



**GROW  
IN  
GRACE**  
NEWSLETTER

**Volume 44, No. 25, June 20 , 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.”***

***“THIS IS OUR USUAL PRAYER MEETING!”***,

Some years back, Kurt Koch, a German missionary, told of an experience he had in South Korea with a local church. **He wrote:** I was invited to give a short sermon. I was glad to do so, but was surprised when told that ***the meeting would start at 5AM! Who would ever show up?*** At 4AM the alarm clock woke me. The rain spattered against the window. Surely the prayer meeting will be called off because of the rain. I said to myself: “You traveled quite in vain to this place. It is wet and cold, and on top of that, it is 5 in the morning!

**Straining against the wind, I ventured into the church. What on earth...? My eyes nearly popped out of their sockets.** The church was packed to capacity! Everybody squatted down or kneeled on straw mats. I was dumbstruck; the wind was out of my sails. **I went up to the pulpit and asked the brothers taking the lead: “What is this? Surely the whole congregation wasn’t invited just to listen to one missionary - that is just not possible?”**

***“This is our usual prayer meeting,”*** was the simple answer. “In the middle of the week?” I asked. “Yes, we gather every day,” was the answer.

“How many people are gathered here?” **“About 3000— the whole congregation.”**

I was speechless. One of the elders announced a song and the singing began. There were no songbooks, organ or any other musical instruments to accompany the people in this bare church building that rather resembled a factory. **THEN THEY PRAYING STARTED— three thousand people praying simultaneously!** I could sense the unity in the Holy Spirit through the prayers. There was no disorder. It could not be compared to the vociferous [loud, insistent so as to compel attention] type of praying in some of the extremist church groups. **They prayed for almost one hour.**

Then the elder asked me to give a message. ***“Please, just a short message— no longer than one hour,” he said, “these people still have to go to work by 7 a.m.”*** Where in the West will you find a church where a preacher will dare to preach at a prayer meeting for one hour? I was in awe at the dedication and spiritual depth of these people.

At the third prayer meeting I attended, I asked some of the brothers, **“How often do your Prayer Groups gather during the week?”** **“Daily!” was their answer.** Three different prayer groups gathered every morning of the week. “It started about five years ago.”

**They also have prayer meetings in the evenings.** Each night a group of about 100 Christians gather together in prayer. (It is not the same people every night; the group varies every night). For the past 5 years, 100 people in this church pray every night until daybreak! **Once a week - from Saturday till Sunday there is all-night prayer attended by about 1000 people.**

I then grasped the meaning and implication of Acts 12:5: *“Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.”*

**These praying Koreans illustrated to me the meaning of Revelation 5:8— “... and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”**

{From: [http://www.prayerhouse.co.za/pdf/A\\_congregation\\_that\\_prays.pdf](http://www.prayerhouse.co.za/pdf/A_congregation_that_prays.pdf)}

**QUESTION: HOW DARK will it have to get BEFORE I, before we take prayer MORE seriously?**

**"THEY WILL ALL BE THERE!"**

Dr. David Gibbs of the Christian Law Association got surprised one Wednesday. His background is Baptist. Few Baptists are faithful to church-wide prayer meetings. But for this particular Wednesday a pastor of a Mennonite church had scheduled Dr. Gibbs to speak during their Wednesday night Prayer Service. **The church family DID NOT KNOW that a guest speaker was coming.** The Pastor was driving Dr. Gibbs from the airport to the church building. Dr. Gibbs was trying to prepare himself for what he is about to face, so he asked:

*"Pastor, what do you expect tonight in the way of who might show up for the meeting? Pastor, I know it's Wednesday night... and folks do not know I'm coming... I just want you to be at ease, because I'm happy to come and the size of the crowd does not matter..."* The pastor simply said, **"They will all be there!"** So, Dr. Gibbs translated that 'response' into his Baptist experience and figured that a few would show up for a holy huddle.

**They arrived. The building was a plain, unattractive block building.** The parking lot was full. Dr. Gibbs entered and found bare concrete floors and bare metal folding chairs— OVER 400 HUNDRED metal folding chairs— and they were all filled with the REGULAR PRAYER MEETING CROWD! As the pastor had earlier stated, **"They will all be there!"... And they were!**

These were farming people, with crops to plant, or tend, or harvest. Their days were always long and their work was never done. **HOWEVER, EVERY WEEK on Prayer Meeting Night— THEY WERE ALL THERE!** Stunned, Dr. Gibbs turned to the pastor and asked, "Please explain this to me?" **"Well, Bro. Gibbs, we are all family** and we are responsible for one another and we are commanded to pray for

one another; **and we also realize that we need God's wisdom and power** if we are to make a difference in our community in reaching others for Christ— **So, we have just as many for Prayer meeting as we do for other Church-wide services...**

And, at our Prayer Meeting, the main agenda is PRAYER. **We actually spend most of the time praying for each other and for those in the world to whom we seek to reach and minister!”**

**HOW DARK will it have to get**

**BEFORE I, before we take prayer MORE seriously?**

**CHURCH-WIDE PRAYER MEETING REALITY FOR**

**SOUTHSIDE:** The issue is (1) Not lack of time,

(2) Nor how tired we are,

(3) Nor a thousand other excuses—

The issue that each of us has to face up to is this:

*What is the level of my LOVE, VISION, PRIORITY, and DEPENDANCE UPON GOD!*

***IN AMERICA and around the world, the ‘HEATHEN’ are raging and getting bolder!***

There are growing indications that persecution may be coming for Bible Christians in America. There are FEARS that the ‘American way of life’ as we have known it may become history.

