



**GROW
IN
GRACE
NEWSLETTER**

Volume 44b, No. 26, July 9, 2019 / 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.”

SACRED MARRIAGE— Until Death Causes Parting! (Part 11)

YOUR MARRIAGE CAN BE SAVED... IF! [Edited from Dr. Ed Wheat]

MULTITUDES are unhappy in their marriage. IF YOU are among these masses, the question is, **“What will you do?”** The stakes are high! One choice clearly leads to the defeat of divorce, as well as lost opportunities for blessing. **HOWEVER, IF** and when you yield to Christ and choose the pathway of irrevocable commitment to JESUS CHRIST, your mate, and your marriage — regardless of how troubled your relationship may seem— you will find that THIS CHOICE leads you into a place of agape love, peace, and personal growth. I am not suggesting that the healing of a marriage is an easy process, especially when one partner resists it. REALITY: Torn relationships involve pain, whatever you do about them.

HOWEVER, as the Holy Spirit points out in 1 Peter 2:18-24, it is far better to suffer (if suffer you must) for doing right, than for doing wrong. It is clear that God’s favor and blessing shine on the one who patiently suffers, if necessary, in order to do His will. **Meeting your marriage problems in a biblical manner is productive** rather than pointless; and whatever hurts your encounter will be less damaging than the long-term effects of

divorce would be. FRANKLY, “The very word divorce should be cut out of the vocabulary of a couple when they marry!”

REAL TRUTH: Shock, hurt, rejection, emotional confusion, bitterness, and pressures from all sides sometimes make couples want to give up. **HOWEVER, if you are willing** to make a commitment to your marriage based on simple submission to the Word of God, you can take heart—Marriages are often saved when only one partner applies biblical principles in a whole hearted commitment... **FIRST TO GOD**, and then, to the mate and the marriage!

GOOD REALITY: The outcome depends squarely on the committed partner’s ability to behave consistently in accord with biblical principles designed by the Author of marriage! **I KNOW, THIS DOES NOT SEEM FAIR!** You are correct! **IT IS YOU EXTENDING MERCY, LOVE, GRACE, AND FORGIVENESS... IN THE SAME MANNER AS GOD HAS SO MINISTERED TO YOU!** You will go forward in these paths because your master passion is not primarily, ‘I must save my marriage’ but rather— **‘I MUST SO LIVE that Christ is GLORIFIED!’**

THEREFORE, FOCUS ON, CLARIFYING YOUR THOUGHTS! When the Bible says, “*Gird up the loins of your mind*” (1 Peter 1:13), it means to get your mental powers in a state of alertness for proper action. You must do this without delay. Often the Lord will provide the opportunity for some quiet, uninterrupted Bible study and prayerful consideration of God’s plan for your situation. You may learn some important things about yourself during this time. **When one husband moved out**, his parents lovingly helped the wife by keeping the children several weeks while she prepared mentally and spiritually for the challenges ahead.

One young wife was ready to dissolve her marriage until a friend in her garden club led her to the Lord. “I only knew two

Scriptures at the beginning,” the wife said, “but they were exactly what I needed: ‘God is not a man that He should lie’ (Numbers 23:19) and ‘With God nothing shall be impossible’ (Luke 1:37). “With those truths as a foundation I began to study the Bible, desperately trying to dig out God’s purpose for marriage and all that He had to say about it.

I found out for myself that if I were to obey JESUS, then I would have to become committed to JESUS CHRIST, to my marriage and my husband, even though he was involved with another woman and we were on the verge of divorce.

“Coming to this decision didn’t make things any easier emotionally at first, but it did show me a clear path of action, and the situation actually became less complicated because there was no more confusion about what to do!

I refused to sign the divorce papers. I had gathered evidence identifying the other woman and proving my husband’s unfaithfulness. I destroyed it all. I didn’t need it anymore.”

The language of God concerning divorce is plain enough for any reader. **For example:** For the Lord, the God of Israel says: I hate divorce and marital separation, and him who covers his garment [his wife] with violence. Therefore keep a watch upon your spirit [that it may be controlled by My Spirit], that you deal not treacherously and faithlessly [with your marriage mate] (Malachi 2:16 AMPLIFIED).

JESUS: “Have you never read that He Who made them from the beginning made them male and female’. And said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be united firmly (joined inseparably) to his wife, **and the two shall become one flesh?**

So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder' (separate)" (Matthew 19:4-6 AMPLIFIED).

