



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 40, No. 29, July 22, 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 is **a weekly Bible Study**, plus local church news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church. It is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), 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.”***

“... GUARD YOURSELVES and GOD’S PEOPLE!”

(From sermon notes, 2009... Time restraints prohibited reworking this into a better and flowing form for a printed article.... But the Biblical truth is present. Let us read and heed!)

Acts 20:28-30— “So guard yourselves and God’s people. Feed and shepherd God’s flock—his church, purchased with his own blood— over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as elders. 29 I know that false teachers, like vicious wolves, will come in among you after I leave, not sparing the flock. 30 even some men from your own group will rise up and distort the truth in order to draw a following.” (NLT)

I. Satan has a great ambition to inject disharmony in Bible believing homes, friendships, and churches! Consider THE effect OF GOSSIP AND SLANDER in the life of the Apostle Paul.

Romans 3:5-8— 5 “But,” some might say, “Our sinfulness serves a good purpose, for it helps people see how righteous God is. Isn’t it unfair, then, for him to punish us?” (This is merely a human point of view.) 6 Of course not! If God were not entirely fair, how would he be qualified to judge the world? 7 “But,” someone might still argue, “How can God condemn me as a sinner if my dishonesty highlights his truthfulness and brings him more

glory?" 8 **And some people even slander us by claiming that we say,** "The more we sin, the better it is!" Those who say such things deserve to be condemned."

Many of Paul's friends and fellow workers of the faith turned away from him before his death:

2 Tim. 1:15- "You are aware of the fact that ALL WHO ARE IN ASIA TURNED AWAY FROM ME, among whom are Phygelus and Hermongenes." REALITY: Satan set out to discredit Paul through gossip and slander. IN ACTS 20:28-30... notice the description of those who will do the devil's work: GRIEVOUS WOLVES! WHO? Elders, Pastors, folks in the congregation... Savage, fierce, merciless, monstrous, ferocious, violent, cruel WOLVES!

SCAN THE NEW TESTAMENT— this is clear: The greatest destruction and hindrance to Bible believing homes and churches is not from the outside— but from within: Matthew 10:34-36; Matthew 24:9-10; Luke 21:10-19

PAUL told Timothy not to receive an accusation against an Elder, except on the basis of two or three witnesses. (1 Tim. 5:17-20) "17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. 18 For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the laborer is worthy of his reward. 19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

Now the Scripture is clear:

A local pastor is not above accountability, but one should not receive an accusation against a pastor unless two or more witnesses come forward concerning the matter. THIS IS A CONSISTENT BIBLICAL TEACHING... TRUE FOR OTHERS ALSO- NOT JUST PASTORS: Matthew 18:15-16; vs. 16... is based on the principle of Deuteronomy. 19:15-21.

II. SAFEGUARDS ARE NEEDED and GIVEN

Proverbs 18:17- AMPLIFIED- *He who states his case first seems right, until his rival comes and cross-examines him.*

Proverbs 20:6- AMPLIFIED- *Many a man [OR woman] proclaims his [her] own loving-kindness and goodness, but a faithful man who can find?*

Proverbs 21:2- AMPLIFIED- *Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs and tries the hearts.*

THEREFORE BEWARE: IF or WHEN someone has unloaded EVIL about a person, (WHO, OF COURSE, IS not present), and the person sharing this inside information is wanting your support, your agreement...

REMEMBER: YOU DON'T HAVE ALL THE FACTS! Beware! You are in danger!

Proverbs 18:13- AMPLIFIED- He who answers a matter before he hears the facts--it is folly and shame to him.

ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD: To listen to a charge against one whom Christ has set in a leadership position... OR A CHARGE AGAINST ANY BROTHER OR SISTER FOR THAT MATTER... A CHARGE BROUGHT by only one witness is contrary to God's instructions **and IF YOU LISTEN TO SUCH, YOU open yourself up to receive a deadly dose of the Devil's poison.**

AS TO THE APOSTLE PAUL... AND ALSO JOHN—

Why did so many thousands fall away from the Apostles... even after THE CONGREGATIONS had heard their defense by letters?

IT IS VERY LIKELY THAT the brethren had been so poisoned by gossip and slander that they were unable to believe the Apostles anymore. They had let a "root of bitterness" set in towards the Apostles. Their mental image of these dedicated servants of God had changed. Their concept of them was no longer based on the good fruits many of them had witnessed, but on the constant poisonous flood of slanderous reports they gave ear to.

These godly servants, PAUL AND JOHN, were not what these brethren believed them to be, but they had become unable to see them in any other way. This is of course, exactly what the Devil wanted, and his tactic? -gossip and slander.

It is important to realize that the gossip and slander did not end with the Apostles, but later was used on those who remained loyal to Paul and John. Notice -

(3 John vs 9-10)- "I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, neither does he himself receive the brethren (loyal to John), and he forbids those who desire to do so, and puts them out of the church."

