

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 39, No.30, July 22, 2013 / Southside Baptist Church & Christian School / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **The Grow in Grace Newsletter**— a weekly Bible Study, plus news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church... sent forth to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide who receive the Newsletter), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."***

DEATH, DYING, HOPE, GAIN!

A giant of a man left earth— not a man of many words nor of exalted thought or opinion of himself; but a humble man, a servant hearted man, a godly man, one who loved Jesus, one who loved the Words of Jesus, one who sought to walk in the steps of Jesus, one who loved his wife and children and grandchildren, one who loved his fellow Christians... unconditionally; one who had a good testimony in the workplace. Such was the man, the brother in Christ, the friend, the faithful laborer who has passed through death to the presence of JESUS! The sovereign God of the universe allowed CANCER to strike His servant, Wayne Sharp... to sift him. I never heard him give details; but I heard him on several occasions testify to good fruit that came from his trial of affliction. In other words, by the grace of God, and in the words of another, **WAYNE DID NOT WASTE HIS CANCER!** Example: A person at work, "Wayne, you've lost weight!" WAYNE: "Yes, I have lost 50 pounds— I have cancer!" Cancer became Wayne's 'door-opener' for sharing the good news of JESUS CHRIST and reminders of what's REALLY important in life! Indeed, by the grace of God, throughout his ordeal with cancer both Wayne and his precious wife, Marsha, continued to worship and serve the LORD JESUS.

On July 12, 2013, Marsha wrote: "Yesterday was a very emotionally draining day. Today we are rejoicing in God's grace and mercies for TODAY :) My heart is breaking... but I'm so glad that Wayne's salvation is secure in Jesus and Heaven is indeed "a wonderful place". **Medically:** (edited for length) The results of yesterday's labs were grim... We knew that one day it might all come to this... Short of God's intervention, we're looking at approximately 3 more months [Doctor's guess] to enjoy Wayne's life on earth. **Emotionally & Spiritually:** We rejoice in having the past 6 months to prepare and make plans, to reminisce and recall memories of our family and friends, thankful for each of you that have been a part of our lives. We've had borrowed time to hope and pray for your future and your families. We thank God for His mercies and grace, for His faithfulness, and His never-ending Love. **We continue to put our lives**

in His hands, accepting his plans for our future, no matter what the result, realizing and acknowledging that total healing could be or might not be a part of that plan! We continue to covet your prayers in these next months and love and miss each of you.

Each Day is a Blessing from Our Awesome God! Wayne & Marsha.”

July 20, 2013 MORNING, MARSHA WROTE: “I was awake most of the night watching the rapid decline of my sweet husband, wanting so badly to 'fix it' and make him better, but knowing that his time is being determined by none other than our AMAZING, MERCIFUL, LOVING GOD. In awe and Praising HIM!”

... AROUND MID-NIGHT... WAYNE WAS ABSENT FROM THE BODY AND PRESENT WITH THE LORD, WHICH IS FAR BETTER!

IT IS GOOD FOR US TO TAKE A Journey to the House of Mourning

Ecclesiastes 7:1-5 (KJV) *“A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth. ² It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.³ Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.⁴ The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.⁵ It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.”*

STATISTICS at the House of Mourning: **How many Americans die every year? Over 2,420,000. Around 40% of these are sudden.** So 2,600 Americans woke up yesterday expecting to live for a long time to come. **And today they passed away. If it happened to you,** what kind of problems would you create for the people you love most? [Obviously more important—what is the state of your soul?]

How Do People Die?

