

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 45, No. 52, December 31, 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."***

[WE ARE MAKING AN ATTEMPT at being closer to reality as to the correct VOLUME NUMBER for the Newsletter: The Newsletters began, mid-1975. **THUS, mid- 2019 will complete 44 years. HOWEVER, the last Newsletter for 2018, [THIS ONE!] is noted as Volume 45, No. 52, December 31, 2018. (SOME YEARS BACK, we goofed on the volume numbering) ... SO, TO move closer to reality, and yet to also avoid having 2 different years with the exact same volume number— we will start the 2019 Newsletters, beginning, January 8, 2019 (not as Volume 46 BUT AS: Volume 44b, No. 1, January 8, 2019... and go forward in the following weeks, as the LORD may allow!]**

2019— NEW CHALLENGES! NEW OPPORTUNITIES! BE READY!

It seems that almost every day, there are new signs and new reports of social, political, economic, and spiritual upheavals taking place that threaten to radically change and/or destroy life as we have known it in our life time. **Spiritually we are in serious warzones filled with both dangers and opportunities. SADLY:** *** Many are falling away into loving this present world. *** Many are falling away into deepening addictions to gross and enslaving sins. *** Many are falling away from the true Christian faith which exalts Jesus and His Word.

THEREFORE, we begin the year 2019 with, a Call to Read, Study, Meditate upon, HEED, and SHARE the Word of God in the Year 2019!

In 2019 it will be critical that the saints of God in Christ be “... *stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*” (1 Cor. 15:58)

I. BE ALERT: Don't be Surprised, Caught off Guard, Anxious, or Paralyzed by Fears and/or Unfolding Events

Let your heart be settled in and guided by God's Word in

*** Matthew 24-28; Mark 13-16; Luke 21-24; John 17-21; *** all the New Testament Epistles; and *** especially the Revelation. Be regularly reading through one of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles! **Obviously, not all at the same time— we are simply encouraging a definite focus.**

1. The above mentioned Gospel **sections** unveil the death, resurrection, ascension, and second coming of Jesus Christ; **as well as** the believer's Great Commission assignment! **KEEP IN MIND: When we are reading straight through** Matthew, Mark, Luke, and/or John, where we are privileged by the Holy Spirit to behold the LAMB OF GOD, to sit at His feet, hear His voice, marvel at Him, and experience the Holy Spirit calling us to faith/obedience.

2. The Acts of the Apostles and all the various letters by the Apostles **unveil how** the Holy Spirit wants us to **'be the church' and 'do church'** before a watching world.

3. Moreover, the Epistles reveal glorious revelation as to our **position of being 'in Christ' and they give** detailed revelation

as to spiritual warfare; **and** abundant revelation as to how to live so as to not bring shame to the name of Jesus; **and** they give practical ways to adorn the gospel by Christ-like living; **and** powerful warnings against FALSE PROPHETS; **and** clear calls to gladly suffer for righteousness sake.

4. The Revelation is the glorious unveiling of Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Lamb of God. The Revelation 'unveils' what Jesus Christ **is doing** at this present time; what He **will be doing** in days ahead; and the reality of His ultimate intentions.

AS to the REVELATION— READ THE REVELATION LOOKING FOR THE SOVEREIGN LAMB OF GOD:

***** Revelation, chapters 1-3 — The Sovereign Lamb is in Heaven** working through His blood bought redeemed saints on earth.

***** Revelation, chapters 4-19 — The Sovereign Lamb from heaven is** ruling and over ruling present and coming events on earth, including Kings and Kingdoms, Presidents, Dictators, and secret rulers even of this present hour.

JESUS is moving them ALL toward that great and glorious day when He, the Lord Jesus Christ, will come back to this earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

NOTICE that in the midst of all these events— ***that those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb often suffer the wrath of men and satan, but never the wrath of God!***

MOREOVER, the suffering, persecution, and martyrdom that is unveiled in the last of the last days IS IN REALITY no different than what true saints of God have often experienced for the last 2000 years... and which many are presently suffering.

***** Revelation, chapters 20-22— The Sovereign Lamb is eternally enthroned and His holy Bride is with Him!** HIS Bride will be composed of the redeemed of all ages— Revelation 21:9-27) **THEY will be with Him FOREVER AND FOREVER:**

“Come hither, and I will show you the bride, the LAMB’S WIFE! (21:9) His ONE WIFE is represented by all the REDEEMED of the Old Covenant era (21:10-13) and by all those redeemed from the New Covenant era (21:14)

GLORIOUS REALITY: The supreme and ultimate goal of all history is a REDEEMED BRIDE for Jesus, comprised of all those saved by God’s amazing grace **during all time periods of history** from Genesis through the days of the Revelation. ***Revelation 21:9-27 clearly reveals the eternal oneness of ALL the redeemed of all ages as being the one, completed Bride of the Lamb!***

READ THE REVELATION LOOKING FOR THOSE REDEEMED BY CHRIST!

