

# GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 38, **No.42, October 23, 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)

**WITHDRAW OR SERVE CHRIST IN THE MIDST!?** (Edited from R.E. Bieber)

**There seem to be more and more warnings of approaching worldwide catastrophe.** Events change day by day— the Middle East, earthquakes, floods, fires, volcanoes, tornadoes, wars and rumors of wars, economic meltdown, etc. Not surprising, with every new set of EVENTS, there is a new Chorus of, "Is this the beginning of the End? Is history out of control?"

**If we are close to the beginning of the End, what are Christians supposed to do?** Do we need to focus on buying land in remote areas, so that when the chaos comes near we have a possible place of escape? There is growing evidence of difficult, even dire days ahead. But what are we to do? Fear-mongering is already flourishing! This much is sure: the same crowd that made MEGA-BUCKS from the threat of Y-2K back in 1997-1999 are making another killing! **Note:** Biblically, there is nothing wrong with alertness and preparation, like the ant! What we are dealing with here is FOCUS and PURPOSE in the midst of times of trouble.

A look in the Word of God and at 2000 years of church history are revealing! Time and again there have been SEVERE HARD TIMES especially for believers. Time and time again believers have suffered torture, been killed, or they are even now in prison for their faith.

**CONSIDER:** Whether we have a reprieve for another few years, or whether things continue to disintegrate until half the cities on earth lie in rubble, **it is essential for believers to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Body of Christ**, as opposed to the fear-mongering of the false prophets. **CONSIDER THIS RESPONSE: "It is hardly a time for believers to leave town and hide in the hills. This is our time of opportunity."**

**LET US HEAR JESUS: "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves." (Matthew 10:16)** Jesus deploys His army to the hot spots of the world, ARMED WITH THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST! I believe we can hear Him saying, "I send you not into hiding, but out where the trouble is!" Presently, that 'hot spot' may be the ungodliness of your work-place or lost neighbors!

BE ALL THESE THINGS AS THEY MAY— WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT JESUS IS IN THE CONTROL ROOM OF THE UNIVERSE! **Revelation 5:1— And I saw in the right hand of him who is seated on the throne a scroll written and on the back, sealed with seven seals...** The scroll is symbolic of Judgment Time. And the breaking of the seals marks the beginning of the End. When a seal is broken and the scroll begins to unravel, things happen on this earth that reveal heaven's judgment— for those who have eyes to see.

***"...and I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?' And no one in heaven or earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, and I wept that no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. Then one of the elders said to me, "Weep not; lo, the Lion of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb, standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth; and he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. Rev 5:2-7***

**REALITY:** "The restraining force, from apostolic days down to this moment, the Power holding back the destructive efforts of the kingdoms of this world is Jesus, the Lamb! HIS KINGDOM IS COMING AND HIS WILL **SHALL BE DONE** ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN! ***"All authority has been given me in heaven and on earth."*** IN THE MIDST, HE HAS BEEN AND IS AND WILL BE SAVING A NUMBERLESS MULTITUDE OUT OF EVERY KINDRED, TONGUE AND TRIBE. So often, **for twenty centuries, Christ's redeemed have suffered in his name... WHILE IT SEEMS that the world just runs wild.**

BUT THE LAMB RULES AND OVER-RULES and the LAMB WILL BREAK THE SEALS! ***"Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say, as with a voice of thunder, "Come!" And I saw, and behold, a white horse (white is not a symbol of good here) and its rider had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer."*** (Revelation 6)

**White Horse: Delusion/Deception/Counterfiet**

***When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" And out came another horse, bright red; its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that men should slay one another; and he was given a great sword.***

**Red Horse: War**

***When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" And I saw, and behold, a black horse, and its rider had a balance in his hand; and I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; but do not harm oil and wine."***

**Black Horse: Famine**

***When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" And I saw, and behold, a pale horse, and its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him; and they were given power over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.***

**Pale Horse: Death/Desolation**

The picture presented here is that everything that occurs now as the End approaches, whether it is the spreading of some new ideology, or a worldwide financial meltdown, or a devastating war, is under the control of things occurring at the headquarters of the universe.

When, finally, the Lamb permits the prince of this world to have his destructive way, all hell breaks loose. And what follows will make every war and cataclysm of past generations look like a rose garden.

Now, there have always been sects inside the church, and heretical groups outside the church that have announced that the End has arrived. While false prophets and false Christs multiply, and hearts harden and turn cynical and cold, it is essential that committed disciples of Jesus have a clear vision of what the Spirit is saying to us now — about the hour in which we live today. **THE CALL IS NOT TO BE AN EXPERT on the details of the timing of prophetic events. The call is not to be a 'prophecy hobbyist!' The call is not to be filled with FEAR. The call is not to withdraw, run or seek to hide.**

**On the contrary, the Spirit of God through the Word of God is reminding us that the Lord Jesus stands above all the things that are happening as the Lamb who was slain, and who is worthy!**

***And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints; and they sang a***

*new song saying, "Worthy art thou to take the scroll and open its seals, for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation..." Rev 5:8-9*

WE NEED TO FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON THE LAMB! He has not changed his attitude, or his nature. He hasn't turned the world over to Satan in disgust. The same mercy that took him to the cross will move him to start breaking the seals, sending this world on its turbulent journey through chaos to the final rest of God's fulfilled kingdom. The Lord Jesus is right on schedule. He won't make a mistake. **The precious last book of the Bible is THE UNVEILING of JESUS CHRIST— and He is Supreme, He is Sufficient, and He is Sovereign!** "The Kingdom of God is coming. The kingdom of satan is falling. God has everything in His control!

