



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 41, No. 23, June 9 , 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."***

Sixteen Marks of an Authentic New Testament Church!

[Note: Space did not permit the listing of the many Scriptures which support this article. Want to see them? Read the New Testament... Especially Acts and the Epistles! The outline for the article is from a booklet I obtained many years ago from a church in Tacoma, Washington. No author was listed. It is out of print and unavailable. **We will be printing FULL COPIES** of it for our congregation. For now, please read, study, pray through the following!]

AUTHENTIC implies being fully trustworthy as according with fact; it is a faithful reproduction of an original. This article is an attempt to draw from Scripture some foundational, ('faithful to the original'), Biblical concepts of church life for Southside.

CONCEPT ONE:

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is our only Head. We exist to worship Him, to make Him known and to do whatever He desires as He builds His church in His wisdom and power. He is the head; we are a part of His body. He is to get all the glory. He is the source of our life. He is the decision-maker; whatever He says goes!

The attraction in authentic Christianity is JESUS CHRIST and His gospel of grace. Walking in His steps and manifesting His life we make him 'visible' to a watching world. JESUS CHRIST is the character-pattern against which everything we do is to be evaluated. Let us develop a passion to grow in His likeness.

CONCEPT TWO:

The Bible is our only infallible, (without lies or error) blueprint for Church life. Jesus is the living Truth. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. The Bible is the written, God-breathed truth. The Living Truth gives us the written Truth quickened by the Spirit of Truth so that we may know God and His will for our lives. The written Word of God is given that we might, quickened by the Holy Spirit, know the God of the Word; and that we can know His will and grow in intimate fellowship with Him. The Bible expresses the mind of God inerrantly.

The Bible is God-given for our only authoritative rule of faith and practice; and the supreme standard by which our conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried. Guidance from God will not conflict with the pure Word of God. To claim to love JESUS CHRIST while rejecting His Word is a spirit of anti-Christ.

CONCEPT THREE:

Human traditions must bow to the Word of God. The Word of God gives absolute truths and forms; but the Word of God also gives FREEDOMS. Whatever God has specifically laid down for us is absolute.

Example: It is a Biblical 'absolute' that we are not to 'forsake assembling together' with other believers. It is absolute that we are to engage in 'true church work' by carrying out the many ONE TO ANOTHERS toward each other. But we have FREEDOM as to when and how often we meet as a congregation; and freedom as to precisely when and how to express the 'one anothers'. We

are never permitted to do things that are in violation of God's Word.

CONCEPT FOUR:

Clearly, God's goals for Southside are threefold— The Glorification of God, the Edification of Believers/Saints and the Evangelization of the world. As these are kept in balance, God makes Himself known through Southsiders in truth, in holiness and in love.

The Kingdom of God on earth through Southsiders will be visible in righteousness, in peace, and in joy in the Holy Spirit.

CONCEPT FIVE:

When we gather, Southside is to be focused on carrying out ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES, such as— Worship, Teaching, Mutual Ministries, The LORD'S SUPPER, Singing, Prayer, Sending and Receiving Missionaries, Carrying out discipline when needed, Praying for boldness to go back out into the world and live and proclaim the Gospel, etc.

CONCEPT SIX:

Evangelism is the DAILY task of ALL TRUE BELIEVERS as God enables us to REACH OUT to minister and to serve people who are outside of Christ. A WITNESS for Jesus tells what they have seen, heard, and experienced; they tell it truthfully and, thus, they help others to arrive at an accurate conclusion about Jesus.

This is done OUT IN THE WORLD where the lost people live and work. It is out in the world that the lost are to witness righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit, faith, hope, and love flowing like a river from Southsiders. Such powerful MODELING of

Jesus Christ makes our tracts and gospel presentations believable!

CONCEPT SEVEN:

Biblical Evangelism includes both, (1) A call to the LOST to receive the Gospel of Christ and **(2)** the specific training or discipling of those who do receive Christ, so that each new believer grows in Christ-likeness and becomes an effective soldier of Christ and disciple of others.

CONCEPT EIGHT:

Southside, as a local church, is a primary Missionary sending agency. We are responsible under God to train, to recognize and to send forth missionaries, following the pattern found in Acts 13. This includes 'local missions' so that at the close of every Sunday's last congregational service we are all freshly COMMISSIONED as missionaries.

CONCEPT NINE:

Tithes and Offerings are given UNTO THE LORD to be used for His Kingdom work and ministry. We are to first give OURSELVES. Our giving UNTO THE LORD is an expression of our STEWARDSHIP and of our GRATITUDE for God's grace in our lives.

CONCEPT TEN:

Every believer is a Minister, a Believer-Priest, who has been graced and gifted by God so that we may lovingly labor to build up our Brothers and Sisters in Christ and make Christ visible out in the world. The New Testament details and describes the true church work of every believer, as over 50 times the Holy Spirit calls us to minister the ONE ANOTHERS to each other.

