



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 41, No. 41, October 13 , 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."***

The Misguided Aims of the Counterfeit "Church" by Berit Kjos

Almost two millennia ago, Jesus called His Church to follow Him, treasure His Word, and spread His gospel. Countless thousands did. By faith, they faced torture and persecution, hatred, and death. Yet they rejoiced, for they knew they were sharing the life and suffering of Jesus! His eternal Kingdom was far more precious to them than any earthly treasure.

Twelve centuries later, dark clouds shrouded Europe. During the Middle Ages, the "common people" could neither own nor read the Latin Bible. So when [John Wycliffe](#)'s first English Bible became available around 1390, a virtual war on Biblical Christianity began. **In the years ahead, thousands of faithful martyrs were tortured and killed by Europe's corrupt Catholic hierarchy for owning the new Bible and spreading God's Word.** [EXAMPLES]

1. In 1413, John Oldcastle was hanged and burned in Wales. His sin? Living by the truths he found in his new Bible! "Do with me what ye will," he told his executioners. "Though ye judge my body... ye can do no harm to my soul.... **I will stand [true to His Word] to the very death by the grace of my God.**" [1]

2. "The established 'church' in Bohemia, accused John Hus of heresy for teaching God's Word. "Tried" and found guilty in 1415, he was mocked by the crowd and led naked to a stake to be burned. "We commit your soul to the devil," cried a bishop. When offered a last chance to

recant, he answered, "**In the truth of the Gospel which I have written, taught, and preached I am willing gladly to die today.**" Then the fire was lit using pages from the forbidden Wycliffe Bible as kindling. Immersed in flames, he sang, 'Christ, thou Son of the living God, have mercy upon me.'" [2]

3. In Germany, many Anabaptists were hounded for their faith. Their emphasis on... adult baptism offended other Protestant groups as well as the Catholic establishment. So in 1527, when leader Michael Sattler refused to recant his faith, he faced a cruel sentence: the hangman would "**cut out his tongue**, then **chain him** to a wagon, **tear his body** twice with hot tongs... then **burn his body** to powder as an arch-heretic. Before he died, he prayed with slurred speech, "**Almighty eternal God. Thou art the way and the truth.... I will, with Thy help on this day, testify to the truth and seal it with my blood.**" [3]

4. After translating the New Testament and much of the Old Testament directly from the original Greek and Hebrew into English, William Tyndale faced the rage of the British Anglican elites as well as the Catholic establishment on the continent. By 1535, he was captured and imprisoned in Brussels. The following year he was impaled and burned on a stake for daring to challenge Europe's church-state tyranny. [4]

When the Bible is banned and His Word forbidden, it's time for God's people to take stand for truth! *"We ought to obey God rather than men."* Acts 5:29

The Downward Slide of the Western Church

*"And the **serpent said** to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'" Genesis 3:4-5*

From the beginning of time, Satan has been twisting God's Word and replacing it with tempting promises that seemed good to a gullible, blinded world. As former president Bill Clinton told America in his 2000 State of the Union message: "We restored the vital center, **replacing outdated ideologies with a new vision** anchored in basic, enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Americans."

It must have sounded good to those who cringed at the "outdated" moral boundaries of the Bible. **God's old narrow ways don't fit 21st century**

lifestyles. Whether "Christian" or not, most would happily agree that God's wise guidelines are an obstacle to the "new vision" of social [solidarity](#).

No wonder [liberal churches](#) are fast replacing His unchanging Truth with more enticing visions of right and wrong.

We forget that God's moral star wall against the corruption that is laughing at today's lies and licentious culture sinks deeper into the darkness.

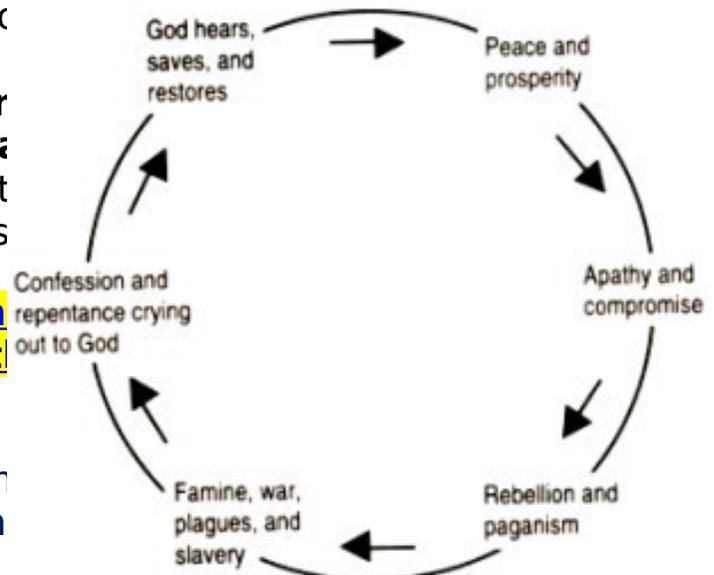
An article titled "[How Will the Shifting of America Affect the Future of the Church?](#)" trend:

