

**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 45, No. 20, May 19, 2020 / 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 JESUS CHRIST!"***

SAVE OURSELVES ... OR LOOSE OURSELVES?

(The first section is edited from Andy and Berit Kjos: <http://www.crossroad.to/index.html>)

Some years ago, there was a book written to draw young people to the mission field. It **promised adventure, good fellowship, and spiritual growth through short-term missions.** *See the world*, it beckoned. *Travel for God!* Clever marketing! Naturally, many answered the exciting call.

But God's call is different. He doesn't lure His servants with promises of fun and pleasure. Instead He warns us to "count the cost" and to resist the natural impulse to seek feel-good experiences.

[NOTE: God DOES NOT call us to place personal safety OVER being faithful to Christ and His Kingdom work! In 1985, 87, and 90... I, (a spoiled American who liked everything CLEAN), was called to spend an extended time in a Third World country doing Bible teaching and preaching. The last time was 45 days. I was well aware of the wide-spread, deadly diseases of that great nation. **I took precautions— but by the grace of God I did not allow GIANT FEAR TO SHUT ME DOWN from going and serving.** I was not shut down from being among lepers, from being in a slum and PARTAKING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, as I sat next to a brother in Christ with TB, Tuberculosis.

GOD HAS NOT CALLED US TO BE RULED BY GIANT FEAR.]

JESUS seeks disciples and equips disciples who will love *Him* more than the world -- who are willing to share in His suffering and follow Him anywhere. Few may answer His call, but those who do will share a joy that can't be compared with the world's thrills and entertainment.

[NOTE: This is the call of God upon every real Christian! We are SAFE IN THE WILL OF GOD SERVING HIM... UNTIL HE CALLS US HOME!]

HERE IS A MODERN DAY 'HEBREWS 11 HERO' OF THE FAITH!

Martha Myers, a missionary doctor was murdered on December 30, 2002. She didn't fear death when God sent her to a Muslim country hostile to Christianity. **Nor did she flee when** Yemen was shown to be a haven for Muslim militants, including al-Qa'eda members. Instead, she saw a poverty-stricken people in desperate need of medical care and in great need of witnessing God's love.

[NOTE: SHE WAS RULED BY THE CALL OF GOD TO SERVE; NOT BY THE GIANT FEAR, rooted in self-preservation!]

The intensity and pressure of the work at the clinic didn't keep her from reaching out to the more distant people in her "free" time. Driving a Toyota Land Cruiser on bumpy dirt roads from village to village, she offered help, hope, medicine, and treatment to the poor along the way. "Everywhere she stopped on the road, people flocked around and she'd write prescriptions and hold court (Hold court: share the Gospel)," said her father, Dr. Ira Myers.

Dr. Myers knew that her safety was in God's hands. Four years earlier, a group of armed men hijacked her Toyota and hid her under a blanket in the back of the car.

When they threatened to kill her for speaking the truth of the GOSPEL, she answered, "Well, I'll be in heaven!"

[NOTE: Over the last 2,000 years— who knows how many Christians have been threatened, fined, jailed, and/or killed for the GOSPEL'S SAKE. In America today, Christians are being told that they cannot ASSEMBLE for worship. They are being told that if they assemble they are being SELFISH and uncaring and will be the cause of MANY DYING. **WELL, there is a virus. Precautions are needed and to be wise!**

HOWEVER, FEAR MONGERING and THREATS and fines, etc... which are BUILT UPON LIES and upon illegal 'orders' — must not be given greater authority than the Word of God.]

AS TO DR. MYERS, trusting God, she had nothing to fear. Neither Muslim militants, highway robbers, nor other life-threatening dangers could shatter her peace in Christ. Though friends and relatives cautioned her, "she just depended on the Lord to take care of her," said her father.

EVEN SO, her 24 years of ministry in Yemen ended when Abed Abdel Razzak Kamel, an Islamist militant armed with a semiautomatic pistol burst into the humble Jibla Baptist Hospital which was serving about 40,000 patients a year.

Interrupting an early morning meeting, the gunman shot the much-loved surgeon along with two fellow missionaries, Bill Koehn and Kathy Gariety. **He later told police he had killed them to "cleanse his religion and get closer to Allah."** The surviving

missionaries were quick to forgive the murderer. "My friends [at the hospital] want you to know that they don't hold anything against the assailant," said Dr. Judy Williams. **"They want him to know that they forgive him and they want him to know God's forgiveness."**

"It's easier to forgive because I know her heart for the people," added her brother-in-law Mark Kingery back home in Alabama.

The people they had served were devastated by the deaths. Yemeni hospital workers built caskets for Koehn and Myers, dug their graves and lowered the bodies into the ground themselves.

"This is my father," one of the Yemeni hospital workers said, referring to Bill Koehn, the slain administrator. "I have to do this."

