



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 43, No. 45, November 15, 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 and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."***

HOLD THE ROPES— for Missionaries Here and Abroad!

The date was January 19. The year: 1888. The place: Toronto, Canada. The old, historic Knox Church was filled to capacity. Excitement was in air. The young man and his new bride were addressing their home church for the last time before being sent to an African mission field known then as "The White Man's Grave."

"My wife and I have a strange dread in going." The young man spoke soberly. "We feel much as if we were going down into a pit. We are willing to take the risk and go if you, our home circle, will promise to hold the ropes."

This brave young couple instinctively knew that they were engaging in dangerous business. They knew the stakes were high and they couldn't do it alone. **They were asking for help.** In the inspiration and anointing of the moment, the people responded heroically. Everyone present promised to pray, to support, and to stand with their missionaries as they attempted to advance the borders of God's Kingdom. **They committed themselves to become prayer partners for this young missionary couple.** I'm sure they were sincere in their intentions to pray. Unfortunately, sincerity just doesn't cut it on the frontlines.

Within two years, his wife and new baby were buried in “The White Man’s Grave” in Africa. When this brave young missionary was stricken with the same fatal fever and realized he, too, was dying, he decided to return to Canada without informing a single person.

As destiny would have it, he arrived at the church precisely at the time of the Wednesday night prayer meeting. No one noticed as he slipped in and sat on the back pew. As the prayer meeting dutifully crawled to its close, he went forward. The people were in complete shock as this emaciated broken shell of a man began to speak.

“I am your missionary. My wife and child are buried in Africa and I have come home to die. This evening I listened anxiously, as you prayed, for some mention of your missionary to see if you were keeping your promise, but in vain! **You prayed for everything connected with yourselves and your home church, but you forgot your missionary.** I see now why I am a failure as a missionary. It is because you have **failed to hold the ropes!”**

Could the lack of prayer really be the reason for this dedicated man’s failure as a missionary? Could the prayerlessness of his home church really be the reason he **lost his wife and child?** “Holding the ropes” is serious business, especially when the gospel is being taken into hostile territory.

All of us, I am sure, have promised to hold some ropes for some young men and women who have responded literally to the command to forsake all and follow. They are giving the prime of their lives to the honor of God and the advancement of His Kingdom. Their obedience has landed them in distant and sometimes dangerous lands. They are doing their part.

How about us? Are we faithfully holding the ropes? Being a house of prayer for trivial needs is not enough. The Church is called to become a house of prayer for all nations. Dare we presume to impact nations apart from prayer? Dare we send men and women to foreign nations, lambs among wolves without proper prayer support?

[If memory serves be right, I first obtained the above account from a book by Oswald J. Smith, long time pastor, years back, of The People's Church, Toronto, Canada]

If you and I have grown tired of holding the ropes for our missionaries, or if some of us have never even laid hold on the ropes— let this be our wake-up call... MISSIONARIES: Their success— sometimes their very lives— depends on our prayers.

FURTHER THOUGHTS:

1. The above story can be read and rejected as just someone trying to place a load of guilt on others and/or trying to use guilt as motivation.
2. We can take the story apart and debate the man's conclusions as to why his missionary journey had such a quick and tragic end.

THERE IS, however, a better and much more needed response we can and MUST make! Indeed, let us receive a CALL TO PRAYER especially for MISSIONARIES; and especially for the many saints of God in Christ who are greatly PERSECUTED; and let us seriously PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER!

PRAYING FOR MISSIONARIES!

Missionaries are people just like us. They have difficulties and frustrations. They deal with stresses of everyday life. Some are thousands of miles away from family. Some live in cultures so different than that in which they grew up. As we do, they need prayer. The Bible tells us to pray for one another, to pray without ceasing. Jesus modeled a lifestyle of prayer for His children. Through the power of prayer, God's people can change the world and lives of people, here and around the world. **When asked what we can do for them, missionaries ALWAYS respond, "PRAY!"**

YES, PRAY! BUT 'WHAT' SHALL WE PRAY?

SADLY, EVEN AMONG THE FEW WHO DO GATHER TO PRAY FOR MISSIONARIES—OUR PRAYERS ARE ALL TOO OFTEN NOT SPECIFIC TO THE WARFARE THE MISSIONARIES ARE FACING.

How to Pray? One way is to use the 'alphabet' to pray. **LET US** commit to pray the missionaries on our LIST, missionaries we are blessed to know; and also let us pray for the 10,200 plus state, North American, and international Southern Baptist missionaries. **[Author of the following prayer suggestions, unknown]**

Ability with Language- ask God to give those who must learn another language the ability to be fluent in their adopted language.

Boldness- pray that each will be a bold witness for Jesus.

Comfort- pray for God's comfort in times of discouragement, despair, or mourning.

Direction- ask God to give them specific direction in ministry.

Energy- ask God to renew their energy when the tasks seem overwhelming and the body is weary.

Family Members- pray that children of missionaries (MKs) will have a sense of God's presence when they're away from their parents.