"...the percentage of Christians in America is dropping. Millions upon **millions of Christians believe** many of the fundamental principles are no longer." [5] Its 2009 research found that "**Less than one percent of the youngest adult generation** in America" and "**only nine percent of all American adults**" share a biblical worldview. [5] As defined by the Barna Group, such a worldview means:

- believing that absolute moral truth exists;
- Satan is considered to be a real being or force, not merely symbolic;
- a person cannot earn their way into Heaven by trying to be good or do good works;
- Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth;
- God is the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the world who still rules the universe.... [6]

"Only slightly more than a quarter of adults (27 percent) believe Satan is real, and **less than half of born again adults** (40 percent) have this worldview." [6]

Apparently, most so-called "Christians" feel free to [adapt the Bible](#) to today's politically correct views of God and His ways. **Afraid to offend, many pastors are simply limiting their Biblical teaching to passages that make people feel good rather than guilty.** Confession and **repentance** are rarely emphasized. **"Woe to the rebellious children," saith the Lord, 'that take counsel, but not of Me..."** Isaiah 30:1



Violence and the changing tides of culture

While we shudder at the horrendous persecution by radical Muslims in Africa or the Middle East, we tend to forget the inhumanity of our own Western history. **The fact is that false "christianity" can be just as cruel and bloody as Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist or Shamanic violence.**

While basic human nature doesn't change, cultures, beliefs, and actions are **always changing** -- either for good or evil. Ponder these examples of atrocities committed under the banner of false "biblical" mandates:

4th Century: Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity in 313 AD and established a precedent that led to the state church of the Roman empire. Like many protestant denominations today, corruption and spiritual syncretism soon became endemic. **As Pastor Charles Spurgeon explained,**

"A Roman emperor [Constantine] professed to be converted.... [It] seemed that the world was Christianized, whereas, indeed, the Church was heathenized! Hence sprang the monster of a State Church.... It promises to advance the Truth of God and is, itself, a negation of it! Under its influences a system of religion was fashioned which, beyond all false religions... is the greatest hindrance to the true Gospel of Jesus Christ! Under its influence dark ages lowered over the world." "Men were not permitted to think. A Bible could scarcely be found and a preacher of the Gospel, if found, was put to death! That was the result of human power coming in with the **sword in one hand and the Gospel in the other** and developing its pride of ecclesiastical power into a triple crown, an Inquisition and an 'infallible Pope!'"[7]

12th Century: Legends and literature still surround the Crusades with an aura of romance and grandeur, of chivalry and courage.[3] But many of their stories were only remotely related to reality. The countless tales of the "gallant knights of the Cross" were often based on imagination rather than factual documentation. Many Crusaders joined the campaign out of genuine concern for Israel. Others sought the thrills of the battlefield and didn't hesitate to kill and steal on the way. Traveling through Turkey, they destroyed towns and slaughtered "infidels"-- including orthodox Christians whose sin was simply to look like Muslims. According to Biblical author Ray Vander Laan, "the Crusaders did this with the full support of popes and other religious leaders:"

"For nearly 200 years, under the sign of the cross and in Jesus' name, Crusaders used **violence** and hatred as **a means of presenting the gospel of peace**. Their actions were inconsistent with Jesus' commands and defamed his name. These 'holy wars' illustrate how easily '**Christians' justify methods and attitudes other than those that Jesus commanded and lived....**'[8]

In the end, the crusaders occupied the Holy Land only temporarily. Ultimately their mission was a failure.

16th and 17th Centuries: Papal edicts banned the new Bible translations. Lutherans, Anabaptists, Huguenots, Waldenses, and other supposedly "heretical sects" faced merciless torture and executions, including hanging, burning, starvation, and the dreaded "rack." The latter was a horrible torture instrument that pulled arms and legs in opposite directions until popping sounds indicated that ligaments were severed and bones were torn from the torso. **The murderous Spanish Inquisition** was led by the Catholic King Philip [husband of [England's "bloody" Queen Mary](#)].

