



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 44, No.12, March 21 , 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."***

ALL Those Who are Saved— Missionaries For CHRIST!

THE VERY FIRST New Testament MISSIONARY JOURNEY was not Paul's— BUT BY ALL WHO SCATTERED from Jerusalem: "... They were ALL scattered abroad... EXCEPT the APOSTLES... THEY THAT WERE SCATTERED ABROAD, went EVERYWHERE PREACHING THE WORD!"(Acts 8:1-4) The modern church has created a special PROFESSIONAL CLASS who are to do 'missions' and all others are simply to pray and financially support. THEREFORE, the 'mission field' IS NOT where WE LIVE; and we are not called to be missionaries. HOWEVER, the New Testament has EVERY CHRISTIAN as an AMBASSADOR FOR CHRIST, called to live and proclaim the gospel (Acts 8:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:17-20; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8) AND YES, there are those, developed in leadership in local churches, whom the HOLY SPIRIT sends forth to the ends of the earth in spreading the gospel, ESTABLISHING NEW LOCAL CHURCHES, and developing and ordaining ELDERS in every place! (Acts 13:1-4ff; Titus 1:4-5ff, etc)

The following verses UNVEIL OUR Mission Field! We are called to the TWENTY FIRST CENTURY edition of the same kind of world that the scattered ones of Acts 8, Paul, Timothy, Peter, John, and their fellow saints faced, years ago: **1. 2 Timothy 3:1-5—** ***This know also, that in the LAST DAYS*** *perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of*

*their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: **from such turn away.** 2. **1 John 2:18**— Little children, **it is the LAST TIME**: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; **whereby we know that it is THE LAST TIME.***

3. Jude 1:17-19— *But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that **they told you there should be mockers in THE LAST TIME**, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. **These be they** who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.*

Words from JESUS about our Mission Field:

***** Matthew 24:4-5: DECEPTION**— There have been, are and will be false prophets, false religions, and false Messiahs who DECEIVE MANY— **Take HEED!** ***** Matthew 24:6-7: WAR**— A mark of the entire age will be war and more war, escalating to WORLD WARS. ***** Matthew 24:7: Famines, diseases and earthquakes** in many places. **BIBLICAL REALITY:** Wars, famines, diseases, and earthquakes DO NOT demonstrate that we are near the end of the end times! JESUS SAYS in Matthew 24: 6 & 8—**'The end is not yet... these are the beginnings of sorrows...'** Again, all these things SPAN the entire ENDTIME from Christ's return to heaven to His return back to earth!

***** Matthew 24:9-10: PERSECUTION**— hatred of true Christians... BETRAYAL of Christians... Martyrdom! This has been, is and will be reality in the Last Days, until the return of Christ! ***** Matthew 24:10-13:** Many PROFESSING CHRISTIANS **leave the faith.** Many of these will likely join the HARLOT WORLD CHURCH and betray true saints! ***** Matthew 24:11-12: More and more False Prophets.** BEWARE: They come in sheep's clothing but are ravening wolves! (Matt. 7:15) They appear (2 Cor. 11:13-15) as 'ministers of righteousness.'

SOME REALITIES ABOUT THE SUMNER COUNTY, TENNESSEE, MISSION FIELD: [NOTE: these statistics are dated. However, I have no

reason to believe that there has been any significant change IN THE “%” FACTORS from what will be seen below.] **In 2000**, Sumner County population was over 130,000. (**In 2011** there were a little over 166,000) **In 2000**, **Over 55%** of the population stated that they had no religious affiliation. **In 2000** there were a little over 40,000 folks (about 31%) **who claimed to belong** to some sort of religious group. **In 2000**, the total number claiming to attend some sort of religious meeting, including all religions, cults, etc., was a little **under 20,000**.

In other words, on any given weekend, ONLY about 15%-16% of folks in Sumner County were/are attending any sort of religious service. Again, include all of the folks who are in man-made religions and/or they are in cults and/or in the ‘rank liberal’ churches— today, **how many folks in Sumner County are attending religious services?**

Assuming a 15,000 increase in the last 12 years, for 2012 we will say that there are at least 35,000 folks attending some sort of religious service. (This is likely a generous number!) **LET’S BE MORE THAN GENEROUS** and say that **75% of all the Sumner County folks attending religious services on a given weekend are saved, Bible-believing Christians**— that would be about 26,250 out of a population of 166,000... or 16%! BOTTOM LINES:

1. WAKE UP REALITY: IN our immediate Mission Field of Gallatin and Sumner County **OVER 80%** of the residents are presently DEAD IN THEIR SINS and on the way to an eternal HELL!

