



**GROW  
IN  
GRACE**  
NEWSLETTER

**Volume 44, No. 28, July 11, 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."***

## **PASTORS AND CHURCH MEMBERS— AT GRAVE RISK!**

A few years back, H.B. London, Jr. and Neil B. Wiseman wrote a book titled, ***PASTORS AT RISK!*** They did extensive research as to trends in evangelical churches of our day. From my perspective, more than Pastors are at risk! Churches and Pastors are at risk— at risk of having many of the trappings of modern day 'success' while at the same time seriously falling away from New Testament Christianity.

The first part of this ARTICLE consists of quotes from London and Wiseman that expose the worldly mindset of many of today's church goers.

**NOTE:** While I feel blessed to serve and worship with a congregation that is NOT given over to these trends—

nevertheless, **we are not immune to their influence and temptations!**

## **CHURCH TODAY— What the Researchers Found**

**1. There is** “... a lack of people willing to do acts of Christian service... people seem centered on their own comforts, achievements, and happiness rather than on the needs of others.” (Page 25)

**2. People** in the congregations, “... are easily enticed by cultural non-values, so we find people even in the churches ***who place more value on success and show than on spiritual reality and wholehearted repentance and authentic holy living.***” (Page 25)

**3. “Pastors** deal daily with diluted dedication, family disintegration, superficial commitments, and an accepted churchly consumerism no longer interested in sacrifice, suffering, or servanthood... ***Without realizing it the enemy has secularized the church without a shot being fired by anyone.***” (Page 29)

**4. “Outside the church,** ... [there is] a new dark age where the masses have no Christian memory, success is king, and faith issues are far down the average person’s priority list after the PTA meeting, latest video release, Little League game, or weekend diversion.” [Note: the same attitudes are rampant inside the churches!] (Page 29)

**5. “Like wild geese, church members are on the move—** not leaving the church, just moving to another local congregation. This superficial loyalty puts pastors among the most vocationally thwarted people in the world. Today, long-held assumptions about doctrinal devotion and congregational commitments no longer apply. ***Fewer and fewer people choose a church or continue to attend because of Biblical teaching...***” (Page 35-36)

**6. “... It is estimated that 80 percent of church growth** in recent years is a result of people moving from one church to another... The migration works to the advantage of megachurches... [which] generally **emphasize the worshiper rather than God**... their worship includes lots of contemporary music, drama... and sermons... with a *minimum of exegesis of Scripture.*” (Page 36)

**7. “Consumer mentality** saturates the American way of life. Consumers can purchase almost anything whenever they desire... These same people naturally want church programs and ministries to appeal to varied interests... **they choose a church on the basis of what it does for them rather than** what they can do for it...

Such consumers view the church as a means to achieve their goals of bliss and respectability. **They may even feel uncomfortable with the biblical language of sin and salvation.**” (Page 39-40)

**8. “Our permissive society** has trashed absolutes... Today, even believers routinely respond to a ‘thus saith the LORD’ with ‘I’m not so sure.’ **Laypersons seldom evaluate life by**

**biblical truth...** Everyone does that which is right in their own eyes.” (Page 42)

**9. The following quote is from *Ashamed of the Gospel*,** by John MacArthur. He is exposing, [not agreeing with], the following philosophy of the church growth, market driven methodology:

“The church is in competition against the world. And the world is very good at capturing people’s attention and affections... Evangelism should... be viewed as a marketing challenge, and the church should market the gospel the way all modern businesses sell their products... **The goal in all marketing is ‘to make both the producer and consumer satisfied,’** so anything that tends to leave the consumer unsatisfied must be jettisoned.

**Preaching— particularly preaching about sin, righteousness, and judgment— is too confrontive to be truly satisfying.** The church must learn to couch the truth in ways that amuse and entertain.” (Page 23)

**10. Guru speaks:** “It is... critical that we keep in mind a fundamental principle of Christian communication: ***The audience, not the message, is sovereign... our message has to be adapted to the needs of the audience...***” (George Barna, *Marketing the Church*, page 145)

**11. The Guru’s method is ancient!** Aaron tried it! The people ‘needed’ to party! They ‘needed’ to be rid of old Moses and his Biblical teaching/leadership. ***They ‘needed’ a relevant, contemporary worship service with idols, and dancing,***

***and music to match their rebellion***— ALL UNTO THE LORD, of course!

And being an ear-tickling, people-pleaser, ***Aaron did what 'good' pastors today are supposed to do: Know what the people want and give it to them!***

**However, God was not pleased!** (Read Exodus 32) GOD IS STILL NOT PLEASED with the POPULAR 'market-driven' ways of doing church!

