

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 45, No. 24, June 12, 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."***

GUNS! SELF-DEFENSE! THE GOSPEL!

WE UNDERSTAND the call to DEFEND OUR NATION, OUR POSSESSIONS, OUR FAMILY, ETC— It comes naturally and there is basis for it... But it is often debated. **Here is a bit of varied history:**

1. In the Old Testament Israel, who was both church and state, was given this law: ***"If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed."*** (Exodus 22:2) There are several Old Testament references, such as: ***"Do not be afraid of them, remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your houses."*** (Nehemiah 4:14... this was in a time of war; other verses such as Numbers 32:20; Judges 5:8; and 1 Samuel 13:19-22... give support to being armed and prepared to protect one's household, etc.

2. AND OF COURSE, there are strong documents in the history of freedom loving people which support the call for self-defense: **The Magna Carta of 1215**, the first written restriction on the powers of government, and the grandfather of all Bills of Rights, guaranteed the right of all free men to bear arms. **The English Declaration of Rights of 1689** recognised *“the right of having and using arms for self-preservation and defence.”* Other free states entrenched this right to obtain, own, carry and use weapons for self-defence, including **most notably the United States of America and its Bill of Rights**. So important and basic was this considered by the American Founding Fathers that they placed it in **the Second Amendment**- right after religious freedom!

3. TRAGIC BUT TRUE, at times governments DISARM their citizens. One of many examples: On 6 April 1994, one of the most dreadful campaigns of mass murder was unleashed upon the Tutsi people of Rwanda. **The MRND Hutu government of Rwanda instigated, organised, and launched the systematic slaughter of the Christian Tutsi minority after enforcing rigorous gun control**. As With the population disarmed, they were helpless to defend themselves against the state which now had a monopoly of weapons. **Over 500,000 Tutsi Christians were murdered.**

TRUE, America is not a third world country. However, Chad Brooks, in LifeScience, 6/28/17, reminds us of some of the background of the SECOND AMENDMENT to our constitution... namely, that our forefathers, ***“Having just used guns and other arms to ward off the English, the amendment was originally created to give citizens the opportunity to fight back against a tyrannical federal government.”***

IN OUR PRESENT DAY, the main threats in churches have been individuals ‘boiling over’ with anger/hate/bitterness toward a family member; and/or teens/young adults overflowing with violence and/or messed up with psychotropic drugs. **THEREFORE, IN OUR OWN CHURCH FAMILY, we have an active ‘Safety Committee’** who are continually working on practical, pro-active ways to help protect our church family and visitors whenever we have a gathering in the church building— we have installed cameras, various lights, communication equipment, and strategically placed armed men. ***NONE OF THIS is designed to try to escape being PERSECUTED FOR CHRIST’S SAKE;*** but rather to seek to ward off unnecessary, wholesale slaughter.

There are some SIGNIFICANT ISSUES that the Christian must take into consideration!

1. CHRISTIAN, could a call to strong action against encroaching globalists or other forces be so all consuming as to take my focus away from being on the FRONT LINES of a far GREATER WAR?

2. WHAT ‘far greater’ WAR? The war unfolded in the New Testament and in 2000 years of history whereby GOD IS SAVING A NUMBERLESS multitude out of every kindred, tongue, tribe, and people— regardless of what kind of government the Christians have to live under!!

3. I NEED TO REMEMBER that God’s agenda for His church is that we be focused on the WARFARE related to the SAVING a numberless multitude out of every nation! Am I fully engaged in this battle?

4. OR: AM I FOCUSED ON being NON-pacifist when it comes to saving me, mine, and America; but an out and out PACIFIST when

it comes to the battle for the saving of SOULS? (1 Peter 2:9-10; 2 Cor. 5:17-21)

5. HERE IS an amazing reality: *SUCCESS IN THE ARMY OF JESUS for lost souls IS NOT dependent upon the form of temporal government a nation has.* **For example,** it was after extreme tyranny came that God began to save and continues to save **millions** in China! During the same period of time, the Church in western countries has been shrinking in numbers and degenerating in sin, in spite of being blessed with wealth, freedom, and considerable safety from harm!

6. Yes, pray for the nations. Pray for leaders. VOTE! Stand for righteousness in your native country. **BUT REMEMBER:** In the politics of the world:

We are 'FIGHTING' to overcome one group of sinners **only to replace them with another group of sinners**— either of which and/both of which are doomed to failure; and either of which will ultimately join in world rebellion against God and persecute saints!!

