

# GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

**Volume 45, No. 28, July 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."***

**TRUE DISCIPLESHIP!** - Edited from William MacDonald; All additions are enclosed in [BRACKETS].

**FORWARD: To the extent that these truths are still beyond our own personal experience, we set forth as the aspirations of our heart.** —William MacDonald

**INTRODUCTION:** The pathway to true discipleship **begins when a person is born again.** It begins when the following events take place:

- 1. When** a person realizes that he is sinful, lost, blind, and naked before God.
- 2. When** he acknowledges that he cannot save himself by good character or good works.
- 3. When** he believes that the Lord Jesus Christ died as his Substitute on the Cross.

**4. When** by a definite action and confession of faith, he acknowledges Jesus Christ as his only Lord and Savior.

[NOTE] Too many people think that you become a Christian by living a Christian life. NOT at all! **You must first become a Christian before you can live the Christian life. [Underpinning and before the above is the inward operation of the LIFE GIVING WORK of the Holy Spirit!]**

**The life of discipleship outlined in [this article] is a supernatural life.** We do not have the power in ourselves to live it. We need divine power.

**Only when we are born again** do we receive the strength to live as Jesus taught. Before reading any further, ask yourself the question, **“Have I ever been born again? Have I become a child of God by faith in the Lord Jesus?”**

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**[Added NOTES:** It is the GRACIOUS work of the Holy Spirit who convicts the sinner of sin and quickens the sinner with new birth/new life/regeneration— leading to repentance and faith. (John 16:8-11; Ephesians 2:1-10)

**BECAUSE** the Holy Spirit will first of all convict the sinner of sin, of their ‘good works’ being but filthy rags, and that the judgment of Holy God awaits them, (John 16:8-11)— CHRISTIANS, LET US LABOR TO GET SINNERS UNDER THE SOUND OF THE GOSPEL— read or preached! ***For the Gospel IS the power of God unto salvation!*** (Romans 1:16) Understanding the terror of the LORD— persuade men! (2 Cor. 5:11) It pleases God to save the lost by the means of the foolishness of preaching! (1 Cor. 1:21; Acts 2 - 8:4)

**AS TO THOSE already saved:** All genuine Christians are at various stages in discipleship. There will always be room for more growth in grace. **BUT THERE IS NO such reality as a heaven bound Christian who IS NOT a disciple, a follower, of Jesus Christ.**

**Being a disciple, A FOLLOWER of Jesus Christ, IS NOT some sort of OPTION— but the reality of all ‘SHEEP’ who belong to Jesus: John 10:27-28!** When a person is born again they not only have their sins forgiven and their eternal destiny changed— they immediately become a new creation: **Ephesians 2:1-10; Acts 2:37-47; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21!**

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**The Terms of Discipleship:** True Christianity is an all-out commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. **The Savior is not looking for men and women who will give their spare evenings to Him — or their weekends — or their years of retirement...**

**Nothing less than unconditional surrender could ever be a fitting response to His sacrifice at Calvary. Love so amazing, so divine, could never be satisfied with less than our souls, our lives, our all.**

Too often we look upon Christianity as an escape from hell and a guarantee of heaven. Beyond that, we feel that we have every right to enjoy the best that this life has to offer. We know that there are those strong verses on discipleship in the Bible, **but we have difficulty reconciling them with our ideas** of what Christianity should be.

We can accept the fact that soldiers give their lives for patriotic reasons. We do not think it strange that Communists give their lives for political reasons. But that “blood, sweat and tears” should

characterize the life of a follower of Christ somehow seems remote and hard to grasp.

