



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 44, No.19, May 9 , 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."***

[NOTE: Apply this to your PRESENT marriage! Reviewing last week's article will also be helpful]

How to Save Your Marriage Alone! (Edited from Dr. Ed Wheat; and others)

Your marriage is in trouble! You are considering options: **1.** You can break your vows and divorce. **2.** You can tolerate a bad situation, busying yourself in something else. **3. OR,** you can sit at the feet of Jesus and be empowered to build an intimate, Christ-honoring marriage. IF YOU ARE LEANING TOWARD DIVORCE, JUST KNOW THIS: **1. "Divorce is more painful than death because it's never really over!"** **2.** When couples run away from their problems by divorcing and remarrying, **"there are usually four miserable people instead of just two— why spread misery?"** **3.** AN EVEN HIGHER percentage of second marriages fail than first marriages. **HOWEVER, when you choose the pathway of irrevocable commitment to your mate and your marriage — regardless of how troubled your relationship may seem —** at the very least you will be glad when you stand before God in the day of

judgment; **and, even now**, you will find that choice leading you into a place of *agape* love, peace, and personal growth— even if your spouse does not positively respond for the saving of the marriage. **BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE**, THE HEALING of a broken marriage can be a painful process. It does not have to be; but it can also be a LONG process. WHY? Because, torn relationships involve pain, regardless of what you do about them. HOWEVER, — ***it is far better to suffer (if suffer you must) for doing right, than for doing wrong! (1 Peter 2:19-21)*** The Holy Spirit makes it clear that God’s favor and blessing shines on the one who patiently suffers in order to do His will. Meeting your marriage problems in a biblical manner is ALWAYS productive rather than pointless; and whatever hurts you encounter will be less damaging than the long-term effects of divorce would be.

“The very word *divorce* should be cut out of the vocabulary of a couple when they marry...” A LADY testified that the turbulent events of the past year had driven her to grow emotionally and spiritually while she “loved her husband back” to their marriage. SHE SAID, “It’s been all gain for me. I’m a different person now. The process was humbling, but it was worth it!” A man said, **“During the time when I was trying to win my wife’s love and hold our family together, sometimes I got so tired of rejection that I didn’t feel anything except a determination to do what God said in His Word and leave the results with God. The only thing I was sure of was that somehow God would work it out for my good because He promised that in His Word!”** SUCH TESTIMONIES ARE encouraging.

EVEN SO, you or someone you know are in the middle of shock, hurt, rejection, emotional confusion, temptation to bitterness, and of course, pressures from all sides that sometimes make you want to give up; while others are in the midst of RANK rebellion. This article is designed to help clarify thoughts, stabilize emotions, and learn to behave in a consistent,

purposeful way that can save your marriage, TRANSFORM your marriage, and GLORIFY GOD! **AND BY THE WAY: Contrary to popular opinion, ONE PERSON, being as clay in the Master's hands, CAN SAVE A MARRIAGE!** Counselor Anne Kristin Carroll says, **“In my experience most torn marriages are brought to new life, new vitality by the interest, basically, of only one party.”** Dr. Ed Wheat states, **“I have seen numerous marriages saved when only one partner** applied biblical principles in a whole hearted commitment to the mate and the marriage— **in the great majority of cases, the outcome depends squarely on the committed partner's ability to behave consistently in accord with biblical principles designed by the Author of marriage.** So, in a very literal sense, it is all up to you. You need not expect your partner to do anything constructive about the marriage if he or she wants out.

CLARIFYING YOUR THOUGHTS: When the Bible says, **“Gird up the loins of your mind”** ([1 Peter 1:13](#)), it means to get your mental powers in a state of alertness for proper action. Without delay, you must make the choice to set aside time for quiet, uninterrupted Bible study and prayerful consideration of God's plan for your situation. Example: At the beginning of his Christian life, Dr. Ed Wheat's wife and daughters were UNRESPONSE to both he and Jesus, his Saviour. The prolonged rejection was painful. HOWEVER, that rejection DROVE HIM to the Word of God so as to learn what he should do.

Time and again, he had to 'run all over his feelings' and simply love his family out of OBEDIENCE to Christ. In time, his obedience to Christ became PLEASURE as well as responsibility— in fact, the obedience took on bright colors of JOY! This was NOT because of a positive response

from his family; but simply the JOY THAT COMES when we live to please and honor JESUS, regardless of people and circumstances! **One young wife** was ready to dissolve her marriage until a friend in her garden club led her to the Lord. “I only knew two Scriptures at the beginning,” the wife said, “but they were exactly what I needed: ‘God is not a man, that he should lie’ ([Numbers 23:19](#)) and ‘With God nothing shall be impossible’ ([Luke 1:37](#)). “With those truths as a foundation I began to study the Bible, desperately trying to dig out God’s purpose for marriage and all that He had to say about it.

