

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 38, **No.38B, September 25, 2012** / Southside Baptist Church & Christian School / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."** (2 Peter 3:18)

GENUINE IMPACT CHRISTIANITY!

WE LIVE IN A WORLD that is filled with men, women, and youth who have fallen among the thieves of a multitude of sins and demons! They are stripped, wounded and half-dead:

(1) Stripped of hope, PURITY and even sanity.

(2) Wounded— infected with a fallen nature.

(3) Half dead— that is, possessing living bodies but spiritually they are dead in sin.

In the midst of such a bondage-filled, suffering world— what is my philosophy of life? Using the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) to help us with our question, let each of us ask: **Who am I most like?**

1. The lawyer?

2. The Priest and the Levite?

3. The one fallen among thieves?

4. The Thieves?

5. The Good Samaritan?

Who am I most like? What is my philosophy of life? (Let us also ask this as a church— who are WE most like?)

THIEVES: "What's yours is mine— I'll take it no matter how it hurts you or others, no matter what God says about it!"

These are the lawless— they steal and/or they rape, they kill, they live to destroy others. *What's yours is mine. I'm going to take it!*— **also by means of** discord, backbiting, tale-baring, slander, gossip, bitterness, revenge and/or envy **many individuals, homes, and/or churches are left Stripped; Beaten; Robbed; Nearly dead.**

The Priest and the Levite: "What's mine is mine and I'm not going to share it!"

The priest and the Levite had opportunity to relieve pain and woe. But, for whatever reason, they passed by. They gave themselves to their worship rituals; but not to ministry to those in need. **What about us?**

The Good Samaritan: *“What’s mine is Thine, O LORD! I’ll give others what I have. Freely I have received; freely I give.”*

The Good Samaritan forgot himself. He forgot his inadequacies and in self-denial he went to the man in need and began to minister.

Compassion sees hurt, broken hearts, and broken lives. **Compassion** stops, goes to the needy, and starts ministering!

PLEASE NOTE: Wisdom and grace to bind up wounds and pour in oil comes **as the task is being done!**

CONSIDER: As an overflow of loving Jesus **it is a part of normal Christian living to focus on ministering to the needs of the stripped, the wounded, and the half-dead.** Surely, saints who are walking in the fullness of the Holy Spirit will manifest the compassion of Jesus!

JESUS DOES NOT CALL AND EQUIP DISCIPLES SO THAT THEY CAN CONCENTRATE ON ‘HOLY HUDDLES’ AND ‘CHRISTIAN FUN!’

He sends us out to ‘fish’ for the souls of neighbors! **BUT WHO are the stripped, wounded, half-dead neighbors and where are they?**

Each one of us will find plenty of them on the road of our lives.

If we don’t know any of them and/or if we do not see any of them— **maybe it’s because we’ve passed by on the other side!**

It’s easy to ‘pass by’— even in the church house. We gravitate to those we know and they know us.

It happens in homes. We live in our own little world and pass by on the other side while family members are wounded.

It happens in our community, neighborhood and work place.

Why? Maybe we don’t want to pay the price. Maybe we assume disqualification for service because of feeling inadequate.

Or maybe we no longer believe in the power of the gospel to transform ‘hard’ cases!?

THE FOLLOWING FIGURES, OVER 10 YEARS OLD, have not gotten better:

88 Million people in America are chemically dependent or living with someone who is. One out of every 4 families suffers from alcohol/drug related problems. There are 37 million food addicts. There are 30 million children of alcoholics. 25 to 35 percent of women in America suffer sexual abuse before adulthood.

Anger, discord and divorce are raging; as is all manner deadly immorality.

Bottom line: 60 to 75 percent of all visitors who walk in the doors of a church service in America are battling with some sort of dysfunctional family problems and/or

addictions. **This is our mission field! (And what are the percentages for the members?)** The mission field is often right in the membership!

HOW SHOULD CHURCHES, HOW SHOULD CHRISTIANS RESPOND? By actions, body language and sometimes even by words many church folk are in reality saying— “I go to church. I believe in Jesus but I beg thee have me excused! I AM NOT QUALIFIED to minister to the hurting masses!”

In similar fashion many PASTORS say, “We believe in Jesus. We worship Jesus. We sing His praises. We serve the LORD— HOWEVER, **we are not qualified... NOR do we have time** to minister to the enslaved masses after the fashion of the Good Samaritan. THEREFORE, we send all of the enslaved masses to qualified Counselors, or to a specially trained Staff person or to Psychiatrists, etc.”