As you try to gain clarity of thought concerning your marital situation viewed in light of the teaching of Scripture, I suggest that you read the first five chapters of the book, ***Love Life for Every Married Couple***; and search the Scriptures that have to do with marriage.

HERE IS THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S WILL: It should be crystal clear that God intends for you and your mate to picture the love-bond of Christ and His church; and that you must beware of substitutes who sometimes find their way into the vacuum of a troubled relationship. Obviously, infidelity and divorce are paths that move away from God's plan and blessing.

But when you pour yourself into restoring love to your marriage, you can be sure that the force of His will and His Holy Spirit are at work with you in the process. It is important to fill your mind with positive biblical input: biblical counseling, preaching, and teaching; good books and Bible-study tapes; and friends who will affirm you in your commitment to your marriage. **You need to take in truth from those who are as committed to the permanence of marriage as the Bible is.** And don't listen to anyone else!

Develop tunnel vision in this area as Proverbs 4:25-27 commands: Let your eyes look directly ahead, and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. Watch the path of your feet, and all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil (NASB).

You need to maintain this total mental commitment to the truth or you will be swamped by waves of human opinion and bad advice, sometimes from seemingly religious people.

One young man came to me, confused because he had been told to do nothing to win back his wife. He had been told to concentrate on his vertical relationship with God. I said to him, “This is true, but you can please God only when you are doing what the Bible says you are to do. **You must be right in line with God’s Word. We have no other direction for this life.** When we are in total accord with the Word, then we can relax and God has the freedom to work with us. He always works with us on the basis of the information that we have from His Word.

So the more you know of the Word of God concerning marriage and love and His abhorrence of divorce, the more equipped you will be to let God do His full work and have His full way in your life.” “I had to take a stand on this matter of outside influence,” a wife told me. “Everyone has been anxious to give me advice about my marriage. I refuse to discuss it with people who hold an unbiblical viewpoint, or people who try to turn me against my husband, or people who make me feel sorry for myself and encourage weakness in me.

I can’t afford to be around worldly friends anymore. They tear me down; they tear my husband down. They may mean well, but they are so misguided. I want to be with people who will stand with me and support me when I might falter.”

When your mind is settled, your thoughts clarified, and your commitment made, you will find that you no longer lie at the mercy of outside events, reacting to every new circumstance with fresh pain and bewilderment.

Instead, your viewpoint becomes, “This is what I am going to do, no matter what, because it is God’s way to do it. I can count on His wisdom, and I can trust Him with the results of a course of action based on His Word.” “I’m not standing by my marriage anymore on the basis of what the outcome will be,” one woman told me. “People urge me to dump my husband, give up on him because he’s made my life miserable; they tell me I deserve someone better, that I wouldn’t have any trouble finding someone else to love me.

My answer is that marriage is sacred; marriage is permanent; I am committed to my marriage vows; I am one flesh with my husband; and then I really shock them! I tell them that even if there is no happy ending for our marriage, I will not regret the stand I have taken. I will know that I made the right decision and followed the only course possible for me. I will have done all that I could.

“But my trust is not in what I am doing,” she added. “It is in God and His Word. He has a perfect, loving plan for my life, and He’s wise enough and powerful enough to carry it out, if I cooperate by following His counsel. So I’m going to keep on obeying Him in my marriage and I’ll leave the results with Him. I am at peace with that.”

A happy wife wrote me a note of thanks for my counsel which gave her the courage to stick with her marriage. She said, “One little thing you said to me meant so much. You said, ‘So what if your husband doesn’t tell you he loves you right now!’ I knew you were right. It really wasn’t that important.” This wife found that putting up with a little rejection was worth it in the long run in order to have a revitalized marriage.

I have talked with many women who tell me that when they do not feel their husband’s love, the Lord has a way of loving them that is

almost tangible. “Like being in the sunshine, just feeling the warmth of His love,” several wives agreed. **A lovely young wife carried that a step further in her own trying situation.** She said that it was often difficult dressing to go out for the evening with her husband because she knew in advance that he would not treat her the way she longed to be treated. So she developed the habit of thinking of the Lord Jesus as her friend and escort of the evening. “It helped me tremendously,” she said. “I looked my best for Him, I behaved my best for Him, and I was constantly aware of His steadying presence with me!” In summary, you need to give love to your mate biblically, emotionally, and physically whether you receive a response or not.

