passover:** Christ was crucified on the day of Passover. He arose from the dead three days later on the Day of First Fruits. **When we experience a saving encounter with Jesus Christ, it is a spiritual participation in these first three feasts:**

1. Passover— we are redeemed, delivered BY THE BLOOD SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST— our Substitute, Sin Bearer, Saviour, and LORD! Christ became our Passover Lamb. THROUGH HIM, WE were and ARE Delivered from wrath/slavery/guilt. But that is not all: WE ALSO EXPERIENCE,

2. “Unleavened bread”— we are separated from sin. We put away sin and feed on Christ. HOW COULD IT BE OTHERWISE?

3. First fruits— we are consecrated. We are **accepted in the Beloved** because of His resurrection and we are set apart for Him. We are not only saved from the world, the flesh, and the devil, but we are consecrated— Saved to a new life in Christ. **But that’s not all!**

IV. LEVITICUS 23:15-16: PENTECOST— This feast is sometimes called the Feast of Weeks. It was seven weeks or 50 days after the presentation of the bundle of First Fruits. This was originally a sort of harvest festival of thanksgiving after the people had gathered the harvest. The ancient rabbis, right or wrong, later concluded that God gave the law to Moses on this day. So this festival came to be regarded as the season of the giving of the law. **But more significant and certain is this: 1. Jesus died on Passover. 2. Jesus was raised on First Fruits. 3. And the Holy Spirit came exactly on the day of Pentecost!** Are you beginning to see the relevance of God’s sacred calendar of redemption? And the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost for express purposes: To indwell and fill and baptize believers. John 14:16-17— **He shall be in you. Acts 1:5; 2:4 Why?**

1. To empower the believers for the evangelizing of the world (Acts 1:8).

2. To form the body of Christ (Jew and Gentile— I Cor. 12:13).

3. To enable and empower every Christian to keep God’s holy law (Ez. 36:26-27).

4. To teach us all that Jesus said. To glorify Jesus. To unveil the future (John 14-16).

5. To manifest in/through every redeemed sinner a miraculous orchard of fruit (Gal. 5:21-23).

6. To release through every Christian a glorious array of ministering gifts to build up the body of Christ. **Oh, glorious full salvation!**

NOTICE: All of these events happen at the beginning of the Christian life: 1. Passover— Deliverance from judgment and Satan. 2.

Unleavened Bread— Separation from sin. 3. First Fruits— Consecration to Christ. 4. Pentecost— indwelling power for a holy/bold/witnessing life. **We are living in the Pentecostal age. EVERY TRUE CHRISTIAN IS, FROM A BIBLICAL SENSE, A PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIAN! None of this is a second work of grace.**

RIGHT NOW: We are living in an interval of time before the next great event of God's calendar. My, what a solid Rock foundation the Christian has: 1. Christ died for us. 2. Christ, our unleavened bread. 3. Christ raised. 4. Christ indwelling and empowering. **Our past is forgiven AND our present is empowered. But even that's not all!** For in the fall of the Jewish year came the Feast of Trumpets, The Day of Atonement and The Feast of Tabernacles.

V. LEVITICUS 23:24: THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS— in this present hour, the Christian lives with **soberness and with hope**. Soberness: Sound the trumpet! The judgment and wrath of God is coming. Soberness: Rev. 18:2-5. Hope: JESUS CHRIST IS COMING BACK! Rev. 19-22. Living in the conscious awareness of Christ's second coming, for the Christian, is a PURIFYING HOPE: 1 John 3:14

VI. LEVITICUS 23:27: THE DAY OF ATONEMENT— In the O. T. it was a sacred day of cleansing from sin. **Today, in Christ, because of Calvary,** we are already cleansed from both the **penalty** of sin and the ruling **power** of sin. But one day, when Christ comes, we shall be delivered from even the **presence** of sin and **possibility** of sin (Rev. 7:15-17; Rev. 21-22; I John 3:1-3). No wonder PAUL CRIES OUT— God forbid that I should glory, except in the Cross! (Gal. 6:14)!

