

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 39, No.19, May 6, 2013 / 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)

FOUNDATIONS for a Christian Home Over-flowing with Love!

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, ***and does them***, I will liken him to a wise man who **built his house on the rock**: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. **But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine *and does not do them***, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. **And great was its fall.**" (Matthew 7:24-27: NKJV)

Multitudes of couples become miserable, destructive, and their marriages are left in the garbage dump. **In most cases the root problems are very simple:** (1) They either married without a Biblical foundation; (2) or they married without consulting and submitting to the Author of marriage; and/or (3) they left the Biblical foundation they earlier embraced.

I. The Primary Foundation is the NEW BIRTH!

If you are BORN AGAIN, **you have Christ indwelling by His Holy Spirit to empower you. 1. You have been crucified**— you are now dead to living a life for self, the world, and satan. Sin, selfishness, satan and society's ruling power in you has been broken— Roman 6:14-22; Galatians 2:20; 6:14. **You have the mind of Christ**— Philippians 2.

2. You are flooded with God's love, the oil that eliminates friction— Romans 5:5; His love to you and THROUGH YOU is sacrificial, forgiving and full of mercy and grace. (Ephesians 2:1-10; 4:29-32) **God first loved you when you were unlovable, undeserving and unresponsive.** (Romans 5:8) BE ALARMED— MULTITUDES OF PROFESSING CHRISTIANS, instead of their lives being flooded with LOVE are, in fact, ENSLAVED TO INIQUITY and on the road to an eternity in hell. Jesus says so, Matthew 7:21-23.

3. GOD'S LOVE has flooded your heart and is ready to flow through you as **one majestic intertwined explosion of Holy Spirit fruit**— love, joy, peace, patience, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and self control. (Eph. 4:28-32; Gal. 5:22-24)

4. THIS DIVINE LOVE in you is His love and His love is very patient and very kind— looking for ways to build up instead of ways to accuse and condemn. **His love through you** is not conceited or arrogant or rude. **His love through you** does not insist on its own way, it is not quick to take offence, it is not irritable or resentful or touchy; and does not keep a score of past wrongs. (1 Corinthians 13:1-7)

TRULY, IT IS REVOLUTIONARY to be a real Christian! Without His love in me and ready to be revealed through me— I may be a preacher or whatever... but I am no Christian! Yes, the real Christian can deeply grieve the indwelling Holy Spirit of love. We can fail miserably. However, we will be moved upon by the Holy Spirit to repent or we will be chastened! **If there is no repentance and/or chastening**— we are giving testimony that we are illegitimates, or as the KJV says, 'bastards!' (Hebrews 12:5-8) **FURTHERMORE, in 1 John 4:7-8 the truth cannot be missed:** *"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. **He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.**" 1 John 4:19-20:* *"We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, [sister, child, husband, wife, etc], he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother, [sister, child, husband, wife, etc], whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"*

FRIGHTENING REALITY: Looking back over more than 44 years of pastoral **ministry it has been exceedingly rare to sit down with a couple,** (who is about to get married or a couple whose marriage is in trouble), **and find that they understand that their relationship with the true and living God through Jesus Christ is THE KEY to a good marriage! LIKEWISE, THIS IS TRUE IN ALL MATTERS OF RELATIONSHIPS IN A LOCAL CHURCH FAMILY!**

Naturally flowing out of and building upon the foundation of the NEW BIRTH IS...

II. The Foundation of Being Filled with the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 5:18.

1. Ephesians 5:18 is a COMMAND— "Be ye being filled with the Holy Spirit!

The Spirit-filled life is not merely a privilege for an elite few; but the provision of God commanded and provided for every Christian. (Eph. 5:18) The command to "Be being, continuously filled with the Spirit" is followed by a revelation of the overflowing evidence of Holy Spirit fullness. **KEEP IN MIND: This evidence of Holy Spirit fullness also continuously FEEDS Holy Spirit fullness!**

(a) SINGING UNTO THE LORD, (Eph. 5:19)! Singing unto the LORD in the hour of trouble is the doorway to miracles: 2 Chronicles 20:1-22; Acts 16:23-33.

(b) GIVING THANKS UNTO GOD, (Eph. 5:20)! Such a heart will not be finding fault with Christ in what He brings or in what He allows! **REALITY:** When we **COMPLAIN** or

FIND FAULT and get UPSET at OTHERS in our world— we are in fact, accusing GOD... for He either brought or allowed the trial! The TRIAL is not about 'THEIR' real or imagined FAULTS— the trial is about what GOD IS UP TO in us! (Psalm 105:17-19) "Blessed is he" who IN EVERYTHING gives THANKS— Philipians 4:4-7!