And yet the words of the Lord Jesus are clear enough. **There is scarcely any room for misunderstanding if we accept them at their face value. Here are terms of discipleship as laid down by [JESUS CHRIST:**

## **1. A Supreme Love for Jesus Christ**

***“If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26).*** This does not mean that we should ever have animosity or ill-will in our hearts toward our relatives, **but it does mean that our love to Christ should be so great that all other loves are hatred by comparison.**

Actually, the most difficult clause in this passage is the expression, ***“yea, and his own life also.”*** Self-love is one of the stubbornest hindrances to [TRUE CONVERSION] and ongoing discipleship. Not until we are willing to lay down our very lives for Him are we in the place where He wants us. [The damning mark of our age is loving self, MORE THAN loving God: 2 Timothy 3:1-7)]

## **2. A Denial of Self**

***“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself...” (Matthew 16:24).*** Denial of self is not the same as self-denial. The latter means foregoing certain foods, pleasures, or possessions.

But denial of self means such complete submission to the LORDSHIP of Christ that self has no rights or authority at all. **It**

**means that self abdicates the throne.** It is expressed in the words of Henry Martyn, “Lord, let me have no will of my own, or consider my true happiness as depending in the smallest degree on anything that can befall me outwardly, but as consisting altogether in conformity to Thy will.”

**“My glorious Victor, Prince Divine, Clasp these surrendered hands in Thine, At length my will is all thine own, Glad vassals of a Savior’s throne.”** - H. G. C. Moule

### **3. A Deliberate Choosing of the Cross**

***“If any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross...” (Matthew 16:24).*** The cross is not some physical infirmity or mental anguish; these things are common to all men. The cross is a pathway that is deliberately chosen. It is “a path which so far as this world goes is one of dishonor and reproach”—C. A. Coates.

**The cross symbolizes** the shame, persecution, and abuse which the world heaped upon the Son of God, and which the world will heap on all who choose to stand against the tide; [... all those WHO deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and FOLLOW JESUS!]

**[ADDED NOTE: Yes, we can try to be a ‘Jonah, a Sampson, or a Lot’— but not without SERIOUS consequence!!** In contrast, multitudes are in churches today who still love the world (1 John 2:15); and many are without chastening consequences. How can this be? **God only chastens His own!** (1 Cor. 11:30-32; Heb. 12:5-8)]

***“If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24).***

To understand what this means, one need simply ask himself, ***“What characterized the life of the Lord Jesus?”*** It was a life of obedience to the will of God. It was a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. It was a life of unselfish service for others. It was a life of patience and longsuffering in the face of the gravest wrongs. It was a life of zeal, of expenditure, of self-control, of meekness, of kindness, of faithfulness and of devotion (Galatians 5:22, 23). **In order to be His disciples, we must walk as He walked. We must exhibit the fruit of Christ-likeness (John 15:8; Gal. 5:22-23).**

**[ADDED NOTE: MUST! MUST? YES! YES!** As a born again Christian a DIVINE ‘MUST’ is laid upon me! How so? **There is the INDWELLING COMPELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT leading, motivating, empowering. The redeemed heart is FLOODED with the love of God! (Romans 5:5) We LOVE JESUS because He first loved us!**

**Yes, sometimes we fail badly.** And when we do, we are of all humans most miserable... thus, we are called to repentance and restoration of fellowship; and if we refuse— chastening will be coming! **Why? Because Jesus loves His redeemed ones so much He will bring us back! (1 Cor. 11:30-32; Heb. 12:5-8)]**

## **5. A Fervent Love for all Who Belong to Christ**

***“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35).*** This is the love that esteems others better than oneself. It is the love that suffers long and is kind. It vaunts not itself and is not puffed up. It does not behave itself unseemly; seeks not its own, is not easily provoked; thinks no evil. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all

things, and endures all things (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Without this love, discipleship would be a cold, legalistic asceticism.