***** Revelation, chapters 1-20—** ALL through the Revelation, **those redeemed by the blood of the LAMB** [They are called: His Church, God’s elect, God’s called out ones, those who follow the Lamb, those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ] **are seen on earth**, moving through tribulations and martyrdom; **and they are seen IN HEAVEN** worshiping, serving, SEEING, and reigning with THE LAMB... AS HIS BRIDE!

While on earth, the redeemed are often the subject of man and satan’s HATRED and WRATH.

The Redeemed are often PRESENT when God pours out some expression of his wrath— even as was Noah during the flood and

even as was Israel on the night of Passover. **But although affected, they were never the subjects or objects of the wrath of God!**

The Revelation has ESPECIALLY been given to encourage the true SAINTS OF GOD IN CHRIST who have always BEEN and WHO ALWAYS will be persecuted.

Jesus said, ***“In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”*** (John 16:33) The Revelation could well be called **Jesus’ commentary on John 16:33.**

The Revelation is a reminder **that joy is not the absence of suffering but the presence of God and confidence in God** in the midst of the most trying of circumstances.

AGAIN, the Christians who first read the Revelation were in a time of severe persecution with thousands being MARTYRED.

And so it has been for 2000 years of church history!

The freedoms and liberties enjoyed by many Christians in the USA and the whole ‘western’ world are an exception. Today and for most Christians over the last 2000 years— suffering, privation, persecution, and martyrdom has been their lot.

And yet, they were and are loved by Jesus just as much as those who are or have been blessed with freedom, wealth and the gospel!

IT IS EASY TO love preachers and preaching that promises rapture before any severe trouble, trials, or tribulation. NEVERTHELESS, The Revelation SHOUTS, ***“Be thou faithful unto death; and I will give thee the crown of life!”***

***** Revelation, chapters 21-22—** ULTIMATELY, OUR LORD’S REDEEMED ON EARTH become the complete BRIDE of the LAMB

triumphant in Heaven, the Bride adorned for Her Heavenly Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Revelation gives needed re-assurance that Jesus is SUPREME, SOVEREIGN, AND SUFFICIENT.

HERE AS 2019 begins, couldn't we use some of that same reassurance?

II. BIBLE READING/STUDY/MEDITATION PLAN!

If you don't have a Scripture reading/study/meditation plan — GET ONE IMMEDIATELY!

NOTE: For whatever else one may be reading from God's Word, I would encourage you to set aside some months and do the following:

Read 5 Psalms and one Chapter of the Proverbs each day.

Example: **On January 1**— read Psalm 1, 31, 61, 91, 121 and read Proverbs, chapter 1. In other words, whatever the day is, start with that Psalm and then add 30 each time... **as on January 7:** Read 7, 37, 67, 97, 127 and Proverbs 7. You can make slight adaptations on months with different amounts of days.

Why this system? The Proverbs are filled with practical wisdom on many of life's daily issues, temptations, etc. **The Psalms** empower prayer and praise to God.

The persecuted New Testament church, as they prayed set portions of Psalm 2 before the LORD: Acts 4:23-33!

III. WHY HAVE A BIBLE READING/STUDY/MEDITATION PLAN?

To 'get more out' we have to 'put more in!' It starts with having a vision and hunger for God! Without question, Jesus calls us to Christ-likeness, to discipleship and He calls us

to HELP EACH other in that process. In other words **we are called to be Disciples and Disciple-makers.**

Helping each other to GROW as Disciples is a Work Achievable ONLY by the Word of God, quickened to us by the Holy Spirit. Growth in Christ-likeness happens as,

- (1) God's Word saturates the lives of Christians **who are;**
- (2) Joining themselves together in **intercessory prayer** for each other **and who are;**
- (3) Yielding to and encouraging **accountability** so as to help each other to win spiritual battles and grow in the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.
- (4) **The FRUIT will be** that more and more— we, our families and church will ADORN the gospel and not BLASPHEME the gospel before a watching world! Moreover, such growing in grace saints will also boldly proclaim the gospel!

NOTE: As we read/study/meditate, be asking questions:

- 1. What one thing** did I learn/see/discover from reading the Bible this week that can make a real difference in my life?
- 2. How** has my life this week demonstrated that Christ lives in me?
- 3. Is** there any temptation or sin I have battled this week that I would like for us to pray about?
- 4. What** lost person in my sphere of influence can we pray for this week and how can I be salt and light to them?

5. What personal praises/personal prayer needs can we pray for?

EMBRACE this reality: If you are a Christian, then, you are a BELIEVER PRIEST. You have within you the MASTER TEACHER, the Holy Spirit. **Therefore, wholly embrace the need and call to be a WORKMAN:** *“Study, give diligence, aim at winning God’s approval, a WORKMAN with no reason to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. [Accurate in delivering the Message of the Truth; correctly analyzing, delivering the Message of the Truth.]*

MOREOVER, let us EMBRACE SOUND Preparation for good Bible Study!