Type of accident	How many in a year	Average frequency
In hospital	90,000	One American dies in a hospital from a medical error or a lethal infection every 6 minutes
Transport	43,443	One American killed by a traffic accident every 12 minutes
Poisoning	19,457	One American accidentally poisoned to death every 27 minutes

At home	18,048	One American killed in an accident at home every 29 minutes
Falls	17,227	One American killed in a fall every 31 minutes
Drunk driving	16,885	One American killed by a drunk driver every 31 minutes
Homicide	16,137	One American murdered every 32 minutes
Drowning	3,306	One American drowned every 159 minutes

Sources: National Safety Council, for 2006; National Vital Statistics Report, for 2006; Home Safety Council, for 2004; Mothers Against Drunk Driving, for 2005; Department of Justice, for 2004

WILL YOU PLACE YOURSELF OR YOUR FAMILY UNDER UNNECESSARY STRESS BECAUSE YOU FEAR AND SEEK TO HIDE FROM THE HOUSE OF MOURNING?

THE FOLLOWING IS EDITED FROM: *Stephan A. Mayer is director of the Neurological Intensive Care Unit at Columbia University Medical Center/New York Presbyterian Hospital in New York. [This deals with the modern, often artificially drawn out, unnecessary, miserable PROCESS of dying]*

Life is difficult. Death used to be simple. You simply died, and that was it. Now, in the modern era of high-tech medicine, death is difficult, too... How do we want to die?

Intensivists — those doctors who specialize in intensive care patients — will tell you that every day thousands of people all over the world are going through the same thing: **Playing out the end game, many of them are stuck on a ventilator with a slim to vanishing chance of ever getting back to the life they knew and loved.**

Modern society is confronting a tragic, silent epidemic of frail elderly people who suffer needlessly at the end of life because of unwanted life support.

These folks are effectively left to die a slow death connected to machines. As a critical care specialist who has seen this process play out many times, it can be agonizing to witness. How did we end up here? Why has death become so complicated?

Modern medicine is powerful, but it is a double-edged sword. The way we can bring people back from the brink of death is truly amazing. There is nothing more satisfying professionally than having a grateful patient walk back into the ICU after surviving a near-death experience. **But more often, for very old people, aggressive life support doesn't work out so well.** Prolonged ICU care often gradually evolves into a checkmate situation. Intensivists know what it usually means when the condition of an elderly person hospitalized for weeks is described as "critical

but stable." **After weeks of aggressive support, the patient still cannot survive off the ventilator.**

When this happens, the muscles start to wither away from a condition called ICU-acquired myopathy. Little may seem to be happening, but as the body inevitably continues to weaken, a relentless series of secondary complications will ensue, such as pneumonia, delirium and failure of the circulatory system or kidneys. In most cases, patients need to be continuously sedated to minimize obvious pain and suffering. The fundamental question is this: When is it time to accept the inevitability of death, change the goal of care to comfort, and let the patient have peace?

COUNSEL:

1. Have advance directives and living wills. **2. Beware** of the human tendency to deny and hide from the reality of death. **3. Make** no mistake: Unless death is sudden and/or unless you have in place advance directives and living wills— one day you will need to decide when to allow someone you love to die, and/or someone will have to make that decision for you.

Perspective from facing the reality of living in a fallen world!

“Today we see our friends in health, tomorrow we hear of their death. We rode in a chariot of comfort only an hour ago, and in a few more hours the black hearse must carry us to the grave. Oh, how closely allied is death to life! See life and death is close behind it. Death reaches far throughout this world, and has stamped all terrestrial things with an arrow pointing to the grave. But blessed be God, there is one place where death is not life’s brother— where life reigns alone. There is a land where the death bells are never tolled, where grave clothes are never put on, where graves are never dug. Blessed land beyond the skies! **To reach it, we must die IN CHRIST!** All die, but not all die IN CHRIST. TODAY IS THE DAY OF SALVATION! FLEE TO CHRIST! BELIEVE on the LORD JESUS CHRIST and you will be saved!” (Quote is edited from Charles Spurgeon)

THEREFORE: 1. Face up to the reality of death. **2. Flee to** Christ so as to have HOPE beyond death. **3. Do not try to** hide from death by selfishly holding on to this life and thereby causing others to have to exist miserably on the end of artificial support systems. **4. DRINK DEEPLY OF THE FOLLOWING:**

Why Dying Is Gain! by Nathan Busenitz

Fox’s Book of Martyrs is a must read for every Christian. Written by John Fox over 350 years ago, it catalogs the lives of hundreds of believers who, throughout church history, were willing to give their lives for the cause of Christ. When it comes to contagious courage, I can think of no greater testimony than reading about those who embraced their Lord to the point of embracing death.