Glorify God- ask God to enable missionaries to live each day to glorify God.

Health- ask God to give physical and emotional health so missionaries can function effectively.

Insight- pray that missionaries will have insight to see people and things from God's perspective.

Joy- pray that the "joy of the Lord" will be evident in their daily living.

Knowledge- pray that missionaries will grow in their personal knowledge of God so they will become all that He intends.

Love- pray that God's love will be evident in their lives, love that will draw lost people to the Father.

Mercy- pray that missionaries will extend the hand of mercy to those around them.

Needs- pray that they will always remember that in Christ all needs will be met.

Open Doors- pray that they will recognize all open doors that God provides them for sharing the gospel.

Power- pray that missionaries will be strengthened daily by the power of God and will live productive lives.

Quiet Time- pray that nothing will keep them from having a quality quiet time with God each day.

Rapport- pray that missionaries will have rapport with co-workers and those they serve.

Safety- pray for their safety in travel, safety from robbers, theft, and the threat of war or revolution.

Trust- ask God to help missionaries trust Him in all things and for every situation they face.

Understanding- as missionaries share the Good News, ask God to give those who hear the gospel the ability to understand who Jesus is, what He did for them, and how they can have eternal life.

Victory- pray that each will experience victory in times of spiritual warfare.

Wisdom- ask God to give wisdom as decisions are made that affect Kingdom work.

X-ray Vision- pray that missionaries will have x-ray vision of the heart and desire a cleansed life.

Yielded- pray that each will be completely yielded to Christ and His ways.

Zealous- pray that missionaries will be zealous in sharing the gospel.

“And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Matthew 21:22 (NAS)

"THEY WILL ALL BE THERE!"

Dr. David Gibbs of the Christian Law Association got surprised one Wednesday. His background is Baptist. Few Baptists are faithful to church-wide prayer meetings. But for this particular Wednesday a pastor of a Mennonite church had scheduled Dr. Gibbs to speak during their Wednesday night Prayer Service. [The question is NOT how many times we have sent this out... but whether or not I have ACTED UPON IT in obedience to the LORD!]

The church family DID NOT KNOW that a guest speaker was coming. The Pastor was driving Dr. Gibbs from the airport to the church building. Dr. Gibbs was trying to prepare himself for what he is about to face, so he asked:

"Pastor, what do you expect tonight in the way of who might show up for the meeting? Pastor, I know it's Wednesday night... and folks do not know I'm coming... I just want you to be at ease, because I'm happy to come and the size of the crowd does not matter..."

The pastor simply said, "**They will all be there!**" So, Dr. Gibbs translated that 'response' into his Baptist experience and figured that a few would show up for a holy huddle.

They arrived. The building was a plain, unattractive block building. The parking lot was full. Dr. Gibbs entered and found bare concrete floors and bare metal folding chairs— OVER 400 HUNDRED metal folding chairs— and they were all filled with the REGULAR PRAYER MEETING CROWD!

As the pastor had earlier stated, "**They will all be there!"... And they were!**

These were farming people, with crops to plant, or tend, or harvest. Their days were always long and their work was never done.

HOWEVER, EVERY WEEK on Prayer Meeting Night— THEY WERE ALL THERE!

Stunned, Dr. Gibbs turned to the pastor and asked, "Please explain this to me?"

"Well, Bro. Gibbs, we are all family and we are responsible for one another and we are commanded to pray for one another; **and we also realize that we need God's wisdom and power if we are to make a difference in our community **in reaching others for Christ**—**

So, we have just as many for Prayer meeting as we do for other Church-wide services...

And, at our Prayer Meeting, the main agenda is PRAYER. We actually spend most of the time praying for each other and for those in the world to whom we seek to reach and minister!"

CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER MEETING REALITY:

The issue is

- (1) Not lack of time,
- (2) Nor how tired we are,
- (3) Nor a thousand other excuses—

The issue that each of us has to face up to is this: *What is the level of my LOVE, VISION, PRIORITY, and DEPENDANCE UPON GOD!*

Grace and blessings to one and 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 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— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE...** Come in side entrance, iron steps... meet in Ladies Sunday School Room

LADIES BIBLE STUDY— Studies in the Gospel of Luke! TAKING A BREAK... NEXT MEETING: January 3, 2017 @ 11:00am; Cindy Bell teaching. [Front door open at 10:45 till 11:05am; or come in Iron Steps side entrance!]

MEN: 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 and biscuits!

NOVEMBER SUNDAY SERVICES:

NOVEMBER 20:

9:30am- Sunday School

10:45am- Worship Service and **LORD'S SUPPER**

HOME GROUPS meet in the Evening

[UPDATE: Home groups led by James Bell and by Dickey Richard... will NOT meet in November or December]

NOVEMBER 27:

9:30am- Sunday School

10:45am- Worship Service // **NOON** 'Covered-dish' Lunch

5:30pm-7:30pm— FAITHFUL MEN'S FELLOWSHIP/STUDY/EQUIPPING