



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 44, No. 23, June 6 , 2017 / 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; and 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."***

WHO ARE THE CHURCH YOUTH DIRECTORS?

"Today's church has created peer dependency. The inherent result of youth groups is that **teenagers in the church are focused on their peers, not their parents or their pastors.** It's a foreign sociology that leads to immaturity, a greater likelihood of sexual activity, drug experimentation, and a rejection of the authority of the Word of God.

"Proverbs 13:20 says, 'He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.' [Fools: the foolish, the untaught, the unwise] The result is that the youth stumble, they can't see beyond their noses, and spiritual adolescence is prolonged well into adulthood. It's crippling the body of Christ. [AND AS WE SAW LAST WEEK: All across America, the children and youth of Christian families **have, "... NEVER ATTENDED CHURCH TO BEGIN WITH:** From a Noah's Ark themed nursery, to jumbotron summer-campish kids church, to pizza parties and rock concerts— **many evangelical youth have been coddled in a not-quite-church, but not-quite-world hothouse.** *We've dumbed down*

the message, pumped up the volume; and act surprised when they grow up pagans." **IN CONTRAST**, IN BOTH OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, the matter of discipling children and youth is not about 'fun and games' and cute stories! THE BIBLICAL MODEL IS WHOLE FAMILIES GATHERED FOR THE PREACHING/TEACHING/READING OF THE WORD OF GOD:

OLD TESTAMENT: Deuteronomy 16:9-14, Joshua 8:34-35, Ezra 10:1, 2 Chronicles 20:13, Nehemiah 12:43 and Joel 2:15-16.

NEW TESTAMENT: Timothy was filled with Scripture by his parents... which made him wise unto salvation. Epistles were to be read to the congregations... and some of the words in them are specifically directed to children.]

Deuteronomy 6:4-7: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.'

"It's time for the Christian **father** to take the central role which God has ordained. **Gathered around the dining room table, the father needs to lead family worship once again**, which had been standard behavior for a vibrant American Christian family for hundreds of years, dating back to the Plymouth, Mass., colony of 1620. Dad needs to read from and discuss the Bible, sing Christian songs and pray with his family, his little flock over which God has appointed him shepherd." (Quotes from Adam McManus, of The National Center for Family-Integrated Churches)

IN THE FUN and GAMES and ENTERTAINMENT world of the modern Evangelical Church, our churches are filled with young people [and adults!] who have “walked an aisle” AND have been guided through ‘saying/praying the SINNER’S PRAYER’... they just did what leaders told them to do: 1. Pray this prayer. 2. Then, they were pronounced saved and urged to be baptized.

BUT THE EVIDENCE IS THAT MOST OF SUCH ONES were not under Holy Spirit conviction of sin; and they were not from their heart crying out for God’s saving mercy. ***So, it really is NO SURPRISE that most of these youth remain dead in their sins and have no real interest in FOLLOWING JESUS!***

AGAIN, THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SPIRITUAL TRAINING OF CHILDREN IS GIVEN BY GOD TO FATHERS... and to mothers; but primarily to dads. **Fathers are commanded to** diligently teach their children and care for their souls day by day. (Deut. 6; Eph. 6) **The sad reality of father’s lives** in modern churches is that they are satisfied with Sunday schools and evangelistic crusades,... but they reject God’s direct and undeniable commands to personally teach their children daily. This is outright rebellion against the Lord. Fathers often feel great about their involvement in their children’s lives **because, rather than defining faithful fathering by what scripture prescribes, they define exemplary fatherhood as going to the kid’s recitals, sports games, and getting them into a good Sunday school or youth group.**

***** Don't Give Spiritual Custody of Your Children to The Church,** edited from Ray Baumann (Ray is the father of 4 children; and a Youth

Pastor) Before you proceed, remember who is writing this; a father of four and a youth pastor by profession. **I am offended at the direction this article is going and I'm the author!** I need to be offended once in a while. It makes me stop and evaluate my methods against scripture. It also pushes me and it doesn't feel good. **For the last 20 years we have seen the same pathetic results from our ministry to kids.**

[The Southern Baptist **Council on Family Life** reported that **88%** of the children in evangelical homes leave church at the age of 18.]

It is true stupidity to continue to repeat the same process over and over and expect a different result.

Raising God-honoring children is an investment few are willing to make. There is great cost involved, thus, many are looking for cheap labor. You see, the church offers program after program and ministry after ministry directed at our kids. **The church believes they can effectively disciple children without their parents, i.e., youth ministry.**

After 10 years of youth ministry I wish I could go back and spend more time discipling and resourcing parents. **The church is failing in youth ministry because it has segregated the family.**

If Mom and Dad are looking for the "just add water" approach to discipling their children, the church has a program to do it for you (aka, cheap labor), but it has an extreme failure rate. **There is no sacrifice too big, no cost too high, in exchange for shepherding your own children.**

The church sees discipleship as a 12 week program, and that has never worked. No wonder the church can only retain minimal students when they graduate high school.