VII. LEVITICUS 23:34: THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES— Here is consummation, completion, rest, and fellowship with God. Here is, ruling/rejoicing with Christ forever; sitting at His feet; and beholding His face (Rev. 22:1-5). Therefore: Gal. 6:14; Phil. 1:6; Phil. 3:13-14. **As the hymn writer says,**

Full salvation! Full salvation! From the guilt and power of sin. Life immortal, Christ descending, Lo! My heart the Spirit's shrine: God and man in oneness blending, oh, what fellowship is mine! **Full salvation!**

Full salvation! Raised in Christ to life divine! Care and doubting, gloom and sorrow, Fear and shame are mine no more; Faith knows naught of dark tomorrow, for my Savior goes before: **Full salvation! Full salvation! Full and free for evermore!**

[<http://www.hymnal.net/hymn.php/h/321>]

Yes, in NEW TESTAMENT fulfillment, the Seven Feasts of the LORD call us to a mighty revival of delighting in God; and CALL US to delight in SO GREAT SALVATION! The LORD GOD is pleased to use these glorious FULL SALVATION CELEBRATIONS to help keep us from SHIPWRECK. They give us a yearly ROADMAP so that saints in Christ are reminded of— WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST AND THAT WE ARE ON A JOURNEY HOME! YES— ***“Blessed/happy/fortunate, to be envied are the people who know the joyful sound, who understand and appreciate the spiritual blessings symbolized by the feasts; they walk, O Lord, in the light and favor of your countenance.”***

PLEASE UNDERSTAND what the above study is NOT: It is not an admonition to celebrate the Feasts as a means of gaining favor either with God or with people. In writing to the Colossians (2:16-17), Paul said, "Therefore, do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a new moon celebration or a Sabbath day. The Old Testament Feasts were a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."

What this study IS: It is a call to embrace the FULL SALVATION of the Lord and respond in worship and praise to God! It is a call to live in light of God's Calendar of Redemption. It is a call to live in the full light of heaven's reality: The world's Head-lines ultimately do not matter— because Jesus came! Jesus is here! Jesus is coming back! And until HE COMES BACK WE MUST BE FOCUSED ON HIS BUSINESS! And as we do, we will be INVINCIBLE UNTIL HE CALLS US HOME! **Let us go forward DELIGHTING in Him, RESTING in Him, and LABORING until the Master comes!**

IN ALL FAITH AND PRACTICE: Let us get back to the sure Word of prophecy, God's Holy Word; and let us sit at His feet and worship Him in spirit and in truth. (2 Peter 1:19; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-14;

Matthew 4:4; John 4:23-24) Let us walk in the steps of the man Christ Jesus who lived by every Word that proceeded from His Father! (Matthew 4:4)

FINAL THOUGHT: In the light of the New Testament fulfillment of the Seven Feasts of the LORD— ONE MIGHT WONDER: **Why didn't the Holy Spirit move one of the Apostles to set forth a NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN for celebrating EACH and all of these glorious 'Full Salvation' feasts?**

ANSWER: HE DID! In utter and profound simplicity, THE LORD'S SUPPER includes ALL the redemptive truth of all Seven Feasts— for at THE LORD'S TABLE we PROCLAIM the LORD'S death UNTIL He comes! (1 Cor. 11:26) Full Salvation includes all redemptive activity from THE DEATH of the Lamb of God until His RETURN— and that is what we remember and celebrate at the LORD'S TABLE!

For a great REVIVAL in our souls— let us 'make much' of the LAMB OF GOD!

Grace to all in Christ! / James Bell /
www.southsidegallatin.org

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; Come in side entrance, iron steps... meet in Ladies Sunday School Room ****

NOTE: Jody Allen is ministering to **Children**, during Prayer Service.

WEDNESDAY YOUTH MEETING, 6:30pm led by Chris and Rachel Beth Estep.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY— April 9, 11:00am, The Life of David! - 1 Samuel 21-22 - 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!

SUNDAYS IN APRIL:

1. April 12— 9:30am- Sunday School

10:45am— Worship Service

NOON- Fellowship, Covered-dish meal

1:00pm- Early Afternoon Service

2. April 19— 9:30am- Sunday School;

10:45am- Worship Service & LORD'S SUPPER; NO noon meal.

HOME GROUPS @ 5:00pm

3. April 26— 9:30am- Sunday School; 10:45am- Worship Service;

NOON- Fellowship, Covered-dish meal;

1:00pm- Early Afternoon Service