

GROW IN GRACE NEWSLETTER

Volume 44b, No. 49, December 17, 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.*

**** [NEXT NEWSLETTER... Scheduled for
January 7, 2020] ****

IMPORTANT NOTE: From time to time... various Newsletter articles and/or sermons are updated, revamped, and REPEATED. **WHY?**

1. BECAUSE WE NEED THEM!
2. BECAUSE they contain VITAL truth which we have neglected or not APPLIED!

BEWARE OF THE 'ATHEINAN SPIRIT'— "they spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear SOME NEW THING!" (Acts 17:21)

Genuine FAITH RESPONSES to a Sunday School Class, a Sermon, a Newsletter, and/or from Personal Bible Reading require 'acting upon the Word of God' in obedience!

GIFT GIVING!

I. 'GIFTS' NOT TO GIVE!

(OK... so the following are not normally considered 'gifts'... but honesty requires the confession that all too often, we give them!) **SO, I MUST NOT GIVE— the WORKS OF THE FLESH!**

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told [you] in time past, **that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**" (Galatians 5:19-21)

NOTE: THOSE WHO continue to 'do'/'GIVE' such acts as sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; **hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions,** factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like— are showing cause to question the genuineness of their claim of being saved!

These 'Anti-Christ' gifts are not EVER justified in God's sight!

ALSO, BEWARE of 'giving' the following ANTICHRIST 'WISDOM' GIFTS: "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but [is] earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife [is], there [is] confusion and every evil work. **Are WE givers of such anti-Christ 'wisdom' gifts?**

II. GIFTS TO GIVE! (These are VERY expensive— but not to your bank account!) They are GIFTS from JESUS, given to every Christian, for us to give to others! "... the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. **And they that are Christ's** have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:19-22)

HERE ARE '**CHRIST**' **GIFTS of WISDOM** : "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, [and] easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." (James 3:14-18)

Grand reality: The Christian's heart has been FLOODED (Romans 5:5) with the LOVE OF GOD by the Holy Spirit! We have been GIVEN His love. **NOW, we are to GRACIOUSLY GIVE** His love to others— EVEN to the unloving, the undeserving, to the unresponsive!

III. UNLESS the following 'CHRIST GIFTS' are being given by us to others— we are ZEROS in God's sight! (1 Corinthians 13:1-7)

LOVE suffereth long, [and] is kind; **LOVE** envieth not; **LOVE** vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, **seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil**; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. **LOVE** never faileth..."

(1 Cor.13:1-8a)

IV. INSIGHT ON GIVING THE LOVE OF GOD in Practical Ways, day by day in the LOCAL CHURCH!

The Christ-like spirit of a local assembly of Christians is a most tangible thing. **This spirit, of which we speak is the product of the INDWELLING Holy Spirit**— shining through smiles, greetings, conversations, conduct, and so much more. **There is** the kindly courtesy of our greeting one another. **There is** the warm handclasp of friendly interest. **There is** the heartfelt participating in a Sunday School Class, or a Prayer Service, or a Worship Service.

There is, in the Worship Service, the centering of our attention upon our primary business of the hour, the worship of God— for we gather to give HIM praise, adoration, and honor. We gather to give Him ourselves, our gifts, talents, and offerings.

We gather to give united hearts crying out, ***“Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory! Amen!”*** We gather to sit at HIS FEET— to receive and to heed HIS WORD.

A further revelation about the SPIRIT OF THE CHURCH is seen as we **NEVER SPEAK OF THE CHURCH as "they"... it is always "we" or "us" or "our."** IF there are times when the spirit of the church is not high and fine, we never blame "they" or "them"... rather, we search our own hearts.

And we stand ready to repent of our own failures; and ready to contribute needed forgiveness, godliness, purity, joy, faith, hope, and love. We stand eager and ready to help and serve.

We refuse to think evil or speak evil or to listen to evil about our brothers and sisters. Moreover, we are not merely those who are willing to serve **if** all goes according to our personal liking; **rather, we are the LORD'S SERVANTS and will be found at our duty posts in all the seasons of life.**

V. MORE PRACTICAL WAYS OF GIVING THE LOVE OF GOD in in the LOCAL CHURCH— GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT! SPEAK WELL OF OTHERS!