SAD REALITY: **Youth ministry has become big business** because **parents would rather put kids in a program RATHER THAN have to do it themselves.** Youth ministries would be unnecessary if the believers took their biblical mandate to parent seriously. There would be prayer and study going on at home. Imagine that--having church with just your family.

Why is it a great concern for many parents that a church has a children's or youth ministry program? **Because parents are looking to sign over spiritual custody of their children to the church.** The sad statistic here is not that high school graduates are leaving churches in droves, but that **parents didn't prioritize imparting faith to their kids at home.**

Here is the answer: it's called family ministry, where Dad and Mom lead the way they should, biblically. The church should resource the family to spend time together, **not segregate all the time.**

The church should **help protect family time** instead of taking it away with a million programs throughout the week. It sounds pretty radical; it goes against the flow of mainstream Christianity. **But then again, have we aligned ourselves with popular opinion or the Word of God?**

Mom and Dad need to reprioritize, even if it means taking different jobs and giving up hobbies. Sacrifices must be made when it comes to Godly parenting. Family time is a must. Kids must see mom and dad lead by

example. **But just like big business, which favors outsourcing, it would be too costly to give training and discipling back to parents; it may affect their bottom line.**

*** "The Pastor's Perspective" *"The Challenge of Youth Ministries"* Pastor Mike Wing, Grace Community Bible Church (Edited)

Over the past few years I have had an increasingly common conversation with people who are looking for a church. In almost every instance, the first question they ask is, **"Do you have a youth group?"**

Rarely do these people ask about our church's doctrinal position or where we stand on current issues that are impacting the church. I am afraid that the church today has lost its focus by centering its ministry around its children. **Everything is done to attract and keep the interest of children.**

Any hint of apathy is met with more activities to hold their interest. **If they claim boredom we fall all over ourselves to apologize and try to find increasingly entertaining ways to ensure that the kids are having fun.** This unbiblical focus has had a detrimental effect upon the church in general and our children in particular.

As I have searched the Scriptures I do not see anywhere a biblical mandate to have a "Youth Group". While such groups are not unbiblical, too many Christians believe that every church must have a youth group, as they picture it, or else that church is a failure.

When a church does desire to organize its youth ministry, the success of that ministry must be measured by its adherence to scriptural principles

rather than its pursuit of popularity. **Qualities of a truly successful youth ministry:**

1. Parental involvement!!

The Scriptures are clear when they tell us of the parents' responsibility to train their children in the fear and the admonition of the Lord. It is the parents' who are to love their children. ***It is the parents' responsibility to instruct their children in biblical truths; and to be the chief Models of Christ!*** It is the parents' responsibility to lovingly discipline their children when they detect bad behavior and unbiblical attitudes. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their children understand the meaning of ministry, both within and without of the local church.

Youth groups should never and can never take over the parents' responsibility in raising their children. A truly "successful" youth group will simply provide the parents a tool to help them fulfill their God-given responsibilities. (Dt. 6:4-9; Pr. 19:18; 29:15, 17; Eph. 6:4) Raising children takes love, time, patience, and self-discipline. We must be careful that we do not fall into the trap of expecting others to raise our children when we ourselves are not willing to fulfill those responsibilities.

With that in mind, what are some things that we can do, as parents, to be involved in any youth ministry that the church might have?

a. Set the example at home. Again, your child will learn far more at home - for good or bad - observing your behavior than they will ever learn at any youth function. *"My son, observe the commandment of your father And do not forsake the teaching of your mother. "* (Proverbs 6:20)

b. Be active within the church. We cannot expect our children to be a constructive part of the local church when we are not. We must see to it that our view of the local body of believers is in line with the scriptures." Paul spoke of, "*the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*" (Acts 20:28)

Consistent attendance at services and the exercising of our gifts for the purpose of building up the body of Christ provide necessary examples for our children's growth in those things pleasing to our Lord.

c. Be involved in youth activities and ministries. Your participation will further show your children your love and concern for them and will be an encouragement to those who have the privilege of ministering to your children.

Church Youth ministries are to be PARENTS TEAMED UP modeling, serving, and helping each other DISCIPLE children and youth. It just so happens that God gave children to PARENTS! **Parents are God's Chief YOUTH DIRECTORS!**

NOTE: Parents unwittingly undermine any youth ministry within the church by allowing their children the opportunity to pick and choose which activities they will attend... and even what church they attend.

