

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 45, No. 32, August 7, 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."***

"MANY SHALL BE OFFENDED!" Matthew 24:10

In the over 4,000 'saved' sermons/newsletters/articles on MSWord, in my computer— more than a few deal with the matter of OFFENDED SPIRITS! **WHY?** Why a revised repeat of previous teaching? **Because** tribulation and persecution comes BECAUSE of the Word of God— **and many** are offended! SADLY, offended church folk are commonly quick to hate and betray the Christians they left! (Matthew 13:21; 24:9-10) ***In Churches and in Christian homes a common and deadly problem is OFFENDED SPIRITS. None of us are immune to offended spirits— we easily embrace them!*** SO, let us all read, apply, and keep this study handy! It is serious error to reject or neglect this Biblical warning!

Offended Spirit! To take an offense is an emotional response to something that we think is an injustice or an emotional response toward someone we believe has wronged us. We may even take offense simply because someone does not agree with

us; or because someone has dared to critique or change our proposed project or plan; and/or expose our false gods, or deceptions, etc. **Typically, when folks are offended— they/we do not admit it; rather... we just claim someone HURT US. MUCH** ongoing conflict in homes, many ‘affairs’ in marriages, and most friendship and fellowship breakdowns in families and churches; as well as emotional breakdowns **are often rooted back somewhere in an offended spirit.**

JESUS WARNS ABOUT OFFENSES and OFFENDED SPIRITS!

1. JESUS GIVES DIRE WARNINGS to any and all who offend or place stumbling blocks in the way of children. (Matthew 18:6-7)

2. JESUS WARNS of those who seem to receive the Word of God, who seem to be saved; **but when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word of God, they get offended—** they turn against the gospel— revealing a faulty ‘spiritual birth certificate’....(Matthew 13:20-21).

3. JESUS ALSO WARNS that the problem of GETTING OFFENDED is a problem for **MANY and not merely a problem for the few** — “... many shall be offended...” (Matthew 24:10)

Throughout the LAST DAYS there have been, there are, and there will be genuine Christians who are delivered up to persecution and tribulation and who are hated and even tortured to death for Christ's name sake. (Revelation 2:10; 6:9-11) **REALITY: The ‘wheat’ stands firm in the faith— MANY ‘tares’ GET OFFENDED!** The ‘tares’ stumble, fall away, recant, and even turn against Christ. (Matthew 24:9-10) They even proceed into a lifestyle of betraying and hating genuine Christians... including family members. (Matthew 24:10)

TODAY, more often than not, we are tempted to be offended in the midst of different, EVERYDAY LIFE SITUATIONS.

EXAMPLES: **Someone** does or says something that we do not like or that we do not agree with— and we get offended! **Someone** stands in the way of us getting our way— and we get offended. **There may not be a deadlier trap on the road of life than the trap of an offended spirit.** More than we have ever considered, so much of the Christian life is determined by how we handle offenses! Offenses will come! **Beware!**

BEWARE! DEADLY DANGER is present!

We live in a very affluent world where we are served by hundreds of 'slaves' every day! Every day hundreds of nonhuman slaves, remarkable devices, created just to serve us, yield to our every desire! **Immediately—** they deliver mail (email) from around the world. They wash our clothes and our dishes. They transport us across town or across country. They play us music or give us movies... the list is endless! We fully expect to be served according our standards by a myriad of gadgets, every day.

But when these devices do not meet our expectations, we are quick to get offended— that is, we steam, pout, rail, kick, and even curse! We trade, or junk them, and get new ones. We were offended!

FRANKLY, WE HAVE ALLOWED the toys and helpful gadgets of an affluent society to spoil us! And without realizing it, TOO OFTEN we take the same "SERVE ME!" attitudes [which we have toward gadgets] and transfer them to the people of our world! **THUS, *** AS** a traffic light turns green and the folks in

front of us are not moving, yet— we get offended. *** The Customer Service people are not serving us according to our standard, pleasure, and time table— so, we are offended! *** **The homes and churches of America** are overflowing with offended people! In alarming numbers, offended folk leave families, jobs, churches, and friendships. Many will also withdraw from spiritual commitment and serious backsliding takes over. **Let us all be alarmed! None are immune! Let us embrace Biblical solutions!**

TO ESCAPE THE DEADLY TRAP OF BEING OFFENDED,

1. LOVE THE WORD OF GOD! At present you may be struggling with an Offended Spirit, Anxiety, Discouragement, Depression, Frustration, and/or with some other form of addictive thinking or behavior. In any case, **great peace comes to those who love God's Word and God's law! GOD'S WORD** received into our minds and souls gives us an eternal perspective and produces a cleansing effect. **GOD'S WORD** is profitable to teach us the truth and the truth sets us free. **GOD'S WORD** delivers us from errors in judgment and errors in destructive thinking.

