

# GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

**Volume 45, No. 35, August 28, 2018** / South side 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."***

**[NEWSLETTER: Are you receiving a paper copy AND an EMAIL copy... and ONLY want the EMAIL copy— please let the Secretary know!]**

## **PREPARING FOR THIS COMING SUNDAY'S WORSHIP HOUR!**

**CHRISTIAN WORSHIP has been accurately defined \*\*\* AS THE** overflow of a grateful heart to God for His greatness and goodness; \*\*\* **AS THE** occupation of the heart— not with needs or blessings, but with GOD HIMSELF; \*\*\* **AS THE** UPRISING of a HEART THAT KNOWS— **(1) God the Father** as the Great Giver; **(2) God the Son** as the Great Shepherd; and **(3) God the Holy Spirit** as the Indwelling resident in and President over our daily lives. \*\*\* **WORSHIP is** adoring contemplation of God Himself, as He has revealed Himself in Christ and in the Word of God.

**ONE OF THE WORDS translated 'Worship'** literally means, "to reverence, to kiss the hand". The English word "Worship" means Worth-Ship— the emphasis is on the worthiness of the one worshiped. In other words— **Praise and Obedience** are given to

God because of WHO HE IS and because of His great acts of Creation and Redemption. **THEREFORE, at Southside:**

**WE WILL NOT** make any effort to ‘pump you up’ into any sort of man-made religious frenzy and call it worship. **REALITY: IN ORDER FOR there to be a FINE expression of GENUINE God-honoring worship this coming Sunday— WE MUST assemble as those who all week long have been WORSHIPING the crucified, risen, reigning, and soon returning King of Kings!**

**Corporate Worship is AN APPOINTMENT with the Living God! God is the focus, not man.** Corporate worship means that we gather as a church family **to ascribe** worth to God, **to prostrate** ourselves before God in submission to His Word, **to offer unto Him** honor, praise, adoration, the first fruit, tithes, offerings, and **to recognize and rejoice in** God's glory, greatness, power, victory, majesty, and rule!

## **I. BIBLICAL Guidance for Biblical Worship**

**First Commandment: Exodus 20:3**— the exclusive object of our worship must be the one, the true and the living, triune God himself. **No room is allowed for** idols, saints, angels, the Virgin Mary, nor any object, nor any other being in all the universe.

**Second Commandment: Exodus 20:4-6**— the manner of true worship must be spiritual and not physical. We are strictly forbidden to attempt to worship God by means of visual representations. Thus, all attempts to visually portray Father, Son, or Holy Spirit are off base. Moreover, all such endeavors obscure God's glory. (Isaiah 40:18)

**Third Commandment: Exodus 20:7**— the specific attitude for true worship is that of reverence for God and, thus, reverence for God's Name. Note: Not only should we not 'ask' God to damn something or someone— **saying, writing 'OMG'** is likewise VILE disrespect for God!

**Fourth Commandment: Exodus 20:8-11**— certainly all of our time is to be used in such a way as to glorify God. Nevertheless, the principles of Scripture call for the specific setting aside of one day in seven for rest, good deeds, and for corporate worship. (Isaiah 58:13-14; Hebrews 10:23-25) **Vital love relationships require vital time!**

## **II. The Nature of New Covenant Worship: John 4:19-21**

**True Christian Worship** does not focus on man and his needs, but on God, His glory, and God's worthiness of worship and praise. **True Christian Worship Must be in Spirit:** It is not outward ceremony, or pumped up emotions from special lights, high energy music, and/or gyrations. **Rather, worship in spirit must be in accord with the Holy Spirit,** aided by the Holy Spirit, and a manifestation of sincerity in hearts which are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. **Moreover** the Holy Spirit is the **HOLY** Spirit! He is the Spirit of **TRUTH!** His master passion is to **Exalt Jesus!** (Matt. 15:18; John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13) **Thus, Worship that is "In the Spirit" will promote Holiness, be loyal to Truth, and will exalt Jesus!**

Exuberance, various physical expressions, **may or may not be** the expressions of being "in the Spirit"— they may only be a man-manufactured display of religious flesh that makes God sick, as in Isaiah 1:2-15; or that brings holy wrath as in Exodus 32.