Talk to any pastor or youth group/Sunday School leader and they will express the same frustration with parents who encourage their kids to go to "fun activities" (while bringing a number of friends with them) and then allow those same children to avoid those activities which they (the children) deem boring!!

2. Priority in imparting spiritual truth.

a. Biblical instruction imparted to produce spiritual growth. *"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."* (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

Somewhere along the line of our cultural decay, **we have grown to believe that entertainment** and instruction in biblical truth are synonymous. They are not. This mindset then blames the teacher when the child becomes bored with hearing God's word being taught. **Parents ... If your child is bored with the faithful proclamation of the truth, the problem is not with the youth group or Sunday School Teacher... but with your child's heart!**

It is your responsibility to do all that is within your power to share the gospel with them and give them instruction on the importance of truth in the life of the believer. I have met many parents who do not seem to understand this. **If their kids are bored with the teaching of God's word, they will find another youth group that is more "fun".**

b. Youth groups should not be designed to entertain our children. Scripture is clear when it tells us to rejoice in the Lord always. This rejoicing is to be centered on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. As a Christian, I am to rejoice in my service for Him. **But I can find no place in Scripture where we are told that following Christ and being involved in ministry is to be "fun" as the world defines it.** **The apostle Paul told his young disciple Timothy,** *"Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, "* (2 Tim. 1:8) **Yet children and parents alike define a successful youth ministry as one that is "fun."**

To hold the attention of the youth, most programs have to increasingly compete with the world. In the process, the biblical emphasis is diminished in favor of entertaining the kids. When entertaining children takes precedence over the pursuit of solid spiritual growth you will often see children dropping out of church when they are old enough to make those decisions on their own - or even when they are not. This is understandable when we realize that they have been trained to expect "fun" and "entertainment" at church services.

3. Inclusion of youth in the overall ministry of the church.

It is my belief that any church youth group that does not seek to actively integrate the children into every possible area of ministry has failed. Opportunity for the youth to apply the truths they are learning through God-honoring service and fellowship within the church body as a whole is necessary. **We are, after all, seeking to equip our children to be productive members of the body of Christ.**

*I am afraid that too many youth groups are doing nothing more than **perpetuating an ongoing childishness and immaturity by separating the youth from the godly example of older saints.***

I would like to close with one more observation. Too often, parents who have raised their children and seen them leave the home believe that their work with youth is done. They say that they have "done their time" and no longer want or need to participate in that particular ministry. This thinking is just plain wrong.

First of all, it implies that children's ministry is an inconvenience that needs to be tolerated while we have kids at home but from which we are

liberated when the children are all grown up. It is understandable when the world views its children as a hindrance to its own pursuits. It is truly disturbing when Christians view youth in a similar fashion. **Second of all,** this mindset robs our youth and their parents of the knowledge and wisdom gained by those who have successfully raised their children. **Godly, older saints have a wealth of knowledge and experience with which they can be a blessing to subsequent generations.**

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.

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! ... NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, *June 20, 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! {*STUDYING the Epistle of First John*} AT THE back of Church building...

Come in under the drive-thru awning, walk forward, coffee & biscuits
WAITING!

**** Sunday Services, JUNE 11:** 9:30am - Sunday School //
10:45am - Worship Service // **NOON MEAL**

**** Sunday Services, JUNE 18:** 9:30am - Sunday School // 10:45am -
Worship Service; LORD'S SUPER // **NO MEAL** // Evening Home Groups

**** Sunday Services, JUNE 25:** 9:30am - Sunday School // 10:45am -
Worship Service // **NOON MEAL**

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

We invite you to COME and WORSHIP with us!

SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH GALLATIN, TN



- **The GOSPEL PREACHED and LIVED**, (NOT entertainment!), is the New Testament method to arrest the world's attention and to bring folks to genuine faith in Christ. Thus, we welcome Biblical preaching which, (empowered by the Holy Spirit), will bring salvation; as well as **TEACH** the faith, **CORRECT** error, **RESET** the direction of our lives, **TRAIN** us in righteous living, and equip us for every good work to the glory of God! (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- **CHRISTIAN WORSHIP**: Hearing and heeding **GOD'S WORD!** Singing the **great hymns of the faith**, Scripture songs, and other God-focused Praise!
- **At SOUTHSIDE we seek** to build up families; empower parents; provide a haven for single parents; and bless children/ youth with Biblical teaching, activities, camp, and ministry opportunities.

**ON MISSION for Christ:
Living and Proclaiming
the Gospel!**



We hope you will accept our invitation!

SOUTHSIDE meets at 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin
www.southsidegallatin.org // CALL: 615-452-5951