

GROW IN GRACE NEWSLETTER

Volume 45, No. 29, July 21, 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!"***

SOUTHSIDE— CALLED TO BE A VISIBLE EXPRESSION of CHRIST'S CHURCH!

A man was long wandering in a harsh blizzard, fearing he would never find home. Finally, he came to a door. He knocked. The door opened and in front of him— EVERY SMILING FACE was known to him and welcomed him— he was HOME AT LAST!

IN A FAR GREATER WAY, the local assembly/local church/local CONGREGATION is ORDAINED of God SO THAT CHRISTIANS are PLACED in the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit for genuine community, protection, fellowship, worship, and ministry! (1 Corinthians 12:13-27; Ephesians 4:11-16) HOW VITAL & PRECIOUS TO HAVE FAMILY IN CHRIST!

PROBLEM: Multitudes of professing Christians are strangers to community, fellowship, worship, ministry, and FAMILY in concert with fellow saints in a local congregation! **[ALARM: IN OVER 50 YEARS OF PASTORAL MINISTRY, I HAVE NEVER KNOWN OF A CHRISTIAN WHO FLOURISHED IN THE FAITH— WHO**

ISOLATED HIMSELF/HERSELF FROM active PARTICIPATION and MINISTRY in and submission to a local family of saints in Christ!]

SOCKINGLY, while about 73% of Americans claim to be Christians — only about 31% attend worship services, as much as ONCE a month! In addition, George Barna’s research shows “**that only 17% of Christians who consider their faith important and attend church regularly actually have a biblical worldview.**”

In other words, when decisions or choices are to be made... even from a congregation’s most faithful attenders— **only about 17% of them will get their beliefs and make their decisions based on WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES!**

A few years back, H.B. London, Jr. and Neil B. Wiseman did extensive research as to trends in evangelical churches of our day.

These Researchers found that,

1. Far too many church members are “Centered on their own comforts, achievements, and happiness rather than on the needs of others ... [they] are easily enticed by cultural non-values... [they] place more value on success and show than on spiritual reality and wholehearted repentance and authentic holy living.” (Page 25)

2. “Like wild geese, church members are on the move— not leaving the church, just moving to another local congregation... Today, long-held assumptions about doctrinal devotion and congregational commitments no longer apply. **Fewer and fewer people choose a church or continue to attend because of biblical teaching...**” (Page 35-36)

(NOW, in 2020, MANY ARE LEAVING congregational life altogether.)

3. "... It is estimated that 80 percent of 'church growth' in recent years is a result of people moving [to] megachurches... **which generally emphasize the worshiper rather than God— their worship includes lots of contemporary music, drama... and sermons... with a minimum of exegesis of Scripture.**" (Page 36)

4. "[Today's] Consumer [church folk]... want church programs and [and music] to appeal to varied interests and [preferences] ... **they choose a church on the basis of what it does for them** rather than what they can do for it. [MANY] even feel uncomfortable with the biblical language of sin and salvation." (Page 39-40) THUS: **"Today, 'believers' seldom evaluate life [OR CHURCH CHOICES] by biblical truth!"** (Page 42)

THESE KINDS OF SAD RESEARCH REPORTS are limited, for **THEY MAKE NO DISTINCTION between the TRUE BRIDE OF CHRIST and the anti-Christ system's HARLOT!**

WAKE UP CALL:

**** If we are IN THE BRIDE—** we are motivated by and we use strategy tools which line up with HOLY SPIRIT revelation which is set forth in THE WORD OF GOD.

**** If we are IN THE HARLOT—** we are motivated by that which appeals to the flesh; and we use THE ARM OF THE FLESH in seeking to build up congregations.

THE HARLOT, so called 'CHURCH'— she is an adulteress. She loves the world and is loved by the world. Thus, the love of the

Father is not in her! (1 John 2:15) **The great harlot and her daughters are in explosive end-time revival!** It is a revival that pleases the flesh. It is a revival that offers the comfort of “religion” while at the same time **allowing deceived masses to keep their sin and their ego.**

At the harlot (Wide Gate!) church (Matthew 7:13-27) there is no need of denying yourself, taking up your cross daily, and following Jesus. **HOWEVER, JESUS TELLS US that God did not plant her and in due time, she shall be rooted up! (Matthew 15:13)**

AND... ONE DAY HER MANY PASTORS WILL HEAR STUNNING WORDS FROM JESUS: “I NEVER KNEW YOU... DEPART! (Matt. 7:21-23) Many and VARIED (Matthew 7:13-14) are ‘WIDE GATE’ Harlot Churches.