2. Gallatin now has a population of a little over 30,000. Thus, if Gallatin is similar to all of Sumner County, then 16%, [BUT LET’S ASSUME 20%... or around 6,000 folks], attend some sort of religious services; and if 75% are genuine Christians, there would be approximately 4,500 Christians in Gallatin.

3. Again, THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT about 80% of our neighbors are DEAD IN THEIR SINS, lost, and on the way to a Christ-less eternity. Note: Even if the researchers missed a bunch of folk... and, so we assume 30% attend and 75% of those are genuine believers. **We are still looking at only around 6,700 believers with 70% of the population LOST!**

SO, THIS IS OUR MISSION FIELD: We live in a SIN DARKENED, satan-deceived mission field. Yes, we can say that there are church buildings on every corner! Probably MOST of the homes have a Bible. Doubtless, a great majority of them have had some Christian heritage in their past. **But that does not change the reality that about 70% to 80% of our neighbors are dead in their sins! WHICH 'DEADNESS' IS WORSE? 1. The deadness of** the masses on some foreign field who have never even heard the name of Christ and who are enslaved to the powerful deceptions of either Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and/or enslaved to the local witch doctor? **2. OR... the deadness of** the masses in Sumner County and/or Gallatin who have many FALSE teachings and concepts of Jesus blasted to them via Television, AND WHO WORSHIP THE gods of sex and money and sports and houses and lands and eating and drinking and yet believe that they are on the way to heaven? **RESPONSE: I DON'T KNOW! But I believe DEAD IS DEAD!**

MOREOVER, we would do well to remember that Jesus warns that it is hard for rich people to be saved. (Matthew 19:23-26) By world standards, even our poor neighbors are rich. **Is the bondage of the witch doctor in Haiti deeper than the bondage of the love of money?** I'm not sure. BUT THIS I KNOW— **in either case it is BONDAGE, deception, and deadness in sin.** And in either case the only hope and the great need is the power of God unto salvation, THE GOSPEL of our LORD Jesus Christ!

LET US ALSO REMEMBER— we do not get to pick and choose! We are commissioned to take the gospel to our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the utter most parts of the World! (Acts 1:7-8; Matthew 28:19-20)

HAVE WE CONSIDERED THIS REALITY: If we DO NOT take the gospel to our immediate world of Gallatin and Sumner County— (1) over time we will have LESS AND LESS believers available to be called to be sent as missionaries to the ends of the earth; and (2) LESS AND LESS believers to pray for the foreign missionaries; and (3) less and less believers to give funds to support those already in foreign lands! These are just a few of the far reaching CONSEQUENCES if we do not TAKE UP OUR MISSIONARY CALLING and EFFECTIVELY EVANGELIZE in Gallatin and Sumner County!

DIVINE EQUIPMENT FOR AMBASSADORS OF CHRIST!

1. We have the GOSPEL and the POWER of the HOLY SPIRIT!

Romans 1:16: *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

*Acts 1:7-8: And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.***

2. Matthew 24:12-13: AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST POSSESS ENDURING FAITH! A mark of genuine faith is ENDURANCE! NO TURNING BACK! **Even so, in New Testament times, there were already MANY who were ‘falling away’— 1 John 2:18-19. So, why do many fall away? — Matt. 13:19-22!**

CRITICAL QUESTION: What, who is it that keeps any and all genuine Christians from becoming ‘antichrist’? □ è 1 John 2:18-**20**; Jude 24

3. Matthew 28:19-20: JESUS PROMISES HIS OWN SPECIAL PRESENCE with HIS AMBASSADORS, all the way until the END OF THE WORLD! (Matthew 28:19-20) In the midst of such a world, as described in Matthew 24:1-13, the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD will be preached unto all the world... and only when that is fully accomplished will the end come! (Matthew 24:14)

BIG QUESTION: Such a world as described in Matthew 24:1-13— in such a world as that, it would be useless to evangelize— right?

The world is getting worse and worse! **MAYBE Christians SHOULD bar the doors; Concentrate on holy huddles; and/or try to ‘save the American way’ by politics; etc.— RIGHT?**

ACTUALLY in Luke 10:2-3 Jesus says, 1. The harvest is GREAT! 2. The laborers are few! 3. PRAY that the LORD of the harvest would send forth laborers! 4. GO your way, BEHOLD I SEND YOU as lambs among the wolves! (Matt. 10:16-28)

In John 4:34-38, Jesus says, that we are to look on the fields of the world; they are white ALREADY to harvest! **SOW! REAP!** MOREOVER, let us be reminded that we are told in **Luke 19:10**, “The Son of Man is come to SEEK and to save the lost!” In the parable of the Great Supper, (Luke 14), **the Master’s servants are instructed** to go, find, bring the poor, the lame, the blind... **they are instructed** to go to the highways and urge people to come in to the great feast! The teaching of Scripture is that when the GREAT COMMISSION IS COMPLETED— only then will the end come! **Therefore, there are still souls to rescue, SOULS to save!**