One such account concerns the lives of Jerome Russell and Alexander Kennedy, two English Protestants who took a daring stand for what they believed. **Because of their biblically-sound doctrine, the pair was arrested and imprisoned.** Kennedy was only eighteen years old. After some time, the two men were brought before religious officials for questioning.

Russell, being older, gave an articulate defense, using the Scriptures to support his belief in salvation through faith alone. Yet, in spite of the evidence, the men's accusers prevailed and Russell and Kennedy were deemed heretics.

In keeping with the jurisprudence of the times, they were condemned to death— their sentence to be carried out the following day. Early the next morning, Russell and Kennedy were led from their prison cells to the place of execution.

They could have denied their Lord, right then and there, and been spared. But when Kennedy, being but a young man, began to display signs of fear, Russell quickly encouraged him to stand firm:

Brother, fear not; greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world. The pain that we are to suffer is short, and shall be light; but our joy and consolation shall never have an end. Let us, therefore, strive to enter into our Master and Savior's joy, by the same straight way which He hath taken before us. Death cannot hurt us, for it is already destroyed by Him, for whose sake we are now going to suffer.

In this way, the two men came to boldly face execution without compromise. John Fox finishes the account with this.

When they arrived at the fatal spot, they both kneeled down and prayed for some time; after which being fastened to the stake, and the fagots [kindling] lighted, they cheerfully resigned their souls into the hands of Him who gave them, in full hopes of an everlasting reward in the heavenly mansions.

How could these men calmly submit to being burned alive? Why did they willingly undergo severe suffering and death? The answer begins with the biblical doctrine of hope. By focusing on God and His unwavering faithfulness, they stood firm as a testimony to the truth.

Biblical Hope Changes the Way We View Death

Every day over 150 thousand people die. Some die from disease, others from crime, and still others from tragic accidents. Sometimes death is expected, the prognosis having been grim for several months; other times death is unforeseen and sudden—the result of an unexpected stroke or a drunk driver. But no matter how it comes, all of us know that one day it will be our turn. Death is part of life, and there's no escaping it.

One might think that, due to its widespread inevitability, death is something people would ponder frequently, constantly preparing for the end of their earthly lives. Yet, generally speaking, the opposite is usually the case. People feel uncomfortable talking about death. For most, it represents the great unknown. It is the result of tragedy, the basis of fear, and the ultimate separation from friends and family.

Of course, it's understandable to realize that non-Christians cower at the thought of dying. For them it is the end of everything they hold dear. The pleasures of this earth, its resources and relationships— this is all they have. In dying, they lose what they have worked so hard to obtain.

What's sad is when those in the church embrace that same kind of worldly perspective. **Why should a Christian ever fear the grave?**

Is not death the doorway to heaven? Is there not eternal life on the other side? God's Word is clear: death has been swallowed up in victory (1 Corinthians 15:56-57).

Granted, when we hope in the pursuits of this world, death is the enemy—separating us from the temporal treasures we love.

But, when our hope is properly placed in God, death comes as a welcome friend to take us home. Here are two reasons why:

a. Hope sees death as a beginning, not an end.

For believers death is the beginning of eternity in heaven. Death is not termination but initiation—the start of an existence far better than anything we can imagine. The apostle Paul knew this to be true. The book of 2 Timothy is the last letter he wrote before his execution—chapter 4 indicates that he realized his death was imminent (see v. 6). As he looked back on his life, he realized that his life was almost over (v. 7). Yet, he now looked forward to something far greater: namely, the reward of Jesus Christ and an eternity spent together with Him (v. 8). Paul looked beyond the grave and saw his God. Because Christ had conquered death (1 Corinthians 15:20-28) there was nothing to fear.

