



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 42, No. 1, January 5 , 2016 / 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!"***

2016— Glorify God: Give Grace-filled GIFTS!

GOD HIMSELF is our MODEL for gracious giving— "God so loved the world, He GAVE His only begotten Son!" No amount of money can measure or equal the cost or value **of JESUS**. The Father gave JESUS. JESUS willingly gave Himself, all the way to the cross where He paid the sin debt of sinners!

The Apostle Paul quotes Jesus in Acts 20:35, ***"It is more blessed to give than to receive."*** The Apostle had been speaking to Elders who were supposed to be *"feeders of Jesus' sheep."* (verse 28) They were to nourish, care for, and protect the Church in Ephesus. THEY WERE TO BE GIVERS— NOT feed themselves. **BEWARE:** TAKERS and NOT GIVERS OFTEN FLOOD the airwaves, TV, and PULPITS of AMERICA! (We are warned of such in 2 Peter 2:1-3)

Moreover, a selfish 'taker spirit' can easily arise in our own hearts!

I. WHAT DOES MY/YOUR GIVING REVEAL?

Every day we give attitudes, words, and actions which reveal Jesus Christ; **OR we give** attitudes, words, and actions which reveal our

carnal, selfish self— attitudes, words, and actions which are in reality, anti- Christ!

WHAT AM I GIVING?

WE need to practice TRUTH in labeling— am I ‘giving’ selfish works of the flesh like these— "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told [you] in time past, **that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**" (Galatians 5:19-21)

[NOTE— to be continually enslaved to these likely reveals the need to be BORN AGAIN! **EVEN SO**, real saints get trapped in giving these EVIL works of the flesh!]

DO I GIVE the above horrible ‘gifts’... and then excuse such by blaming others?

II. INSTEAD, LET US Glorify God by Giving Grace-filled GIFTS!

"But the fruit of the Spirit **[CHRIST IN us by the Holy Spirit, flooding us with Himself and manifesting Himself in and through us]** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. **And they that are Christ's** have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:19-22)

EVERY CHRISTIAN HAS BEEN GIVEN HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT GIFTS FROM GOD... IN ABUNDANCE— Romans 5:5.

AND THEY ARE FOR DISTRIBUTION!

Galatians 5:19-22, Amplified Translation: "But the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [the work which His **INDWELLING** presence accomplishes] is love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (**an even temper**, forbearance), **kindness**, goodness (benevolence), faithfulness, **Gentleness** (meekness, humility), self-control (**self-restraint**, continence). AT CONVERSION— every new born Christian's heart is FLOODED with the LOVE OF GOD! (Romans 5:5) We are to be GIVERS of that which God has so graciously GIVEN US!

HOW'S OUR GIFT GIVING?

III. AGAIN, I, we must practice TRUTH IN LABELING— we open our mouths and OUT FLOWS our wisdom!

***** ARE WE GIVING WISDOM from satan or from God?**

James 3:14-18 SATANIC GIFTS of 'wisdom': "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but [is] earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife [is], there [is] confusion and every evil work.

CHRIST GIFTS of wisdom are gloriously DIFFERENT: But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, [and] easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." (James 3:14-18)

IV. WHEN OUR GIVING IS FROM GOD— THE KEY CHARACTERISTIC IS LOVE! (1 Corinthians 13:1-8, Amplified Bible)

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, **but have not love [for others growing out of God's love for me]**, then I have become only a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal [just an annoying distraction].

²And if I have *the gift of prophecy* [and speak a new message from God to the people], and understand all mysteries, and [possess] all

knowledge; and if I have all [sufficient] faith so that I can remove mountains, **but do not have love [reaching out to others], I am nothing.**

³ If I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, **it does me no good at all.**

⁴ **Love endures** with patience *and* serenity, **love is kind *and* thoughtful**, and is not jealous *or* envious; **love does not brag** and is not proud *or* arrogant.

⁵ **It is not** rude; **it is not** self-seeking, **it is not** provoked [nor overly sensitive and easily angered]; **it does not** take into account a wrong *endured*.

⁶ **It does not** rejoice at injustice, but rejoices with the truth [when right and truth prevail].

⁷ **Love bears** all things [regardless of what comes], **believes** all things [looking for the best in each one], **hopes** all things [remaining steadfast during difficult times], **endures** all things [without weakening]. ⁸ **Love never fails [it never fades nor ends].**

GOD IS CALLING US TO HONEST REALITY IN OUR GIVING!

1. Our words and deeds go forth as GIFTS TO OTHERS!

2. AND THEY ARE either of CHRIST or they are of OUR FLESH and/or from SATAN!

3. BEWARE: ARE ANY OF US thinking of someone else (A SPOUSE, A NEIGHBOR, CHURCH MEMBER, A CO-WORKER)... **and in our minds we are** accusing them of being 'eaten up with' words and actions in the CARNAL FLESH, SATANIC LIST— **RATHER THAN** allowing the Word of God by the Spirit of God call US to personal repentance for our own failures!?

4. From time to time, even growing Christians BOG DOWN into being mere **MIND** and **MOUTH-PIECES** for ANTICHRIST! **LET US HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD:**

LET US Turn From Our Excuse Making!

- ** REPENT OF THE WORKS OF THE FLESH!!
- ** PUT THEM OFF!!
- ** PUT ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!
- ** NO LONGER MAKE PROVISION FOR THE FLESH!!

