

GROW IN GRACE NEWSLETTER

Volume 45, No. 37, September 15, 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!"***

PREPARING FOR OCTOBER 2020— A MONTH of PRAYER and FASTING! October 1-31, 2020: BECAUSE OF OUR CALL TO BE CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS IN A DARK, DARK WORLD— this article SHOULD help us to understand why we have GREAT NEED for Church-Wide Prayer Meetings!

"For if a man is in Christ he becomes a new person altogether— the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new.

*All this is God's doing, for He has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ; and He has made us **agents of the reconciliation**. God was in Christ personally reconciling the world to Himself — not counting their sins against them —and **has commissioned us with the message of reconciliation. We are now Christ's ambassadors**, as though God were appealing direct to you through us. **As His personal representatives we say, "Make your peace with God."**~~ Phillips paraphrase. 2 Cor. 5:17-20*

WE MUST JOIN TOGETHER IN PRAYER FOR WE ARE ON MISSION FOR CHRIST IN A CHRISTIAN-HATING, SIN-LOVING, COVID-FEAR-FILLED-QUARENTINED WORLD... And ONLY GOD can DO the work of God— SO we must PRAY!

I. THE CONDITIONS ON OUR MISSION FIELD REMAIN THE SAME!

THE NATURAL BENT OF HUMAN HEARTS IN 2020, and beyond is more of what has been: 2 Timothy 3:1-5— *"This know also, that **in the LAST DAYS** perilous times shall come. For **men shall be** lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents,*

*unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: **from such turn away.**" **THERE ARE MANY ANTICHRISTS:** 1 John 2:18— *Little children, **it is the LAST TIME:** and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; **whereby we know that it is THE LAST TIME.****

THERE ARE MOCKERS, SCORNERS, and SCOFFERS with sensual PASSIONS: Jude 1:17-19— *But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that **they told you there should be mockers in THE LAST TIME,** who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. **These be they** who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.*

MORE SPECIFIC WORDS FROM JESUS ABOUT CONDITIONS ON OUR MISSION FIELD— in the **PLACES** where we are to be serving as **Ministers of RECONCILIATION, AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST,** we will find,

Matthew 24:4-5: DECEPTION- There have been, are and will be false prophets, false religions and false Messiahs who **DECEIVE MANY— Take HEED!**

Matthew 24:6-7: WAR- A mark of the entire age will be war and more war, escalating to **WORLD WARS.**

Matthew 24:7: Famines, diseases, and earthquakes in many places. **[REALITY:** Wars, famines, diseases, and earthquakes **DO NOT** demonstrate that we are of necessity near the end of the end times! **JESUS SAYS** in Matthew 24: 6 & 8— ***'The end is not yet... these are the beginnings of sorrows...'*** Again, all these things **SPAN** the entire **ENDTIME** from Christ's return to heaven to His return back to earth!]

Matthew 24:9-10: PERSECUTION- hatred of true Christians... **BETRAYAL** of Christians... **Martyrdom!** This has been, is, and will be reality in the Last Days, until the return of Christ!

Matthew 24:10-13: Many PROFESSING CHRISTIANS leave the faith. Many of these historically have, do, and will join the **HARLOT WORLD CHURCH** and betray true saints!

Matthew 24:11-12: More and more False Prophets. BEWARE: They come in sheep's clothing but are ravaging wolves! (Matt. 7:15) They appear (2 Cor. 11:13-15) as 'ministers of righteousness.' [**Note:** Regardless of the timing of 'end-time' events, the situations Jesus set forth in Matthew 24, have been and are reality, in varying degrees and at different times.]

[ALERT: Articles, books, podcasts, and seminars are coming out, all giving information about how to make adjustments SO AS to successfully HAVE CHURCH in a COVID-QUARANTINED WORLD. FINE! BUT IF THE INFO DOES NOT SET FORTH the truth of the ABOVE SCRIPTURES— FLEE!]

STATISTICS ABOUT SOUTHSIDE'S IMMEDIATE MISSION FIELD OF GALLATIN AND SUMNER COUNTY: [NOTE: Although the stats are dated; I have no reason to believe that there has been any significant change in the percentages shown below.]

In 2000, Sumner County population was over 130,000. (**In 2011** there were a little over 166,000; **in 2020- right at 195,000**)

In 2000, **Over 55%** of the population stated that they had no religious affiliation. **In 2000** there were a little over 40,000 folks (about 31%) **who claimed to belong** to some sort of religious group. **In 2000**, the total number **claiming to attend** some sort of religious meeting, including all religions, cults, etc., was a little **under 20,000**.

