

THIS NEWSLETTER ARTICLE NEEDS TO BE CAREFULLY READ, MEDITATED UPON, AND ACTED UPON BY ALL OF US!

**GROW
IN
GRACE
NEWSLETTER**

Volume 46, No. 17, April 27, 2021 / 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!"***

PRINCIPLES OF NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH LIFE!

The Bible tells us that Christ is the HEAD of his body, the church, and born again believers are its members. But reading something in the Bible does not mean "having" it. **Far too often churches today do not function as bodies in which the members are connected to the head and to one another in a living, functioning manner.**

HOW ABOUT US? I'm glad my own PHYSICAL body is not in the shape many churches are in— if it were, my mouth might start talking against my ears. My feet might stop listening to my head, etc.

SADLY, in many ways, what MANY FOLK have in church is JUST meetings and activities. But a meeting is not a body. **My body does not get together once a week IF NOTHING BETTER COMES ALONG!** The members of my body are in a relationship all the time. They are in ministry one to another; and together they TEAM UP to minister to those in the world!

Now, being a body (a local church) does not mean being assembled in one place all the time— but it does mean being properly related to one another. How so?

Just this— there is a difference between a rock pile and a building; between a stack of bones and a living, functioning body!

Without committed relationships, the local church is just a collection of arms and legs, hands and feet. Living, functioning connections with the Head and the other members— these make the parts into a glorious body of Christ.

There has to be **submission to the Head. There must be joint connections and mutual submission one to another!**

The only true and enduring basis of unity is to be found in being united to CHRIST by the new birth; and in our recognizing and submitting to the will of JESUS CHRIST OUR HEAD! Thus, certain principles come into play when we begin, as a local church, relating as members of a body.

These PRINCIPLES are like the law of gravity— they work whether we understand them or not!

1. The Principle of Church Government— a person cannot be part of TRUE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST until he confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord.

You cannot come into CHRIST'S body unless you acknowledge JESUS CHRIST the Head of the body because JESUS CHRIST won't have subversion in HIS body. We could call this the "door principle." **Jesus said, "I am the door!"**— HE is the door into the church.

EXAMPLE: Even in an earthly family— if I am going to have fellowship with a family I need to acknowledge and honor the husband and father of the family.

If I have fellowship with a man's wife and I do not acknowledge his headship, my fellowship is going to cause trouble. If I develop a relationship with the children and I do not acknowledge that the parents have responsibility for them, my relationship with the

children is going to make them worse, not better children, because it will be at odds with their parents' training them.

Not only is it ESSENTIAL that all be related properly to the one Head, Christ; but it is IMPORTANT that the members of the body be properly related to others in the local body. In 1 Corinthians 16:15-16, God speaks through the Apostle Paul to us:

"You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers, to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work and labors at it. I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatas, Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition."

If I had gone into the church at Corinth and refused to recognize Stephanas because I protested that, "I recognize God not any man,"— I would have been out of order. **"Submit to men like this," Paul says, "... and recognize them."** (Submit to one another in the body: Ephesians 5:21)

2. The Principle of Fellowship— Fellowship Requires Walking in the Light.

Walking in the light means walking in the truth with each other, living honestly. GOD speaks to us in 1 John 1:7-- ***"If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."*** As Christians in a body of believers walk in the truth and in openness with each other we experience cleansing and the total sufficiency of the continually cleansing blood of Jesus!

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR LAST BACKSLIDING?

BACKSLIDERS will begin to drift out of honest fellowship. **The brother won't show up at the congregational meetings.** When you talk to him he does not really communicate with you. **It is likely that poison is setting in— it may be** the result of the ignorance of CONTAMINATION which comes from gossip, slander, tale-bearing or discord sowing.

IT COULD BE guilt from hidden sin which is taking root. And if the truth be known— his Bible at home is shut.

Staying in fellowship requires walking openly and honestly with one another. Satan, the master liar, claims that we cannot be open and honest because people might think badly of us. There will be voices that say, *"What I do is nobody's business but mine!"*

However, in beautiful healing contrast— GOD calls us: **"Confess your faults to one another. Pray for one another."** (James 5:16) THINK ABOUT IT: We cannot really know how to pray for each other if we do not confess our faults to one another. We say, "Forgive us our sins..." But that is not a confession; that's a generalization... a mere CONSCIENCE SOOTHER!

"Please forgive me for those wicked and evil words I spoke against my spouse, my child, my brother in Christ. O God, it was sin. It was wrong. It was evil in your sight. There is no excuse..." — that's a confession! **REALITY:** If we go on being religious without HONESTY and RECONCILIATION, we are deceiving ourselves.

3. The Principle of Humility— humility is required for Harmony and Success.

Romans 12:10: **"In honor prefer one another."** 1 Peter 5: 5, 6: **"You younger men, be subject to your elders. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you at the proper time."**

Humble yourself, and God will exalt you. **Exalt yourself, and God will humble you. You do your job, God will do His. You**

do His job, He will do yours. Strife is directly traceable to pride. A working body is one where each member serves the body and not merely itself. Serving other members is direct evidence of humility.

Humility is at work when imperfect Christians submit one to another in the fear of God!

To refuse to connect with and submit to a local body of believers is pride. It is a slap in the face of God who has ordained local assemblies and connects us one to another!

4. The Principle of Faithfulness.

Luke 16:10-12: "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much." So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

Let's think more deeply about the matter of being faithful in the little things of life! As to servant leadership, The Bible exhorts us to, "... not lay hands suddenly on anybody - on a novice - lest he be lifted up with pride and fall into the snare of the enemy." A person should start by serving. Every new Christian ought to be given a few things to do, and little things.