1. Every time we open our Bibles to study the Revelation (or other Scriptures) — WE MUST COME WITH PROPER HEART ATTITUDES! Let us Pray and proceed with Reverence, Expectancy, Dependency, Alertness, and a willingness to OBEY what God reveals!

2. Before reading the Bible: It will be very important to FIRST read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 over and again until when as we start to Pray before reading our Bible chapter that **a part of our praying will be a submitting to the very purpose for which God has given us each chapter of the Word of God! The Word of God is for,**

a. DOCTRINE/TEACHING— teaching us the Faith, teaching us the truth of doctrines to believe and the true paths on which we are to walk.

b. REPROOF/refuting error— showing us where we got off the Straight and Narrow Way.

c. CORRECTION/resetting— showing us how to get back on the right path.

d. INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS— showing us how to stay on the right path.

e. ALL FOR THE GOAL that we be completely prepared and equipped for all good work, to the glory of God! (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

f. ABOVE ALL: The Word of God has been given to us that we might KNOW and KNOW more intimately the GOD of the WORD! (Luke 24:44-48; Col. 3:16; Luke 16:29-31; John 14:21-25)

NOTE: DON'T GET BOGGED DOWN ON WHAT YOU MAY NOT UNDERSTAND! I deeply suspect that **in most EVERY chapter in the Word of God that there will be** at least SOMETHING that each and every one of us will SEE and UNDERSTAND CORRECTLY— **major on and apply those truths. We will understand more later!**

Excellent Questions to Keep in Mind as We Read Scripture:

1. Are there SINS I need to confess? **2.** Are there PROMISES I need to claim? **3.** Are there ATTITUDES I need to change? **4.** Are there COMMANDS I need to obey? **5.** Are there EXAMPLES I need to follow? **6.** Are there PRAYERS I need to pray? **7.** Are there ERRORS I need to avoid? **8.** Are there TRUTHS I need to believe? **9.** Are there thing for which I need to PRAISE God and/or Give Him THANKS?

The point being that as I read the Word of God— it is very likely that I will find teaching about Godly attitudes or commands or errors, etc. Moreover, as I read a chapter over, day after day— **the**

Holy Spirit will see to it that the Chapter births PRAYERS of confession, repentance, petitions, praise, and worship!

REALITY: With this sort of prayerful and careful study of the Word of God— we will be gaining **INSIGHT**, we will be gaining **UNDERSTANDING**, we will be gaining **REVELATION** as to the will of God in various situations.

REMEMBER: Our goal is not mere interpretation. Our goal is **application and transformation MORE and more into Christ-likeness!** So, jot down things you discover, etc. **OBJECTION:** **This is all too involved; too serious. This will require too much time!**

THE DEEPER REALITY: 1. The hour in which we are living is so late! **2.** The spiritual warzone is so deadly! **3.** MANY MEN, WOMEN and YOUTH are FALLING BY THE WAYSIDE throughout the land! **4.** **The stakes are so high—** that only a great fool would NOT approach personal Bible Study in the coming year in a much more serious way than has been our custom!

Grace to one and all! James Bell

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

MONDAYS: Jail Ministry— (This ministry is presently ON HOLD... PRAY FOR opening of doors!)

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—

→ **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE...** (Enter via IRON STEPS; or double doors by gym)

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY— Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, JANUARY 8, 2019 @ 11:00am; Continuing in LUKE.** ENTER at the back of the church building, [*Doors open at 10:30am... re-locked at 11:10am*]

***** MEN: EVERY SATURDAY @ 8:00am:** Men's Fellowship/Bible Study! (**STUDY: THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN!**) ENTER AT THE back of Church building... under the drive-thru awning. [**DOORS OPEN FOR FELLOWSHIP, Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits & Donuts at 7:30am!**]

SHARE the Preaching of the Word of God!

<http://www.southsidegallatin.org/>
[Listen_to_other_sermons_on_sermonaudio/](#)

SUNDAY SERVICES: January 6, 13, 20, 27

9:30am— Sunday School, classes for all ages

10:45am— Sunday MORNING WORSHIP service

SPECIAL NOTES FOR VARIOUS SUNDAYS:

1. January 6— after morning worship, A COVERED-DISH, Fellowship meal.

2. January 13— Faithful Men meet @

3. January 20— at the close of the regular Morning Worship; we enter into the SACRED TIME OF WORSHIP at the LORD'S TABLE.

***** Sunday Evening HOME GROUPS**

**4. January 27, at 6:00pm— Equipping for Disciples...
presently 'SHEPHERDING THE HEART OF A CHILD**