THE REAL QUESTION FOR US AS A CONGREGATION IS THIS:

1. WILL WE BE A SOUL RESCUING LIGHTHOUSE OR JUST A RELIGIOUS CLUB? **2. WILL WE BE CONTENT TO HAVE CHURCH FOR JUST ME AND MINE? 3. OR DO WE HAVE A GROWING PASSION TO TRULY ‘HAVE CHURCH’—** (1) TO WORSHIP GOD; (2) TO BUILD UP THE SAINTS; and (3) TO TAKE THE GOSPEL TO THE LOST?

LET’S BE HONEST: OUR PRIORITIES, GET TIME, EFFORT AND RESOURCES— ALL ELSE GET EXCUSES!

Acts 1:6-8: To live and to give the GOSPEL in our kind of world will take POWER beyond us! To be found faithful and NOT among those who turn back in the day of adversity, will take power beyond us!

HERE’S GREAT NEWS: Christians are possessed with POWER from God to endure, to overcome and even to be BOLD with the Gospel! [Matt.28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:16; 5:1-5]

SOUTHSIDE: We Have a GOD-GIVEN CALLING! (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

*“For if a man is in Christ he becomes a new person altogether—the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. All this is God’s doing, for he has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ; **and he has made us agents of the reconciliation.** God was in Christ personally reconciling the world to Himself — not counting their sins against them —and **has commissioned us with the message of reconciliation. We are now Christ’s ambassadors,** as though God*

were appealing direct to you through us. As his personal representatives we say, "Make your peace with God."~~ Phillips paraphrase of 2 Cor. 5:17-20

WE MUST EMBRACE GOD GIVEN METHODS FOR MISSIONS/EVANGELISM:

1. By LOVING one another, all men shall know that we are Christ's true disciples. John 13:34-35 **2. HOLY LIVING:** We must not BLASPHEME the Gospel... but rather we must ADORN the gospel! (Titus 2:1-14) **3. We must reject all** of the WORKS OF THE FLESH and SEEK TO ALWAYS BE A CHANNEL FOR THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: Gal. 5:19-25 **4. We must DISCOVER and utilize the power of GOOD WORKS BEFORE MEN— for such glorifies our Father who is in heaven! (Matthew 5:14-16)** **5. WE MUST GIVE GOD THE LORD'S DAY... NOT MERELY THE LORD'S MORNING... BUT THE LORD'S DAY!** Isaiah 58: 13-14—

"Keep the Sabbath day holy. **Don't pursue** your own interests on that day, **but enjoy** the Sabbath and speak of it **with delight** as the LORD's holy day. Honor the Sabbath in everything you do on that day, **and don't follow** your own desires or talk idly. (NLT) [WE MUST GIVE GOD SACRED TIME for Kingdom worship and work!]

6. WE must CEASE merely attending church... totally! You can attend a ball game... AND WHEN YOU DO— YOU CHEER ON... OR YOU BLAST AND/OR YOU 'PLAY MONDAY MORNING QUARTERBACK'... YOU CRITIQUE... BUT YOU DO NOT GET IN THE GAME AND HELP WIN THE GAME! **YOU ARE A SPECTATOR!** MULTITUDES TREAT THE LOCAL CHURCH THAT WAY!

In the church of Jesus Christ, there is NO PLACE for spectator Christians! Rather, we assemble, (1) TO Worship God. (2) TO Encourage one another. (3) TO be further equipped to SEEK and to bring the LOST to Christ... WE MUST HEED THE GREAT COMMISSION!

JESUS in Luke 10:2è "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." GO... I send you... Yet, how do we find unchurched, lost people to whom we can minister? What can we do? Where do we begin?"

ANOTHER REALITY TO FACE TODAY— most folks sitting in the pews do not know any lost people and no not seem to have any way to make connection with lost people in their community. We live in one community and work many miles away. We live in neighborhoods but do not know most of our neighbors. **[Surely one thing we must do in the coming WEEKS AND MONTHS is to take some positive steps to REACH OUT to our neighbors!]** The Biblical reality IS that the lost are not called to come to us but JESUS commands us to GO TO THEM! As Jesus has said, *"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. **Ask the Lord ... to send out workers into his harvest... GO... I AM SENDING YOU!**"* (Luke 10:2) **"FOLLOW ME! AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN!"**
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.

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 26

March 26— 9:30am - Sunday School

10:45am - Worship Service

Noon Covered Dish meal

**5:30pm - 7:30pm FAITHFUL MEN'S MONTHLY
FELLOWSHIP/STUDY/EQUIPPING**