**[WITHOUT THIS LOVE, WE ARE YET DEAD IN OUR SINS;** for the very essence of being a Christian... is that NOW, our hearts are FLOODED WITH the love of God by the Holy Spirit! (Romans 5:5)]

## 6. An Unswerving Continuance in His Word

***“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed” (John 8:31).*** For real discipleship there must be continuance. It is easy enough to start well, to burst forth in a blaze of glory. But the test of reality is endurance to the end. Any man who looks back after putting his hand to the plow is not fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9:62). Spasmodic obedience to the Scriptures will not do. Christ’s disciples are those who will follow Him in continuing obedience... empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit. (John 10:27-28; Phil 1:6)... and in a life of repentance... Psalm 32; 51) WE CRY OUT: “Keep me from turning back. The handles of my plough with tears are wet, The shears with rust are spoiled, and yet, and yet, My God! My God! Keep me from turning back.” **[ADDED NOTE: Because Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith— saving faith is enduring faith!**

**HOWEVER, there are MANY whom the Father did not plant and there are MANY anti-christs! (Matt. 15:12-14; 1 John 2:8-9)]**

## 7. A Forsaking of All to Follow Him

***“So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33).*** This is perhaps the most unpopular of all Christ’s terms of discipleship, and may well prove to be the most unpopular verse in the Bible.

**Clever theologians can give you a thousand reasons why it does not mean what it says, but simple disciples drink it down eagerly, assuming that the Lord Jesus knew what He was saying!**

What is meant by forsaking all? The man who forsakes all does not become a shiftless loafer; he works hard to provide for the current necessities of his family and himself.

**But since the passion of his life is to advance the cause of Christ, he invests everything above current needs in the work of the Lord and leaves the future with God.** In seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, he cannot keep going down the road of BIGGER and BETTER STUFF FOR ME... when souls are perishing for want of the gospel.

He does not want to waste his life accumulating riches that will fall into the devil's hands when Christ returns for His saints. He wants to obey the Lord's injunction against laying up treasure on earth— **he offers what he cannot keep anyway, and what he has ceased to love.**

**[NOTE:** None of this means that the disciple of Jesus cannot have a bank account, a savings account, a lay-a-way of seeking to plan wisely for the future, enjoy a vacation, etc... **BUT WHAT IT DOES MEAN** is that **NOTHING** is held with a 'clenched fist' and nothing is **OFF LIMITS** from God. **EVERYTHING** is owned as **BELONGING TO GOD**; and **GOD HAS THE FINAL** say as to what is to be done with it!]

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**The writer realizes that in the act of setting them forth, he has condemned himself as an unprofitable servant.** But shall

the truth of God be forever suppressed because of the failure of God's people?

**Is it not true that the message is always greater than the messenger?**

Is it not proper that God be true and every man a liar? Should we not say with an old worthy, "Thy will be done though in my own undoing."

**Confessing our past failure, let us courageously face up to the claims of Christ upon us and seek henceforth to be true disciples of our glorious Lord!**

**"My Master, lead me to Thy door: Pierce this now willing ear once more, Thy bonds are freedom; let me stay with Thee to toil, endure, obey." - H. G. C. Moule**

**[RESPONSE]— May these words become the prayer of each of our hearts:**

"My glorious Victor, Prince Divine, Clasp these surrendered hands in Thine, At length my will is all Thine own, Glad vassals of a Savior's throne. My Master, lead me to Thy door: Pierce this now willing ear once more, Thy bonds are freedom; let me stay with thee to toil, endure, obey." - **H. G. C. Moule**

Grace to all! 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 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, July 17 @ 11:00am; Continuing in LUKE.** ENTER at the back of the church building, [*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 GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN!)** 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/](http://www.southsidegallatin.org/Listen_to_other_sermons_on_sermonaudio/)

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**SUNDAY SERVICES: JULY 2018— 15, 22, 29**

***Sunday School at 9:30am and Worship at 10:45am***

## **SPECIAL NOTES ON SUNDAY SERVICES:**

- 1. July 15:** LORD'S SUPPER at conclusion of the worship service.  
***HOME GROUPS at 5:00pm***
- 2. July 22:** Family Integrated EQUIPPING Night  
at 6:00pm— Shepherding a Child's Heart
- 3. July 29: Fifth Sunday Evening Praise & WORSHIP at 6:00pm!**