



Volume 45, No. 11, March 13, 2018 / Southside Baptist Church / 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 Savior JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen.”***

PREPARATION for COMING to the LORD’S TABLE!

This BIBLE STUDY is sent forth to help prepare SAINTS in CHRIST for worship at the LORD’S TABLE. For Southsiders, our next opportunity will be this Sunday, March 18.

1. Let us come to HIS TABLE, fully embracing our DIVINE PREDESTINATION! The Bible is clear: “...He [GOD] chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, **that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love**, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will...” (Ephesians 1:4-5)— **predestined to be “adopted”** as His own children (Ephesians 1:5), **predestined according to** His own purpose (Eph. 1:11); and **predestined us** to the goal of Christ likeness! (Romans 8:28-29) **This MOST critical aspect of predestination** is not open for debate— we either make responses of worship and obedience; or we make responses of rebellion!

ALL SAINTS are predestined to be conformed into the likeness of Christ! HOW? We are changed into Christ likeness NOT ONLY because we are now IN CHRIST and He has, by the Holy Spirit, FLOODED OUR HEARTS with His love (Romans 5:5); BUT ALSO by BEHOLDING Jesus we are changed into His likeness! (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Thus, in preparation for coming to HIS TABLE— let us BEHOLD JESUS!

BEHOLDING JESUS, WE SEE THAT there was no resentment; no plans for revenge; no bitterness; no grudges; no self-pity. He never demanded His rights; there was no anger, no depression; He never threatened to quit because of the way He was treated! Stress had no power over Him!

INSTEAD, Jesus Has Set Before Us An Extraordinary Example of Silence in Suffering; Non-resistance; Returning Good for Evil; Love; Forgiveness; Abiding Trust in His Father; and SUBMISSION to His Father. His silence in suffering was not a SECRET PITY PARTY, nor a state of Passivity! He was anointed with the oil of GLADNESS above all others who have ever lived.

WHAT AMAZING FOOT PRINTS JESUS LEFT FOR US! And He graces every saint with POWER *to walk in His steps* by the supernatural indwelling Holy Spirit! **Regularly coming to the LORD'S TABLE will** flood us with FRESH GRATITUDE and DESIRE to walk with Jesus, IN HIS STEPS!

INDEED, I MUST WALK IN THE STEPS OF JESUS! —

BECAUSE that is the Real Essence of what it means to be a Genuine Christian! (John 10: 27-28);

BECAUSE that is what God commands in His WORD! (Romans 12:19, 21; Matthew 5:44; 1 Peter 2:18-21);

BECAUSE if I do not, my actions and reactions to circumstances and people **will CAUSE me** to deny Jesus, Grieve the Holy Spirit; and rob me of a life of joy and amazing miracles! (Philippians 1-4)

MOREOVER, I MUST walk in the Steps of Jesus, remembering that God has personally designed my own Calvary Road for His glory and for my good! (Romans 8:28; Genesis 45:8; 50:19-20)

I MUST walk in the steps of Jesus, BECAUSE—

LOVE is better than hate;

FORGIVENESS is better than bitterness;

FAITH is better than unbelief;

TRUST IN GOD is better than despair;

OBEDIENCE TO GOD is better than rebellion;

AND IT IS IN THE STEPS OF JESUS that I experience anointing from God, with CUPS RUNNING OVER! (Meditate upon **Psalm 23!**)

‘THE STEPS OF JESUS’ — OUR GOD ORDAINED PREDESTINATION! **EVEN SO**, reality is that at one time or another— genuine Christians find themselves OUT OF STEP WITH JESUS! We PUSH FORWARD in the wrong direction, desperately needing to TURN AROUND!

Have you ever been wrong, but too proud to admit it? We all tend to underestimate the depth of our pride, the blinding power of anger, and other sins. **How can you or I get TURNED AROUND RIGHT, when we are pushing forward in the wrong direction?**

GOOD NEWS: The good news is that if we will confess **our own sin**, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness! (1 John 1:9)

BAD NEWS: Unless we are **in Christ** and walking with Him, we will love darkness more than light. When we have done wrong— unless we are truly in Christ and thus walking with Him, we will

hate the light and we will not come to the light because we do not want the reality of our dark hearts exposed. (John 3:20)

Ever notice how slithery we can be?

Instead of confessing the truth, we say things like: I'm just unhappy. I'm hurt. I'm stressed. I'm misunderstood. I'm under extreme pressure. 'They' are to blame... etc. **Or, we will seek to cover up reality by saying things like:** "I just blew up! I lost my head. I broke down. He got under my skin. My blood is boiling. He made me mad."