The New Testament was purposely written to instruct Christians — Pastors and Congregations! **WE PLACE OURSELVES AT RISK, in Great Peril if we do not heed the pure Word of God!**

Real success is in doing the will of God regardless of the perceived RELEVANCE in the eyes of the masses! NEED PROOF? JUST ASK NOAH! — Gen. 6, 7; Luke 17:20-27

**LET US HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD!**

**2 Timothy 4:1-3** ☐ "I CHARGE [you] in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, Who is to judge the living and the dead, and by (in the light of) His coming and His kingdom:

**Herald and preach the Word!** Keep your sense of urgency [stand by, be at hand and ready], whether the opportunity seems to be favorable or unfavorable.

***[Whether it is convenient or inconvenient, whether it is welcome or unwelcome, you as preacher of the Word are to show people in what way their lives are wrong.]***

And convince them,

Rebuking and correcting,  
 Warning and urging and encouraging them,  
 Being unflagging and inexhaustible in patience and teaching.”

“For the time is coming when [people] will not tolerate (endure) sound and wholesome instruction, but, having ears itching [for something pleasing and gratifying], they will gather to themselves one teacher after another to a considerable number, chosen to satisfy their own liking and to foster the errors they hold,

And will turn aside from hearing the truth and wander off into myths and man-made fictions.” (Amplified Bible, 2 Timothy 4:1-3)

**[Note: All saints have a similar calling— Galatians 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14]**

**Galatians 6:1** □ **“Brothers,** if anyone is caught in any sin, you who are spiritual [that is, you who are responsive to the guidance of the Spirit] are to restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness [not with a sense of superiority or self-righteousness], keeping a watchful eye on yourself, so that you are not tempted as well.”

**1 Thessalonians 5:14** □ **We [earnestly] urge you, believers,** admonish those who are out of line [the undisciplined, the unruly, the disorderly], encourage the timid [who lack spiritual courage], help the [spiritually] weak, be very patient with everyone [always controlling your temper].

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NONE OF US ARE immune to the self-pleasing trends of our day.

We must be vigilant and alert.

We must be attentive to the pure Word of God!

Doubtless, there are backslidings from which we must repent!

**May this be our daily heart cry:**

**Col. 3:23-24** ☐ “Whatever may be your task, work at it heartily (from the soul), as [something done] for the Lord and not for men, Knowing [with all certainty] that it is from the Lord [and not from men] that you will receive the inheritance which is your [real] reward. [The One Whom] you are actually serving [is] the Lord Christ (the Messiah).” (Col. 3:23-24, Amplified)

**Grace, Joy, and Peace in Christ!** 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.

### **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! ... Cindy Bell, teaching.

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, JULY 25, 2017 @ 11:00am. LOCATION:** Park at the BACK of church, come in DOUBLE DOORS under the AWNING... **Door will be UNLOCKED by 10:30am... and locked back at 11:10am**

Bible Study will be held in Dicky Richard's Sunday School Room!

**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: \*\*\* July 16—**

**9:30am** - Sunday School

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

**NO MEAL & NO 1pm service**

☐ **HOME GROUPS: 5PM-7PM**

**\*\*\* July 23— 9:30am** - Sunday School // **10:45am** - Worship Service

**Noon MEAL & 1pm Prayer and PRAISE**

☐ **FAITHFUL MEN: 5:30pm-7:30pm**

**\*\*\* July 30— 9:30am** - Sunday School // **10:45am** - Worship Service

**Noon MEAL // 1pm [Missionaries Bruce and Laura Harris are scheduled to be with us. Bruce will be preaching during the worship hour; and he and Laura of their work in Japan during the 1pm service]**

**ALSO on July 30.... CHURCH-WIDE 'LET'S JUST PRAISE THE LORD!' SERVICE @ 6:00PM— An hour of sharing SCRIPTURES**

*AND CHRIST-HONORING, GOD-GLORIFYING PRAISE... said and/or sung! **(Inform Adam Troutt if you have something you desire to share!)***