Hundreds of Yemenis gathered at the hospital for the January 1 memorial service, while many others lined the roads to the hospital. **"Something is happening in my heart,"** said one Yemeni national. **That's not surprising. He had been touched by God's self-sacrificing love which has been changing hearts for over 2000 years.**

"The people here who love us are decimated even more than we are, because they don't see the big picture," said Kaye Rock, another fellow-missionary. "But the Bible says 'Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his saints.' The church is built on the blood of the martyrs, and any of those three people would have gladly given their lives for that."

"They freely chose to give their lives to serve the people of this country," said Dr. Williams. "And although their lives on earth have ended, **nothing was taken from them that they hadn't**

already freely given. The natural reaction to ongoing threats is to flee to a safer place. But that's not an option for those who have trusted God with their lives.

“We can’t let someone with a gun

make us afraid to do what God wants us to do,” said Kaye.

[NOTE: The call of God is NOT that we focus on SAVING OURSELVES! The call of God is NOT that we MURDER the heathen before or less they murder us. (1 Peter 4:12-19) RATHER, the call of God is that we be ready and willing to LAY DOWN OUR LIVES FOR THE GOSPEL’S SAKE.]

"We've been begged not to [leave]," said Lee Hixon, another co-worker. "Many [Yemeni] count these folks as family."

Confident that God is in control, he knows that **"the call of Jesus Christ to take the gospel personally to hurting individuals far outweighs the risks of living in a country like Yemen."**

[AND IN AMERICA... the call of God is no less! WE MUST NOT LET ‘RISKS’ due to the ungodly or even a VIRUS BE THE DECIDING FACTOR!]

So Lee Hixson and others will stay until God leads them out. After all, it's in these hard places that God's love becomes all the more visible.

MOREOVER, nothing spreads God's good news -- and filters out the alluring counterfeits -- more effectively than persecution. For

"...we have this treasure in earthen vessels; that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are

- hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed...

- perplexed, but not in despair
- persecuted, but not forsaken;
- struck down, but not destroyed — always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body."

2 Cor 4:7-10

[End of first section] *****

SO, WHAT ON EARTH ARE WE CHRISTIANS TO DO?

HERE IS USELESS ACTIVITY:

- (1) CURSING the darkness;
- (2) Lamenting, and/or longing for the America that used to be;
- (3) Speculating about the time of the END OF THE WORLD— these are diversions from our God ordained gospel labors!
- (4) BEING RULED BY 'GIANT FEAR!'

When persecuted, the early New Testament Church

- (1) GATHERED FOR PRAYER;**
- (2) REJOICED** in wonder and awe at the SOVEREIGNTY of God;
- (3) Quoted from Psalm 2 to God in prayer;**
- (4) And then FOCUSED** on praying for BOLDNESS to PREACH THE GOSPEL. (Acts 4:23-33)

[THEREFORE,] Psalm 2:11-12; *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.*
BLESSED ARE ALL THEY THAT PUT THEIR TRUST IN HIM."

AGAIN, When Persecuted, the Early New Testament Church

- (1) GATHERED FOR PRAYER;**
- (2) REJOICED** in wonder and awe at the SOVEREIGNTY of God;

(3) Quoted from Psalm 2 to God in prayer;

(4) And then FOCUSED on praying for BOLDNESS to PREACH THE GOSPEL. (Acts 4:23-33)

THE EARLY CHURCH WAS FOCUSED ON GOD'S AGENDA!

Maybe we have forgotten... but GOD'S AGENDA has been and is to SAVE A NUMBERLESS MULTITUDE of sinners out of every nation; teamed up as soldiers of Christ in the building of ONE HOLY NATION, the Church of Jesus Christ.

WHEN THIS IS ALL COMPLETE the holy Wrath of God will be poured out on all the earth; and this present world will be destroyed and there will, at last, be a new heaven and new earth, etc.

OK, SO WHAT MUST WE CHRISTIANS BE DOING?

1. GO FORWARD EMBRACING our God-given ASSIGNMENT:

In other words, let us live Christ-like and preach the Gospel until Jesus calls us home. (Drink deeply of the Epistles of the New Testament and the letters of Jesus to the churches in Revelation 2 & 3 for details of this assignment— they are very clear!)

2. LEARN GOOD LESSONS FROM HISTORY: When China EXPELLED all Christian missionaries and became super oppressive against the CHURCH— INSTEAD of the church disappearing, she began to grow. **The BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS has always been the SEED of the church.** The DEEPENING DARKNESS of our time in history are days of GRAND OPPORTUNITY for the GOSPEL to be lived and preached.