Its goal -- not unlike that of [radical Islam](#) today -- was to cleanse Europe of believers who owned or read the Bible and treasured its Truths.

In this true story, King Philip's inquisitors found a Bible in the home of a mayor, but no one claimed ownership at first. Then... a young maidservant came in. When asked about the Bible, she declared, "***I am reading it!***" The mayor sought to defend her saying, "Oh, no, she doesn't know how to read."

But the maidservant did not wish to be defended by a lie. "***It is true, this book is mine. I am reading from it, and it is more precious to me than anything!***" She was sentenced to die by suffocation, sealed in the city wall. Just before her execution, she was asked by an official, 'So young and beautiful and yet to die?' She replied, "***My Savior died for me. I will also die for him.***" When finally one single brick remained to complete the wall, she was told again, "Repent! Just say a single word of repentance!" Instead she voiced her single desire to be with Jesus and added, "***O Lord, forgive my killers!***"[9]

How many Christians today love Jesus enough to make that choice? Are you and I willing to take such a stand?

Preparing for the [New Paradigm](#)

The last book written by C. S. Lewis shows the author's attitude toward social change and ambiguity. In ***The Discarded Image***, he predicts that when people no longer tolerate the old [paradigm](#) based largely on Christian beliefs and values, they will simply discard it. In that context, **nothing is permanent; everything changes** along with human thought, wants, and speculations. Even "ultimate realities" must change: "**We must recognize that what has been called 'a taste in universes' is not only pardonable but inevitable. We can no longer dismiss the change of Models as a simple progress from error to truth. No Model is a catalogue of ultimate realities, and none is a mere fantasy.**"[8]

Lewis ends his book with this strange prediction: "**It is not impossible that our own Model [this fading era of Christian faith and freedom] will die a violent death, ruthlessly smashed by an unprovoked assault of new facts -- unprovoked as the nova of 1572. ...The new Model will not be set up without evidence, but the evidence will turn up when the inner need for it becomes sufficiently great.**"[10]

Lewis doesn't seem to mind the anticipated loss of a Christian worldview. His own changing perspectives suggest that he passed through at least two personal paradigm shifts in his lifetime: from [fascination with the occult](#), to a [public acceptance of the Christian worldview](#), to [questioning that worldview](#) and [imagining its alternatives](#). "What Lewis imagined to be 'not impossible' some generations away -- **the death of the modern model or worldview -- turns out to be happening,**" wrote postmodern Pastor [Brian McLaren](#), who has indeed [discarded absolute truth](#).[11]

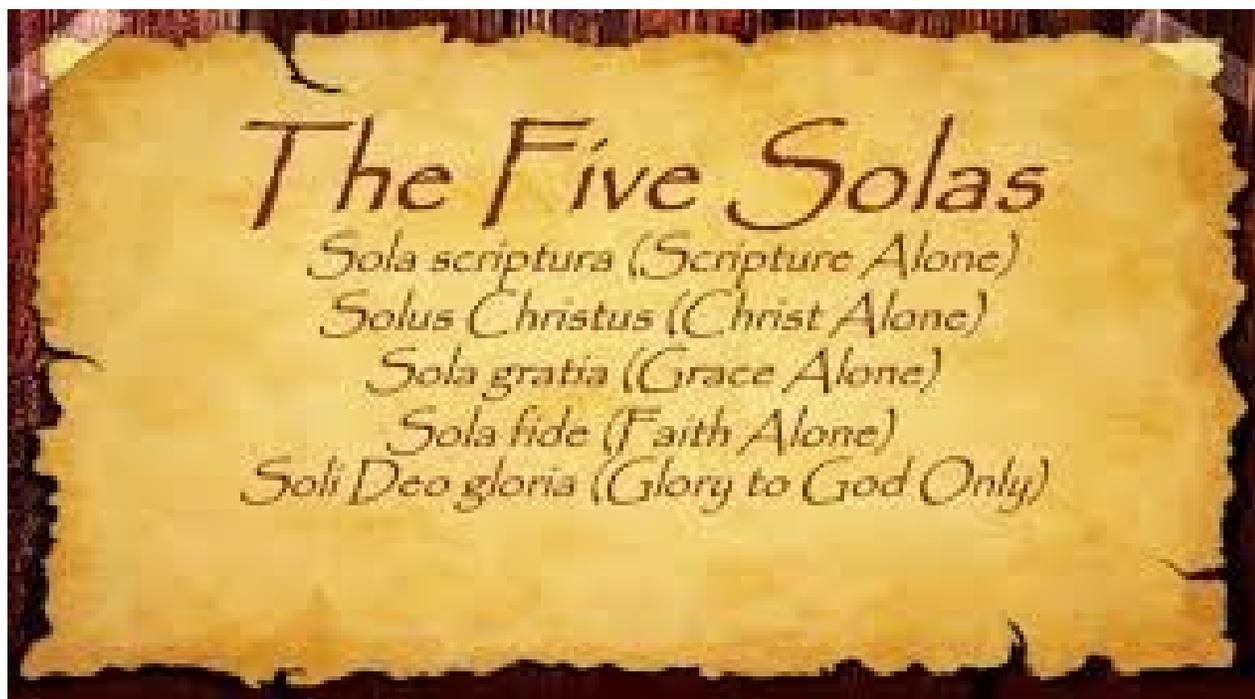
With help from both Lewis and McLaren, the Bible's true message is fading from sight. It won't totally disappear, because God will preserve a remnant of believers who will treasure it. But life will change. Our cultural foundation of truth and integrity is crumbling fast, and most churches seem to follow the trends. The consequences could be severe: "**...as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.... Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness....**" Romans 1:28-32

