



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 44, No.11, March 14 , 2017 / 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; and 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."***

SOLUTIONS or PROBLEMS— to WHICH am I Contributing?

(Read I Cor. 12:27-31; 13:1-13; 14:1)

The Church at Corinth was a troubled church with troubled families! Today, we are much like the church at Corinth! And like them, we need to hear and receive the Word of God! **The Holy Spirit Gave and Still Gives Godly Solutions:**

1. The preaching of the cross, Jesus Christ crucified: 1 Corinthians 1:17-18; 2:2
2. The more excellent way of God's love: 1 Corinthians 13
3. Specific doctrine, rebuke, correction and exhortation— this is found throughout the Epistle as Paul's pen is moved by the Holy Spirit to confront the sin problems in the church and in their homes.
4. The godly examples, in the midst of this troubled church, of the House of Chloe and the House of Stephanas. (1 Cor. 1:11; 16:15-16)

1. Chapters 1-4: The church was filled with strife. The root problem was pride, for the Bible tells us that **it is only by pride** that contention comes! (Prov. 13:10) Families and churches have differences from time to time! That's no problem— that's life! **But how we handle our**

differences can be a problem. Let's be honest, most of us have a hard time handling differences: We withdraw! Dig in! Sharpen our weapons! Attack! Demonize others. Promote our victim status. Build an army of supporters for our position, etc. **GOD'S WAY IS RADICALLY DIFFERENT!**

Our differences and the real or imagined failures of others give us a grand opportunity to show a strife-filled world the supernatural reality of God's love!

CHRISTIANS are divinely empowered to do more than others! (Matthew 5:44-48) There is room for diversity— but no room for divisiveness, resentment, bitterness, slander, etc. Corinth was drowning in lovelessness! How is it with us?

2. Chapter 5: They were tolerating gross sin among those who professed to be Christians. Their root problem was a lack of love— for they refused to discipline and did not value holiness. **God's love never compromises holiness!** Holiness is not optional! (Hebrews 12:10-14)

3. Chapter 6: They were taking one another to court, presided over by the unsaved, (I Cor. 6:1). There was no willingness to suffer for righteousness sake and no willingness to forgive! *They were keen on pointing the finger of accusation at others; but they were **unwilling to judge their own sin.*** Today masses in the churches flee the pure Word of God and flock to churches, counselors, and courts that gladly take their money and tell them what they want to hear— 'You are justified in divorcing! **CHRISTIANS IN DIVORCE COURTS and Christians 'splitting' from one another in churches** make a gross mockery of Jesus Christ and His mercy, love, grace, forgiveness, and more!

4. Chapter 7: They were having marriage problems and a number of them were looking for excuses to end their marriages. **REALITY: This is a very strong chapter which sets forth a clear NO DIVORCE policy in— 1 Corinthians 7:10-14; 27; 39! These verses are very clear, namely:**

(1) If separated, be reconciled or remain unmarried.

(2) Don't divorce; you may win the unbeliever to Christ.

(3) You are bound in marriage until there is a DEATH— then there is liberty to marry a believer.

Sadly, multitudes flock to this same chapter—and skip and reject these clear verses; and focus on 1 Corinthians 7:15; and interpret verse 15 so as to excuse their divorce plans! What verse 15 means is much debated. But obviously if you interpret verse 15 in a way that cancels out the very clear emphasis of **1 Corinthians 7:10-14; 27; 39**—you have wrongly interpreted verse 15!

5. Chapters 8-10: In **Chapter 8**, they were arguing over whether or not to eat meat that had been sacrificed to heathen gods. In **Chapter 9**, they were arguing over whether or not Paul was a true apostle. In **Chapter 10**, Paul needed to warn this church about lust, idolatry, fornication, tempting God, murmuring and fellowship with devils. **Lovelessness was rampant!**

6. Chapters 11, 12, 14: In **Chapter 11** Paul warned them of gross selfishness and wickedness which was being practiced at their fellowship suppers and Lord's Supper. In **Chapters 12 and 14**, Paul addressed this church on the issue of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how the church should function as a body.

