



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 45, No. 15, April 10, 2018 / Southside Baptist Church / 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."***

‘B.R.S.’— Broken Rope Syndrome! [Part 2 of 3] (Edited from ***WHEN YOUR ROPE BREAKS***, by Stephen Brown)

In last week’s article, we saw— **all is not right with the world!** Long before we were born something bad happened— the first man, **Adam sinned!** And today we are still dealing with the repercussions. If you are in the middle of ‘Broken Ropes’ or B.R.S. — you can’t afford to close your eyes and pretend that everything is fine!

Because of Adam’s sin, the whole creation groans in the aftermath of sin’s continuing consequences. (Gen. 3:17b-19; Romans 8:20-22) Living in a fallen world, you are going to have to live with the implications of a fallen world— among them you have to face the fact of natural disasters, disease, death, all manner of suffering, and numerous manifestations of human wickedness are the result of sin— all of these and more are fall-out from Adam’s sin! SO, instead of being angry at God— let us be angry at sin!

MOREOVER, we must understand the way the world works— namely, **God is working His plan, not ours.** God has created the world for His reasons and not for ours. Believe it or not, that is **very good news!** **‘God is everything!’** God, as revealed in the Bible, is the Creator who, for His own reasons, created the world and is doing all of His good pleasure and purpose.

Yes, because of man's sin, we live in a fallen world! But, still, everything was created that God might be glorified. If you understand these two facts, breaking ropes will still hurt, but you will find the meaning in them— **for Life is about the King of Kings and the LORD OF LORDS!** It is NOT about His servants, or His lands, or His subjects. **It is only about the King. In the midst of breaking ropes, Almighty God reigns!** And... stunningly, He loves and redeems sinners!

V. BEWARE— BROKEN ROPES INVITE BITTERNESS.

Every rope that ever held Job had broken— in spite of the fact that Job knew and loved God! KNOWING and LOVING GOD DOES NOT MAKE YOU IMMUNE TO TROUBLE, TRIAL, and TRIBULATION. BUT IN THE MIDST OF GREAT SUFFERING, Job confessed deep faith in God and worshiped God (Job 1:20-22; 2:10) EVEN SO, AT TIMES, the bitterness with which he spoke was cutting. (Job 9:14-18)

BEWARE OF THE BANE OF BITTERNESS!

***** The root of bitterness.** (Hebrews 12:15; Deut. 29:18)
Bitterness - (characterized by feelings of hatred, envy, resentment, cynicism, and severity) - usually **begins when** one begins to TRY TO UNDERSTAND 'WHY!'

God has brought or allowed a deep and continuing trial, trouble, disease, etc... in such times it is easy to turn from casting all care upon God. THE RESULT IS a 'spiritual disease' that can also easily infect others.

Someone has said that life is the only school where you take the test and then learn the lesson! That sounds good, and in some cases I suppose it's true, but it isn't the way God works with breaking ropes.

Walking in trust you can learn the lessons about broken ropes before you take the test. And if you can learn the lessons, you can avoid the bitterness which often follows the test.

FIVE Helpful Hedges against Bitterness

1. Prayer before panic! Daniel is a great example of someone who was faithful to God both before, during, and after a crisis. (Daniel 6:6-7; Daniel 6:10) The story shows how a man of God should face lions. Because Daniel had prayed regularly, long before he faced the lions, Daniel did not become bitter. Too many Christians pray only in storms.

2. Right Knowledge Upfront. (Proverbs 18:15) Some feel that God is in the business of preventing tragedy and are devastated when their ropes break. They become bitter. (I Peter 1:13; I Peter 4:12) God is God! **He is carrying out His purposes, not necessarily ours.** His pleasure for Christians is Christ-likeness and the advance of the Gospel. **He may** bring and/or allow 'still waters and green pastures' **or He may** bring or allow all manner of suffering.

The key to joy, (instead of bitterness!), is NOT a life free from pain and sorrow; but in our being in tune with His passion— the furtherance of the gospel! (Phil. 1:12)

ALSO, CONSIDER THIS: Most people react to breaking ropes in the same way they react to ropes that don't break. **In other words,** if you are faithful, loving, trusting, and obedient when things are going right in your life, you will probably be faithful, loving, trusting, and obedient when things are going wrong.

3. Thanks before the tragedy. (Ephesians 5:18-20) Understanding that everything comes from God and/or at least comes with His permission (and, thus, praising Him and THANKING

Him) is an effective way to prevent bitterness. An attitude of praise to God for who He is and THANKSGIVING to God for what He brings or allows will grant you power under pressure. **God does not promise power without pressure.**

MOREOVER, GOD IS GOD! He is sovereign. He rules and overrules over all. **He has the freedom to do as He pleases, when He pleases, and with whom He pleases.** Moreover, because GOD IS GOOD, He will always do right! SO, LET US GIVE THANKS!