For example, there was this brother who had just met the LORD and was all excited and was already looking down his nose at some wayward believer... and this new excited brother wanted to immediately stand up and preach!

THE PASTOR SAID: "Wonderful, you've met Jesus. You're on fire for the Lord. You believe you are full of the Spirit. That's good. That's wonderful.

Now, would you straighten up the chairs for next Sunday morning?"

"Chairs?" he says. "I feel the call of God. I'm ready to stand up and preach!" **"Would you fix up the chairs?"**

"The world is lost and dying. I want to stand in the pulpit and preach, glory to God!"

"Brother, please do the chairs and straighten up the hymnals."

"Praise God, if we had faith, we wouldn't need hymnals!" he replies.

So, when the PASTOR came to the church building for Sunday worship— the chairs WERE not arranged and the hymnals WERE all messed up. THE PASTOR SAID— **"Brother, what happened to the chairs?"** "Well, I didn't feel led to do it. I was praying and fasting, glory to God!"

Now what if later the pastor has a meeting with the elders and a brother says, **"We need somebody to do a certain big job. What about the YOUNG BROTHER WHO'S SO ON FIRE?"**

"Well, he didn't do the chairs,"...

"Well, maybe he wasn't challenged by that. Let's give him a bigger job. Maybe he'll do that." **Will he?**

(Luke 16:10-12) No. Faithful over a few things, faithful over many. Unfaithful over a few things, unfaithful over many. Who said that? Jesus did. When Jesus chose his disciples he started them out at the bottom not at the top. He sent Peter to get the tax money from the fish. He told the disciples to fetch the donkey and get the room ready for the meal. **They served!** Jesus calls us to humble service.

5. The Principle of Liberality— increase Requires Graciousness. When Mary broke her alabaster box at Jesus' feet, Jesus rebuked her critics. In the Lord's eyes, her lavish love

deserved to be remembered wherever the gospel would be preached.

Proverbs 11:25 says, "***The generous man will prosper.***" Liberality is part of the Christian way of life, in which we ought to train the people we are caring for. Paul sent Titus to the Corinthians "to finish this grace" in them, to work graciousness in them (2 Cor. 8:6).

When there is meagerness, miserliness, meanness in the church the wheel turns, but there's friction! Grace is the oil that makes things go smoothly. Those who share and are gracious are those WHO WILL have the greatest revelation of Jesus Christ. GOD IS CALLING US to graciousness in all the relationships.

6. The Principle of Fruitfulness— What One Receives He Must Transmit. "***Unto whom much is given, much shall be required.***" In John 15 Jesus says, "***Herein is the Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.***"

Fruitfulness: Every branch is to bear fruit. "Lord, here's what you gave me, and here's what I did with it." ***Being fruitful is not a position in the church. Being fruitful is bearing people into the kingdom of God. Being fruitful is manifesting Christ-likeness.***

7. The Principle of Administration— Provide Oversight/Care One for Another

Everyone in the church should learn to take at least some degree of spiritual responsibility for each other. The whole idea is for parents to raise children so that they will be mature at a certain age and can go and raise children themselves.

Sadly, I think the church has raised a lot of dependents. Multitudes of Christians have never taken any

responsibility for helping anyone else grow to maturity as Christians. They have watched while others have done it all. One of the important priorities for pastors who are building up a Christian body is to train the members of the body to take on this responsibility.

A successful body of Christians is no accident. It is the result of a body of believers carefully observing God's instruction!

The above are some of the principles that must be observed, according to Scripture.

As we observe the will of the Head, members will properly relate and edify the body. The body will be visibly unified. A functioning mature body can then give itself to doing his will on earth, as it is done in heaven! (Author, unknown... greatly edited)

Grace to all in Christ! / James Bell /

www.southsidegallatin.org

NEWS NOTES:

EVERY Saturday, * 8:00am — Men's Bible Study: *THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS!*** (*Doors open by 7:30am... coffee, juice, donuts, and Hardee's Biscuits are available!*)

***** NEXT Ladies Bible Study— Tuesday, May 4, 11:00am: Women of the Bible! (The "GREAT" WOMAN, 2 Kings 4:8-37)**

SUNDAY SERVICES: May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

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

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

Additional Sunday Events for May 2021:

1. **May 2, Fellowship Meal, after morning worship service.**
2. **May 9, 5:00pm-6:30 pm-** Training Faithful Men, 1689 Confession of faith.
3. **May 16, LORD'S SUPPER, at end of Morning Worship; and HOME GROUPS, in the evening.**
4. **May 23, 5:00pm-6:00pm-** Church Wide DISCIPLESHIP... NEW STUDY... to be announced!
5. **May 30, 5:00pm-FIFTH SUNDAY Church-wide ** SINGING/PRAISE to the LORD; ** SCRIPTURE; and ** a message from the Word, Luke Haskins!**

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

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ SOUTHSIDE:

6:30pm— Come in by the back 'double doors' under the Drive Thru awning! * Adult Prayer Service ** Young FAMILIES Prayer Service

**IT IS A MATTER OF SAFETY for all:
NO UNSUPERVISED CHILDREN
ANY WHERE IN THE CHURCH BUILDING!**

***** 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. WE CONTINUE to encourage FREEDOM... as to 'social distancing'— give sensitivity and respect one to another.

NOTE: In addition to carefulness, good hydration, good nutrition, and sleep— ALSO: so as to SEEK TO HAVE A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM... I PERSONALLY TAKE ELDERBERRY, VITAMIN C, ZINC, GINGER, VITAMIN D, Quercetin, and a good multi-vitamin that includes fiber.

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

TO RECEIVE LIVE STREAMING FOR MAY 2;

OR simply to connect with our YouTube page, for a variety of messages— GO TO: www.southsidegallatin.org

***** LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD BY MAIL or by 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>