These and many more **are culturally acceptable terms** to use to describe our dealings with situations and people. We focus on our feelings and on real or imagined words or actions of others—and we blame them. We will even lie and slander others as we seek to hide the stink of our own hearts. However, such responses do not find acceptance with God.

We must either judge our own sins or face chastisement from God: *"For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. (1 Cor. 11:31-32)*

IT IS a wonderful day when we confess OUR OWN sins and NOT the sins - (real or imagined) - of others!

Grand freedom confessions: "I am sorry. I am wrong. Please forgive me. Cleanse me, O God! Empower me, O Holy Spirit! I am wrong because I have sinned against God's holy standard!" (Meditate on Ps 32)

Why is it such a battle to confess OUR OWN sin? When faced with the crisis of having our own frailty or sin exposed, it is

common for us humans to put up a 'smoke-screen' or try to 'blame-shift'... hoping that our sin or failure will be forgotten, pushed in the background, or even excused. In pride we choose darkness over light, because our deeds were evil. **Jesus exposed the Pharisees, and this is a huge warning to all of us:** "You are those who justify your selves before men, but God knows your hearts." (Luke 16:15)

*"And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. **For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.** But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."* (John 3:19-21)

More Reality: O the wickedness of our hearts! I can go so far as to confess that I have said or done something sinful and yet not be the least bit repentant! One sign of such is that we mix our confessions with excuses! However, if we are to be free, then in confessing our sin there is no place for excuses or alibis! **GODLY SORROW is the need!**

FREEDOM: O God, I have sinned against you!

The Apostle Paul received a lot of criticism because he dared to confront the Corinthian saints with their many sins. It was painful. In the second letter, Paul rejoices in some of the fruit of his efforts: *"Now I am glad I sent it [the letter], not because it hurt you, but because **the pain caused you to repent and change your ways.** It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way.*

The kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation [deliverance from

the bondages of sin]. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow.

*But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death. Just see what this godly sorrow produced in you! Such earnestness, such concern to clear yourselves, such indignation, such alarm, such longing to see me, such zeal, and such a readiness to punish wrong. You showed that you have done everything necessary to make things right.” (2 Cor. 7:9-11, New Living Translation) **[Also mediate deeply upon Psalm 51!]***

Reality: It is common when confronted with sin that we put up smoke-screens: “Look what they did to me. Did you hear what they said about me? Can't you see that I am depressed? O, I hate myself.” **Beware: The flesh is willing to do or say almost anything to avoid the sentence of crucifixion!**

FREEDOM: Holy God, I not only own and confess my sins without excuse; but— O GOD, I REPENT... I TURN FROM the old sin paths...and... THANK YOU JESUS for YOUR FORGIVENESS!

YES, if I am already IN CHRIST, then with such a confession I am coming to the Throne of Grace as a child redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus; and **I am coming to enter into forgiveness that is already my birthright!** My sin has broken fellowship- not relationship- but fellowship.

Thus, I flee to my heavenly Father in the name of JESUS and humbly own up to my rebellion and ask for restoration on the merits of my Savior, Jesus Christ, for: “... if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” (1 John 1:7)

IF I AM NOT YET A CHILD OF GOD— Conviction of my sin, a gracious work of the Holy Spirit, brings me to cry out, like the tax

collector Jesus spoke about— “GOD, BE MERCIFUL TO ME A SINNER!”

FREEDOM: LORD GOD, I not only come confessing and repenting and asking for forgiveness— PLEASE CLEANSE ME from my sin! Sin leaves a trail. Sin leaves areas of weakness, open to future failure in the same areas of life. Therefore, I must yield to the Holy Spirit’s revelations as to how sin got a stronghold in me in the first place. **What ‘appearances’** of evil must I avoid? **What ‘provisions’** for the flesh and sin must be closed down? **What is the ‘secret leaven’** in my heart which must be ruthlessly removed? (Acts 19:18-20)

FREEDOM: LORD GOD, please Empower me! When we are truly in Christ, we have an ever present and inexhaustible resource: “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:19) And again, the good news is that if we will confess **our sin**, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness! (1 John 1:9)

Over and again in life we find ourselves needing a FRESH START. SO, AGAIN: It is a wonderful day when we confess our own sins and not the sins- real or imagined- of others! **THEREFORE:** *I am sorry. I was wrong. Please forgive me. Cleanse me, O God. Empower me, O Holy Spirit! (Psalm 32)*

THE WAY HOME— the first FORWARD STEP is repentance!