BE FOUND TALKING UP brothers and sisters in Christ; and not talking them down! **I refuse** to do satan's work of fault-finding,

accusing, back-biting, slandering, tale bearing, or discord sowing.

RATHER, I choose to do Christ's work of loving, blessing, praying for, and doing good. **I choose** to speak words of patience and kindness and encouragement. If I see a brother or sister overtaken in a fault, **I choose** to go to them privately and in humility to seek to be Christ's agent of healing.

I choose to speak well of the LOCAL ASSEMBLY of saints to which the Holy Spirit has joined me. There is so much to give thanks for as we look at the various works of God's grace in the midst of the saints to whom the Holy Spirit has joined me. Because it is a glorious testimony to my Savior, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, I will speak well of the local church to which He has joined me.

Nothing of the work that Christ is yet to complete in the Body at Southside is ever godly grounds to deny or minimize the amazing grace of God already done and being done!

VI. MORE WARNINGS about the wrong kind of GIVING—namely, I REFUSE to persecute JESUS! PROTEST: “I WOULD NEVER DARE TO PERSECUTE JESUS!! OK, BUT DO I REMEMBER that the words and attitudes I manifest toward my brothers and sisters reveal words and attitudes I am, in fact, manifesting toward Jesus! What I say and do toward another Christian, reveals the reality of what I have just said and done to Jesus. (Acts 9:4-5)

We are NEVER BEYOND needing to hear this: When I or when any of us participate in satan's work of fault-finding, accusing, back-biting, slandering, tale bearing, discord sowing, and/or evil speaking against another Christian or against a local

Bible-believing church or against our spouse— **WE ARE PERSECUTING JESUS!**

VII. SOUTHSIDERS: GIVE FAITHFULNESS to Christ and His Body! Let this be my confession: **"I am a** contributing, building up member of the Body of Christ at Southside. **I choose to** give full proof of my own faith in and love for JESUS by my faithful contributions to the building up of the Body of Christ at Southside. In the midst of the crookedness of this present world, I will walk uprightly in all my dealings with both saints and sinners. **In the local body of Southside, I may be a "little toe" or an "arm" or an "ear" or "a hand"...** or I may not feel sure as to what my gifts are. However, I know that we are all built up by the streams of grace that God has ordained to flow through one to another, (Ephesians 4: 11-16; 1 Corinthians 12).

VIII. I WILL GIVE AN OPEN, PASSIONATE HEART TO THE HARVEST!

LORD, OPEN MY EYES TO THE HARVEST, for souls are perishing. Some time ago, 10,000 active Christians were asked this question: "Humanly speaking, who or what was responsible for your coming to Christ and the church you attend?"

Here is how they replied: **2%--** I had a special need.

4%-- I just decided to. **6%--** I liked the pastor.

1/2 of 1%-- I attended a revival service.

78%-- A friend or relative influenced and invited me!

9 1/2%-- All other reasons.

Therefore, let us each and every one go out into our daily world and live holy and humbly, and live lovingly and forgivingly, and live to give kindness and hope, and live to be a blessing to others— **THUS,**

CREATING ENTRANCE WAYS so as to be empowered to influence and invite others to Christ and to the local assembly where God has us worshipping.

For it is the will of God that when we bring folks to our Sunday School classes and Worship Services that they will be able to experience, to see the GOSPEL we have been telling them about!

IX. GIVING Tithes and Offerings UNTO THE LORD

MY ATTITUDE ABOUT FINANCIAL GIVING IS ROOTED IN MY ATTITUDE TOWARD MONEY! Jesus said Luke 16:10, ***“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”***

If a person is faithful to God on financial issues— which is the *least* issue, then they will also be faithful and scriptural with the *greatest* issue— faith in God and passion for His kingdom labors.

“If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, [deceitful riches; or in ‘money matters’] who will commit to your trust the true riches?” If we will not be faithful in financial matters, and if we will not allow God to be *first* concerning money issues, how can He trust us with the true riches of His grace?