FURTHER REALITY: The expectations placed upon most pastors are that they increase attendance, financial giving and baptisms; and that they use creativity to keep the crowd coming back for more exciting ‘Christian entertainment’ *sprinkled with lite* Bible preaching.

Nevertheless: 60 to 75 percent of all visitors who walk in the doors of a church service in America are battling with some sort of dysfunctional family problem and/or addiction.

This is our mission field!

And obviously, our mission field includes the masses who are not going to JUST SHOW UP at our Sundays Services!

Do we have any MISSIONARIES WITH GOOD NEWS for the masses of sin/satan slaves of Gallatin and Sumner County?

WHAT SHALL WE SAY ABOUT THESE THINGS?

1. Foremost, let us debunk a deep seated deception! The Deception is that our world, our mission field is different than the ones of the New Testament era. THE GOSPEL TRUTH:

Our mission field is not, at the core, different from mission fields in any era of time! The ROOT problem has been and still is that all lost people are DEAD in sin and only the POWER OF GOD can raise them to LIFE!

Every human, until or unless they are made ALIVE in Christ Jesus are

- (1) dead in sin;
- (2) walking according to the course of this world;
- (3) walking according to the dictates of satan who works in the lost;
- (4) walking in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind;
- (5) and are by nature children of wrath, under the wrath of God! (Eph. 2:1-3)

2. The Gospel of Christ is sufficient to handle even the most difficult cases. For example, the residents of Corinth were steeped in all manner of, (what we would call), dysfunctional family problems and/or addictions.

Using God’s descriptions, here is a sampling of the deep lifestyles of bondage from which the founding members of the Church at Corinth were delivered— simply by the gospel of Christ!

*“Do you not know that the unrighteous and the wrongdoers will not inherit or have any share in the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived (misled):** neither the impure and immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor those who participate in homosexuality, Nor cheats (swindlers and thieves), nor greedy graspers, nor drunkards, nor foulmouthed revilers and slanderers, nor extortioners and robbers will inherit or have any share in the kingdom of God.*

And such some of you were [once]. But you were washed clean (purified by a complete atonement for sin and made free from the guilt of sin), **and** you were consecrated (set apart, hallowed), **and** you were justified [pronounced righteous, by trusting] in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the [Holy] Spirit of our God.” (1 Cor. 6:9-11, Amplified Bible)

QUESTION:

In 2012, has the gospel of Jesus Christ lost its power? OR have we abandoned the gospel and settled for a poor substitute?

QUESTION:

What will happen with any Bible believing congregation **who stops** grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit **and who starts** welcoming and being filled with the Holy Spirit?

Answer: We will have testimonies and lifestyles like those of New Testament Christians!

I. We will embrace Paul’s confession of Rom. 1:14-16:

*“**I am debtor** both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, **I am ready to preach the gospel** to you that are at Rome also. 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.**”*

II. When the gospel of God’s amazing, saving grace invades a life there will be Acts 2:36-47 experiences/realities/miracles/changes:

1. Acts 2:36-37— there will be CONVICTION (Also see, John 16:8-11) and a growing realization that it was not merely the Jews or the Romans who crucified Christ — **“No, O God, it was I!”**

2. Acts 2: 38-41— there will be REPENTANCE and FAITH brought on by a supernatural work of the calling of God. (Paul summed up his gospel preaching: Acts 20:19-21— “repentance toward God and faith toward our LORD JESUS CHRIST!”) This ‘repentance and faith’ is expressed in **a glad receiving** of the convicting Word of God

and a **public identification** with Christ in 'death/burial/resurrection' in the waters of baptism.

3. Acts 2:42-47— there will be LIFESTYLE TRANSFORMATION by the gospel! Because the Holy Spirit now INDWELLS the newborn redeemed, many NEW THINGS become STANDARD for all those who are truly saved!

2 Corinthians 5:17— *Therefore if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) **he is a new creation (a new creature altogether)**; the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come! (Amplified)*

Notice the Characteristics of being a New Creation in Christ Jesus, Acts 2:42-47:

- a. **Continual devotion to** the study of the Word of God.
- b. **Learning the doctrines** of the Word of God and having **fellowship** with other believers.
- c. **Partaking of** the LORD'S SUPPER.
- d. **Prayer with** other believers.
- e. **Reverential fear** of God.
- f. **Sharing possessions with** one another so that no one is left 'out in the cold.'
- g. **Sharing meals with** other saints in Christ with gladness and joy.
- h. **Praising** God.
- i. **Having respect from neighbors** who are, doubtless, impressed by the new supernatural lifestyle of the believers.
- j. **Into such an environment, God adds more believers!**

NOTE: To the extent that true saints in Christ are **not** living in the reality of **Acts 2:36-47 Christianity**— we are grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit. **Therefore,** let us be broken and repent. Let the redeemed follow in the steps of the new born redeemed of Acts 2:36-47!

