

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 40, No.6, February 11, 2014 / 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."**

BURN OUT! Depression! Mental Illness! part 3

In part one of these articles we noted that C. H. Spurgeon had to face up to his need **to give his physical body rest.** Thus, Spurgeon wisely taught his students, **"The bow cannot be always bent without fear of breaking. Repose is as needful to the mind as sleep to the body. . . Rest time is not waste time. It is economy to gather fresh strength."** **THEREFORE,** here is a 'checklist' of practical helps/suggestions (physical, spiritual, emotional), which I pulled and edited from dusty old files of articles we sent out years ago... original author is unknown:

FITNESS GOALS... SEEK TO— Have a regular check-up by a physician. Eat a proper diet. Follow a regular pattern of sleep. Exercise regularly. Allow for hormonal changes. Sometimes there are real, physical issues which can and do affect our mental/emotional state. Various actual diseases can have negative impact in a variety of ways. Complications from medications for physical diseases can be a factor, etc. Be accountable with someone who will encourage you to MOVE FORWARD with Godly choices. Read ***NONE OF THESE DISEASES***, by S. I. McMillen, M.D., who informs us that bitterness can aggravate anything from a headache to a heart attack. REALIZE that various personalities, physical changes, painful and/or long-term illnesses, emotional trauma, etc.— these are special OPPORTUNITIES to grow in grace. **Quick to 'drink the kool-aid' of humanistic psychiatry** or even 'Christian' psychiatry that takes it 'cue' from secular, humanistic psychiatry— MILLIONS are running to PILLS and MISSING the kind of lessons and growth in grace that come through the crucible of varied and even intense suffering, as per JOB or Joseph!

SPIRITUAL FITNESS: Our spiritual state is critically connected to our emotional state. Such was Cain's experience. Sadly, he rejected the solution: **Genesis 4:1-8. THEREFORE:** Encounter God in a personal relationship through his

Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:12). **Seek** forgiveness for any sin that separates you and God or you and others. **Follow** David's example of confession to God (Psalm 32). **Trust** God for His love and healing when your 'heart is broken' (Psalm 147:3). **Strengthen** your relationship with God in quiet times where He can give you perspective as He gave to David in the sanctuary (Psalm 73:17). **Expel** anger and bitterness by expressing it to the Lord— if possible, in the manner of Hannah (I Samuel 1:10). **When one is AMAZED at** God's merciful forgiveness it becomes much easier to forgive others and be set free from resentments and bitterness.

Refuse negative thinking, which invites and perpetuates depression. (2 Corinthians 10:4-6) A negative response to a person or situation can trigger a downward spiral. This is what happened to Jonah, who griped and brooded until he wanted to die (Jonah 4:3-9). **Memorize** God's Word. **Replace** negative thinking with God's promises. **Study** God's method of working with Elijah to overcome depression (I Kings 19:1-15). **Pray** and ask for God's help when the demand seems too heavy, just as Moses did when he cried out to God about his heavy load (Numbers 11:14).

Praise God for his blessings— this is great therapy for a heavy spirit. Worship GOD for who he is, just as Mary did: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:46-47). **Use Thank-You Therapy—** obtain and read Don Baker's book by that name! **Continue praising** God by reading or singing from a hymnal. Search for a Godly friend who will not pamper your flesh, but compassionately point you to Christ— together you can dispel loneliness and overcome the relentless attacker of depression. 'Pity parties' and 'Condemnation parties' are NO GOOD— reject them and replace them with PRAISE to God and with RESTING in Christ. **Remember: Spurgeon's repeated battles with depression did not deplete him spiritually, but deepened his dependence upon God; and gave him comfort with which he was then able to comfort others— comfort that EXALTED CHRIST! Such is the fruit of godly, Christ-focused responses to such battles!**

THIS IS WAR— USE THE RIGHT WEAPONS (This next section is repeated from two weeks ago because it is needed. Please drink deeply!) **BEWARE of JUSTIFYING the works of the flesh and/or justifying a lack of the fruit of the Holy Spirit by claiming—** after all, 'the other person' - (spouse, fellow church member, relative, neighbor, or whoever) 'caused me' to BE DEPRESSED! **THE STRATEGY OF SURE DEFEAT, DEPRESSION, AND DESTRUCTION is well trodden— for many use this same failed strategy over, and over, and over: (1) Accusing others and defending self; defending self and accusing others. (2) Blame-shifting and putting up smoke-screens to hide/excuse our own failures. (3) Confessing the real or imagined sins/faults of the other person **instead of** obeying Scripture and only confessing OUR OWN faults, (James 5:16; 1 John 1:9). (4) Gathering an army of supporters to promote 'our side'!**

NOTE: Most of this is carried on BEHIND THE BACKS of the ones we are accusing. In other words, we are gossiping, back biting, and usually slandering. REALITY: The longer these sin-filled, satan-pleasing tactics are used there will be growing hardness of heart, resentments, bitterness, hopelessness, and DEEP DEPRESSION! GOOD NEWS: What other people do or don't do is not to guide or control our responses. Instead, as life 'tumbles in' we simply need to ask and respond Christianly to two questions:

1. "LORD, WHAT do you have in this situation for me?" That is, what do you want to teach me? What do you want to take out of my life that has not or is not pleasing to you, LORD JESUS? What do you want to BUILD INTO MY LIFE so that I will be in attitudes, words, and actions an adornment to the Gospel of Christ?