BUT ALSO KNOW THIS: A member of “the Harlot” may be found in the midst of a true expression of Christ’s church— **FOR THE WHEAT (The Bride) and tares (The Harlot) often grow together!** (Matthew 13:24-30) **IN THE PULPIT or in the PEW, let each one of us ask: “Does the spirit of the Harlot live in me?”**

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST:

The true Church of Jesus Christ is comprised of ALL those personally **“planted” by** God the Father (Matthew 15:13); and **personally given to God the Son** by God the Father! (John 17:2); and personally **CHOSEN BY GOD** BEFORE THE FOUNDATION of the world! (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9)

MEMBERS of the BRIDE OF CHRIST experience the life of God in their souls by the miracle of new birth and revival by the Spirit

of God, feeding souls on the profitable Word of God! (Matthew 4:4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17, 4:1-4)

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST: Those who all their lives had **been** dead in sin, and living according to the course of this present world, and duped by the devil, and under the holy and just wrath of God (Ephesians 2:1-3) — **NOW BY THE GRACE OF GOD are** BORN AGAIN, set free from satan; and set free from sin's guilt, power, and domination by the precious blood of Jesus and by the LIFE-GIVING power of the Holy Spirit who now resides in all true saints of God. (Ephesians 2:4-10)

WHO IS IN THE BRIDE?

Ultimately, the Bride, the LAMB'S Wife, is the redeemed of all ages whose sin has been washed away by the BLOOD OF THE LAMB! THE BRIDE IS ALL those who, by grace, in both Old and New Testament eras of time, CEASED to be 'in Adam' and were or will be PLACED IN CHRIST! (Every human has their identity EITHER 'in Adam' or 'In Christ! The faith of all Old Testament saints, looked forward to the redemptive work of Christ; we in the New Testament era, look back to the same. From Genesis 3:15 right through the Revelation is the glorious SCARLET THREAD OF THE LAMB OF GOD!)

Thus, when all the 'dust of time' has settled and FUTURE ETERNITY shines forth ***with the total fruit from CHRST'S substitutionary sacrifice***— ALL THE REDEEMED will be in the experience of that which God gave the Apostle John a SPECIAL VISION OF— **THE BRIDE, THE LAMB'S WIFE, comprised of all the redeemed of all ages whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life: Revelation 21:9-27**

THE BRIDE'S 'LOYALTY' FACTOR IS UNIQUE!

R.E. Bieber correctly reminds us that,

*** The True BRIDE of Jesus Christ is comprised of **people to whom and in whom** the Kingdom (the RULE) of God has already come!

*** The True Bride of Christ is **a people over whom** the Spirit of God is already sovereign. Jesus reigns in His TEMPLE by His Holy Spirit!

*** The True Bride of Christ is **a people among whom** the Lordship of Christ is already being received. The Christian DOES NOT 'make Jesus LORD!'—JESUS IS LORD!

***** *THUS, FOR the True Bride of Christ, the real and only loyalty factor is Jesus Christ the Lord!***

*** **The Bride** listens to and receives the Word of God.

*** **The Bride** goes forth out into her world as a people sent forth by Jesus Christ.

Members of the Bride of Christ are—

*** **FOLLOWERS** in the steps of Jesus!

*** **PUPILS** at the feet of Jesus!

*** **SERVANTS** submitting to the commands of Jesus!

*** **AMBASSADORS** of Jesus to a lost world!

*** **And they are WORSHIPERS OF THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD!**

None have perfection; but all are possessed of a genuine, life-changing love for Jesus because He first loved them! (1John 4:10, 19)

EXAMPLES OF THE BRIDE OF CHRIST!

***** EXAMPLE ONE:** Acts 2:36-47; 8:1-4 — In these verses we see that **when the lost are born again by the Spirit of God— No one has to beg, bribe, pamper, threaten, or motivate! Discipleship is on automatic! There is an INDWELLING COMPELLING by the Holy Spirit!**

***** EXAMPLE TWO:** Over 450 years ago, a 14 year old lad, (because of having witnessed a genuine expression of the Bride of Christ), was moved to search out where such believers met. He found a group, meeting in a nearby home.