In other words, in 2000, on any given weekend, ONLY about 15%-16% of folks in Sumner County were/are attending any sort of religious service. Again, this includes NOT ONLY the Born Again; but also all of the folks who are in man-made religions and/or they are in cults and/or in the 'rank liberal' churches. **SO, how many folks in Sumner County, 20 years later, are attending religious services of some sort?** *Assuming a MORE THAN generous 20% of the 195,000 residents— that would be about 39,000 people on a given weekend, attending some sort of religious service in Sumner County.*

NOTE: EVEN IF ALL OF THE 39,000 WERE SAVED, BORN AGAIN— **THAT STILL LEAVES around 80% or 156,000 who are NOT saved.** **THEREFORE:** In our immediate Mission Field of Gallatin and Sumner County, **about 80%** of the residents are presently DEAD IN THEIR SINS!

What about GALLATIN? In 2020, Gallatin has a population of a little over 44,000. Thus, if Gallatin is similar to all of Sumner County, then 16%, [BUT LET'S ASSUME **20%... or almost 9,000** folks], **attend** some sort of religious services; **and we will also generously assume** that ALL OF THESE are genuine Christians, THAT WOULD LEAVE 35,000 NOT SAVED..

Again about 80% of our neighbors are DEAD IN THEIR SINS, lost, and on the way to a Christ-less eternity.

THIS IS OUR MISSION FIELD:

1. We live in a SIN DARKENED, satan-deceived mission field. Yes, we can say that there are church buildings on every corner! Probably MOST of the homes have a Bible. Doubtless, a great majority of them have had some Christian heritage in their past.

2. EVEN SO, about 80% of our neighbors are dead in their sins!

3. MOREOVER, the masses of folk in Sumner County and/or Gallatin have many FALSE teachings and concepts of Jesus blasted to them via Television; and many worship the gods of sex, and money, and sports, and houses, and lands, and eating and drinking; AND EVEN SO, many of them believe that they are on the way to heaven?

4. The only hope and the great need is the power of God unto salvation, THE GOSPEL of our LORD Jesus Christ!

[BY THE WAY: The New Testament Christians started GOSPEL LABORS in the city where Jesus was crucified—

AND... THEY PRAYED! What will we do?

II. DIVINE EQUIPMENT FOR AMBASSADORS OF CHRIST!

1. We have the GOSPEL and the POWER of the HOLY SPIRIT!
Romans 1:16: ***For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.***

*Acts 1:7-8: And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. **But ye shall receive***

power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

2. Matthew 24:12-13: AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST POSSESS ENDURING FAITH! A mark of genuine faith is ENDURANCE! NO TURNING BACK! **Even so, in New Testament times, there were already MANY who were ‘falling away’— 1 John 2:18-19. So, why do many fall away? — Matt. 13:19-22!**

3. Matthew 28:19-20: The Great Commission and the SPECIAL PRESENCE OF JESUS with His disciples [HIS AMBASSADORS!] lasts all the way until the END OF THE WORLD! (Matthew 28:19-20)

IN THE WORLD OF 2020 and beyond... OUR GREATEST EVANGELISTIC WEAPONS/TOOLS are and will be:

1. The GOSPEL lived out and made visible by overflowing FRUIT of the Holy Spirit.

2. The GOSPEL preached/proclaimed.

BIG QUESTION: Such a world as described in Matthew 24:1-13— in such a world as that, it would be useless to evangelize— right? The world is getting worse and worse! MAYBE Christians SHOULD bar the doors; Concentrate on holy huddles; and/or try to ‘save the American way’ by politics; etc. — RIGHT?

ACTUALLY in Luke 10:2-3 Jesus says,

1. The harvest is GREAT; **2.** The laborers are few; **3.** PRAY that the LORD of the harvest would send forth laborers; **4. GO your way, BEHOLD I SEND YOU as lambs among the wolves!** (Matt. 10:16-28)

In John 4:34-38, Jesus says, that we are to look on the fields of the world; they are white ALREADY to harvest! **SOW! REAP!**

There are still souls to rescue, SOULS to save! THUS: The real question for us AS A CONGREGATION is this: WILL WE BE A SOUL RESCUING LIGHTHOUSE OR JUST A RELIGIOUS CLUB?

LET’S BE HONEST: OUR REAL PRIORITIES GET TIME,

EFFORT, AND RESOURCES

— EVERYTHING ELSE GET EXCUSES!