(c) SUBMISSION UNTO GOD, (Eph. 5:21)! "In lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself" **(1) Spirit-filled husbands and wives** shall submit ONE TO ANOTHER in the fear of God! [MOREOVER, in faith-obedience to the will of God, Husbands and wives who submit ONE TO ANOTHER in the fear of God will overflow with Holy Spirit fullness!] **(2) Spirit-filled wives** will be in submission to their husbands, (Eph. 5:22). **(3) Spirit-filled husbands** will love their wives, as Christ loved the Church, (Eph. 5:25). **(4) Spirit-filled children** will obey and honor their parents, (Eph. 6:1-3) **(5) Spirit-filled fathers** will not provoke their children to wrath but bring them up in disciplined training of the LORD, (Eph. 6:4). **(6) Spirit-filled servants** will be obedient to their masters, (Eph.6:5).

(7) Spirit-filled masters will be considerate, and will treat their servants as they would wish to be treated by their master, (Eph. 6:9). **(8) Spirit-filled Christians** will be warriors, clad in the whole armour of God, (Eph. 6:11). **(9) Spirit-filled Christians** will be strong in the Lord, spiritual giants, not sickly hunch-backed dwarfs, (Eph. 6:10). **(10) Spirit-filled Christians** will not be warring against flesh and blood; their enemies are now external, and they are free to concentrate all of their attention and God-inspired energies on external enemies.

[NOTE: Christians who fight, quarrel with each other, pick at and find fault with each other are 'FIGHTING FLESH AND BLOOD' and clearly out of the will of God and acting like pagans! STOP IT! REPENT!] The enemies of the Spirit-filled Christian are the world, the flesh, and the devil; powers and spiritual hosts of wickedness, (Eph. 6:12; 1 John 2:15-17).

(11) Spirit-filled believers will be praying always in the Spirit, (Eph. 6:18). **NOTE AGAIN:** The above 11 points are evidences of Holy Spirit Fullness. However, the lack of these 11 realities must never be excused on the basis of a lack of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Instead, each and all of the above commands must be met with faith obedience, which will stir up Holy Spirit fullness! (The above section is edited from the Spirit-filled Life by John MacNeil.)

The Word of God is divine FUEL for the Spirit-filled life: Colossians 3:16— ***Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.***

Again, there is no way to have a Christian home unless there is one or more people residing in the home who is TRULY SAVED and BING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT!

III. HOW CAN WE, HOW CAN I GO FORWARD in Cultivating a Growing, Intimate Love for and Fellowship with one another in our Marriage, our Family... or in our Church Family?

1. FULLY Embrace these Four Foundation Stones for the Christian Home: (a) New Birth, Romans 6: 1-23; **(b)** Spirit- filled, Eph. 5:18; **(c)** Living with Divine Purpose, Rev. 4:11; Eph. 1:12; I Cor. 6:20; **(d)** Fellowship I Cor. 1:9.

In other words: (a) We MUST be born again; **(b)** We MUST be being filled with the Holy Spirit; **(c)** We MUST be living for GOD'S PLEASURE, not our own; **(d)** We MUST be living in FELLOWSHIP with Jesus Christ our LORD.

2. Recognize and reject the works of the flesh: Galatians 5:19-21. The destructive factors that fight against the Christian home AND church are the works of the flesh. At the root of these fleshly works is selfishness and pride. (I Cor. 6:9-11; Isaiah 21:1-6) Being born again makes a person a willing love slave of Jesus Christ. (Romans 6: 1-23; Exodus 21:1-6) New birth makes a radical and practical difference in our lives— being born again is no less than **a miracle of conversion from** serving self, Satan and society **to serving Christ and to serving others for Christ's sake.** (1 Thess. 1:9; Gal. 5:24; 19-23)

IV. HOW DO WE APPLY THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST?

Every spiritual blessing and every ounce of power over self, sin, satan and society comes from Christ! He is not a taskmaster. He is Lord; He is the Good Shepherd. So to experience victory in life and in our homes, **priority must be placed on knowing Christ in intimate fellowship.** (Dan. 11:32b; 2 Chron. 16:9; Ps. 46:10; Matt. 7:21-23)

1. GOD'S FELLOWSHIP CYCLE: (a) KNOW GOD— Requires thirst, attention, time, diligence. **Tools:** The Word, The Spirit, Believers, a yielded heart! **(b) LOVE GOD—** Love comes from knowledge— the more I KNOW God, the more I will love Him! Love and Knowledge are constraining forces behind obedience. **(c) OBEY GOD—** as we know and love God, we will obey Him. **(d) BRING PLEASURE TO GOD—** obedience brings God pleasure and places us in the center of His will and purpose for us. **(e) The result is that HE WILL REVEAL HIMSELF STRONG ON OUR BEHALF!** (Dan. 11:32b; 2 Chron. 16:9; Ps. 46:10)

2. GOD'S FORGIVENESS CYCLE: All of us as Christians have a deep need for forgiveness. Forgiveness provides freedom. Even though we are no longer enslaved to sin, self, satan, and society as ruling powers which we must obey— nevertheless, we do sin.