It was John Owen, the great Puritan, who wrote on his deathbed: **“I am yet in the land of the dying, but I hope soon to be in the land of the living.”** Like Paul, he too understood that true life, in its fullest measure, begins where this life ends. In stark contrast, many in the contemporary church live as though this present life is better than the life to come. Tenaciously, they hold on to their short stay on this earth. Some follow every health fad, taking whatever supplement will reduce the risk of a heart attack. Others avoid airplanes, fearful that their trip could end in an unexpected dive.

Our quest for longevity has affected our eating habits, our exercise routines, our travel plans, and even the type of sunscreen we buy. **While there is nothing inherently sinful in enjoying the earthly life that God has given, Christians sometimes need to be reminded that the next life is far superior.**

Death is a doorway, not a dead end. And for God's children, death's door opens into heaven.

b. Hope sees the Shepherd through the shadows.

A second reason Christians need not fear death is because our Savior has already conquered death. He is not asking us to go anywhere He has not already been. And, because He arose from the grave victorious (Acts 2:32-33), we can be confident that we also will be resurrected one day (1 Corinthians 15:20).

In Psalm 23, the writer says, “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” For David, whose life was often in danger, comfort came in looking to his Shepherd, even when thinking about death.

Just over 1,000 years later, an early Christian leader named Ignatius shared David's confident perspective. According to church tradition, Ignatius was arrested by the

Roman government and executed because he professed Christ. Shortly before his death, he wrote the church, saying:

I care for nothing, of visible or invisible things, so that I may but win Christ. Let fire and the cross, let the companies of wild beasts, let breaking of bones and tearing of limbs, let the grinding of the whole body, and all the malice of the devil, come upon me; be it so, only may I win Christ Jesus.

Even in being thrown to hungry animals and torn limb from limb, Ignatius' commitment to his Lord remained firm. He was willing to endure death because of the Master he sought to please, the Master he knew he would soon see face-to-face.

In considering death, these men focused on the One who was waiting to meet them there. They did not fear death, because they rested in the promises of their Savior.

What comes into your mind when you think about death? A biblical perspective thinks first about Christ. And for the soul that loves Jesus, nothing is more exciting than the thought of going to be with Him. We love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19), and not even death can separate us from that love, (Romans 8:38-39).

Death is the doorway that brings us into the presence of Christ. That is why Paul could triumphantly tell the Philippians, **"To live is Christ, and to die is gain."** For those who know the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul's words summarize both our purpose in this life and our hope for the next.

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

WORK DAY FOR BUILDING/GROUNDS: JULY 27/ 9:00AM

LADIES SUMMER BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

August 15 @ 10am— Cindy Bell teaching!

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES for JULY!

1. THIS WEDNESDAY, July 24: NO prayer service at church & NO YOUTH MEETING...

Church family is encouraged to be a part of the VISITATION at Crestview Funeral Home, 1623 HWY 109 N, for **Wayne Sharp**, any time from 4-8PM

2. THIS THURSDAY, July 25: Wayne Sharp... VISITATION from Noon until 2PM.

Memorial/Celebration Service is at 2PM at Crestview.

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

SUNDAY SCHEDULE FOR JULY 28

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

UNDER WHICH PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE WILL HE/SHE BE EDUCATED? *Children are like young plants in a garden— while young and tender they must be protected.* Southside Christian School works in harmony with the local Church and empowers parents as to their critical roll. **QUESTION: Is it wise** for a child to spend 7-8 hours per day, 180 days a year for 12 or more years in a school system that does not support Christian family and local church values?

REALITY— there are growing problems with drugs, immorality, disrespect of authority, and lack of discipline in America. Typical schools teach the godless theory of evolution. Books and materials teaching alternative sexual lifestyles are being required.

In contrast, at Southside Christian School we proclaim that **Jesus Christ and His wisdom** are central and the best preparation for the real world. **SCS offers** a sound academic education which is integrated with the Word of God.

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

Please call us at: 615-452-5951