GOD'S WORD, quickened by the Holy Spirit, resets our lives on to healing, winning paths, trains us in Godly living, and equips us even for the unknown and the unexpected! (Psalm 119:165; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; John 15:3; Ephesians 5:26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; John 8:32)

Most of all, GOD'S WORD reveals the True and Living GOD OF THE WORD to us and guides us into deepening fellowship with Him! Thus, walking in His steps we love and forgive in the same fashion as He loves and forgives us. **THIS KILLS offended spirits!**

2. YIELD TO GOD for Him to Be God in Your Life! GOD Makes No Mistakes In What He Brings Or Allows In Our Lives! (Psalm 115:3; Romans 14:8) To avoid being offended, we must understand how the world works! Believe it or not, the world was not created for us! It was created by God and for God. He is committed to carrying out His plan and will and not our plans and will. (Isaiah 40:25; Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1; Revelation 4:11) Life on planet earth is all about God Almighty! God reigns!

WE CAN LEARN A LOT FROM JOB! Job never knew why satan was allowed to bring him so low. In fact, there is no indication in the Book of Job, that Job connected satan to his troubles. INSTEAD, he credited his calamity to the sovereignty of God: ***"THE LORD GAVE and the LORD took away; blessed be the name of the LORD!"*** JOB knew God and through the STORMS OF LIFE he continued to TRUST HIM!

REALITY: *When we are in the DARK VALLEY, GOD SELDOM gives us an explanation!* "All we can do is cry out to Him in our pain. Wait on him. Abandon ourselves to Him in hope, clinging to the knowledge that God is FAITHFUL, GOOD, HOLY, RIGHTEOUS, MERCIFUL, and much more. SO , BY FAITH we cry: ***"Though He slay me, I will TRUST HIM! When He has finished trying me, I shall come forth as GOLD!"***

REALITY: "God has invited you/us to a party! But it ain't our party, it's His!" However, here is some very good news: ** You are loved with an everlasting love! ** God has good, redemptive purposes for all He brings or allows. ** He who began a good work in you will complete it. ** You are not alone. ** You are becoming like Christ! ** You have a **"Fellow Suffer"** who prays for you 24/7! ** Stay close to Jesus! (Romans 9:14-16; 1 John 3:1; 4:10; John 13:7; 14:16-18; 2

Corinthians 4:8-11; 1 Peter 4:12-13a; John 15:18-20; Philippians 3:8,10; Acts 9:15-16; 2 Corinthians 11:23-28; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:21)

3. BUILD BRIDGES OF LOVE So Truth Can Be Delivered

(Ephesians 4:15) Every Christian is under clear commands from Jesus: **Do not be overcome by evil** which may come from others. Overcome that evil with good. Bless. Do not persecute. Do good. Walk in the steps of Jesus who although He was shamefully treated— He loved, He sacrificed, He forgave, He committed these matters into His Father's care. (Romans 12:14-21; Matthew 5:43-47; 1 Peter 2: 11-21)

In the Christian faith, we are also called upon to live and to speak the truth. We must speak the truth in love. **"The greater the load of truth we must deliver, the greater the bridge of love we must build!"**

4. LIVE to Please GOD and Build up others! (Romans 14:7,19, 21; 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1) It is so easy to fall into the trap of seeking to please someone on earth more than we seek to please God. But we are commanded in Scripture to do all that we do to the glory of God! (1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1) At the same time, our LORD would have us **to always be patient and kind toward others**. So far as we are able— Let us make every effort to live at peace with others. Let us never be careless with the souls of others! Let us be careful to speak words and do deeds which edify.

5. KEEP A GOD FOCUS! Never Allow Another Person To Rob You Of Joy and Power In Christ! (Acts 16:23-25; 2 Timothy 4:15; 2 Timothy 4:17-18; Jude 24-25) These Scriptures reveal the awesome power of a God-focused life. Let us remember: **Offenses will come! And when they do, let us join with Paul and Silas in having a PRAISE SERVICE!**

And let us confess supreme faith in the Good Shepherd! (Psalm 23; Romans 8:27-39) MOREOVER, as we focus on JESUS, we will hear Him call upon us to CONFESS our own sins— not the sins of others! A GRAND SECRET of joy and peace is to give others to God and to personally be ‘clay’ in His hands!