**True Christian Worship Must be in Truth:** That is, worship in truth is worship which is in accordance with God's Word, which is truth. (John 17:17) It is worship which has God and God alone as the object of worship. (Ex. 20:3)

**THUS:** The question is never about *"I like... or I don't like... or I don't agree."* **It is ONLY ABOUT— IS THIS ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD?**

### **III. Biblical EXPRESSIONS in the Corporate Worship of God!**

1. During a Worship Service **it is a good thing** for the congregation to freely and expressively say, **"AMEN!"** **By this we are saying "Yes!" to God! "So be it LORD!"** \*\*\* *Nehemiah 8:6*— "And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, **and all the people** answered, **AMEN, AMEN...**" \*\*\* *1 Chronicles 16:8-36*— A great, God-centered Psalm was read before the people... **"And all the people said, AMEN,** and praised the LORD!" \*\*\* *Psalm 106:48*— "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and **let all the people** say, **AMEN, PRAISE YE THE LORD!"** \*\*\* *Revelation 7:9-12*— All those in heaven are worshipping God and saying, **"AMEN!** Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, **BE UNTO OUR GOD forever and ever. AMEN!"**

#### ***The IMPORTANCE of preaching/teaching the Word of God.***

In Nehemiah 8 we find the people demanding that Ezra the scribe **bring the Book of the Law** to the assembly. Ezra and his colleagues stand on a raised platform and **read from the Book.** When he opens the Book to read, the assembly rises to its feet in honor of the Word of God and their response to the reading is to answer, **"Amen, Amen!"**

Interestingly, the text explains that Ezra and those assisting him "read from the Book, from the Law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading" (Neh. 8:8). **Once the text was read, it was carefully explained to the congregation.** Ezra did not stage an event or orchestrate a spectacle— he simply and carefully proclaimed the word of God. This text is a sobering indictment of much contemporary Christianity. **According to the text, a demand for biblical preaching erupted within the hearts of the people.** They gathered as a congregation and summoned the preacher. This reflects an intense hunger and thirst for the preaching of the Word of God.

QUESTION: ***WILL YOU and I ARRIVE at worship services this coming LORD'S DAY with that same sort of desire?***

**2. During a Worship Service it is a good thing** for the congregation to freely and expressively SING and/or SAY PRAISE! \*\*\* ***Psalm 95:1***— "O come, let US **sing** unto the LORD. **Let US** make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation." \*\*\* ***Ephesians 5:19***— "**Speaking to YOURSELVES** in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the LORD!"

**3. During a Worship Service it is a good thing,** at times, for a congregation to stand, and/or to kneel, and/or to bow, etc. Various physical postures may convey gratitude, reverence, submission, humility, and/or dependence, etc.

**It is true that mere physical actions can become mechanical and/or hypocritical.** Indeed, we must come to God in worship with right heart attitudes. Among those right attitudes

is a submissive, godly embracing of Biblical expressions in worship, such as these ones of which we are speaking.

**The fact that there are** those who 'get in the flesh' and just put on a show, rather than truly worship God— **THESE NEGATIVE REALITIES DO NOT GIVE US LIBERTY TO IGNORE OR REJECT BIBLICAL PATTERNS!**

**4. During a Worship Service it is a good thing** for our hearts and hands to blend in worship to God. "Hear my cry for mercy as I call to you for help, **as I lift MY HANDS** toward your most holy place." (Psalm 28:2) "The LORD is my strength and my shield; My HEART trusteth in Him, and I am helped. MY HEART leaps for joy and I will give thanks to Him in song." (Psalm 28:7)