Their worship services had become chaotic because many in the church were **misusing** the gifts of the Spirit— primarily, the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy. They were using them for self-glorification, self-gratification, personal excitement, and in pride. **Lovelessness was rampant!**

7. Chapters 15 & 16: With all the above selfishness and sin, it is no wonder that they were doctrinally confused about the resurrection and needed some instruction as to giving.

**BIG QUESTION: Had I been a member of the church at Corinth—
Would I have been a part of the problem; or a part of the
solution?**

A PART OF THE SOLUTION

1. The house of Chloe was a part of the solution— 1 Corinthians 1:11. When gossip / slander / discord / discontent and tale-bearing reached their ears— they reported it to someone who was responsible before God to deal with it. At least a portion of the First Epistle of Paul the

Apostle to the Corinthians was the result! (Slanderers, gossips, busybodies, discord sowers, sin lovers, etc... could not HIDE IN CHURCH with the House of Chloe around!) THEY DID NOT spread trash throughout the church. They simply INFORMED those whom God had placed in servant leadership over the church family!)

2. The house of Stephanas was a part of the solution— I Corinthians 16:15-16.

They ADDICTED themselves to the ministry of the saints!

QUESTION: What saints? ANSWER: Those fighting, feuding, selfish, pride-filled, sinning saints of the church at Corinth!

NOTE CAREFULLY: A different sort of soul says, “I am not about to plug in and faithfully serve the LORD at the church at Corinth... or at this or that church— because they got this problem and that problem and I don’t like or agree with this or that... No, sir, there is no way that I will cultivate ADDITCTION to the saints at those churches! In fact, there are just NO good churches around.

So, me and Jesus got a good thing going— I’ll just stay home or just ‘float’ from church to church. When the mood strikes me I’ll come in and ‘critique’ one of them and then go tell others how lacking the folks are at Corinth or Southside or wherever!” **REALITY: The above ‘super saint’ who is too good for any ‘needy’ Bible believing church— YOU ARE A PART OF THE PROBLEM!**

JESUS will have us ***to be ADDICTED to ministering to*** and with an imperfect, Bible believing local church even as He did the house of Stephanas! REMEMBER: **The way we treat the BODY OF CHRIST is how we treat Jesus!** (Acts 9:1-5)

The Word is also plain that if I LOVE JESUS I will obey Him.

Therefore, aloofness from, refusing to be a vital contributing part of a local assembly of believers is an OPEN EXPRESSION of rebellion against JESUS. **For JESUS CHRIST. the Head, always CONNECTS believers into vital, contributing positions in a local assembly. That is the strong message of 1 Corinthians 12.**

3. The Apostle Paul was a part of the solution. How? He gave them the tough love, living truth from a sacrificial heart (2 Cor. 12:15) The infallible Word of God to a congregation is the true source of hope and comfort, (Romans 15:4); and is profitable to teach the faith, correct error, reset direction to be well pleasing to God and instruct in right living so that we will be completely equipped for all good works to the glory of God! (2 Tim 3:16-17)

HAD I BEEEN in the church at Corinth— what would have been my contribution?

1. In lovelessness contribute to the problems?
2. Sit and watch while lives are destroyed?
3. Fuel the flames of destruction with gossip and talebearing?
4. Pack up and leave?
5. **OR... when needed, like the house of Chloe,** communicate with the under shepherds who are responsible for the flock?
6. **OR... Like the house of Stephanas, be addicted to the ministry of imperfect saints?**
7. **OR... Like Paul, welcome or unwelcome, preach the pure Word of God?**

SITUATION: Over the last 48 years of fulltime pastoral ministry, on A FEW occasions, FOLKS have come to me and said, “Oh, Pastor, there’s trouble in the church. People are upset! You must do something about it!”

And I would ask, “Who? Where? When? What?”

