



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 45, No. 4, January 23, 2018 / 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 Savior JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."***

Adult / Children / Youth Ministry— FUN and ENTERTAINING!?

It is true, that God gave us the ability to laugh. A cheerful heart is a good thing. **It is also true that no one in all of history had more JOY than the Suffering Servant of God, our Lord Jesus Christ!** HOWEVER, Jesus was no 'funny man'... nor did He train 'funny men'... **'Christian comedian' is not a Biblical calling or gift of the Holy Spirit. CHURCH as fun is foreign to New Testament Christianity!** Nevertheless, we are in a time when the churches love funny men, love entertainment, and love to talk about how Christianity is supposed to be fun! 'Christian' comedians are **crowd bringers and crowd pleasers!**

A. W. Tozer, said, "THE GREAT GOD, ENTERTAINMENT amuses his devotees mainly by telling them stories. The love of stories, which is a characteristic of childhood, has taken fast hold of the minds of the retarded saints of our day, so much so that not a few persons manage to make a comfortable living by spinning

yarns and serving them up in various disguises to church people. Even today's pastors must be entertaining."

"Is it not a strange thing and a wonder that, with the shadow of atomic destruction hanging over the world and with the coming of Christ drawing near— that the professed followers of the Lord should be giving themselves over to religious amusements?"

(The above is edited from **The Great God Entertainment** by A.W.Tozer; from *The Root of the Righteous*, 1955, p. 32-33)

Edited from Feeding Sheep or Amusing Goats, by C. H. Spurgeon:

The devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the church that part of their mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them. **My first contention is that providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of** in the Scriptures as a function of the church. Then again, "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers .., for the work of the ministry" **(Eph. 4:11-12). Where do entertainers come in?** [Or so called "Christian Comedians?"] The Holy Spirit is silent concerning them. **Were the prophets persecuted because they amused the people or because they refused?**

The concert has no martyr roll!

['Bro. Aaron, one of Moses' 'assistant pastors'... is the first known 'pastor' to help a congregation have an FUN NIGHT of high powered entertainment! THEY LOVED IT! GOD DID NOT! Exodus 32]

Again, providing amusement is in direct antagonism to the teaching and life of Christ and all His apostles. What was the

attitude of the church to the world? **We are not sugar candy,— "Ye are the salt!"** (Matt. 5:13) — something the world will spit out, not swallow!

Had Christ introduced more of the bright and pleasant elements into His mission, **He would have been more popular** but, because of the searching nature of His teaching, many turned away. [HOWEVER] **I do not hear Him say, "Run after these people Peter and tell them we will have a different style of service tomorrow, something short and attractive with little preaching!** We will have a pleasant evening for the people. Tell them they will be sure to enjoy it. Be quick Peter, we must get the people somehow."

Jesus pitied sinners, sighed, and wept over them, but never sought to amuse them... After Peter and John were locked up for preaching, the church had a prayer meeting but they did not pray, "Lord grant unto Thy servants that by a wise and discriminating use of innocent recreation we may show these people how happy we are. NO, scattered by persecution, they went everywhere preaching the gospel. They turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6)."

The mission of amusement produces no converts. ***[Modern church members for the Great Harlot? Yes! Converts and Disciples of Christ? No!]*** The need of the hour for today's ministry is believing scholarship joined with earnest spirituality, the one springing from the other as fruit from the root. The need is biblical doctrine, so understood and felt, that it sets men on fire. [End of Spurgeon's article]

(Edited from Ken Moser) Throughout the years I've run five youth groups, lectured in seminaries and Bible Colleges, and

trained other youth leaders to be more effective in changing this world for Christ.

Most groups have bought the lie that, to be an effective youth group, you must put on a night of entertainment so that the local young people will come, have a truckload of fun, hear a short message from the Bible, and then maybe come back next week for more, and start all over. That is, until you move on to better, more fulfilling entertainment. **I HAVE REJECTED USING ENTERTAINMENT** to reach the non-Christian or to hold faithful Church Adults or youth!

HERE ARE A FEW REASONS:

1. ENTERTAINMENT is DECEPTIVE: If we base our programs on entertainment (be it games or rock bands), we are using deception instead of the power of the gospel. The front door or entry level to the Christian faith must not be an enjoyable time or a safe social environment. **Rather, it must be built on the call to follow Jesus and a call to join the people of God** (2 Cor. 4:1-5, 10:4-5 and 1 Thess. 2:3-6).

IN BRINGING YOUTH or ADULTS into a saving relationship with God — we don't need deceptive entertainment. Rather, we must LIVE and preach the GOSPEL, the Power of God to them— clearly and truthfully (Rom. 1:16-17). There must be CONVICTION of sin! There must be the call to REPENT and BELIEVE— to deny yourself, take up your cross, and FOLLOW Jesus! HE SAYS: My sheep hear My voice, I KNOW THEM, and they FOLLOW ME!

2. ENTERTAINMENT HIDES JESUS: The message of Jesus is the message of "**Come to ME; and FOLLOW ME!**" He's the Bread of Life, the Living Water, the Resurrection and Life, the Gate, the Good Shepherd, the Light, etc. The Bible tells us that Jesus is

attractive enough without fancy programming. **We must offer JESUS to the world on His terms**, not through clever nights out or flashy entertainment. Trying to entertain hides the true and ONLY source of attraction into the Kingdom of God— JESUS and HIS CROSS!