This is altogether possible through agape love. One wife said, “I tried to show him that my love for him did not depend on how he treated me. I said to him sometimes, ‘I love you, no matter what you are doing right now, and I believe the Lord means for us to be together.’ I sent him little cards with appropriate messages that expressed my caring while we were apart. And, do you know, when we reconciled, I found that he had saved every one of them!”

I asked some wives who had been through the experience to give me their list of do’s and don’ts for any woman trying to save her marriage. **Here are the excellent suggestions they compiled:** **There can be no growth in your relationship as long as there is doubt as to your commitment to your marriage. Make your commitment! **When your husband withholds his love, trust the Lord to meet your emotional needs. He won’t let you down! **Give your husband honor, love, and biblical respect even though his actions do not deserve it. Give him warm acceptance no matter what. The more hopeless your situation is, the more your loving behavior is apt to be accepted as genuine.

****Don't try to reform your husband. Just love him. **Live one day at a time. **Don't try to do it on your own. The Lord is with you! **Don't be bitter against anyone in the situation.**

Never turn your children against their father. Forgive! ****Don't ask family or friends to take sides against your husband. **Don't discuss your intimate marriage problems. Don't give fuel to gossip. Confide in the Lord, your counselor, and perhaps a close Christian friend whom you can trust to keep silence. **Choose your biblical counselor wisely.**

****Never discuss your problems with a friend of the opposite sex. **Spend as much time in the Word of God as possible. **Concentrate on yourself, 10 redeeming the mistakes you made, and asking God to show you how to change, rather than concentrating on your partner's failures. **Do not separate. Encourage your husband to stay in the home, no matter what. **Do not give your husband a divorce. Do all in your power to delay or prevent it. If you must consult a lawyer, make it clear to the lawyer that it is only for your financial protection and that of your children. Find a Christian lawyer who will help you preserve your marriage.**

****Spend your time with people who will encourage you in spiritual growth. ** Do not overcompensate with your children. They need your love and stability while their father is gone, but they still need discipline. It will be hard to build a new love relationship with your husband when he does come home if the children are out of control. **Do not try to defend yourself from gossip or criticism. Keep your mouth shut. The Lord will fight for you and you will hold your peace.**

****Remember that the most innocent thing you say will get twisted. Avoid loose talk and do not listen to tale-bearing. **When you do anything (large or small) to pull the marriage apart, you are going**

against God's will. Let that be your guideline for all decisions. ****Don't expect your husband to change overnight when he does come back home.**

****The hardest time may be when you are reconciled and you have a tendency to fall back into old habit patterns. Don't do it! **Hope all things, believe all things, and endure all things. [OBVIOUSLY, most of these can be adapted for use by husbands!]**

[NOTE: This article is just a portion of one of the 16 outstanding chapters of LOVE LIFE For Every Married Couple: How to fall in love, Stay in love, Rekindle your love, By Dr. Ed Wheat. GET THIS BOOK. READ IT. APPLY IT. HAVE SEVERAL ON HAND TO GIVE TO OTHERS!]

Great Grace to All! James Bell // www.southsidegallatin.org

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SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

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

WEDNESDAYS: → **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE** → Enter via **IRON STEPS, side door.**

WEDNESDAYS: → **6:30pm— Youth** Activities and Bible Study— enter, side double doors.

WEDNESDAYS: → **6:30pm— Young Family Prayer Time!** THIS IS a time of Bible study and prayer geared toward **families with children in the nursery and pre-K class.**

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY— NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON JULY 23, 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's Fellowship/Bible Study:** EVERY SATURDAY @
8:00am: (*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!**]

SUNDAY SERVICES, JULY 14, 21, 28

9:30am— Sunday School Classes for All Ages

10:45am— Sunday Morning Worship Service

SPECIAL EVENTS ON THE FOLLOWING SUNDAYS:

**** JULY 14 — FAITHFUL MEN, 5:30PM... (1689 Confession of Faith)**

***** JULY 21 — LORD'S SUPPER, at the end of the Morning Worship**

HOME GROUPS... some at 5pm

***** JULY 28 — 6:00pm - 7:00pm, Church-wide
 EQUIPPING DISCIPLES by developing
 Christ-honoring Marriages:**

**Paul David Tripp's 'WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?
 (Redeeming the Realities of Marriage)**