Acts 1:6-8: To live and to give the GOSPEL in our kind of world will take POWER beyond us! To be found faithful and NOT among those who turn back in the day of adversity, will take power beyond us! As we saw in Matthew 24:10-12, 1 John 2:18-19 and Matthew 13:19-22— during the last days, many FALL AWAY. **The Apostle Paul wept about this tragic reality: Phil. 2:21; 3:18-19**

BUT AGAIN, HERE'S GREAT NEWS: Christians are possessed with POWER from God to endure, to overcome and even to be BOLD with the Gospel! [Matt.28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:16; 5:1-5]

SOUTHSIDE: We Have a GOD-GIVEN CALLING! 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

*For if a man is in Christ he becomes a new person altogether—the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. All this is God's doing, for he has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ; **and he has made us agents of the reconciliation.** God was in Christ personally reconciling the world to Himself — not counting their sins against them — and **has commissioned us with the message of reconciliation. We are now Christ's ambassadors,** as though God were appealing direct to you through us. As his personal representatives we say, "Make your peace with God."~~ Phillips paraphrase of 2 Cor. 5:17-20*

III. SOUTHSIDE: We Must Embrace GOD-GIVEN Methods!

HERE ARE SOME FOUNDATIONAL METHODS REQUIRED FOR BIBLICAL EVANGELISM:

1. By LOVING one another, all men shall know that we are Christ's true disciples. John 13:34-35

2. HOLY LIVING: We must not BLASPHEME the Gospel... but rather we must ADORN the gospel! Titus 2:1-14

3. We must reject all of the WORKS OF THE FLESH and SEEK TO ALWAYS BE A CHANNEL FOR THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: Gal. 5:19-25

4. We must DISCOVER and utilize the power of GOOD WORKS BEFORE MEN— for such glorifies our Father who is in heaven! (Matthew 5:14-16)

5. WE MUST GIVE GOD THE LORD'S DAY... NOT MERELY THE LORD'S MORNING... BUT THE LORD'S DAY! Isaiah 58: 13-14—

¹³ “Keep the Sabbath day holy. **Don't pursue** your own interests on that day, but enjoy the Sabbath and speak of it with delight as the LORD's holy day. Honor the Sabbath in everything you do on that day, **and don't follow your own desires or talk idly.** (NLT) [WE MUST GIVE GOD SACRED TIME for Kingdom worship and work!]

6. In the church of Jesus Christ there is NO PLACE for spectator Christians! (Ephesians 4:11-16) RATHER: WE ASSEMBLE TO WORSHIP GOD; TO ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER; AND TO BE FURTHER EQUIPPED TO SEEK TO WIN THE LOST... and/or to further minister to the lost.

7. THUS, as a congregation, WE MUST PRAY!

The words of Jesus in Luke 10:2, "*The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.*" GO... I send you... Yet, how do we find un-churched, lost people to whom we can minister? What can we do? Where do we begin?"

Surely one thing we must do in the coming WEEKS AND MONTHS is to take some positive steps to REACH OUT to our neighbors! The Biblical reality IS that the lost are not called to come to us but JESUS commands us to GO TO THEM!

AGAIN: As Jesus has said, "*The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.*

Ask the Lord ... to send out workers into his harvest... GO... I AM SENDING YOU! (Luke 10:2) ***"FOLLOW ME! AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN!"—***

Jesus Prayed and Jesus FISHED!

WALKING IN HIS STEPS, SO WILL WE!

Grace to one and all! James Bell www.southsidegallatin.org

NEWS NOTES:

EVERY Saturday, * 8:00am — Men's Bible Study: New Study— *The Epistle to the HEBREWS, Chapter 1!***

***** NEXT Ladies Bible Study— Tuesday, September 29, 11:00am: Women of the Bible!**

SUNDAYS— September 20, 27:

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

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

Additional Sunday Events:

***** September 20, LORD'S SUPPER, at end of Morning Worship; and HOME GROUPS, in the evening.**

***** September 27, 6:00pm-** Church Wide DISCIPLESHIP... presently an important STUDY on PRAYER, using R.C. Sproul videos...

TUESDAYS: WEEKLY Youth Group Meeting, ages 12 and up ... NOW, Tuesdays a 7:15pm... at Jaden and Rhi's home...