4. When the gospel of God's amazing, saving grace invades a life, (Galatians 2:20; 5:18-23; 6:14), there will be CRUCIFIXION! (Romans 6:14-23; Rom. 8:7-16)

THEREFORE: When a non-Christian or a Believer sees us out in daily life and/or walks into our Sunday School Classes or a Sunday Worship Service

They should witness people who are crucified to sin and self and a people who are risen in Christ, free and led in accordance with Galatians 2:20; 5:18-23; 6:14; Rom. 6:14-23; 8:7-16.

THEY SHOULD WITNESS a people who have and manifest love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control.

They should witness a people of holiness, love and forgiveness! These are all divine realities, divine grace transformations GIVEN to every born again Christian and INDWELLING every born again Christian! **AND WHAT GOD HAS PUT IN US, WE MUST WORK OUT!** (*Phil. 2:12-13*)

They should witness A PEOPLE TAKEN UP WITH THE WORD OF GOD AND RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD: Neh. 8:1-6; Rev. 19:1-6; Col 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

III. When the gospel of God's amazing, saving grace invades a life and we are in tune with the Holy Spirit there will be a TESTIFYING OF WHAT GOD HAS DONE FOR OUR SOUL!

1. Psalm 22:22, 25—

I will declare thy name unto my brethren: **in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation:** I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

2. Psalm 35:18— I will give thee thanks **in the great congregation:** I will praise thee among much people.

3. Ps. 66:16— Come *and* hear, all you who fear God, And ***I will declare what He has done for my soul.***

4. Psalm 107— Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good! For His mercy *endures* forever. **Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,** Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy...

IMAGINE THE IMPACT that THE FOLLOWING PRACTICE WILL MAKE!

1. While we may chat a little about the weather, work or 'the game'— **the highlight of our conversation**, (before Sunday School, between Sunday School and the Worship hour, after the worship hour and during lunch) **will be something like this:**

"This week... or today... or from Daily Bible reading, or from the Sunday School lesson or from the preached Word of God, etc... GOD SPOKE TO ME!"

"God spoke to me today **convicting me of** ____!"

God spoke to me today **encouraging me with** ____!"

God spoke to me today **instructing me about** ____!"

God spoke to me today **rebuking/correcting** me of _____"

“GOD SPOKE TO ME TODAY and brought me **from death to life!** Praise God I am now saved!”

CAREFUL NOTE: We have famous so called 'Bible Teachers' and others going around... and they are often speaking of something 'GOD TOLD THEM'-- but what they are claiming is direct revelation from God... other than what the Bible actually says. Above, we are only speaking of prayerfully receiving the pure Word of God and then applying it to our lives. This is a valid use of the phrase 'God spoke to me....'

2. In other words, when we READ/STUDY the Word of God and/or when we participate in a group Bible Study and/or when we sit under the sound of the preaching of the Word of God— we must be asking ourselves questions like—

Is there a sin to confess?

Are there promises to claim?

Are there commands of God to obey?

Are there examples to follow?

Is there error to avoid?

Is there truth to believe?

Is there PRAISE and THANKSGIVING to give to God?

3. And then, we TESTIFY in the midst of the Congregation: Psalm 35:18— I will give thee thanks **in the great congregation:** I will praise thee among much people. **Ps. 66:16—** Come *and* hear, all you who fear God, **and I will declare what He has done for my soul.**

THINK OF THE IMPACT THIS WILL HAVE ON EVERYONE IN THE CONGREGATION! UNLESS WE ARE CONTENT TO JUST 'PLAY CHURCH', THIS WILL BE AN EXCITING, EVERY SUNDAY EVENT!

IV. WHEN A VISITOR WALKS INTO ONE OF OUR S.S. CLASSES AND/OR WORSHIP SERVICES... OR INTO OUR HOMES they should witness A CONGREGATION OF MINISTERS, SERVANTS OF CHRIST WHO ARE ALL SIGNIFICANTLY INVOLVED, 'ADDICTED' TO TRUE CHURCH WORK! (1 Cor. 12:7- 13:8)

Practically, what does this 'Church work' look like?