In fact, we are deceived and calling God a liar if we say we have no sin. But as we confess, we experience God's restoring and cleansing from all unrighteousness, (1 John 1:8-9-10). **In the forgiveness cycle we see how God frees us from sin's grinding guilt.** This is vital in home relationships, for usually it is guilt-ridden, unforgiven and unforgiving husbands or wives and/or parents or children who are angry, revengeful, envious, and filled with self-pity, etc. **The FORGIVENESS CYCLE:** Temptation, Sin, Repentance, Confession, Forgiveness, Cleansing, and Restoration. "If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

GOD'S 'FORGIVENESS CYCLE'— we need to employ this consistently so as to put down any possibility of carrying around a load of guilt. **NOTE:** Our problem starts with **TEMPTATION**, a solicitation to sin. **Temptation** is not sin— for our Lord Jesus was "...tempted as we are, yet **without sinning.**" But succumbing to temptation becomes **sin**, which must then be put away, since it hinders our fellowship with God. **The next step is REPENTANCE**, which is "a change of mind." Repentance is a good word, though we often try to avoid it. It is not just being sorry we were caught, but rather it involves a thorough change of mental attitude about the act of sin which has been committed. The word repentance is not set forth in 1 John 1:9, but it is implicit as the prelude to **CONFESSION**— for to confess means "TO SAY THE SAME THING" about my sin AS GOD SAYS about it! Since my mind somehow justified the act, leading to its commission, I must have a change of mind in order to acknowledge that God was right all along. **So, I confess my sin:** not just by saying to God, "I confess my sin," but by telling Him specifically what I did wrong and agreeing with Him that it was wrong. **By such confession and repentance, we are restored in the experience of something very precious which is already ours, won at Calvary**— complete and total forgiveness and cleansing. Forgiveness is for my sake - to free me from guilt - while cleansing is to fit me once again for fellowship with a Holy God. **And Note:** It is cleansing from **ALL** unrighteousness. **The result is RESTORATION** into the full enjoyment of my life and fellowship with the Lord! From there we go back to the top of the cycle and face the next temptation. However, it is not necessary to follow temptation with yielding to sin!

3. GOD'S DELIVERANCE CYCLE: As good and necessary as God's Forgiveness Cycle is, we should place our focus on God's Fellowship Cycle and God's Deliverance Cycle! We have seen that as we grow in knowing, loving, obeying, and bring pleasure to God He reveals Himself strong on our behalf. **But we need to not only know God; we also need to know who we are in Christ.** We need to appropriate by faith our resources and wealth in Christ. This leads us to **God's Deliverance Cycle.**

Preliminary to the Deliverance Cycle, please note: Both the Forgiveness Cycle and the Deliverance Cycle begin with temptation; so it will be helpful to list a couple of Scriptures to help us in identifying the source of temptations and noting the results of yielding: **James 3:13-18**— this passage will help us to identify the source of our thoughts, attitudes, behavior. Ask, "Where am I getting my thoughts, attitudes, behavior?" **Galatians 5:19-22**—Observe the results of your thoughts, attitudes, behavior. **Practice "Truth in Labeling!"** We are often tempted to excuse our own carnal attitudes, thoughts, behavior and attack the behaviors or attitudes in our spouse or fellow church member!

Now, let's move on to the DELIVERANCE CYCLE: As you walk daily in the Fellowship Cycle, you will be faced with temptations; but you have been set free from the slavery of sin, self, satan, and society! **SO, TEMPTATION IS TO BE MET WITH,** (1) **RECOGNITION** (Know- Rom. 6:6); (2) **RECKONING**... Rom. 6:11; (3) **REJECTION** (Yield- Rom. 6:12-13); (4) **REIGNING** (Rom. 5:1; 17; Gal2:20; Rom. 10:8-10)

YOU DIED WITH CHRIST! "For we know that OUR OLD MAN WAS CRUCIFIED WITH HIM so that the body as it was characterized by sin might be put out of work and we might no longer be enslaved to sin" (Rom. 6:6, literal rendering). **This is God's Emancipation Proclamation... and the key word is 'K N O W'.** We start by

knowing this fact— I am identified with Christ in His death... so I died with Christ... in God’s reckoning. **COUNT ON IT:** “So also all of you (as with Christ) reckon yourselves to be DEAD TO SIN AND ALIVE TO GOD” (Rom. 6:11, literal rendering). **RECKON is the key word here.** This is the Step of Faith. Believing the fact. **God has said it. I believe it.**