V. HOW CAN I, WE DEFEAT CARNAL FLESH and SATANIC GIFT GIVING?

1. Ephesians 4:29-32 "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, **be put away** from you, with all malice: **And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."**

2. Those and the following verses are not about doubling up in self-effort; but rather they are rooted in the GRACE REALITY that *Christ lives in every Christian to live through us His own life!* Therefore,

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

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 2:3-8)

****** HONESTY MOMENT: WE ALL KNOW WHY WE SQUIRM AT SUCH WORDS FROM GOD! RIGHT? WHY? BECAUSE,** we have all

too often allowed, fed, and justified STINKING SELFISHNESS to reside in and to GIVEN through GOD'S HOLY TEMPLES.

WHEN are we MOST LIKELY to SPREAD ANTI-CHRIST GIVING?

WHEN SOMEONE HAS, AT LEAST IN OUR MINDS, GIVEN EVIL SOWINGS TO US!

FOR SUCH OCCASIONS, GOD HAS A CLEAR WORD FOR US:

ROMANS 12:14-21 NKJV) ¹⁴ **Bless** those who persecute you; **bless and do not** curse. ¹⁵ **Rejoice** with those who rejoice, **and weep** with those who weep. ¹⁶ **Be** of the same mind toward one another. **Do not** set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. **Do not** be wise in your own opinion.

¹⁷ **Repay no one evil for evil.** Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. ¹⁹ Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, "*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*" says the Lord.

²⁰ **Therefore,** "*If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.*" ²¹

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good!

AWESOME MIRACLES OF LOVE AWAIT ALL THOSE

1. WHO REPENT OF ALL ANTICHRIST THINKING, WORDS, ACTIONS, and/or ANTI-CHRIST gift giving!

2. AND REPLACE THEM by yielding to CHRIST who will manifest CHRIST GIFTS OF NINE FOLD LOVE in us and through us... for....

"... the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [**the work which His presence within accomplishes**] is love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (**an even temper**, forbearance), **kindness**, goodness (benevolence), faithfulness, **Gentleness** (meekness, humility), self-control (**self-restraint**, continence).

Against such things there is no law [that can bring a charge]. And those who belong to Christ Jesus (the Messiah) have crucified the flesh (the godless human nature) with its passions and appetites and desires.

VI. GOD IS COMMANDING US TO SPECIFIC CHRIST GIFT GIVING and CHRIST GIFT EXCHANGING IN LOCAL CHURCHES and IN CHRISTIAN HOMES!

Love one another (John 13:34-35) **Accept** one another (Romans 15:7) **Greet** one another (Romans 16:16) **Care** for one another (1 Corinthians 12:24) **Submit** to one another (Ephesians 5:18-21) **Forbear** one another (Ephesians 4:1-3) **Confess** your sins to one another (James 5:16) **Forgive** one another (Colossians 3:12-13)

Be kind to one another (Ephesians 4:31-32) **Serve** one another (Galatians 5:13-14) **Bear** one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2) **Be hospitable** to one another (1 Peter 4:9) **Pray** for one another (James 5:16) **Build up** one another (Romans 14:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Teach one another (Colossians 3:16) **Exhort** one another (Hebrews 3:12-13) **Admonish** one another (Colossians 3:16) **Speak** to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18) **Prefer** one another (Romans 12:9-10) **Do not** judge one another (Romans 14:13)

Do not speak evil of one another (James 4:11) **Do no** murmur against one another (James 5:9) **Do not** bite and devour one another (Galatians 5:14-15) **Do not** provoke one another (Galatians 5:25-26)

Do not envy one another (Galatians 5:25-26) **Do not** lie to one another (Colossians 3:9-11) **REALITY: ATTITUDES, WORDS, and/or DEED which are DIFFERENT OR CONTRARY TO THESE MIRACLE GIFTS are sin and antichrist!**

VII. RESPONDING TO THE GREATEST GIFT:

1. If you have never personally and truly **received** Jesus Christ, the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation— COME TO JESUS NOW!

2. Already a real Christian? All praise to God for His amazing grace!

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:1-2)

REMEMBER: "Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me?" [Jesus was in heaven; Saul was on earth treating Christians VERY BADLY. Thus, Saul was persecuting Jesus— for Christians on earth are THE BODY OF CHRIST. BOTTOM LINE:

The way you and I treat a Christian is the way we treat Jesus!

"God so loved the world, He gave His only begotten Son!"

TODAY: What will I, what will you give?

WILL my giving, testify of Christlikeness?

Will my attitudes, words and deeds GLOIFY GOD or satan?

AM I A GIVER OF GOD'S LOVE?

Grace to all! 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— New Study, the Epistle of James, starts January 7 @ 11:00am; Cindy Bell teaching ☐ Front door open at 10:45 till 11:05am; or come in Iron Steps side entrance

*** 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 JANUARY, 2016:

1. January 10, 24, 31: 9:30am- Sunday School // 10:45am- Worship //

NOON meal and Early Afternoon Service.

2. January 17: 9:30am- Sunday School // 10:45am- Worship / LORD'S SUPPER // NO MEAL, or afternoon service. [EVENING HOME GROUPS... location to be announced]

3. First 2016 FIFTH SUNDAY Evening of PRAISE— May 29

SOUTHSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL— *Uniting Church, Home, and School in CHRIST!* <http://www.aceministries.com/curriculum/?content=presentingACE>