REMEMBER: There were all sorts of political movements when Jesus was here on earth. The Jews and even the Disciples wanted Jesus to focus on TEMPORAL KINGDOM power and rule. Jesus refused. Jesus had and He still HAS much more important business! **In 2018, the deepening darkness, will His business be my business?**

7. HERE IS SOME CULTURAL REALITY: We have grown up in an Americanized Christianity. **All too often we intertwine Christianity and American Patriotism. It is most popular for preachers to do so.** It is exceedingly hard for us to embrace the truth that every true Christian is an ALIEN, a STRANGER, not at

home, and AN AMBASSADOR FOR CHRIST IN A FOREIGN LAND—
we are here to represent the interests of the King of Kings!

Why is it that multitudes get exercised about taking up arms for temporal warfare and are PACIFISTS when it comes to the REAL WAR that is worth fighting?

8. Yes, we have temporal citizenship. For most reading this, it is in the USA. There are many blessings here. **I am not saying** that it is wrong to seek to be a good citizen; or that it is wrong to participate in the temporal process. I am not against a godly self-defense.

BUT I AM SEEKING TO FACE REALITY: I am quite human and this present world is all I know by physical experience. There are blessings and freedoms I am accustomed to and it would be exceedingly hard to do without them.

THUS, MY TENDENCY is to focus on TEMPORAL LIFE NOW! How can I protect my family, my self, all my stuff, and my freedoms? Thus, even unwittingly, it is easy to minimize the KINGDOM OF GOD. **Growing up in the USA,** it is easy to confuse the Kingdom of God with temporal patriotism. In reality, how I relate to all that is temporal should reflect KINGDOM OF GOD values and priorities and serve as a witness to those who live for that which is passing away! *But sadly, I get caught up in that which is passing away— seeking it, protecting it, fearing its loss, etc. **How is it with you?***

9. IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP AND 'SMELL THE REALITY!' Fear about losing stuff and freedoms is fueled by the reality that world leaders are now openly calling for ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT; and they are seeking to totally control the masses! But this is no surprise. The Word of God has long revealed this reality. The deepening moral darkness, likewise, is no surprise. The world

systems are entrenched in the Babylon spirit of pride, greed, war, and rebellion against God. (Revelation 17 & 18)

THE ONLY enterprise on earth not engulfed in the Babylon spirit is the BRIDE OF CHRIST, the One Holy Nation! THEREFORE: **How much do I need to be involved in fighting battles for the DOOMED endeavors of the world? Where are the 'Acts 4:23-33' prayer meetings— FOCUSED ON CRYING OUT for BOLDNESS to preach the gospel and LIVE OUT GENUINE CHRISTIANITY?**

10. The only enterprise that is NOT DOOMED to failure is the building of the true Church of Jesus Christ! HOWEVER, just as things appeared when Jesus was on the Cross: **To give one's self to the enterprise of LIVING and PROCLAIMING the Gospel APPEARS to be out of touch with reality and appears to be wholly futile.**

One of the slanderous accusations such a position faces is, "So, you are a pacifist and you are just going to sit around and do nothing and let the liberals, the abortionists, the sodomites, and the Globalists take over! We need to get out there and fight and protest and BEAT SIN at the ballot box!"... **And if that doesn't work,** we must ARM OURSELVES and FIGHT with guns! **REALITY:** The Moral Majority and many other likeminded folk spent MEGA BILLIONS trying to beat sin at the ballot box. We are deeper in the darkness of sin than ever!

TRAGIC REALITY: FAR TOO OFTEN, 'Christian' efforts in the CULTURE WARS were put forth by church folk who were themselves drowning in sin! The morality level in the churches is in about the same sad state as those we rail against. Divorce, all manner of sexual sin, bitterness, bickering, and fighting is epidemic in Christian homes and churches.

11. In stark contrast, the Epistles of the New Testament call for we Christians to JUDGE OURSELVES— NOT THE WORLD! Moreover, we are warned that if WE will not judge ourselves, WE WILL BE JUDGED. (1 Cor. 11:28-32)

III. WHAT WE CAN AND MUST DO TO REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

1. WE in the churches MUST cry out to God: “WE HAVE SINNED....”
 2. WE MUST repent and live holy, loving, forgiving, Christ-like lives in our homes and Bible-believing Churches. **This is called ADORNING the Gospel!**

3. BACKED UP BY LIVES THAT DEMONSTRATE JESUS CHRIST— WE MUST have “ACTS 4:23-33” PRAYER MEETINGS; and go out and TELL the Gospel with all boldness!

