

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 43, No. 26, July 5 , 2016 / 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."***

"Lighthouses Blow No Horns— They JUST SHINE!"

SURPRISING TRUTH— the reason **Sodom and Gomorrah** were destroyed by fire was ultimately NOT because of their grievous gross sin; but because 10 righteous citizens could not be found! (Genesis 18:20-33)

MORE SURPRISING TRUTH— Sodom not only had a strong sexually perverted element in their society, (Genesis 18-19); they also had a lot of solid, middle class citizens whose lives were simply built around eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, and building! (Luke 17:28-30) IN and of ITSELF— there's nothing is wrong with these activities. You sort of have to do them to live on planet earth! But the problem was that they LIVED FOR these endeavors— much like the Rich Man of Luke 12:16-21... whose 'only' sin was that of living a life of not being 'rich toward God!' **As to the people of Sodom— the FIRE of GOD'S wrath destroyed all** the sexually perverted **and all** the fine materialistic citizens!

NOT AT ALL TRYING TO BE CUTE, BUT STARING REALITY IN THE FACE— OTHERS HAVE STATED: **"If God does not judge America, He will have to apologize to Sodom!"** **MANY** are wisely fearful that AS A NATION, WE ARE IN TROUBLE.

But the question for me as an individual Christian and for us a local CHURCH is— **WHAT CAN/WHAT SHOULD WE DO?**

A COMMON ANSWER: Just vote out all the liberals. They are the problem. **Response:** They are 'a' serious problem! **HOWEVER:** Have we considered that they (And the rising threat of Islam and/or domination by China, etc.) could be an expression of the judgment of God that is coming on our NATION and especially upon CHURCHES who are not RICH TOWARD GOD and whose moral lifestyle is similar to that of the culture? (Hab. 1:5-12) Matthew 5:13— "... if the salt has [b]lost its taste (purpose), how can it be made salty? It is no longer good for anything, but to be thrown out and walked on by people..." (Amp)

MORE Questions: IN CONTRAST, have we Christians considered the positive potential impact of JUST 10 RIGHTEOUS ONES? Can we receive and act upon the reality that the WORD OF JESUS to Christians is all focused upon us being and becoming righteous, holy, pure, loving, forgiving... and BOLD with the Gospel? **That is the truth! Therefore let US take SPIRITUAL INVENTORY! We must move forward in serious CHRIST-LIKENESS!** Let's actually get serious and allow the Word of God and the Holy Spirit **to PLOW DEEP!**

2 Corinthians 13:5 commands: "**Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.** Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

Leonard Ravenhill: "I think the greatest miracle that God can do is to take an unholy man out of an unholy world, and make that unholy man holy and put him back in an unholy world and keep him holy. But we are more afraid of holiness today in the church than we are of sinfulness."

Dwight Moody: "A holy life will produce the deepest impression. Lighthouses blow no horns; they only shine!"

WHERE ARE WE, WHERE AM I? WE NEED TO FIND OUT! AGAIN, 2 Corinthians 13:5 exhorts is, "**Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.** Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the following Spiritual Check List can lead us as Christians to **identify and confess sins which often**

hinder us from being GODLY 'LIGHTHOUSES'... shining forth with Christlikeness!

These questions are given in the spirit of the cry of the Psalmist: "**Search me, O God and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!**" (Psalm 139:23-24) They are designed to lead us Christians to act upon 1 John 1:9: "**If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**"

Acting upon the following Scriptures and questions will help us as Christians to obey the command: "**Be filled with the Holy Spirit!**" (Eph. 5:8). **When our known sins are confessed and with the Holy Spirit in control of our lives**, we will have a new song and we will freely tell others of Jesus (Psalm 51:1-13); and we will be used to bring the lost to Christ. (Psalm 40:1-3) [IN CONFESSING OUR SINS, we are agreeing that they are wrong, against God, and got to go— "O LORD, I was wrong... I repent... please forgive me... THANK YOU JESUS!]

1. Matthew 6:12, 14-15 - "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors ... for if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses." Is there anyone against whom you hold a grudge? Anyone you haven't forgiven? Anyone you hate? Anyone you do not love? Are there any misunderstandings that you are unwilling to forget? Is there any person against whom you are harboring bitterness, resentment, or jealousy? Anyone you dislike to hear praised or well-spoken of? Do you allow anything to justify a wrong attitude toward another?