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ SOUTHSIDE: 6:30pm—

**** Adult Prayer Service... NOW... MEETING IN the 'Big Learning Center'... ENTER BACK OF BUILDING, through DOUBLE DOORS, under Drive-Thu Awning**

**** Young FAMILIES Prayer Service**

***** 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.*

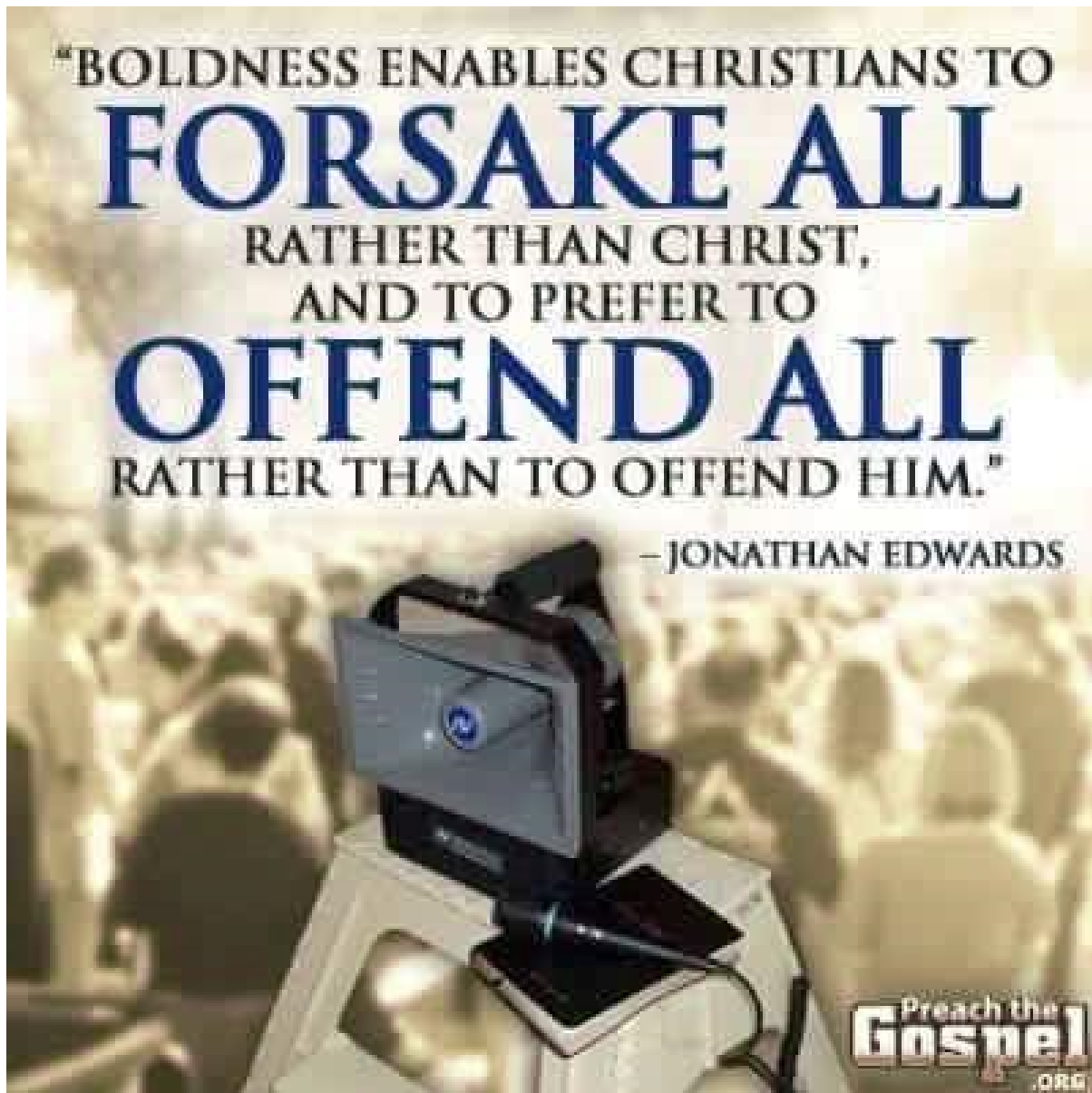
5. IT IS A MATTER OF SAFETY for all, (ESPECIALLY for SENIOR ADULTS), CHILDREN IN THE WORSHIP SERVICE— no unsupervised Children!

6. THOSE AT HOME: TO RECEIVE THE 10:45am LIVE STREAMING of the worship service for September 13 ... SIMPLY GO TO OUR CHURCH WEBSITE: www.southsidegallatin.org [At the same location, you can access our YOUTUBE page... FOR 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>

**"BOLDNESS ENABLES CHRISTIANS TO
FORSAKE ALL
RATHER THAN CHRIST,
AND TO PREFER TO
OFFEND ALL
RATHER THAN TO OFFEND HIM."**

— JONATHAN EDWARDS



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