As I repent of GOING MY OWN WAY, LEANING TO MY OWN UNDERSTANDING, DRINKING IN COUNSEL THAT HAS JUSTIFIED MY FLESH; and as I repent of finding fault with others and repent of CONDEMNING OTHERS— **THEN** Floodgates of MERCY and GRACE will come open! (Proverbs 28:13)

ANOTHER FORWARD STEP is a Proclamation of Reception of my DIVINELY designed Calvary Road. As a miracle of mercy and grace, every real Christian is predestined to adoption (Ephesians 1:5), so as to be molded into the image, the likeness of Jesus Christ! (Romans 8;28-29). Thus, it is the Divine design of God that we follow in the steps of Jesus! (1 Peter 2:19-23)

Jesus walked the Calvary Road to CALVARY! We get on the Calvary Road **at Calvary** when we savingly come to Christ; and then for all the days of our lives we walk in the power of His resurrection and with the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, step by step...

Till we get home! ... and yes, we come to the LORD'S TABLE... until HE comes! And at His TABLE...

We are reminded yet again to embrace our DIVINE PREDESTINATION— CHRISTLIKENESS!

Grace to one and all! James Bell //
www.southsidegallatin.org

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

MONDAYS: Jail Ministry— First and Second Monday of each month at 7:30pm. Questions? Call the church office at 615-452-5951

TUESDAYS: Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care Nursing Home. Meet at the front door at **5:15PM.**

WEDNESDAYS: ☐ **6:30pm— Children Ministry/activities;** ☐ 6:30pm— **Youth** Activities and Bible Study— **(Enter via double doors by gym)**

☐ **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE...** (Enter

via IRON STEPS; or double doors by gym)

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY— Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 27 @ 11:00am; LUKE 13:1ff.** ENTER at the back of the church building, through double doors, under the Drive Thru Awning. *[Doors **open** at 10:30am... The doors are **re-locked** at 11:10am]*

***** MEN: EVERY SATURDAY MORNING @ 8am:** Men's Fellowship/Bible Study! **(STUDY: THE EPISTLE OF JAMES!)** ENTER AT THE back of Church building... under the drive-thru awning. **FELLOWSHIP, Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits, & Donuts WAITING, starting at 7:30am!**

***** WATCH and SHARE the Preaching of the Word of God!**

http://www.southsidegallatin.org/Listen_to_other_sermons_on_sermonaudio/

SUNDAY SERVICES IN MARCH:

***** March 18— [3rd Sunday]**

9:30am— Sunday School /

10:45am— Worship Service & **LORD'S SUPPER**

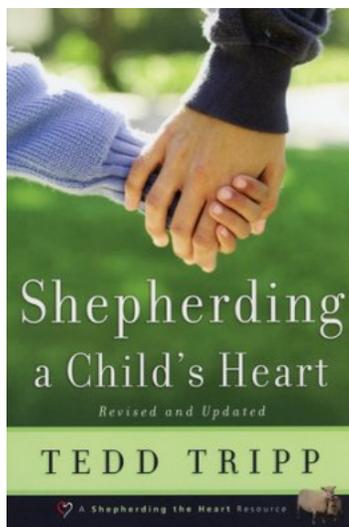
HOME GROUPS at 5:00pm... or check with your group

***** March 25— [4th Sunday] 9:30am—** Sunday School

10:45am— Worship Service

6:00pm- 7:00pm— Family Integrated EQUIPPING Night!

Meet in Auditorium, come in FRONT DOORS! (Doors will open at 5:30pm, 3/25/18)



1. FAMILY INTEGRATED, that is, it is for the WHOLE family— Grandparents, Parents, Teens, Children. (Infant & Toddler Nursery available)

2. All grandparents and parents have FAMILIES in your world who need help, counseling, advice, mentoring— THESE 4TH Sunday Evenings will help you with your own children and grandchildren... as well as EMPOWERING you for ministry to your neighbors!

3. Present Study: Tedd Tripp's *SHEPHERDING a Child's Heart*, 12 session series.

4. Arrive and be IN YOUR SEATS by 5:55pm... Session will start at 6:00pm sharp. Sessions will last approximately one hour.

FIFTH SUNDAYS: (The next one is April 29th)... We gather to SING, give testimonies, and share Scriptures.

***** APRIL 1— [1st Sunday, RESURRECTION SUNDAY]**

9:30am— Sunday School... regular classes

10:45am— Worship Service **and the LORD'S SUPPER!** /

NOON ... MONTHLY 'COVERED DISH' MEAL!

Let us, one and all, HONOR the Lord Jesus Christ **by placing preeminent priority on** setting aside this day to worship JESUS with the saints to whom the Holy Spirit has joined us!