2. Matthew 6:33 - "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness ..." Is there anything in which you have failed to put God first? Have your decisions been made after your own wisdom and desires rather than by seeking and following God's will? Do any of the following in any way interfere with your surrender and service to God: Ambition, pleasures, loved ones, friendships, desire for recognition, money, or your own plans?

3. Mark 16:15 - "... Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Have you failed to witness consistently for the Lord Jesus Christ? Has your life failed to show the Lord Jesus to lost people?

4. John 13:35 - "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Are you secretly pleased over the misfortunes of another? Are you secretly annoyed over the accomplishments or advancements of another? Are you guilty of any contention or strife? Do you quarrel, argue, or engage in heated discussions? Are you a partaker in any division or party spirit? Are there people whom you deliberately slight? SEEING HOW YOU TREAT your spouse, in secret, would others believe you are, indeed, a Christian?

5. Acts 20:35 - " ... ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Have you robbed God by withholding His due of time, talents, and/or money? Do you give GENEROUSLY of your income unto the LORD, for God's Kingdom work? Have you failed to support mission work either in prayer or in offerings?

6. 1 Cor. 4:2 - "Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." Are you irresponsible so that you cannot be trusted with responsibilities in the Lord's work? Are you allowing your emotions to be stirred for things of the Lord but doing nothing about it?

7. 1 Cor. 6:19-20 - "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." Are you in any way careless with your body? Do you fail to care for it as the temple of the Holy Spirit? Are you guilty of intemperance in eating? Do you defile your body via sexual sin?

8. 1 Cor. 10:31 - "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Do you take the slightest credit for anything good about you, rather than give all the glory to God? Do you talk of what you have done rather than of what Christ has done? Are your

statements mainly about "I"? Are your feelings easily hurt? Have you made a pretense of being something you are not?

9. Eph. 3:20 - "**... him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.**" Are you self-conscious rather than Christ-conscious? Do you allow feelings of inferiority to keep you from attempting challenging goals in serving God?

10. Eph. 4:28 - "**Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good that he may have to give to him that needeth.**" Do you underpay? Do you do very little in your work? Have you been careless in the payment of your debts? Have you sought to evade payment of your debts? Do you waste time? Do you waste time for others?

11. Eph. 4:31 - "**Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you with all malice.**" Do you complain? Do you find fault? Do you have a critical attitude toward any person? Are you irritable or cranky? Do you ever carry hidden anger? Do you get angry? Do you become impatient with others? Are you ever harsh or unkind?

12. Eph. 5:16 - "**Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.**" Do you listen to unedifying radio or TV programs? Do you read unworthy magazines? Do you partake in worldly amusements? Do you find it necessary to seek satisfaction from any questionable source? Are you doing certain things that indicate you are not satisfied with the Lord Jesus Christ?

13. Eph. 5:20 - "**Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**" Have you neglected to thank Him for all things, the seemingly bad as well as the good? Have you virtually called God a liar by doubting His Word? Is your spiritual temperature based on your feelings instead of the facts of God's Word?

14. Phil. 1:21 - "**For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.**" Are you taken up with the cares of this life? Is your conversation primarily about "things" rather than the Lord and His word? Does anything mean more to you than living for and pleasing Christ?

15. Phil. 2:14 - "**Do all things without murmurings and disputings.**" Do you ever by word or deed seek to hurt someone? Do you gossip? Do you speak unkindly concerning people when they are not present? Are you prejudiced against others because of their race, social status, or beliefs?

16. Phil. 4:4 - "**Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.**" Do you carry any bitterness toward God? Have you complained against Him in any way? Have you been dissatisfied with His provision for you? Is there in your heart any unwillingness to obey God fully?

17. Col. 3:9 - "**Lie not to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.**" Do you engage in empty and unprofitable conversation? Do you ever lie? Do you ever exaggerate? Cheat? Steal? Do you overcharge?

18. 11 Tim. 2:22 - "**Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, -- with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**" Do you have any personal habits that are not pure? Do you allow impure thoughts about the opposite sex to stay in your mind? Do you read that which is impure or suggests unholy things? Do you indulge in any unclean entertainment? Are you guilty of the lustful look?