2. "LORD, WHAT do you have in this situation to accomplish through me?" That is, what are the attitudes, words, and/or actions you want me to take so as to REVEAL CHRIST to a watching world? What manifestations of the FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT do you desire to release through me so others will SEE JESUS?

3. This foundational CONFESSION is powerful: "I am BOUGHT with the price of the precious blood of Jesus. He has full rights to manifest Himself through me!" ***"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's!"*** (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) **CHRISTIAN, you Are Bought With A Price! WE ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE—** redeemed "...with the precious blood of Christ..." (1 Peter 1:18) **THEREFORE, CONFESS: *** MY PAST—** I have been bought by the blood of Jesus! My sins are forgiven. Sin and satan's power over me have been canceled. **I am not my own. I belong to Jesus!**" (Romans 12:1-2) ***** IN THE PRESENT—** CHRIST is for me! I am In Christ! Christ is in me; and I am a Minister of Reconciliation, an Ambassador for Christ, on Mission with God! (1 Cor. 3:7-9; 2 Cor. 5:19-20) ***** MY FUTURE—** because of the BLOOD OF THE LAMB, I will continue to experience the ongoing cleansing power of the blood of Christ; and I will rule and reign with Christ for all eternity." (Rev. 5:9-10; 7:9-12; 12:11)

***** MY PAST is forgiven! The blinding, binding, grinding power of sin and satan is broken. *Sin's weights are lifted!*** I am set free from the **futility of performance based living, of trying to be good enough to merit heaven.** I am resting in the total sufficiency of Jesus, in His precious blood, in His goodness and in His merit. ***** MY PRESENT—** because I am forgiven and resting in Christ, I am now free to be and become all that Christ intends today! I no longer search or strive for significance— **for in Christ I have supreme significance! I AM A CHILD OF GOD! I HAVE A FAMILY! I HAVE A MOST SUGNIFICANT OCCUPATION!** ***** MY FUTURE:** I am free from any obligation to fear death or the future. I am FORGIVEN, IN CHRIST,

and COMMISSIONED to give His Gospel to others! Nothing or no one can separate me from the love of God in Christ. Whether I live or whether I die, I am the LORD'S! **SUCH CONFESSIONS ARE CRITICAL in the battle against discouragement and/or depression.**

Mental/Emotional Fitness: Face your problems. Reach for realistic goals, not to attain superiority but to honor Christ. **Focus on your personal behavior, not on feelings. Certainly on the front end, feelings are neither right nor wrong— what we do with our feelings is what makes them right or wrong.** Learn to take care of your responsibilities **one at a time**. Spend some time with your family and/or friends— but not for a pity party. **It is more blessed to give than to receive — find a way to focus upon the needs of others and in Jesus' name, help meet those needs.** Play Godly, Christian music! Read/listen to God's Word. Structure each day to include work, relaxation, and worship. Whistle, sing, or hum while you work— if not out loud, then, in your spirit.

LIFE IS OFTEN HARD IN A FALLEN WORLD. DIG DEEPLY INTO THE STORY OF OTHERS WHO FACED EVEN HARDER SITUATIONS AND WERE VICTORIOUS IN CHRIST! The life of the Apostle Paul offers us a BLESSED EXAMPLE:

The Apostle Paul— Suffered in many ways and yet— No BURNOUT!

[This section is edited from: Christian Burnout/ Nov 27, 2013, David Cloud, Port Huron, MI]

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

1. INSTEAD OF BEING burnout or broke down, PAUL WAS RENEWED: *"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Corinthians. 4:16)* **PAUL MET TROUBLE WITH A GODLY PHILOSOPHY:** *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair" (2 Corinthians. 4:7-8).*

2. ABIDING IN CHRIST, PAUL DID NOT CRUMBLE UNDER PRESSURE: *"For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us" (2 Corinthians 1:8-10).*

REALITY: The problem for some cases of "burnout" is that men and women have no testimony of the new birth. They may be religious, but they have no life or power from God. **THERE ARE OTHERS,** solid in gospel faith, but have strayed from solid

foundations; while others have been deceived by the fine sounding philosophies of this present world.