Broken ropes on your plate may be there, in part, because

(1) Of the sins of others; or

(2) Because of your sin; or

(3) it may all be a total mystery to you— regardless God rules and overrules. He could have controlled things differently, had He so desired.

HANG YOUR HAT HERE: GOD owes us no explanation and if He gave one— we still might not understand! HOWEVER, with thanksgiving we can rest in the fact that,

“... infinite wisdom and unchanging love conspired with Almighty power to cause and/or allow something that’s ultimately for our good and His glory!” (See Don Baker, *Thank You Therapy*, p. 43)

4. Recognizing the effects of bitterness. Many of us have our emotional “hall of injustice,” and we like to visit it often. We like to polish the statues of those who have hurt us. We might not be polished singers, but we know all the verses to many ‘*SOMEBODY DONE BE WRONG*’ songs! Frankly, many of us need to confess **the tendency toward bitterness.** Moreover, we must confess and turn from bitterness. (I John 1:9; Ephesians 4:31-32)

To be perfectly honest, you can’t turn bitterness on and off like a faucet. Bitterness is sometimes hard to destroy. Why?

Because we feel justified. Someone hurt us and we are determined to make them pay!

Reality is that they can never pay enough!

The only solution is to forgive in the same manner as God has forgiven us for Christ's sake! (Ephesians 4:31-32) IF I AM HAVING A HARD TIME WITH BITTERNESS... I AM SHOUTING TO THE WORLD that I do not grasp how deeply I have offended Holy God; nor am I AMAZED at His grace!

Another critical reason to heed these verses is the reality that there **is a DEMONIC CONNECTION to bitterness!** (James 3:13-17)

5. Waiting for the light. CHRISTIAN: **IF** God is sovereign (and He is); and **IF** He loves you (and He does); and **IF** you have done everything you can (and sometimes you have)— then don't do anything more. **Simply be still and continue to 'wait upon the LORD!'** (Isaiah 40:28-31)

"WAIT at His door in prayer. **WAIT** at His feet in humility. **WAIT** at His table with service. **WAIT** at His window with expectancy!"

Ultimately, one of the key revelations in the book of Job is that the explanations Job's friends offered, (**attributing his problems to his sin**), were dead wrong. Job had not turned his back on God. Of course, he was not perfect and there were things he needed to learn about God. But, his sufferings were not consequences of chastening for any particular sin. Nevertheless, it is common, in the midst of troubles/broken ropes, **that we may ask,**

VI. Have I Done Something Wrong? Not Necessarily!

THE CHASTENING ROPE:

Yes, broken ropes can sometimes be the result of God's chastening. (Heb. 12:5-11) At other times God allows us to experience broken ropes so that we can learn valuable lessons. (1 John 3:2) **Frankly**, 'ropes' sometimes break because we do something stupid. (Exodus 8:2-3; Exodus 8:9-10)

Some broken ropes occur because that's the way the world works. (2 Samuel 12:13-14) Sometimes when our ropes break God is allowing us to face the natural consequences of our sin. (Gal. 6:7-8) **But at other times, there is no direct, absolute correlation** between breaking ropes and our breaking God's laws. **Consider:**

***** YOU DESERVE A LOT WORSE!** (Romans 3:10-12)

Think for a moment of all the bad things you have done in your life. What if God decided to balance the books right now? Where would you be? **You would be holding so many** broken ropes that you'd have to carry them off in a truck.

What's the point?

Broken ropes are **a good time to be amazed** at how merciful, kind, good, gracious, forgiving, and patient God has been; and to know that He can be trusted now!

***** ALSO, IN A FALLEN WORLD, Bad People Do Prosper.** Your broken rope may or may not logically have something to do with your sin.

But don't get tripped up with 'fairness'... because, presently, 'turkeys' do quite well sometimes, thank you! (Psalm 10:3-5a;

Psalm 73)

Someday when God balances the books, just rewards will be given, but only a foolish one would say that it works that way right now.

There is one other thing to think about if you believe you're hurting because you've done something wrong— **there is glorious forgiveness** for those who take God's point of view about sin and confess it! (1 John 1:9)

VII. HOW TO 'BE THERE' FOR HURTING PEOPLE!

Again, there may not be a direct, absolute correlation between other people's breaking ropes and their breaking God's law. (John 9:2-3) As Christians we must learn to relate to one another in tragedy as well as good times. (1 Cor. 12:12-13; 26-27)

In the early going, Job's friends did some things right:

First, they were there. (Job 2:11) **Second**, Job's friends were not only there but they were also quiet, at least at first. (Job 2:13)

Third, when Job's rope broke, his friends didn't talk behind his back. Job's friends did another thing right. They allowed him to express his bitterness and anger. (Job 3:3, 10-11)

[IMPORTANT INSERT: In being totally honest before God with our complaints, fears, doubts, confusions, anger, etc. — We must not forget to **then conclude with PRAISE TO GOD!** The Psalms model this!]