Incidentally, “DEAD” here means “unresponsive to”, or separated from the necessity of responding to the “old man”. **GO FREE:** “Stop yielding your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but yield yourselves to God, AS MEN WHO HAVE BEEN BROUGHT OUT OF DEATH TO LIFE, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God” (Romans 6:13). True liberty is being who God designed us to be — instruments of His grace. Now since our old man died with Christ, we have the liberty to choose to serve God. **So the key word here is YIELD.** We gain victory over the flesh as we: **KNOW! RECKON! YIELD!**

Then we can walk in newness of life. **“...For since we have been united with Him in conformity to His death, so also we shall be in His resurrection.”** (Rom. 6:5, freely rendered) These truths applied in daily living, free us from the heavy shackles of sin’s slavery. **These cycles enable us to deal effectively with three issues:**

1. Deal with sin for forgiveness and cleansing— **Forgiveness Cycle!**
2. Deal with the self-life for deliverance from the enslaving power of sin, self, satan, society— **Deliverance Cycle!**
3. Deal with being filled with the Holy Spirit for continuing and re-enforced victory in daily living— **Fellowship Cycle!** This is obvious, for we realize that **being filled continuously with the Holy Spirit is the same as a God-filled, or Christ-filled life.** Or, as we have stated here in these pages, it is a life of DAILY FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD. {Note: As best I remember... the above section on the Three Cycles is drawn from material gleaned from the Canadian Revival Fellowship Ministries... as they ministered in our midst in the late 1970s}

Someone has wisely said, “A man (or woman) wrapped up in himself or herself makes a mighty small package. **But what happens, as we deal with sin, deal with self, and are being filled with the Spirit? (1)** Selfishness and all of its traits and manifestations are made in-operative, rendered powerless. **(2)** I’m set free from sin and self’s slavery which hurt and destroy Christian homes... AND CHURCHES!!

(3) I’m set free, empowered by the Indwelling Spirit to live for others for Jesus’ sake, set free to fellowship with God. **(4)** The fruit of the Holy Spirit comes forth, Gal 5:22-23. **These build the Christian home!** A joyful, thanksgiving heart and a submissive spirit come forth, Eph. 5:18-21; Col. 3:16-18. Likewise, these attitudes and actions build the Christian home! **(5)** We are filled with desire and power to witness; that is, we give evidence that Christ reigns in our lives, (Acts 1:8; John 16:13-14); and REVEAL CHRIST to a watching world, John 13:34.

GRACE TO ALL! James Bell

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES for May!

1. WEDNESDAYS: PRAYER SERVICE at 7:00PM! / YOUTH: Wednesdays, 6-8pm @ Southside Church building!

2. Thursdays @ 6:30pm: OUTREACH

3. Saturdays @ 8am: Men's Fellowship/Bible Study

Sunday Schedule for May 12

SPECIAL MAY NOTES: MAY 12— Mother's day : *Sunday School and Morning Worship only.* Recognition of Mom's during the Worship Service.

THE STARTING OF A NEW TRADITION:

Mother's day and on Father's day— Let us give Gideon Bibles in memory of Moms or Dads **and/or** in appreciation for them; **and/or** let us give extra special OFFERINGS for one or more of our Missionaries— **especially on behalf of Odell and Beth.**

MAY 19— NOTE SPECIAL SCHEDULE!

1. 9:30AM— SUNDAY SCHOOL

2. 10:45AM—WORSHIP/Children's Church

{AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WORSHIP SERVICE WE WILL RECOGNIZE AND HONOR ALL GRADUATES— HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE!}

NOTE: At the conclusion OF THE WORSHIP SERVICE, in the auditorium, we will observe THE LORD'S SUPPER.

3. NOON— Covered Dish, FELLOWSHIP MEAL

4. 1:00PM— SPECIAL AFTERNOON SERVICE with Aidan McKenzie

May 24— Senior Banquet, SCS Graduation and Awards Night!

SUNDAY SCHEDULE FOR MAY 26

1. 9:30am- Sunday School

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

3. Noon Fellowship Meal {Covered Dish}

4. 1:00pm Early Afternoon Service: A church family Conversation II:

SPECIAL NOTE: We need to have a FOLLOW UP on our Recent Church-wide CONVERSATION. There were several important matters we did not get to discuss.

1. A suggestion coming from our deacons' meeting of better CARING for all members and those attending... especially making sure that widows/widowers/shut-ins, etc... are cared for.

2. A servant team to lead us in the care of the church facilities.

3. A follow-up as to Sunday service options.

4. Some are wondering as to whether or not there is a vision for a re-start of AWANA or something similar?