*The YOUTH and the YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM of this church was the same as their OLDER adult program— **JESUS!***

Fourteen year old Cornelis stated that,

*“...*** Their witness of faith, *** their serious study of the Word, *** their joy in life, (Though they were persecuted), and *** their concern for love and moral integrity all excited him....”*

Before long, by the power of the gospel of Christ, Cornelis was saved; and then disciplined by the ADULT saints— they did not have fun and games youth or adult department!

By age 17, Cornelis was so dynamic in his love for Jesus that **the Harlot “church” wanted to get him to recant his simple faith in Jesus.**

The Harlot arrested him, tortured him, **and at the same time promised Cornelis “a future of honor and position if he would turn....” from Christ.**

Calmly he replied,

“There is no higher position than to be a child of God and no greater honor than to be a voice for Him!”

Cornelis survived many tortures with a Christ-like spirit, before being burned at the stake at age 21. (This account from, *Faithful Unto Death*, by Myron Augsburger)

CRITICAL NOTE: The Bride of Christ is willing to be tortured and even killed... but she is not willing to inflict such on others.

God may not call you, or I, or our youth to martyrdom.
HOWEVER, IN OTHER PARTS OF OUR WORLD, this very day
growing numbers are becoming Martyrs for Christ! AND WE MUST
 be developing a spirit like theirs!

“BRIDE” MEMBERS AT SOUTHSIDE:

***** WE MUST BE ‘ACTS 2’ BRIDE OF CHRIST CHRISTIANS—**
WITH, [1] No begging to be faithful— AND [2] having an
INDWELLING COMPELLING to worship and serve Christ.

***** [3] WE MUST BE AS TEENAGER** Cornelis Aertsz De Man—

“There is no higher position than to be a child of God and no greater honor than to be a voice for Him!”

Let it so be among us!

FINAL QUESTIONS:

There are only two churches in my town OR in your town!
Let each of us dare to ask:

***** To which Church do I belong?**

***** Which church am I helping to build?**

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

James Bell www.southsidegallatin.org

NEWS NOTES:

EVERY Saturday, * 8:00am — Men’s Bible Study: New Studies— “SPECIAL, NEEDED WORDS FROM THE WORD OF GOD... FOR MEN!”**

****** NEXT Ladies Bible Study— August 4, 11:00am: Women of the Bible!**

SUNDAY— July 26:

***** Sunday School at 9:30am:** Nursery, Children’s classes, Youth, and Adult classes.

***** WORSHIP SERVICE at 10:45am!**

****** CHURCH-WIDE DISCIPLESHIP, 6:00PM...**

New Study Series, by R. C. Sproul: PRAYER: “Intimate communion with God is at the heart of our relationship with Him. Through Christ we are accepted by God and enabled to call upon Him as our LORD and FATHER!”

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ SOUTHSIDE:

6:30pm— ** Adult Prayer Service

**** Young FAMILIES Prayer Service**

**** Youth Bible Study**

***** HEALTH REMINDERS as to CHURCH SERVICES**

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; **or 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 CONTINUE to encourage FREEDOM... as to ‘social distancing’— 6ft apart... give sensitivity and respect one to another.

4. LET each of us DO OUR PART IN personal hygiene. *IF you use the restrooms— please wash your hands with SOAP; and use nearby SANITIZER.*

5. IT IS A MATTER OF SAFETY for all, (ESPECIALLY for SENIOR ADULTS), CHILDREN IN THE WORSHIP SERVICE— no unsupervised Children!

6. THOSE AT HOME: TO RECEIVE THE 10:45am LIVE STREAMING of the worship service for July 26 ... SIMPLY GO TO OUR CHURCH WEBSITE: www.southsidegallatin.org

[At the same location, you can access our YOUTUBE page... and view/listen to previous services; Men’s and Ladies Bible Studies!]

7. LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD BY MAIL or ONLINE GIVING:

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

**OR, you may choose to GIVE, via ONLINE GIVING @
<https://southsidebaptist.breezechms.com/give/online>**