WE CANNOT serve God and mammon! (Luke 16:13) **All stingy giving is rooted in love for mammon and/or love for what mammon buys!**

X. GIVING PRAYER UNTO THE LORD! BECAUSE ONLY GOD CAN DO THE WORK OF GOD— the congregations in the **Book of Acts often gathered for united congregational prayer!** (Classic example: Acts 4:23-33) **WHAT ABOUT MY ATTITUDE TOWARD “GIVING TIME AND PRAYER?”**

SADLY, for many churches, the church-wide prayer meeting no longer exists or is the LEAST ATTENDED meeting of the church. **HERE IS A RADICAL CONTRAST: "THEY WILL ALL BE THERE!"**

The pastor of a Mennonite church had scheduled Dr. David Gibbs, of the Christian Law Association, to speak during a Wednesday night Prayer Service. AS the Pastor was driving Dr. Gibbs from the airport to the church building, Gibbs was trying to prepare himself for what he is about to face, so he asked: "Pastor, I know it's Wednesday night... and folks do not know I'm coming... I just want you to be at ease, because I'm happy to come and the size of the crowd does not matter..." **The pastor responded simply, "THEY WILL ALL BE THERE!"**

They arrived. The building was a plain, unattractive block building. **THE PARKING LOT WAS FULL!** Dr. Gibbs entered and found bare concrete floors and bare metal folding chairs— **OVER 400 HUNDRED metal folding chairs**— all filled with the **REGULAR WEDNESDAY NIGHT PRAYER MEETING CONGREGATION!**

KEEP IN MIND: These were farming people, with crops to plant, or tend, or harvest. Their days were always long and their work was never done.

HOWEVER, EVERY WEEK on Prayer Meeting Night— THEY WERE ALL THERE! Stunned, Dr. Gibbs asked, "Pastor, please explain this to me?" **"Well, Bro Gibbs, WE ARE ALL FAMILY and ...**

1. We are responsible for one another!

2. We are commanded to pray for one another! We also realize that;

3. We need God's wisdom and power if we are to make a difference in our community in reaching others for Christ!

4. THEREFORE, we have just as many for Prayer meeting as we do for other Church-wide services...

5. At our Prayer Meeting, the main agenda is PRAYER. We actually spend most of the time praying—

(a) PRAYING for each other and

(b) PRAYING for those in the world we seek to reach and minister unto!”

CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER SERVICE: FOR MOST OF US, the issues are not a lack of time, how tired we are, or a thousand other excuses! *The issues are LOVE for Jesus, LOVE for our brothers and sisters in Christ, VISION of our calling, and EMBRACING DEPENDANCE UPON GOD! HOPE TO SEE YOU THIS COMING WEDNESDAY! FOR MOST OF US it is a matter of PRIORITY AND FOCUS! IT IS all a matter of GIVING UNTO THE LORD!*

PS... TO EACH AND EVERY ‘SOUTHSIDER’— Cindy and I are blessed and honored to serve and fellowship in your midst! **THANK YOU** for your many expressions of love and kindness!

Abundant Love and Grace to you all!

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.

☐ **[NO WEDNESDAY SERVICES ON DECEMBER 25!]**

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY: NEXT MEETING** scheduled for **JANUARY 7th 2020 @ 11:00am; NEW STUDY ==> LESSONS FROM WOMEN IN SCRIPTURE!** 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:** **(DECEMBER STUDY: 50 REASONS WHY JESUS CAME TO DIE!)** 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 FOR DECEMBER 22, 29

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

ADDITIONAL NOTES: **December 22 & 29— NO** Evening Service

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR January 2020 — ALL SUNDAYS:

**** Sunday School at 9:30am // ** Worship at 10:45am**

ADDITIONAL NOTES... ABOUT EACH SUNDAY:

- 1. January 5...** FELLOWSHIP MEAL at Noon
- 2. January 12...** Faithful Men at 5:30pm
- 3. January 19...** Home Groups, most at 5pm
- 4. January 26...** CHURCH DISCIPLESHIP... currently completing a VIDEO series on Husband/Wife relationships.

**** [NEXT NEWSLETTER... Scheduled for January 7, 2020]**