As Jesus had prophesied, even family members in the church betrayed one another due to an EVIL spirit created by EVIL men *unjustly accusing* PAUL, JOHN, and FAITHFUL CHURCH MEMBERS with *wicked words*— even denying the brethren access IN THE CHURCH MEETINGS.

"One of the most effective tools of satan is gossip. With gossip he will poison the minds of the unsuspecting.

➔He may come to you with the words, "*Just between me and you.*" Then proceed to *poison your mind* toward other brothers or sisters that are not present.

➔The gossip or slanderer will say he is telling you because he is "*deeply concerned.*" What he tells you may be 100% true or some truth mixed with lies. BUT HOW CAN YOU KNOW? You only have his side...

The Bible is clear in its instruction toward helping a brother or sister,

➔ If we see him/her practicing sin. WE are to go to him/her directly in a spirit of love and humility, motivated to restore ➔ Galatians 6:1.

ALSO: There are times when we should, as did the house of Chloe, go directly to those in spiritual leadership responsibility ➔ 1 Corinthians 1:11.

SAD REALITY: The gossip/slanderer will not follow these Biblical procedures, because he is not really motivated by the spirit of restoration of a brother or sister... or motivated to guard the unity of the Holy Spirit in a local church.

The slanderer, the gossip, the talebearer may offer various excuses, such as, 1. "*I would talk to him/her, but I'm sure he/she won't listen...* 2. *HE/SHE'S NOT TEACHABLE...* 3. *JUST PRAY FOR ME...*" 4. He may say, "*I'm going to tell you this, but don't tell anyone...*"

REALITY: IF YOU give your word to keep it confidential, then you receive POISON into your SOUL— NOW THE DEVIL HAS A STONGHOLD ON YOU.

You won't really know if it is true, and now you won't have a means of finding out. You may never look at the accused brother or sister in the same way again. You will have received "*seeds of division*."

THIS IS ALL VERY SERIOUS STUFF: Romans 16:17-18, -

"Now I URGE YOU, brethren, keep your eye on those who CAUSE DISSENSIONS and HINDRANCES contrary to the teaching which you learned, and TURN AWAY FROM THEM. For such are SLAVES not of our Lord Jesus Christ but of THEIR OWN APPETITES; and by their SMOOTH and FLATTERING SPEECH they DECEIVE the HEARTS of the unsuspecting."

III. WISE WAYS TO respond to those bringing accusations... ASK:

1. "Why are you telling me this about brother or sister so and so"?
2. "How do you know what you are telling me is true" . . .
3. "Have you gone to him (or her) privately as the Scripture says" . . .
4. "Can I quote what you are telling me" . . .
5. "Let's you and me go to that person and help restore him" . .
6. "If you won't go or if you will not go with me... I will go..."

IV. MOREOVER: YOU ARE TELLING ME HOW MUCH so and so has WRONGED YOU... AND THAT YOU ARE only GUILTY OF FOLLOWING AND SERVING JESUS—

WELL, I AM WONDERING: Why do you not exhibit joy and happiness?

You should be overflowing with happiness→1 Peter 3:13-16; 4:14-16!!

MORE REALITY: Often, those bringing accusations and seeds of division come as "vulnerable victims"... "Unjustly hurt" or "abused" by another. They may *pull on the strings* of your heart with a sad story as the Scripture above warned, - "by SMOOTH and FLATTERING SPEECH they DECEIVE the HEARTS of the unsuspecting."

It works much like a son or daughter complaining to their friends about "unfair" treatment by their parents, - "*My parents grounded me for no good reason. . . .They don't understand me.*" Their friends usually go along to get along, giving them an ear to complain to and sympathizing with them along the way.

ATA THE SAME TIME, YES, the world is filled with GENUINE, HURTING people; and if they are Christians, walking in the steps of Jesus, they will... 1. Have happiness, JOY, and PEACE; 2. They will have a broken heart for their offender; 3. They will want wisdom on how to WIN the offender; 4. They will be teachable, humble, and willing to SEE WHAT God may want to change in their own heart...

As God told Cain concerning his attitude toward his brother Abel, -"***If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up?*** And if you do not do well, SIN IS CROUCHING AT THE DOOR; and its DESIRE IS FOR YOU, but YOU MUST MASTER IT." (Genesis 4:7)

V. REALITY: Without a doubt, a chief tactic used by Satan to spread strife among CHRISTIANS AT HOME, AT WORK, and/or IN A CHURCH FAMILY is through the poison of gossip and slander. PROVERBS 16:27-28, -

"A worthless man DIGS UP EVIL, while HIS WORDS are as a SCORCHING FIRE. A PERVERSE MAN SPREADS STRIFE, and a SLANDERER SEPARATES INTIMATE FRIENDS." **PROVERBS 18:6-8**, - "A fool's lips BRING STRIFE, and his MOUTH calls for BLOWS. A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are the SNARE OF HIS SOUL. The words of a WHISPERER are like DAINTY MORSELS, and they go down into the INNERMOST PARTS of the BODY."