I found out for myself that if I were to obey JESUS, then I would have to become committed to my marriage and my husband, even though he was involved with another woman and we were on the verge of divorce. “Coming to this decision didn’t make things any easier emotionally at first, but it did show me a clear path of action, and the situation actually became less complicated because there was no more confusion about what to do! I refused to sign the divorce papers. I had gathered evidence identifying the other woman and proving my husband’s unfaithfulness. I destroyed it all. I didn’t need it anymore.”

GIVING YOURSELF THE ‘NO DIVORCE’ POSITION IS EMPOWERING!

Now you can concentrate on forgiving; and as needed— being forgiven; and upon being sacrificially REDEMPTIVE toward the wayward spouse; and upon the blessing of WALKING IN THE STEPS OF JESUS! (1 Peter 2:20-21)

And let us be reminded that: “He replied, ‘Have you never read that He Who made them from the beginning made them male and female’. And said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be united firmly (joined inseparably) to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What

therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder'" (separate) ([Matthew 19:4-6 AMP](#)). **As you try to gain clarity of thought concerning your marital situation viewed in light of the teaching of Scripture, I suggest that you read the first five chapters of the book, *Love Life for Every Married Couple* and search the Scriptures that have to do with marriage. Let me remind you once more of the eternal principle that undergirds the biblical counsel we offer: It is God's will in every marriage for the couple to love each other with an absorbing spiritual, emotional, and physical attraction that continues to grow throughout their lifetime together.**

It should be crystal clear that God intends for you and your mate to picture the love-bond of Christ and His church and that you must beware of substitutes who sometimes find their way into the vacuum of a troubled relationship. Obviously, infidelity and divorce are paths that move away from God's plan and blessing. **But when you pour yourself into restoring love to your marriage, you can be sure that the force of His will is at work with you in the process.**

It is important to fill your mind with uncompromising Biblical input: Biblical counseling, preaching, and teaching; good books and Bible-study tapes; and friends who will affirm you in your commitment to your marriage. ***You need to take in truth from those who are as committed to the permanence of marriage as the Bible is. And don't listen to anyone else!*** Develop tunnel vision in this area as [Proverbs 4:25-27](#) commands: "*Let your eyes look directly ahead, and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. Watch the path of your feet,*

and all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil.” (NASB).

You need to maintain this total mental commitment to the truth or you will be swamped by waves of human opinion and bad advice, sometimes from seemingly religious people. One young man came to me, confused because he had been told to do nothing to win back his wife. He had been told to concentrate on his vertical relationship with God. I said to him, “This is true, but you can please God only when you are doing what the Bible says you are to do. You must be right in line with God’s Word. When we are in total accord with the Word, then we can relax and God has the freedom to work with us.

He always works with us on the basis of the information that we have from His Word. So the more you know of the Word of God concerning marriage and love and His abhorrence of divorce, the more equipped you will be to let God do His full work and have His full way in your life.”

A GODLY WIFE SAID, “I had to take a stand on this matter of outside influence. “Everyone has been anxious to give me advice about my marriage. I refuse to discuss it with people who hold an unbiblical viewpoint, or people who try to turn me against my husband, or people who make me feel sorry for myself, and encourage weakness in me. **I can’t afford to be around worldly friends anymore. They tear me down; they tear my husband down.** They may mean well, but they are so misguided. I want to be with people who will stand with me, ENCOURAGE ME to be true to God’s Word; and who will support me when I might falter... not to give me sympathy; but to encourage me to HONOR GOD’S WORD!” **When your mind is settled, your thoughts clarified,**

and your commitment made, you will find that you no longer lie at the mercy of outside events, reacting to every new circumstance with fresh pain and bewilderment. Instead, your viewpoint becomes, ***“This is what I am going to do, no matter what, because it is God’s way to do it. I can count on His wisdom, and I can trust Him with the results of a course of action based on His Word.”***

“I’m not standing by my marriage anymore on the basis of what the outcome will be,” one woman told me. “People urge me to dump my husband, give up on him because he’s made my life miserable; they tell me I deserve someone better, that I wouldn’t have any trouble finding someone else to love me. My answer is that marriage is sacred; marriage is permanent; I am committed by my marriage vows; I am one flesh with my husband; and then I really shock them! **I tell them that even if there is no happy ending for our marriage, I will not regret the stand I have taken. I will know that I made the right decision and followed the only course possible for me. I will have done all that I could.**

“But my trust is not in what I am doing,” she added. **“It is in God and His Word. He has a perfect, loving plan for my life, and He’s wise enough and powerful enough to carry it out, if I cooperate by following His counsel. So I’m going to keep on obeying Him in my marriage and I’ll leave the results with Him. I am at peace with that.”**

A happy wife wrote me a note of thanks for my counsel which gave her the courage to stick with her marriage. She said, “One little thing you said to me meant so much. **You said, “So what if your husband doesn’t tell you he loves you right now!... I knew you were right.” This wife found that**

putting up with a little rejection was worth it in the long run in order to have a revitalized marriage.