4. WE MUST CRY OUT for grace so that in the HOUR of SUFFERING and PERSECUTION, WE will remain faithful! The calling of God IS NOT ONLY FOR ME TO BELIEVE on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, but to also suffer for His name’s sake! (Phil 1:29)

5. WE MUST NOT FORGET: Two of the great ‘sifters’ that serve to separate the true believers from the pretenders is STUFF and Persecution. (Matt. 13:21-22) FRANKLY, in America, we could be on the verge of losing STUFF and on the verge of being persecuted! **What shall I do?**

“O, I must save myself... and save my family!” Well, we do have responsibilities for our families, etc.... as indicated in section ‘I’ of this article. HOWEVER, HERE ARE SOME ADDITIONAL WORDS FROM JESUS from which we may have forgotten: **Matt. 10:16-39; Luke 9:23-26; 12:3-9; 12:49-53; 21:12-19, 26-29.**

6. We all live with a MASTER PASSION! **What is mine?** The only MASTER PASSION worthy of being our Master Passion: **Phil 1:12 & 1:20b-21! We all live in the MINDSET of Phil. 1:21 or in the mindset of Phil 2:21/ 3:18-19**

A Critical BOTTOM LINE: It does not matter how long I live. **It does matter** that I LEARN TO BE CONTENT regardless of the conditions I am experiencing as to freedoms, wealth, poverty, persecution, etc. **It does matter** that I heed the call: BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH... (Rev 2:10)

The issue of just what is a true Biblical stand on the issue of personal self-defense; and issues relating to protecting or defending our nation are very important. Be those things as they may— the primary subject of this article is of FAR GREATER IMPORTANCE!

By the Way, as to physical safety: If as a Christian, I get my priorities right so that I am walking with Jesus and in His steps; AND I am walking in love and holiness; AND I am walking with a growing passion to know Christ and make Him known; AND I am, like the early Christians, concerned— not about personal safety— but about BOLDNESS to preach the gospel: **MIGHT THAT BE THE SAFEST PLACE ON EARTH? YES!**

The place of true safety that has promised personal protection from God is not in a bunker or cave, or hiding behind a cache of weapons; but, rather real safety is here: Matthew 28:18-20!!

BEING a DISCIPLE-MAKER in the world-wide Enterprise of the ONE HOLY NATION is the will of God for every believer. **Embracing this high calling** is not only the place of profound **USEFULNESS** but also the place of protection **BY THE SPECIFIC PRESENCE OF JESUS** until Jesus calls you home!

WHEN loyalty and commitment to my AMBASSADORSHIP (2 Cor. 5:17-21) IS MY FOCUS— JESUS PROMISES: 'I AM WITH YOU, DAY BY DAY, UNTIL THE CLOSE OF THE AGE!

IF loyalty and commitment to my AMBASSADORSHIP (2 Cor. 5:17-21) is not my focus— then, I am a foolish spiritual pacifist! I am not under divine protection! (Matthew 28:18-20) And I am in great danger of judgment! (Revelation 2:5; 3:3; 3:16-22!)

Grace to 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 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, June 19 @ 11:00am; Continuing in LUKE.** 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/

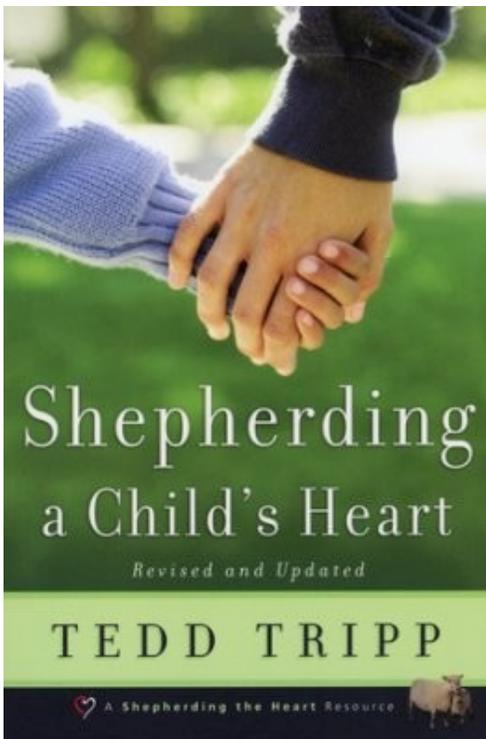
***** **SUNDAY SERVICES: JUNE 2018— 17, 24**

Sunday School at 9:30am and Worship at 10:45am

(JUNE 17... LORD'S SUPPER, at conclusion of Morning Worship)

HONORING FATHERS on Father's Day! // HOME MEETINGS @ 5:00pm

JUNE 24... Family Integrated EQUIPPING Night!



Meet in Auditorium, come in **FRONT DOORS!** (Doors will open at 5:30pm, 6/24/18)

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. 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

++ SOUTHSIDE DAY CAMP: June 27-29, 9:30am- 3pm ++

Questions: call Jaden Allen-

615-939-0318