REALITY: A WHISPERER is one that introduces gossip and slander secretly, usually asking that his words be kept confidential. But notice that his words are as "dainty morsels" which go down into the innermost parts of the hearer's body.

➔This illustrates the dangers of listening to gossip and slander. God's command to us is to not engage in gossip and slander nor listen to it from others.

PROVERBS 20:19, -"He that GOES ABOUT as a SLANDERER reveals secrets, therefore DO NOT ASSOCIATE WITH A GOSSIP." **REALITY: This**

isn't just an idea or good advice, but what God is commanding. EPHESIANS 4:29-32, -

"Let no UNWHOLESOME WORD PROCEED FROM YOUR MOUTH, but only such a WORD AS IS GOOD FOR EDIFICATION according to the *need of the moment* that it may give GRACE TO THOSE WHO HEAR. And do not grieve the holy spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all BITTERNESS, and WRATH and ANGER and clamor and SLANDER be PUT AWAY FROM YOU, along with all MALICE. And be KIND TO ONE ANOTHER, TENDER-HEARTED, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

1 TIMOTHY 5:13, -"And at the same time they also LEARN TO BE IDLE, as they GO AROUND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE; and not merely idle, but also GOSSIPS and BUSYBODIES, TALKING ABOUT THINGS NOT PROPER TO MENTION." **HEBREWS 12:15**, -"See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that NO ROOT OF BITTERNESS springing up CAUSES TROUBLE and by it MANY BE DEFILED." REALITY: Just how would a "root of bitterness" springing up in someone "defile MANY" → if it wouldn't be through gossip and slander? This is the vehicle by which bitterness is spread. **JAMES 3:6-10**, - "And the TONGUE is a FIRE, the very WORLD OF INIQUITY; the TONGUE is set among our members as that which DEFILES THE ENTIRE BODY, and sets on FIRE THE COURSE OF OUR LIFE, and is SET ON FIRE BY HELL. For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed by the human race. But NO ONE CAN TAME THE TONGUE, it is a RESTLESS EVIL and full of DEADLY POISON."

VI. THE POISON OF A DEADLY SERPENT

ON THE PHYSICAL PLANE → Unless a poison is absorbed into the body it cannot harm you. Satan is called the "serpent" → Therefore, let's consider that the poison of a deadly snake cannot harm you unless by some means the VENOM enters the inside of your body. → When a person is bitten by a poisonous snake the critical damage is being done on the inside, but soon the effects become visible on the outside.

I read AN ACCOUNT OF the effects of the poison of a snake, through the eyes of a microscope, - The snake had bitten a lady on the foot. The lady was in excruciating pain and the microscope revealed why, -One by one the deadly poison was causing her blood veins to literally explode inside her foot and leg! She almost died but survived due

to quickly administered anti-venom, but her foot still required extensive restructure and numerous surgeries. This lady had walked that same trail many times and had always worn snake-proof boots. She was well aware of the dangers of snakes... IN FACT, her job was to study them. But this one time she made a conscious decision to proceed carefully without changing into her protective boots. **In recounting the story**, she said that she was watching extra carefully and could not believe that she did not see the snake lying in wait on the side of the paved trail.

As Christians we don't have to wonder if there is a serpent lying in wait in our path— we know the Devil is always there seeking an opportunity to give us the poisonous bite of gossip and slander.... Or wanting to use us to give the POISONOUS BITE to others!

1. So let us make sure we don't neglect to put on the full armor of God in our Christian walk. 2. And don't let Satan's deadly poison of gossip and slander enter into our body through our ears; or into the Body of Christ through our mouths.

JAMES 5:9, - "DO NOT COMPLAIN, brethren AGAINST ONE ANOTHER, that you yourselves may not be JUDGED; behold the JUDGE (Christ) is *standing* right at the door."

So we find both Jesus standing at the door and Satan and sin crouching at the door.

1. Satan is CROUCHING in order to hide and not be seen clearly.
2. Jesus STANDING because He has knocked announcing He is there waiting for you... for me... Choose Jesus!

Don't let the Devil in! FLEE! RUN INTO THE ARMS OF JESUS!

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

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES!

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

**** WEDNESDAYS: PRAYER SERVICE at 7:00PM; IN THE CHURCH AUDITORIUM! ****

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

➔ NEXT LADIES BIBLE STUDY— August, 11:00AM, led by Cindy Bell

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

~~~~ SUNDAY SCHEDULE FOR JULY 27 ~~~~

- 1. 9:30am-** Sunday School Bible Study and Small Group Fellowship
- 2. 10:45am-** Morning Worship / Children's Church
- 3. Noon- Covered-dish Fellowship Meal**
- 4. 1pm- Early Afternoon Service, 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>