3. SO, YES, "THE DAYS ARE EVIL!" THEREFORE: "REDEEM THE TIME!" [Meditate on Ephesians 5 and 6, for some specific assignments so that we will be ADORNING THE GOSPEL and not CAUSING the Gospel to be BLASPHEMED before a watching world!]

CLEAR REALITY: These are serious, dark days in which we live. BUT AS WE CAN SEE from the Word of God—

(1) The world has always been in darkness.

(2) The Christian's CALLING is not to curse the darkness; nor to POINT disgusting or fearful fingers at those who are citizens of the darkness; NOR TO STOP SERVING THE LORD OUT OF FEAR; NOR TO STOCKPILE guns and ammunition!

(3) [This is not denying a needed path of wisdom in protecting families; protecting church gatherings; **but neither must we** deny the example of the New Testament Church whose PRIMARY PASSION was not their physical safety at any cost; but the advance of the GOSPEL at great cost and abandonment!]

(4) These are days to wholly embrace our God-given assignments, like those in Ephesians 5 and 6; and as in Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8.

(5) AND THESE ARE DAYS for repentance in the churches. OF COURSE, the truth of the Word of God is offensive to a lost world.

IT IS MORE THAN TRAGIC that the Word of God is REJECTED even in Bible-believing churches.

(6) NEVERTHELESS, it is time for pastors and people— FOR US to repent of our own rampart sex sins, and other forms of ungodliness, unrighteousness, lovelessness, and bitterness so that we can **start ADORNING the gospel** before a watching world rather than blaspheming the gospel before a watching world.

(7) O GOD, WE HAVE FOUND THE CHIEF ENEMY AND PROBLEM OF THE BIBLE-BELIEVING CHURCH AND IT IS ME, IT IS US! If godly Daniel could pray 'WE HAVE SINNED!'... Instead of 'they'... then, maybe we should pray like Daniel, in chapter NINE!

“THE DAYS ARE EVIL!” LET US GO FORTH “REDEEMING THE TIME!”

Grace and Peace to all in Christ! James Bell

NEWS NOTES:

1. Saturday, May 23, * 8:00am — Men’s Bible Study: Studies in Titus.**

2. Sunday, May 24, * 9:30am** Sunday School: Nursery, Children’s classes, Youth, and Adult classes scheduled.

3. May 24, 10:45am WORSHIP SERVICE. [WE HAVE ABUNDANT SPACE so that 6ft OR more DISTANCING will be EASILY SET UP AND MAINTAINED in the worship hour!

4. WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ 6:30pm— ** Adult Prayer Service ** Young FAMILIES Prayer Service ** Youth Bible Study

5. May 26... Ladies Bible Study! (Prayer time, 10:30-10:45am) BIBLE STUDY @ 11am... studies on Women of the Bible

BE SAFE IN MAY:

1. IF YOU ARE SICK... OR if you are presently in a state of high immune deficiency or if (at home or work) you are caring for one who is sick— WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT ATTEND any of our gathered services. [If you have • **Fever**; • Coughing; • • Chills; • Headache; • Sore throat; etc.... **please stay home!**]

2. IF YOU ARE HEALTHY and well... you may or may not choose to wear a mask... or gloves... WE do not require; we WILL NOT provide such.

3. WE ask you to practice ‘social distancing’— 6ft apart... you will be seated at least 6ft apart. WE EXPECT THAT EACH OF YOU WILL DO YOUR PART IN personal hygiene. *IF you use the restrooms— please wash your hands with SOAP before leaving... and once outside the bathroom... use nearby SANITIZER.*

4. LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD: When each of you arrive in the auditorium for the WORSHIP SERVICE... **YOU PLACE YOUR OFFERINGS IN THE PLATES....** WHICH will be on the Communion Table and on the FRONT middle Pew... or... on BACK of Auditorium table.

5. CHILDREN IN THE WORSHIP SERVICE... THEY ARE NOT TO BE OR TO GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT A PARENT AT THEIR SIDE...

7. We will find ourselves at ‘different places’ and with ‘different beliefs about how to respond to the COVID-19 matter. WE MUST GIVE RESPECT AND HONOR TO EACH OTHER... REGARDLESS!

8. May Events on Sundays: ** **May 24-** Missionaries Nathan and Rachel Waldock. *** **May 31-** ORDINATION SERVICE for Jaden Allen

FOR THOSE AT HOME: THE 10:45am LIVE STREAMING of the worship service for May 24... **SIMPLY GO TO OUR CHURCH WEBSITE: www.southsidegallatin.org**

***** JOYFUL HEART LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD, for ministry through Southside and through MISSIONARIES:**

1. SUCH funds, (if checks), make out to Southside Baptist) — MAIL TO: Southside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1594, Gallatin, TN 37066

2. OR, you may choose to GIVE, via ONLINE GIVING @

<https://southsidebaptist.breezechms.com/give/online>