You may never sing in the Choir, preach a sermon, teach a S.S. lesson or be set before the congregation as a deacon.

But every Christian is equipped by the Holy Spirit and commissioned to actively carry out the following ministry:

1. "...Be at peace with each other" (Mark 9:50)
2. "...Wash **one** another's feet" (John 13:14)
3. "...Love **one** another..." (John 13:34-35; John 15:12, 17)
4. "Love **one** another"(Romans 13:8)
5. "Be devoted to **one** another in brotherly love..." (Romans 12:10)
6. "Honor **one** another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10)
7. "Live in harmony with **one** another..." (Romans 12:16)
8. "...Stop passing judgment on **one** another"

(Romans 14:13) 9. "Accept **one** another, then, just as Christ accepted you..." (Romans 15:7)

10. "...instruct **one** another" (Romans 15:4) 11. "Greet **one** another with a holy kiss..." (Romans 16:16; I Corinthians 16:20, II Corinthians 13:12; I Thessalonians 5:26) 12. "...When you come together to eat, wait for each other" (I Corinthians 11:33) 13. "...Have equal concern for each other" (I Corinthians 12:25)

14. "...Serve **one** another in love" (II Corinthians 13:12) 15. "Carry each other's burdens..." (Galatians 6:2) 16. "If you keep on biting and devouring each other...you will be destroyed by each other" (Galatians 5:15) 17. "Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other" (Galatians 5:26) 18. "...Be patient, bearing with **one** another in love" (Ephesians 4:2) 19. "Be kind and compassionate to **one** another..." (Ephesians 4:32)

20. "...forgiving each other..." (Ephesians 4:32) 21. "Speak to **one** another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" (Ephesians 5:19) 22. "Submit to **one** another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21)

23. "...in humility consider others better than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3) 24. "Do not lie to each other..." (Colossians 3:9) 25. "Bear with each other..." (Colossians 3:13) 26. "...Forgive whatever grievances you may have against **one** another" (Colossians 3:13)

27. "Teach...[**one** another]" (Colossians 3:16) 28. "...admonish **one** another" (Colossians 3:16) 29. "...make your love increase and overflow for each other" (I Thessalonians 3:12) 30. "Encourage **one** another" (I Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11; Hebrews 10:25) 31. "...Build each other up..." (I Thessalonians 5:11) 32. "Encourage **one** another daily..." (Hebrews 3:13) 33. "Spur **one** another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24)

34. "...Do not slander **one** another" (James 4:11) 35. "Don't grumble against each other" (James 5:9) 36. "Confess your sins to each other..." (James 5:16) 37. "...Pray for each other" (James 5:16) 38. "...Love **one** another deeply, from the heart" (I Peter 1:22, 4:8) 39. "...Live in harmony with **one** another..." (I Peter 3:8) 40. "Greet **one** another with a kiss of love" (I Peter 5:14) 41. "Offer hospitality to **one** another without grumbling" (I Peter 4:9) 42. "Each **one** should use whatever gift he has received to serve others..." (I Peter 4:10) 43. "...Clothe yourselves with humility toward **one** another..." (I Peter 5:15) 44. "Love **one** another" (I John 3:11, 23; 4:7,11,12; II John 5)

Final Note: The above '44 commands' are God's assignment for all saints in Christ! And Jesus is saying:

*"If a man [woman, youth, child] love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. **He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings:** and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."* (John 14:23-24)

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

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES!

1. Tuesdays, 10:30am— Ladies Bible Study!

2. WEDNESDAYS: PRAYER SERVICE at 7:00PM!

YOUTH: Wednesdays, 6-8pm @ Adam and Bethany's home.

3. Thursdays @ 6:30pm: OUTREACH VISITATION

4. EVERY SATURDAY @ 8:00am: Men's Fellowship and Bible Study

Sunday Schedule for September 30

1. 9:30am- Sunday School

2. 10:45am- Morning Worship / Children's Church

3. Noon Fellowship 'Covered Dish' Meal

4. 1:00pm- Early Afternoon Service

Southside Christian School:

Students entering SCS for the first time are diagnostically tested and placed in class-work where they are actually performing— thus, existing 'learning gaps' are discovered and remedied. A student can enter SCS at any time, begin work and go forward without having been left behind.

Please VIEW the video! Then call us: 615-452-5951

<http://www.aceministries.com/curriculum/?content=presentingACE>