All the more, let's pray that God will prepare us to stand firm on His Word through this time of change and new challenges.

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31-32

Notes:

1. E. Michael and Sharon Rusten, *The One Year Book of Christian History* (Tyndale House Publishers, 2003) p.539.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 666-667.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 110-111. The word, Anabaptist, was a derogatory label for Christian pacifists who believe baptism should follow a sincere confession of faith. Other groups that were more militant (not pacifist) but believed in adult baptism also bore that label.
4. *The Tyndale Bible* was the main source for the 1611 [King James Bible](#). "90% of the wording" for the KJV came from Tyndale's faithful research. *Ibid.*, p. 340-341.
5. "How Will the Shocking Decline of Christianity in America Affect the Future of this Nation?" http://endoftheamericandream.com/archives/how-will-the-shocking-decline-of-christianity-in-america-affect-the-future-of-this-nation?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=how-will-the-shocking-decline-of-christianity-in-america-affect-the-future-of-this-nation [No author is listed]
6. Jennifer Riley, "Survey: Less Than 1 Percent of Young Adults Hold Biblical Worldview," *Christian Post*, March 10, 2009. www.christianpost.com/news/survey-less-than-1-percent-of-young-adults-hold-biblical-worldview-37415
7. C. H. Spurgeon, Sermon #1535, "Christ's Universal Kingdom and How It Comes," April 25, 1880, <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols25-27/chs1535.pdf>
8. Ray Vander Laan, *Life and Ministry of the Messiah* (Zondervan, 2009), pp. 229-230.
9. *Extreme Devotion* by Voice of the Martyrs (Thomas Nelson) p. 241.
10. C. S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image* (Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 222-223.
11. Brian McLaren, *A New Kind of Christian*, (Jossey-Bass, 2001) p.37.



www.southsidegallatin.org / Pastor James Bell

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

MONDAYS: Jail Ministry— First and Second Monday of each month at 7:30pm. Questions? Contact Mike Munday at 615-681-7533

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

WEDNESDAYS: 6:30pm— Children Ministry/activities;

☐ **6:30pm— Youth** Activities and Bible Study— **(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— NEXT, OCTOBER 22, 11:00am, The Life of David! 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 ROMANS}... Come to back of Church building... Come in under the drive-thru awning... walk forward... till you smell the coffee!

Sunday Services for October, 18—

9:30am, Sunday School

10:45am, Worship Service/LORD'S SUPPER SERVICE

NO meal & NO afternoon service

SOME HOME GROUPS MEET IN THE EVENING — INQUIRE FOR DETAILS!

SUNDAY SERVICES 25:

1. 9:30am, Sunday School

2. 10:45am, Worship Service

3. NOON 'Covered-Dish' meal and church-wide WELCOME HOME and fellowship time with our missionary family, Odell, Beth, Josh, Titus, Caleb, and Wyatt Summers.

SOUTHSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL— *Uniting Church, Home, and School in CHRIST!* For the 2015-2016 school term we are offering **Second through Twelfth grades. Children need the Home, the Church, and the School to model and teach the same basic philosophy of life.**

Children are like young plants in a garden— they must be protected.
<http://www.aceministries.com/curriculum/?content=presentingACE>