

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 44b, No. 42, October 29, 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.***

Part 3— TAKING A SERIOUS LOOK AT THE LOCAL CHURCH!

Last week, we noted some Biblically important ‘callings’ and practices for a ‘Narrow Gate’ congregation: As a LOCAL Church,

- 1. We are to MAGNIFY,** to worship the one true and living triune God!
- 2. We are to MAKE KNOWN** God our Father and the LORD Jesus Christ to our neighbors and to the nations.
- 3. We are to MOVE BELIEVERS in Jesus** toward Christian maturity and ministry.
- 4. WE ARE TO FUNCTION AS SALT AND LIGHT** IN A DARK WORLD, letting the light and life of Jesus shine before men that they will see GOOD WORKS and glorify Almighty God!

THE NEW BIRTH IS THE REQUIRED FOUNDATION!

True discipleship **begins when a person is born again. A SINNER** is brought under CONVICTION that he is sinful, lost, and spiritually blind before God; and, convicted that he cannot save himself by good character or good works.

By the power of the GOSPEL, GOD GIVES LIFE TO THE SPIRITUALLY DEAD, (Ephesians 2:1-10) — so that they ARE BORN AGAIN, becoming NEW CREATIONS IN Christ!

ALEART: NO ONE becomes a Christian by living a Christian life. **The life of Christian discipleship is a supernatural life; and it is only when we are born again** that we receive the DESIRE and strength to live as Jesus taught. Before reading any further, ask the question, *“Have I ever been born again? Have I become a child of God by faith in the Lord Jesus?”*

CHRISTIANS: BECAUSE the Holy Spirit will first of all convict the sinner of sin, of their ‘good works’ being but filthy rags, and that the judgment of Holy God awaits them, (John 16:8-11)— LET US THEREFORE LABOR TO GET SINNERS UNDER THE SOUND OF THE GOSPEL! WHY? **BECAUSE the Gospel IS the power of God unto salvation!** (Romans 1:16) **CHRISTIAN:** Understanding the terror of the LORD— persuade men! (2 Cor. 5:11) **REMEMBER,** it pleases God to save the lost by the means of the foolishness of preaching! (1 Cor. 1:21; Acts 2 - 8:4)

AS TO THOSE already saved: All genuine Christians are at various stages in discipleship. There will always be room for more growth in grace. ***BUT KNOW THIS: THERE IS NO heaven bound Christian who IS NOT a disciple, a follower, of Jesus Christ! Being a disciple of Jesus Christ, IS NOT some sort of OPTION— but the reality of all ‘SHEEP’ who belong to Jesus: John 10:27-28! Ephesians 2:1-10; Acts 2:37-47; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21!***

THE SAVED ARE DISCIPLES:

The Savior is not looking for men and women who will give their spare evenings to Him — or mere portions of their weekends or parts of their years of retirement! The words of the Lord Jesus are clear... When He calls us to salvation; HE automatically calls us to a life of discipleship! NO, WE DO NOT HAVE PERFECTION as His disciples! **NEVERTHELESS, IT LOOKS LIKE THIS:**

1. The Disciple of JESUS is called to a **Supreme Love for Jesus**

“If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26).

This does not mean that we should ever have animosity or ill-will in our hearts toward our relatives, **but it does mean that our love to Christ should be so great that all other loves seem as hatred by comparison.**

Actually, the most difficult clause in this passage is the expression, ***“yea, and his own life also.”*** Self-love is one of the stubbornest hindrances to [TRUE CONVERSION] and to ongoing discipleship. ***The TRAGIC mark of our age is loving self, MORE THAN loving God: 2 Timothy 3:1-7)***

2. The Disciple of JESUS is **called to DENY himself**

“If any man [woman/youth] will come after me, let him deny himself...” (Matthew 16:24). Denial of self is not the same as self-denial. The latter means foregoing certain foods, pleasures, or possessions. **But denial of self means** such complete submission to the LORDSHIP of Christ that self has no rights or authority at all. **It means that self is no longer on the throne of one’s heart!** It is expressed in the words of H.G.C. Moule:

“My glorious Victor, Prince Divine, Clasp these surrendered hands in Thine,

At length my will is all Thine own, Glad vassals of a Savior’s throne!”

3. The Disciple of JESUS will, **must TAKE UP his Cross**

“If any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross...” (Matthew 16:24). The cross is not some physical infirmity or mental anguish; these things are common to all men. ***The cross is DIVINELY GIVEN (Galatians 2:20) and a pathway that is deliberately chosen. The cross symbolizes*** the shame, persecution, and abuse which the world

heaped upon the Son of God, and which the world will heap on all who choose to stand against the tide; [... All those WHO deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and FOLLOW JESUS!] **Yes, we can try to be a ‘Jonah, a Sampson, or a Lot’— but not without SERIOUS consequence!!**

ALERT: Many REJECT THE CROSS, ‘love the world’ (1 John 2:15) ... and are NOT chastened! HOW CAN THIS BE? God only chastens His own! (1 Cor. 11:30-32; Heb. 12:5-8)]

“If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24). To understand what this means, one need simply ask himself, ***“What characterized the life of the Lord Jesus?”***

It was a life of obedience to the will of God.

It was a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit.

It was a life of unselfish service for others.

It was a life of patience and longsuffering in the face of the gravest wrongs.

It was a life of zeal, of expenditure, of self-control, of meekness, of kindness, of faithfulness, and of devotion (Galatians 5:22, 23).