3, LABORING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST, WE FIND REST FOR OUR SOULS: *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mat. 11:28-30).*

REALITY: You or I may have even extremely difficult circumstances, pressures, trials, troubles, tribulations, persecutions, physical sickness, etc. However, this truth still remains: Christ's yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Thus, if I am finding the Christian life and service too hard and heavy, it MAY MEAN that I am somehow trying to pull the plow myself rather than resting in Christ. I am laboring apart from that intimate fellowship with the Lord that makes the labor a blessing rather than a curse. I am somehow neglecting my main work, which is to learn of Him. Jesus put this way:

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. ... If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:4-5, 7).

The branch of a healthy vine will naturally bear fruit if it simply abides on the vine and does its "branch work." A branch has work to do, and its work is a necessary part of the vine's fruit bearing, but without the vine the branch can do nothing... We simply do the light branch work as we abide in Him, and even our branch work is accomplished by His life and power flowing into us. **Paul taught the same thing.** He said the Christian life is a life is a life that Christ lives in me: ***"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).***

The true Christian life is not 20% me and 80% Christ. It is 100% Christ in me, and to forget that is a recipe for burnout.

4. BY WALKING IN SPIRITUAL RENEWAL/REVIVAL we win over the destructive paths of the carnal flesh which birth guilt and depression.

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Ephesians 4:23). The "old man" is a heavy drag on the spiritual life— empowered in SECRET by faithless thoughts and pity parties. It is called "the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24). **Renewal is available through the process of putting off the old man and putting on the new, which is the context of Ephesians 4:22.** *"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be*

renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:22-24).

To renounce and put off the way of the old man and to put on the way of the new man is to walk in the Spirit, and by this manner the believer is renewed day by day. The mercy and grace for renewal is obtained directly from the risen Lord.

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:14-16).

The throne of grace is available and the One who sits on that throne is our great high priest who died for us and ever lives to make intercession for us. We can come to him and obtain mercy for every sin and find grace to help in any and every situation. **Those who walk in these spiritual resources do not get DESTROYED with "burnout."**

Yes, like Elijah, Jonah, Job, David, and many others— there are DARK SEASONS. Sometimes rooted in sin; sometimes NOT rooted in sin. Sometimes DARK SEASONS may be connected to serious physical ailments, as with Spurgeon... and/or deep dark times for which he could find no rhyme or reason.

HOWEVER, BY CONTINUING TO WALK WITH CHRIST, GRACE ABOUNDED and super abounded! AND NO WONDER, BECAUSE,

"According as his divine power HATH GIVEN UNTO US ALL THINGS THAT PERTAIN UNTO LIFE AND GODLINESS, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (2 Peter 1:3-10).

THE HOLY SPIRIT MOVED Peter to inform us that we live the Christian life by God's divine power, not our own petty resources. **Peter didn't talk about burnout; he talked about the sufficient resources that every believer has in Christ. He said the Lord has given us ALL THINGS that pertain unto life and godliness.**

Victory/deliverance comes by the knowledge of, growing intimacy with, the Lord. The very essence of the Christian life is to know the Lord and to walk with the Lord and to learn of the Lord and to delight in the Lord. This is man's created purpose, which was lost in Adam's rebellion, but is renewed in Christ's salvation.

THE HOLY SPIRIT also informs us through Peter that victory comes by pursuing spiritual growth with diligence. His teaching bears out the fact that if I am not going forward spiritually, I am going backward. Spiritual stagnation is backsliding, and backsliding is a recipe for burnout, but when the child of God is pursuing Christ and pursuing holiness, burnout, DEPRESSION, etc... cannot get a deep rooted, destroying grip.

5. BY MAINTAINING AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE we are encouraged!

"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

Abounding Grace to all! James www.southsidegallatin.org

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES!

TUESDAYS: Come and sing with us every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care nursing home. Meet at the front door at 5:30PM. Any questions contact Bradley Pennington at 615-804-3054.

****** LADIES BIBLE STUDIES— EVERY other Thursday, each month, 11:00am.**

NEXT ONE, 2/20/14, led by Cindy Bell

***** WEDNESDAYS: PRAYER SERVICE at 7:00PM! NOTE:** Jody Allen is ministering to young Children, up to about age 10 during Prayer Service. Older children, but not old enough for the Youth Group... will be with their parents in the Prayer Service. **YOUTH GROUP: Wednesdays 6-8pm...** led by Byron Smith_

****** SATURDAY MORNINGS @ 8am: Men's Fellowship/Bible Study**

SUNDAY SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY 16, 23

1. 9:30am- Sunday School → Bible Study and Small Group Fellowship

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

→ [LORD'S SUPPER, this Sunday!]

3. Noon: Fellowship 'covered-dish' Meal together!

4. 1:00pm- Early afternoon Service, in the Fellowship Hall

SOUTHSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL: *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!

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