***** Avoid What Job's Friends Did Wrong! *****

First, they tried to have an intellectual discussion with Job while he was holding his broken rope in his hand. (Job 4:1-5a)

Second, Job's friends took a superior position. (Job 5:1-2, 8, 17; 12:1-3a)

Third, the friends of Job presumed to speak for God. (Job 11:7, 10-11, 14-15) Very interesting— Zophar said that one couldn't explain God, but then he went about trying to explain Him.

Fourth, Job's friends assumed that what was happening to Job couldn't happen to them.

Fifth, Job's friends didn't do anything practical. They just debated.

KNOW THIS: Sometimes quiet, prayerful presence is the only thing and the powerful thing that can be done on behalf of suffering people.

At other times, there are many practical 'Good Samaritan' type actions that can and should be taken, (Luke 10:30-37)

Grace to all in Christ! / James Bell /
www.southsidegallatin.org

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

MONDAYS: Jail Ministry— First and Second Monday of each month at 7:30pm. Questions? Call the church office at 615-452-5951

TUESDAYS: Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care Nursing Home. Meet at the front door at **5:15PM.**

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)

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY—** Next meeting scheduled for **Tuesday, April 24 @ 11:00am; Continuing in LUKE 13.** ENTER at the back of the church building, through double doors, under the Drive Thru Awning. [*Doors **open** at 10:30am... The doors are **re-locked** at 11:10am]*]

***** MEN: EVERY SATURDAY MORNING @ 8am:** Men’s Fellowship/Bible Study! (**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!**

WATCH and SHARE the Preaching of the Word of God!
http://www.southsidegallatin.org/Listen_to_other_sermons_on_sermonaudio/

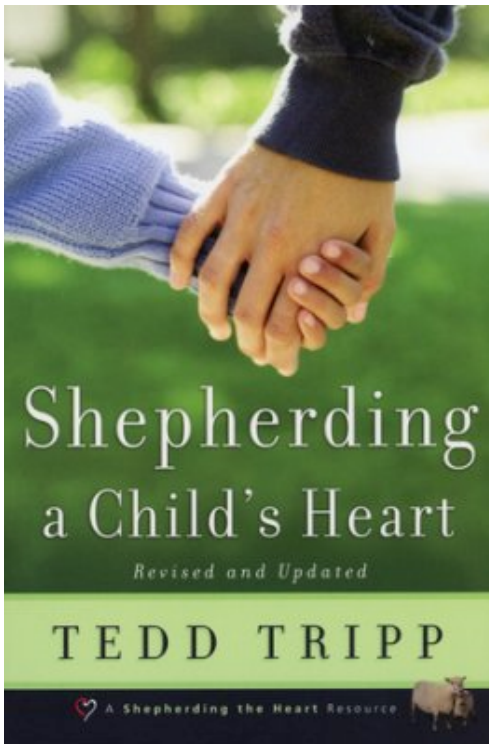
SUNDAY SERVICES: APRIL 2018— 15, 22, 29
ALL SUNDAYS:
Sunday School at 9:30am and Worship at 10:45am

SUNDAY SERVICES, special notes— 15, 22, 29

1. April 15: LORD'S SUPPER at conclusion of the 10:45am worship service.

HOME GROUPS at 5:00pm

2. April 22, 6:00pm- 7:00pm—
Family Integrated EQUIPPING Night!



Meet in Auditorium, come in FRONT DOORS! (Doors will open at 5:30pm, 4/22/18)

1. FAMILY INTEGRATED, that is, it is for the WHOLE family— Grandparents, Parents, Teens, Children. (Infant & Toddler Nursery available)

2. All grandparents and parents have FAMILIES in your world who need help, counseling, advice, mentoring— THESE 4TH Sunday Evenings will help you with your own children and grandchildren... as well as EMPOWERING you for ministry to your

neighbors!

3. Tedd Tripp's *SHEPHERDING a Child's Heart*, 12 session series.

4. Arrive and be IN YOUR SEATS by 5:55pm...

Session will start at 6:00pm sharp.

Sessions will last approximately one hour

3. April 29: 6:00pm... Fifth Sunday Evening Praise & WORSHIP!

THIS WILL BE A GLORIOUS SCRIPTURE and HYMN FEST with one and all LIFTING THEIR VOICES to God in worship! [IN ADVANCE... give us the Scripture you would like to read or have read; and the hymns you would like for the congregation to sing unto the LORD!]