THE disciples of Jesus, must walk as He walked. We must exhibit the fruit of Christ-likeness (John 15:8; Gal. 5:22-23)

NOTE: MUST? YES! As a born again Christian a DIVINE ‘MUST’ is laid upon the real Christian! How so? **There is the INDWELLING COMPELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT leading, motivating, empowering. The redeemed heart is FLOODED with the love of God! (Romans 5:5) We LOVE JESUS because He first loved us!**

Yes, sometimes we fail badly. And when we do, we are of all humans most miserable... thus, we are called to repentance and restoration of fellowship; and if we refuse— chastening will be coming!

Why? Because Jesus loves His redeemed ones so much He will bring us back! (1 Cor. 11:30-32; Heb. 12:5-8)]

5. A Disciple of JESUS will have Love for all Who Belong to Christ

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). This is the love that esteems others better than oneself. It is the love that suffers long and is kind. It vaunts not itself and is not puffed up. It does not behave itself unseemly; seeks not its own, is not easily provoked; thinks no evil. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Without this love, discipleship would be a cold, legalistic asceticism. **MOREOVER, WITHOUT THIS LOVE, WE ARE YET DEAD IN OUR SINS;** for the very essence of being a Christian... is that NOW, our hearts are FLOODED WITH the love of God by the Holy Spirit! (Romans 5:5)]

6. The Disciple of JESUS will have faithful Continuance in His Word

“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed” (John 8:31). For real discipleship there must be continuance. It is easy enough to start well, to burst forth in a blaze of glory. But the test of reality is endurance to the end. Any man who looks back after putting his hand to the plow is not fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9:62). Spasmodic obedience to the Scriptures will not do. ***Christ’s disciples are those who will follow Him in continuing obedience... empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit.*** (John 10:27-28; Phil 1:6)... and in a life of repentance... Psalm 32; 51) **WE CRY OUT:** “Keep me from turning back. The handles of my plough with tears are wet; The shears with rust are spoiled, and yet, and yet, My God! My God! Keep me from turning back.”

NOTE: Because Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith— saving faith is enduring faith!

*** **HOWEVER,** there are MANY whom the Father did not plant and there are MANY anti-christs! (**Matt. 15:12-14; 1 John 2:8-9**)

7. The Disciple of JESUS Forsakes All to Follow Him

“So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33). This is perhaps the most unpopular of all Christ’s terms of discipleship, and may well prove to be the most unpopular verse in the Bible. **Clever theologians can give you a thousand reasons why it does not mean what it says, but simple disciples drink it down eagerly, assuming that the Lord Jesus knew what He was saying!**

What is meant by forsaking all? The man who forsakes all does not become a shiftless loafer; he works hard to provide for the current necessities of his family and himself. **But since the passion of his life is to advance the cause of Christ, he invests everything above current needs in the work of the Lord and leaves the future with God.**

In seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, he cannot keep going down the road of BIGGER and BETTER STUFF FOR ME... when souls are perishing for want of the gospel.

He does not want to waste his life accumulating riches that will fall into the devil’s hands when Christ returns for His saints. He wants to obey the Lord’s injunction against laying up treasure on earth— **he offers what he cannot keep anyway, and what he has ceased to love.**

NOTE: None of this means that the disciple of Jesus cannot have a bank account, a savings account, a lay-a-way of seeking to plan wisely for the future, enjoy a vacation, etc...

BUT WHAT IT DOES MEAN is that NOTHING is held with a ‘clenched fist’ and nothing is OFF LIMITS from God. EVERYTHING is owned as BELONGING TO GOD; and GOD HAS THE FINAL say as to what is to be done with it!]

Confessing our past failure, let us courageously face up to the claims of Christ upon us and seek henceforth to be MATURING disciples of our glorious Lord!

[RESPONSE]— “My glorious Victor, Prince Divine, Clasp these surrendered hands in Thine, At length my will is all Thine own, Glad vassals of a Savior’s throne. My Master, lead me to Thy door: Pierce this now willing ear once

more, Thy bonds are freedom; let me stay with Thee to toil, endure, obey.”
- H. G. C. Moule

[William McDonald's booklet, True Discipleship... was used in developing the above article]

ABOUNDING Mercy, Grace, Love, and PEACE to all in Christ!

James Bell www.southsidegallatin.org

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

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

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**. Enter at double doors, under AWNING.

*** **LADIES BIBLE STUDY: NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON NOVEMBER 12, 2019 @ 11:00am; Continuing in LUKE.** ENTER at the back of the church building, *[Under AWNING, 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... DOUBLE DOORS, under the drive-thru awning. [DOORS OPEN FOR FELLOWSHIP, Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits, & Donuts at 7:30am!]

SUNDAY SERVICES, NOVEMBER 3, 10, 17, 24

9:30am— Sunday School Classes for All Ages

10:45am— Sunday Morning Worship Service

SPECIAL EVENTS ON THE FOLLOWING SUNDAYS:

*** November 3 — NOON Covered Dish Fellowship Meal**

**** November 10 — FAITHFUL MEN, 5:30PM... (Studying the 1689 Confession of Faith)**

***** November 17 — LORD'S SUPPER, at the end of the Morning Worship**

HOME GROUPS... some at 5pm

****** November 24, 25, 26, 27 — at 6:00pm (Sunday-Wednesday)... THE CREATION GUYS from Australia, John Mackay and Joseph Hubbard, will be speaking at SOUTHSIDE:**

*** Sunday, 11/24 @ 6pm —**

Fear God, not man! The Real Homophobes! Gender and Creation!

**** Monday, 11/25 @ 6pm —**

CHRIST, Creator & Creation! Animal Rights and Human Wrongs!

***** Tuesday, 11/26 @ 6pm —**

**CLIMATE WARNINGS: The Real ROLES of God, man and
satan in the weather!**

****** Wednesday, 11/27 @ 6pm —**

“THANK YOU for DESIGN! JESUS we THANK YOU!”