And they would say, “Oh, now Pastor, we couldn’t tell you the answer to those questions. That would be breaking confidence! We promised not to tell! But there’s trouble and you’d better fix it! I’ve told you because I love THE LORD and our church.”

RESPONSE: SUCH AN APPROACH equals BEING THE MOUTHPIECE OF SATAN, THE ACCUSER OF THE BRETHREN! Do you know what would have happened if THOSE TALE-BEARERS HAD told me who/what/when/where?

NAMELY THIS: A secret slander/gossip/backbiting ring would have been broken up and their talebearing business would have been out of business! Thank God for the house of Chloe and THE HOUSE OF STEPHANAS! Every Christ-honoring, Bible-believing church in America needs such families.

Am I a part of the problem or part of the solution?

Further Question: Had I been a member of one of the New Testament Churches— would my name be listed in one of the Epistles? And if so, would it be a positive or a negative reference?

In letters to be read in churches, church folk got named:

1 Cor. 16:15-18— **Positive**...the house of Stephanas: Addicted to the ministry of saints!

Phil. 4:2— **Negative**... Euodias and Syntyche: Stop your fussing!

2 Tim. 4:10— **Negative**... Demas has forsaken... loves this present world!

2 Tim. 4:11— **Positive**... Mark is profitable to me for the ministry!

2 Tim. 4:14— **Negative**... Alexander did me evil!

Rom. 16:17-18— **Negative**... mark those who cause divisions!

3 John 1:9— **Negative**... Diotrephes loves to have preeminence and won't receive us!

NEWS FLASH:

Beginning next Sunday Morning, in all Bible believing churches, when pastors and members walk into the church auditorium/worship centers—the real truth about each one of us

All we have thought, said or done the previous week will be printed out and/or **shown** on a giant screen... and this will be done every Sunday!

If this were to be the case— what would happen to church attendance?

MUCH MORE IMPORTANT— One day this will take place:

2 Corinthians 5:10-11: For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. (Rom 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:11-17)

God's bottom line ULTIMATE SOLUTIONS for the church at Corinth and for any Bible believing congregation!

1. Specific doctrine and exhortation that deals with the specific problems and needs in a church to EXPOSE LOVELESSNESS! (1 Corinthians 1-16)
2. A call to be rooted in THE WAY OF THE CROSS! (1 Corinthians 1:17-18 / 2:2)
3. A call to the more excellent way of God's love! (1 Corinthians 13:1-13)
4. The examples of **those** [of the house of Chloe and the house of Stephanas] **who** while members of a very carnal church, were a part of the solution and not a part of the problem! AND the example of Paul, who LOVED the Corinthians and so he instructed, corrected, rebuked, and trained in Godly living via his preaching/teaching.

To be a part of the solution, we must first make sure we have received the love of God! We cannot express love until, at NEW BIRTH, our hearts are FLOODED with the LOVE OF GOD by the HOLY SPIRIT! (Romans 5:5)

Jesus sacrificed His bruised and bleeding body as the greatest display of unconditional love ever exhibited! **NOW HE EMPOWERS HIS REDEEMED PEOPLE with HIMSELF**, by the INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT—**SO THAT we can be vessels of His unconditional love to the imperfect people in our lives; and THUS a part of the SOLUTION and no longer a PROBLEM!**

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— Studies in the Gospel of Luke! ... NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, *March 28, 2017* @ 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! *{STUDYING the Epistle of First John}* AT THE back of Church building... Come in under the drive-thru awning, walk forward, coffee & biscuits WAITING!

Sunday Services For March: March 19, 26

March 19— 9:30am - Sunday School // 10:45am - Worship Service ***INCLUDING The LORD'S SUPPER***
NO Noon Covered Dish meal / **NO** 1:00pm Afternoon Service

EVENING HOME GROUPS... ask about locations!

March 26— 9:30am - Sunday School // 10:45am - Worship Service

Noon Covered Dish meal /
5:30pm - 7:30pm
FELLOWSHIP/STUDY/EQUIPPING:

FAITHFUL

MEN'S

MONTHLY