[A TRAGIC PROCESS: In many Evangelical circles today the culture-wise pastors and other leaders pay big bucks for exciting entertainment venues because they must get the crowd to come. Then once they have the crowd and they have entertained them for a while, the preacher or an evangelist or a comedian, or a sports hero, or an illusionist, etc. — **MUST DRAW THE NET!** They have to go for the close. They have to manipulate the emotions of the crowd and get them down the aisle. Next, they must guide them through a 'sinner's prayer' — which is followed by human pontification that all who obeyed the commands of the preacher or 'soul-winner' are **SAVED!** **Sadly, in short order, from 75-90% of all these deceived souls** SOON GO back to their normal living for sin, self, satan, and society lifestyles. **AND UNLESS** they are later savingly brought to Christ— they die and go to hell. *(The scary thing is this: the professional religionists know all about these deadly statistics; however, they will not change their methods. They just gear up for the next big show.)*

What the lost really need to witness is REALITY. They need to SEE genuine Christians who are seeking to live holy lives, whose lives overflow with love, with forgiveness, with kindness, and who love Jesus and His Word and who live with a holy boldness for Christ.]

3. ENTERTAINMENT HIDES THE 'BODY OF CHRIST': We are to be a people of love, salt, and light! **Our attraction DOES not LIE** in activities or entertainment. **THE ATTRACTION MUST BE**

JESUS being revealed through changed lives, loving Christian communities, and the PREACHED gospel of the cross from the Word of God! We are to live "honorably among the Gentiles, so that, though they may malign you as evildoers, they may see your honorable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge." (1 Peter 2:12).

4. ENTERTAINMENT DISTORTS THE CALL: The words of Jesus are straightforward and clear. ***If any man is to come after JESUS, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Him*** (Mark 8:34). **JESUS never portrays the Christian life** as the easy road or a life requiring entertainment so as to create interest or so as to overcome boredom! **ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCES CONFLICTING MOTIVES and promotes a DECEPTIVE LIE:** For Senior Citizens, adults, and youth there is a GIANT MOVE on that, in reality, teaches that Biblical Christianity is too serious and boring— thus, entertainment must be provided— or else no one will hang around for the ‘serious’ (and boring) teaching, preaching. **IT PROMOTES ‘BAIT and SWITCH’**— bait with increasingly heavy doses of FUN so as to get a small and fun-filled hearing of lite-truth. [By the way, there is nothing more sickening that the childish entertainment to which Senior Citizen church members are subjected by local churches ... tied in with a REJECTION of the important roll to which the Scriptures call older saints! See Epistles of Timothy and Titus.]

HERE IS A NEW TESTAMENT BASED MODEL FOR ADULTS AND YOUTH:

Cornelis Aertsz de Man, around the year 1544-45, witnessed an Anabaptist being burned at the stake, for refusing to recant and bow to Romanism. In the flames the man prayed for his tormentors. **Cornelis, age 14**, was so moved by such a beautiful

faith that he searched and FOUND A HOME where Anabaptists were having Bible study. ***"Their witness of faith, their serious study of the Word, their joy in life, and their concern for love and moral integrity all excited him."***

THE CONGREGATION'S adult/youth/children's program was all the same: THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD and by the power of the Holy Spirit, sinners are converted to Christ and DISCIPLED. Cornelis was converted, baptized, and discipled. **AT AGE 17** the Roman Catholic institution captured and imprisoned Cornelis. They later brought him into a castle court room where they lined the walls with Romanists priests. There they promised that if only Cornelis would renounce his simple Biblical faith and return to the state Romanist church— that he would be give a FUTURE OF POSITION AND HONOR. Cornelis calmly replied: ***"There is NO HIGHER POSITION than to be a child of God; and NO GREATER HONOR than to be a voice for Him!"*** He would not recant. At age 21, he became a MARTYR FOR CHRIST.

BOTTOM LINE: WHICH METHOD WILL WE EMBRACE?

1. RELIGIOUS ENTERTAINMENT followed by Emotional Manipulation... and all too often a bad eternity!

2. OR: The way modeled in the Acts of the Apostles; AND modeled by an Anabaptist church overflowing with, "... witness of faith,... serious study of the Word, ... joy in life and ... concern for love and moral integrity...."; and modeled by a 17 year old who set forth a powerful, godly witness:

"There is NO HIGHER POSITION than to be a child of God; and NO GREATER HONOR than to be a voice for Him!"

Abundant Grace to one and all! 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— **(Enter via double doors by gym)**

☐ **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE... (Enter via IRON STEPS; or double doors by gym) ...** meet in Ladies Sunday School Room

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY—** the Gospel of **Luke, 12:13ff!** ... Cindy Bell, teaching. Next meeting on **Tuesday, 1/30 @ 11:00am, 2018.**

***** MEN: EVERY SATURDAY MORNING @ 8am:** Men's Fellowship/Bible Study! **(NEW STUDY: THE EPISTLE OF JAMES!)** ENTER AT THE back of Church building... under the drive-thru awning. **FELLOWSHIP, Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits, & Donuts WAITING, starting at 7:30am!**

SUNDAY * January 28—**

9:30am— Sunday School

10:45am— Worship Service

NOON Covered dish meal

NOTE: We will 'restart' the Monthly Faithful Men's meeting in February...

SPECIAL NOTICE: After the meal on January 28, we need to have A CHURCH-WIDE 'MEMBERS/THOSE ATTENDING' MEETING. It is VITAL that ALL be present for this meeting. This will be an 'Open Forum' meeting... where we as a body of believers will prayerfully consider some plans and ideas as to ministry; and consider some possible changes in various meetings... etc.



SOUTHSIDE: ***"The Local Church and the Home UNITED together under the authority of God's Word and quickened by God's Spirit to be Ambassadors for Christ in the world!"***

******* WATCH, LISTEN to, SHARE the Preaching of the Word of God!**

http://www.southsidegallatin.org/Listen_to_other_sermons_on_sermonaudio/