CONCEPT ELEVEN:

The Holy Spirit motivates and directs saints in service, ministry, work and worship. When Southsiders are being led by the Holy Spirit, the Church works together harmoniously and effectively. **There are opportunities in our church services for the whole body to participate...** not only in congregational singing, but also in testimonies and praises unto the LORD. We must carefully embrace the call not to grieve or quench the Holy Spirit; but, rather, to be being continuously filled with the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit led congregational services will manifest PRAISE to God and embrace and act upon TRUTH from God.

CONCEPT TWELVE:

The vision is for God to RAISE UP Elders and Deacons from within the congregation, as a general practice. EVERY MEMBER is to be a minister, a servant. Some are set forth as EXAMPLES/Servant-Leaders before the congregation.

We are at a point in the life of Southside where we must look unto the LORD for the raising up of additional deacons and for a return to the plurality of Elders. Deacons are examples of servants, they model serving in many ways.

Pastors/Bishops/Elders, all one and the same, are a team of God-called, God-ordained men who, under Christ, are called to shepherd the local church. For the last several years, even though we have continued to have various men in the pulpit and not just one voice— nevertheless, officially we only have one man serving as Pastor/Elder. LET US DILIGENTLY seek the LORD and trust Him for the raising up of additional men.

THINK ABOUT THIS: While I have no plans or knowledge of any of the following— nevertheless, it is common for churches to come to a time when the lone pastor dies, retires, or is fired, or just leaves. Then the church starts

from ground zero and seeks a pastor. They find one from somewhere and a new era starts with hope and excitement, but usually conflict and 'divorce' quickly follow. Why? Strangers 'married' and woke up a few months later to many SURPRISES!

I BELIEVE THERE IS A BETTER MODEL TO EMBRACE: With plurality of ELDERSHIP we have the opportunity to have a 'seamless' transition from one 'LEAD' pastor/elder to a team of elders. (Historically, most are self-supported... some are bi-vocational... some are full-time and fully financially supported.)

EXAMPLE: We begin to cry out to God to show us, to lead us to an additional, younger, pastor/elder or elders who would, (as the LORD leads and enables), labor part-time and/or full-time and alongside the current Lead Pastor. The younger are mentored by the older, they function as a team. Then, as time goes along there is a seamless transition where by the younger one or ones are called to take the reins of servant leadership and the older could, (or might not), continue to serve for many years, but would be more and more in a roll of support/counsel and not lead. IN THIS PATH, the church family and ministry is able to continue without disruption.

CONCEPT THIRTEEN:

The function of pastors/elders at Southside is to serve as "Player-Coaches" of the Congregation. A primary function is to EQUIP THE MEMBERS for their God-Appointed ministries, so that the whole body will be built up in love and Christ-likeness.

CONCEPT FOURTEEN:

The local church and the Home are two Divine institutions. They should not compete but complete and complement one another.

The Church should BUILD UP families. Strong, Godly families are vital for a vibrant Congregation.

God holds parents to be primarily responsible for the training and discipling of children. The Church has a roll of support.

CONCEPT FIFTEEN:

A local church is A BODY of believers. Even as the MEMBERS of our human bodies are COMMITTED to ONE BODY and thus empowered TOGETHER to minister to OTHERS, even so it is in the church at Southside. We must make forward steps in this Biblical pattern.

CONCEPT SIXTEEN:

Serious attention should be given to make sure that Southside Church remains both united and pure. As a part of this process, prayerful and humble application of Biblical Standards concerning Church Discipline need to be applied.

Grace to one and all in Christ! 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: NOTE NEW TIME SCHEDULE!!**

☐ **6:30pm— Children** Ministry/activities, led by Jody Allen

☐ **6:30pm— Youth** Activities and Bible Study— led by Chris and Rachel Beth Estep

(For both of these... enter via double doors by gym)

☐ **6:30pm— CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE...** Come in side entrance, iron steps... meet in Ladies Sunday School Room

LADIES BIBLE STUDY— JUNE 18, 11:00am, The Life of David! – 1 Samuel 27, 29-30; - 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 2 Thessalonians}... Come to back of Church building... Come in under the drive-thru awning... walk forward... till you smell the coffee!

☐ **SUNDAY SERVICES, June 14: 9:30am**, Sunday School; **10:45am** Morning Worship. **DUE TO REPAIR WORK in side rooms in fellowship hall... there will be NO NOON MEAL or afternoon service.**

☐ **SUNDAY SERVICES, June 21: 9:30am**, Sunday School; **10:45am** Morning Worship; NO **NOON** lunch or afternoon service. **HOME GROUPS IN THE EVENING!**

☐ **SUNDAY SERVICES, June 28: 9:30am**, Sunday School; **10:45am** Morning Worship— **With John Mackay of Creation Research.**

NOON FELLOWSHIP 'covered dish' Lunch;

6:00pm-8:00pm WITH JOHN MACKAY

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SUMMER CAMP ☐ JULY 6-10 // PRAY and PLAN!

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SOUTHSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL! Call— 616-452-5951