19. Heb. 10:25 - "**not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together ...**" Do you whisper or think about other things while God's Word is being read or preached? Are you irregular in attendance at worship services? Do you neglect to attend or participate in prayer meetings? Have you neglected private prayer? Have you neglected God's Word? Do you find the Bible and prayer uninteresting? Have you neglected thanksgiving at meals? Have you neglected daily family devotions?

20. Heb. 13:17 - "**Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.**" Do you hesitate to submit to leaders in the church or elsewhere? Are you lazy? Do you rebel at requests to help in the work of the Lord? Do you in any way have a stubborn or unteachable spirit?

21. James 1:27 - "**Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this ... to keep ... unspotted from the world.**" Have you allowed yourself to become "spotted" by the world? Do you spend beyond what is pleasing to God on anything? Do you neglect to pray about things that you buy? Are your deeds displeasing to God?

22. James 4:6 - "**God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.**" Do you feel that you are doing quite well as a Christian? That you are not so bad? That you are good enough? Are you stubborn? Do you insist on having your own way? Do you insist on your "rights"?

23. James 4:11 - "**Speak not evil one of another, brethren!**" Have you dishonored Him and hindered His work by criticizing His servants? Have you failed to pray regularly for your pastor or other spiritual leaders? Do you find it hard to be corrected? Is there rebellion toward one who wants to restore you? Are you more concerned about what people will think than about what will be pleasing to God?

Conclusion: If you and I have been honest in admitting, confessing our sins, [They are wrong, against God, not the fault of anyone else; and they 'gotta go!'] — then ask God's forgiveness right now. RECEIVE and rest in His promise to forgive and remove your sins "**as far as the east is from the west**" (Psalm 103:12). **Remember three things: (1)** Every sin is against God so we confess our sins to Him and make things right with Him. **(2)** If our sin is also against another person, we must make things right with that person. **(3)** If my sin is against a group, make it right with the group.

Don't be afraid to say to God, a business associate, a classmate, a member of your family, a fellow Christian, a Sunday School class,

or anyone else against whom you have sinned: “I was wrong when I said or did _____ - Please forgive me!” **Genuine revival has always started** in the hearts of God's people as they have confessed their own sins, allowed the Holy Spirit to control their lives, and made themselves available for service. **REMEMBER:** “Lighthouses Blow No Horns—they JUST SHINE!” [Part of article is edited from Arthur Davenport Associates, Oklahoma City, OK]

Grace and Peace to all in Christ! James Bell // www.southsidegallatin.org

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

MONDAYS: Jail Ministry— First and Second Monday of each month at 7:30pm. Questions? Contact Mike Munday at 615-681-7533

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

WEDNESDAYS: ☐ **6:30pm— Children** Ministry/activities; ☐ **6:30pm— Youth** Activities and Bible Study— (For both of these... enter via double doors by gym)

☐ **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE...** Come in side entrance, iron steps... meet in Ladies Sunday School Room

LADIES BIBLE STUDY— Meets EVERY OTHER TUESDAY: **The Epistle of James, chapter 5 // NEXT: July 19 @ 11:00am;** Cindy Bell teaching. [Front door open at 10:45 till 11:05am; or come in Iron Steps side entrance!]

MEN: EVERY SATURDAY MORNING @ 8am: Men’s Fellowship/Bible Study! {Study in **ROMANS**}... **Come to back of Church building... Come in under the drive-thru** awning... walk forward... till you smell the coffee!

SUNDAY SERVICES, JULY 10, *17, ***24, ***31**

9:30am- Sunday School

10:45am- Worship Service / Children’s Church

NOON 'Covered-dish' Lunch // **1pm Service,**

SPECIAL NOTES: (July 17: **9:30am-** Sunday School // **10:45am-** Worship Service / NO Children's Church // NO meal or 1pm service // HOME GROUPS MEET IN THE EVENING, generally 5-7pm)

{July 24☐ Faithful Men meet from 5:30-7:30pm}

[JULY has a FIFTH Sunday, July 31— Let us have an EVENING OF SCRIPTURE and PRAISE UNTO THE LORD!

SOUTHSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL— *Uniting Church, Home, and School in CHRIST!*

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