**HOW DARK will it have to get**

**BEFORE I, before we take prayer MORE seriously?**

**In a world of** frightening instability, where greedy humans jockey for world power and domination— **In such a world, what should be the FOCUS of SOUTHSIDE Christians?**

### **1. WE NEED TO BE GROUNDED IN CLEAR, BIBLICAL REVELATION:**

As a result of sin— **man's 'FREE WILL'** is radically ENSLAVED to sin! AND, a part of God's sovereign control is that He has ordained "sowing and reaping." **Thus**, men and nations make choices, chart courses, and reap consequences. (Galatians 6:7-8) The wrath of God is not merely 'future tense'— it is now: Romans 1:18-32!

### **2. In the midst of it all, God still rules and overrules. Example:**

Joseph's brothers thought and did evil out of the wickedness of their own hearts with no enticement from God; but God over-ruled and brought good — Genesis 50:20; Psalm 105:17-19! **This is not just true in ancient history!**

**3. Revelation 17** tells us that there is coming a day when **TEN KINGS/Ten nations-** (who have previously been supportive of a worldwide apostate religious system) - **shall turn on**, attack, and destroy that same religious system.

**Why will they do it? Because God will place this task in their hearts!** (Revelation 17: 15-18) Almighty God is STILL in Sovereign control of and over all nations! He is carefully working out His purposes and His agenda and not ours! No one can stop Him!

**CRITICAL NOTE:** ALMIGHTY GOD is also in total control of China, Russia, ALL and every aspect of Islam, the UNITED NATIONS, and all of the 'secret' power elite who might be trying to move to one world government, one world religion, etc. Satan, men and nations do all manner of RAGING. However, they cannot frustrate the plans and purposes of God.

In spite of current appearances, the 'heathen' and satan don't win! **The saints of God in Christ win! Furthermore, all of the wicked will be held accountable and judged for their rebellion.**

**Jesus is sovereign, supreme, and sufficient! Read and heed the glorious Unveiling of JESUS CHRIST— Revelation 1-22!**

**THEREFORE:** Regardless of the headlines and/or regardless of coming wars, REGARDLESS of economic depressions, persecution of Christians or whatever— Jesus STILL has a master passion to save the lost and to KEEP ON building His Church! **[A look at the last chapters of the Bible**

**reveals the bottom line ultimate purpose of all human history— All the redeemed- Jew and Gentile: Ephesians 2:11-22; Revelation 21:9-14- as the Bride/wife of the Lamb, seeing Him, serving Him, and reigning with Him for eternity. (Revelation 22:1-7)]**

**4. Acts 4:23-33:** The early disciples of Jesus understood and embraced God's primary agenda!

**Thus, when persecuted for the gospel's sake— they made the right response:**

**\*\*\* Acts 4:24—** they began with Praise to God— which is the Primary focus of Biblical Praying!

**\*\*\* Acts 4:25—** they 'prayed Scripture'... which gave them a right perspective: The heathen are raging! Realized or not the lost world's rants against and persecutions of Christians are in reality expressions of hatred against JESUS! (Acts 4:25-27)

**\*\*\* Acts 4:28—** they embraced the over-ruling sovereignty of God in their prayer!

**\*\*\* Acts 4:29-30— they did not pray for personal safety.** They did not take a 'survival course'. They did not buy weapons or take 'self-defense' courses! They did not run to 'Prophecy Hobby' preachers.

**\*\*\* Acts 4:29-30— they prayed for the LORD to behold the threats of their enemies; they prayed that the LORD grant them ALL boldness in speaking the Word of God;** and they asked that the LORD send forth healing power, signs and wonders to be done in the name of Jesus.

**\*\*\* Acts 4:31-33— they were all given a FRESH FILLING of the Holy Spirit! As a result,** they went forth boldly preaching God's message; and great generosity, love, power and grace was upon them all!

**Their singular passion was for BOLDNESS to preach the gospel!**

**QUESTIONS WE MUST ASK AND ANSWER: What is my passion? IN THE MIDST OF THE DEEPENING DARKNESS— HOW DARK**

**will it have to get BEFORE I, before we take prayer MORE seriously?**

HOW CAN WE IMPACT OUR COMMUNITY WITH THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST?

**1. LOOKING through the Acts of the Apostles—** how did the New Testament Church impact their world?

**2.** What do the New Testament Epistles call for from believers?

**3.** What do the special letters of Jesus in Revelation 2-3 call for from believers?

**4.** How does one 'ADORN' the Gospel?

**5.** What causes the Gospel to be BLASPHEMED?

**6.** What direction and wisdom can we glean from: Acts 2:37-47; Acts 4:5-33; Acts 5; Acts 6; Acts 8:1-4; Acts 12:1-12??

**7.** Let us pay close attention to Acts 4:18-33; Acts 4:23-31; Acts 12:12; Acts 21:5!

**8. TRUE REALITY:** The congregations in the Book of Acts often gathered **for united prayer! SHOULDN'T WE DO AS THEY DID?**

1. We must REST in God and His sovereignty and be focused on His agenda even as was the New Testament Church.

2. We must pray TOGETHER as a congregation because a FOUNDATIONAL ESSENTIAL for genuine Christianity is to *RETURN TO OUR OWN GROUP AND CRY OUT TO GOD—* Acts 4:23-33. **HOW DARK will it have to get BEFORE I, before we take prayer MORE seriously?**

**Grace and blessings to one and all!** James Bell

**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! ... Cindy Bell teaching. NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, **June 27, 2017 @ 11:00am**

**NEW LOCATION:** Park at the BACK of church, come in DOUBLE DOORS under the AWNING... Bible Study will be in Dicky Richard's Sunday School Room!

**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, JUNE 25:**

**9:30am** - Sunday School

**10:45am** - Worship Service

**NOON MEAL**

**5:30pm** - **7:30pm**  
FELLOWSHIP/STUDY/EQUIPPING

FAITHFUL

MEN'S

MONTHLY