6. KEEP AWAY FROM TALEBEARERS! A very common way in which the Evil One seeks to get our focus away from God, is by getting us to listen to Talebearers! So many of God's people are offended because of believing the slanderous gossip of talebearers and discord planters! **BEWARE:** The words of talebearers cause deep wounds; cause strife; and separate even close friends! (Proverbs 11:13; 17:9; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20) **[To inform God ordained leadership of problems in a Church or ministry IS NOT tale bearing: 1 Corinthians 1:11)]**

7. RESOLVED: BECAUSE I AM REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB AND INDWELT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT— I will follow Jesus Christ! I will refuse to live in misery and/or blame others if I am presently in a pathetic state of mind. **Instead, I will** humble myself before God and flee to the throne of Grace! **Henceforth, I will** embrace GOD AS GOD in my life. He is good and He has a right to do all of His good pleasure! I choose to trust Him, even when I do not understand. I will seek NOT to offend others. I refuse to be offended. **Instead, I will PRAISE and REJOICE in God!** And I will love, bless, pray for, and do good to others!

Because God first loved me while I was His enemy; and because at salvation, (by His Holy Spirit, Romans 5:5), He flooded my heart with His unselfish, sacrificing, forgiving love that never fails, that never quits— **therefore,** no REAL or IMAGINED evil spoken or

done to me ever justifies hatred, resentment, or retaliation. No injustice warrants the holding of a grudge or bitterness.

I MUST NOT GRIEVE OR QUENCH THE HOLY SPIRIT; MY BLOOD BOUGHT BODY IS HIS TEMPLE to be a channel for the love of God which is very patient, very kind, always looks for a way to be constructive, is never envious, never boastful, is not arrogant, is never rude or conceited or indecent, does not insist on its own way in a self-seeking way, **is not quick to take offence, it is not irritable or touchy, nor does this love keep an account of the failures of others. This love with which God has flooded my heart** is never glad when others go wrong, delights in the truth. God's love in the saint is slow to expose the failures of others and is eager to believe the best. There is nothing this love cannot face; there is no limit to love's faith. **And God's love in me hopes under all circumstances; and knows no limit to its endurance; and this love never comes to an end! (Let us all drink deeply of First Corinthians, chapter 13!)**

MOREOVER, the Holy Spirit fruit in me and through me is self-control. I am no longer a slave to sin, self, satan, or selfishness. I am no longer a slave to bad habits, bad thoughts, bad attitudes, or an evil tongue. I am free in Christ. My body and spirit belong to Christ. I am His Holy Temple. **I NEVER HAVE ANY RIGHT** to think, to say or to do anything with which JESUS is not well pleased. THEREFORE, I MUST BE **being continuously filled with the Holy Spirit** by letting the Word of Christ richly dwell within me. (Col. 3:16) I MUST "live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God!" (Matt. 4:4)

AND WHEN I FAIL in any of the above, I will choose to be humble, confess my sin and repent. PRAISE THE LORD! I will be restored by God's amazing mercy and grace! **By the Grace of God,** I am a Christian! The very life of God is in me by the indwelling Holy Spirit!

I AM NOT A VICTIM OF OR A SLAVE TO MY PAST! I will rise above any present failings or trials or persecutions! I will give thanks! I will seek God's face! And then when this day is done, I will place my head on my pillow and rest... all amazed by the goodness, the mercy, the love and the grace of God in Christ!... **AND ALL FULL OF HOPE— KNOWING THAT ONE DAY I SHALL SEE MY LORD AND SAVIOUR FACE TO FACE AND HE WILL WELCOME ME HOME, “WELL DONE, MY CHILD, YOU YIELDED TO ME AND FOLLOWED ME AND WALKED IN MY STEPS!... ENTER THOU INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD!” FOREVER, AND FOREVER, AND FOREVER! AMEN!**

[Note: A number of sources used, especially material from Steve Brown, Don Baker, R. E. Bieber, and Clay Sterrett.]

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? 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— → **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE...** (Enter via IRON STEPS; or double doors by gym)

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY—** Next meeting scheduled for **Tuesday, August 14 @ 11:00am; Continuing in LUKE.** ENTER at the back of the church building, [*Doors open at 10:30am... 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/

SUNDAY SERVICES: August 2018— 12, 19, 26

Sunday School at 9:30am & Worship at 10:45am

SPECIAL NOTES:

1. August 12, 5:30pm— Faithful Men's Equipping

2. August 19, LORD'S SUPPER at end of Morning Worship

HOME GROUPS, 5:00PM

3. August 26, 6:00PM... Monthly Evening Service, (Present focus: Shepherding the Heart of a Child)