A lovely young wife said that it was often difficult dressing to go out for the evening with her husband because she knew in advance that he would not treat her the way she longed to be treated. **So she developed the habit of thinking of the Lord Jesus as her friend and escort of the evening. She said. “I looked my best for Him, I behaved my best for Him, and I was constantly aware of His steadying presence with me!”**

In summary, you need to give love to your mate biblically whether you receive a response or not. This is altogether possible through *agape* love. One wife, whose husband was in rebellion against God, said, “I tried to show him that my love for him did not depend on how he treated me. I still showed him physical affection. I said to him sometimes, ‘I love you, no matter what you are doing right now, and I believe the Lord means for us to be together.’ I sent him little cards with appropriate messages that expressed my caring while we were apart. And, do you know, when we reconciled, I found that he had saved every one of them!”

***** I asked some wives who had been through the experience to give me their list of do’s and don’ts for any woman trying to save her marriage. Here are the excellent suggestions they compiled:** (With very little needed adaptation... the list is also very helpful for husbands seeking to save their marriage!)

****There can be no growth in your relationship as long as there is doubt as to your commitment to your marriage. Make your commitment!**

****When your husband withholds his love, trust the Lord to meet your emotional needs. He won't let you down!**

****Give your husband honor, love, and biblical respect even though his actions do not deserve it. Give him warm acceptance no matter what. The more hopeless your situation is, the more your loving behavior is apt to be accepted as genuine. **Don't try to reform your husband. Just love him; and live one day at a time.**

****Don't try to do it on your own. The Lord is with you! **Don't be bitter against anyone in the situation. Never turn your children against their father. Forgive!**

****Don't ask family or friends to take sides against your husband. **Don't discuss your intimate marriage problems. Don't give fuel to gossip. Confide in the Lord, your counselor, and perhaps a close Christian friend whom you can trust to keep silence.**

****Choose your biblical counselor wisely. *Never* discuss your problems with a friend of the opposite sex.**

****Spend as much time in the Word of God as possible. **Concentrate on YIELDING TO GOD'S WORK in changing YOU— redeeming the mistakes you made, and asking God to show you how to change, rather than concentrating on your partner's failures.**

****Do not separate. Encourage your husband to stay in the home. **Do not give your husband a divorce. Do all in your power to delay or prevent it. ** If you must consult a lawyer, make it clear to the lawyer **that it is only for your financial and/or PHYSICAL protection** and that of your children. Find a Christian lawyer who will help you preserve your marriage.**

**Spend your time with people who will encourage you in spiritual growth.

** Do not overcompensate with your children. They need your love and stability while their father is gone, but they still need discipline. It will be hard to build a new love relationship with your husband when he does come home if the children are out of control.

**Do not try to defend yourself from gossip or criticism. Keep your mouth shut. The Lord will fight for you and you will hold your peace.

**Remember that the most innocent thing you say will get twisted. Avoid loose talk and do not listen to tale-bearing.

**When you do anything (large or small) to pull the marriage apart, you are going against God's will. Let that be your guideline for all decisions.

Don't expect your husband to change overnight when he does come back home. **The hardest time may be when you are reconciled and you have a tendency to fall back into old habit patterns. Don't do it! **Hope all things, believe all things, and endure all things.**

[IMPORTANT NOTE: The authors, Dr Ed Wheat and Gloria Okes Perkins go on from this point to include a lot more valuable advice. Due to copyright privileges, we cannot print the entire chapter, even if we had the space. **This article is just a portion of one of the 16 outstanding chapters of LOVE LIFE For Every Married Couple: How to fall in love, Stay in love, Rekindle your love. GET THIS BOOK. READ IT. APPLY IT. HAVE SEVERAL ON HAND TO GIVE TO OTHERS!]**

Grace and Blessings! 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, *May 23, 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 May 14 — 9:30am - Sunday School

10:45am - Worship Service [IT'S MOTHER'S DAY... No Meal]

*** **Mother's day and on Father's day**— Let us give Gideon Bibles in memory of Moms or Dads **and/or** in appreciation for them; **and/or** let us give extra special OFFERINGS for one or more of our Missionaries— **especially on behalf of Odell and Beth.**

Sunday Services, May 21— 9:30am - Sunday School

10:45am - Worship Service // NO MEAL

HOME GROUPS MEET... generally at 5pm

Sunday Services, May 28— 9:30am - Sunday School

10:45am - Worship Service // NOON MEAL

5:30pm - 7:30pm FAITHFUL MEN'S

MONTHLY FELLOWSHIP/STUDY/EQUIPPING



MANY THANKS! Dear Southside Family of saints in Christ! CINDY and I WERE and ARE very thankful and blessed by your many expressions and testimonies of love and kindness this past Sunday afternoon... as you, as it were, KICKED OFF our upcoming 50th wedding anniversary; and as you gave tribute, as to the completion of 42 years of serving as pastor at Southside. **THANKS FOR THE GRACIOUS and KIND ENCOURAGEMENTS!** It is an honor to fellowship and serve in your midst! - James & Cindy