**The Spirit of God by the Word of God is not telling us to withdraw.** He is reminding us, on the contrary, that our task, the rougher things get, the hotter the fire burns, is to proclaim the Lordship of Jesus as the hope of all people— to call them to his Banquet Hall and to touch them with the healing of the GOSPEL as a foretaste of the coming glory.

*"And they will deliver you up to tribulation, and put you to death; and you will be hated by all nations for my Name's sake. Then many will fall away and betray one another, and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. Because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold. But he who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come." Matthew 24:9-14*

The gospel of the kingdom is the gospel of the Lamb. Jesus Christ crucified and risen— God's Incarnate Mercy. And this gospel is not PRIMARILY proclaimed from a distance by "gospel satellites," ... television or short-wave— **but by REAL people on the street level!** We are to spread this good news outside the church sanctuary, outside our Christian "inner circle", into the world. **Don't just send a missionary — be one!**

**We go out into the world, and wait our time. We pray. We live God's mercy. When the right opportunity comes, we speak. And we will see results we've never dreamed of. The more difficult living gets, the more dangerous life becomes, the more free, bold, joyful, glad, and authoritative will be our message.**

**The Spirit is not calling us to withdraw.** On the contrary, He is telling us that we are **INVINCIBLE until our work is done!** We cannot be stopped until the job is finished.

***"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men for they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them and the Gentiles." Matthew 10:16-18***

There are countless people living on the earth right now who are going through all this — both the suffering and the power. People who are no different than we are.

***"When they deliver you up, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved." Matthew 10:19-22***

**Nowhere do we even have the hint of a suggestion that we are to run off into the woods and hide in a cave.** We are to be out there in the world, living the gospel and proclaiming the gospel. If we are brought to trial, we'll be told what to say when the time comes. And if we find ourselves having to walk through the valley of the shadow of death, the Lamb will be our comforter! **REALITY:** A great cloud of witnesses shout to us: JESUS AND HIS GOSPEL IS WORTH DYING FOR! **REALITY:** If I do not believe He is worth dying for— I won't live for Him today. Indeed, this fact alone explains the sorry condition rampant in churches today.

**REAL CHRISTIANITY SAYS:** We will be protected as we press on until our work is finished. And when our work is finished, let the bomb fall, let the bullet hit and may God be praised!

**The Spirit of God is not calling us to crawl into a hole and withdraw. On the contrary, He is reminding us that the destination of our journey lies on the other side of the End, in the Kingdom of the Lamb.** Here we have no continuing city, but seek the city which is to come, and...

**what liberty and freedom this gives when our hearts are thus detached from this world!** We are no longer weighed down by everything that goes wrong or by all the uncertainty that surrounds us. We are free to live with our eyes on the world beyond, and our feet on solid ground.

**We live in houses, we drive cars, we have families, we love our children, we enjoy our food, and we rejoice in the sunshine and the blue sky.** At the same time the Spirit of God floods us with the life of heaven

and helps to detach us from the "treasures" on this side until it becomes clear that the only lasting treasure we have, waits for us in the world beyond.

***"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms; provide yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in heaven that does not fail, where no thief approaches, and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the marriage feast, so that they may open to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes..." Luke 12:32-37***

**SELL POSSESSIONS????.... IF HE SAYS SO! But until or unless He does— ENJOY THEM... don't be proud... don't trust in riches... DO GOOD... be RICH in good works! (Read: 1 Timothy 6:17-16)**

You could say that the End really began when Jesus died on that cross. You could say the New Age began when he arose from the grave the Firstborn of the New Creation. **But the climax of these Last Days begins when he starts to break the seals.**

**The issue is not, when will this be? Tomorrow? Next week? 20 years from now? The issue is— are we about KINGDOM BUSINESS... until He comes? Are we withdrawing and building our bridges of escape, or are we going out to where we are being sent?**

***"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."***

***May God help us to go out, and keep going out, and never stop until the end of time.***

Let us be found faithful!! Grace to all! James Bell

## **SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES!**

**CHURCH-WIDE OUTING: THIS FRIDAY: 10/26/12 BONFIRE! At Kevin and Jody Allens, 1008 Northshore Drive, Castalian Springs.** Arrive at 6pm or after / Bring LAWN chairs / Bring any of the following: **Chili, Hotdogs and Buns / Fixings such as:** Chips, cheese, potato salad, slaw, Ketchup, mustard, etc.... / Drinks / Deserts

**SET ASIDE TIME FOR PRAYER and FASTING— October 15 - November 14, 2012**, Yes, we continue to call Southsiders to band together for a time of prayer and fasting. **There are more than a few reasons** why we call for a time of Prayer and Fasting— here are primary ones:

**1. We need to be much more focused on INTIMACY with and the worship of the KING OF KINGS and LORD of LORDS! 2. We need to be more focused upon and effective in the work of the KINGDOM OF GOD—** modeling the good news of the GOSPEL with our lives and proclaiming the GOSPEL with boldness. **3. We need to heed the Biblical prayer call of 1 Timothy 2:1-3**, "... I admonish *and* urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be offered on behalf of all men, For kings and all who are in positions of authority *or* high responsibility, that [outwardly] we may pass a quiet *and* undisturbed life [and inwardly] a peaceable one in all godliness *and* reverence and seriousness in every way. For such [praying] is good *and* right, and [it is] pleasing *and* acceptable to God our Savior,..."

**4. THE BOTTOM LINE: We** are issuing a call to PRAY FOR one another; to pray for our MISSIONARIES; to pray for those who still abide under the wrath of God; to pray for BOLDNESS in proclaiming the GOSPEL; and to pray for our nation and for all who are in authority!

## **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 October 28**

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

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