\*\*\* **EXTENDED HANDS** reveal the worshipper in a posture of faith, looking to God for mercy and grace. (Psalm 88:9b) \*\*\* **LIFTED UP HANDS** are also in the context of praise to God for his greatness. "Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD... **LIFT UP YOUR HANDS** in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD!" (Psalm 134:1-2) "And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, **AMEN, AMEN, with LIFTING UP THEIR HANDS**, and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground." (Neh. 8:6)

God inspired Paul to write: "I will therefore that men **PRAY** everywhere, **LIFTING UP HOLY HANDS**, without wrath and doubting." (1 Tim 2:8)

**One of the grand Old Testament worship scenes** is found in Nehemiah, Chapter 8 and 9. Here are some very instructive verses from Nehemiah, chapter 8, emphasis is added:

<sup>1</sup> And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; **and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses**, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.

<sup>2</sup> And Ezra the priest brought the Law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. <sup>3</sup> **And he read** therein before the street that was before the water gate **from the morning until midday**, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were **attentive** unto the Book of the Law.

<sup>4</sup> **And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood**, which they had made for the purpose;... <sup>5</sup> **And Ezra opened the Book** in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, **all the people stood up**: <sup>6</sup> And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God.

**And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground."**

**What can we learn** from this wonderful scene?

The focus of true worship is all on God! It's all focused on God's Word which points us in the paths of being RIGHT WITH GOD. And, prominent throughout Scripture is **the worship response of AMEN! ... that is, "So be it LORD!"**

**The book of Acts** gives us a clear worship scene from the New Testament Church: **Acts 2** (Emphasis is added) <sup>41</sup> "Then they that **gladly** received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. <sup>42</sup> **And they**

**continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.** <sup>43</sup> And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> And all that believed were together, and had all things common; <sup>45</sup> And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. <sup>46</sup> And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, <sup>47</sup> **Praising God**, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." **Here we see that true New Testament worship is, again, all about God and His agenda!**

**NOTE:** There was/is no need to seek to motivate by appealing to the carnal flesh. **For with new hearts**, new Christians have an awesome **indwelling compelling** for sitting at the feet of Jesus in the Word of God! They are drawn to fellowship with other believers, and drawn to worship at the LORD'S TABLE, and drawn to prayer with other saints, and drawn to ministries of doing good one to another. In other words, they are led by the Holy Spirit! (Romans 8:14)

**ONE OF THE WORSHIP scenes from the Revelation. Revelation 19** (Emphasis is added) <sup>1</sup> And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, **Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God:** <sup>2</sup> For true and righteous are his judgments: for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

<sup>3</sup> **And again they said, Alleluia, [hal·le·lu·jah],** And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. <sup>4</sup> And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, **Amen; Alleluia.** <sup>5</sup> And a voice came out of the throne, saying, **Praise our God,** all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. <sup>6</sup> And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, **Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.**

#### **IV. What IS Clear from These Various Scriptures?**

**(1) WE SEE** the total **GOD FOCUS** of true, Holy Spirit led worship. **Therefore, the preaching of the Holy Spirit breathed out Word of God is prominent!**

**(2) WE SEE** the emotion, intensity, and VERBAL nature of true, Holy Spirit led worship; Plus, Various POSTURES are used in true worship— Kneeling, Standing, Bowing, and the LIFTING UP OF HANDS.

**(3) WE SEE THAT** in Holy Spirit led worship, WORDS of praise RESPONSES are predominant— **AMEN! HALLEUJAH! SO LET IT BE!**

**Grace to all in Christ! James**

James Bel      [www.southsidegallatin.org](http://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, September, 28 @ 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!**

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**SUNDAY SERVICES: September 2018— 2, 9, 16, 23, 30**

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

***SPECIAL NOTES:***

- 1. September 2— NOON Covered Dish Meal***
- 2. September 9— 5:30pm, Faithful Men***

**3. September 16— LORD'S SUPPER at conclusion of the Morning Worship Service //**

**HOME GROUPS MEET at 5:00pm**

**4. September 23— 6:00pm, monthly, church-wide equipping hour... presently SHEPHERDING A CHILD'S HEART**

**5. September 30— 6:00pm, an Evening of Praise and Scriptures**