

# GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

**Volume 45, No. 39, September 25, 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."***

## **THE 'WAY OF THE CROSS!' // JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHTS!**

**It seems that every day I am witnessing or hearing of those who are trying to win spiritual battles by defending self and blaming others! This well-trodden and crowded highway never leads to a good end! **The following 'narrow way' truth... yields good fruit now and without end!****

**I. THE FOUNDATION FOR ALL MENTAL/SPIRITUAL HEALTH IS THE CROSS!** THE CALL OF JESUS IS CLEAR: *"Deny yourselves, take up your cross daily, and follow Me!"* (Luke 9:23) INDEED: The new master passion [to which GENUINE CHRISTIANS are daily empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit!] is, ***"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*** (Gal. 2:20)

THUS, genuine Christianity yields excellent mental/spiritual health; and is rooted in the experience of TRIPLE CRUCIFIXION:

**1. CHRIST CRUCIFIED for us**, in our place— fully paying our sin debt!

**2. I AM CRUCIFIED**— even as stated in Galatians 2:20 and in Gal. 5:24!

**3. THE WORLD IS CRUCIFIED to me** and I to the world— as stated in Gal. 6:14! In another place, Paul testifies, “I die daily!” Also, in Christ, we are DEAD to sin’s dominion, (Romans 6:14-22). **Again: Jesus calls His followers to**, ‘Deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Me!’”

[This is the CORE and ESSENCE of sound mental and spiritual health!]

## **II. SUBMITTING TO THE WAY OF THE CROSS IN RELATIONSHIPS OPENS THE DOOR TO DAILY MIRACLES!**

All human relationships operate in a ‘triangle’ fashion. That is, all relationships have 3 sides— **we have rights, expectations, and responsibilities**. Sometimes rights and expectations may overlap. Sometimes rights and expectations are based on what is good, honorable, and Biblical. On the other hand, they can be based on tradition, on how I was raised, or even upon selfishness, etc.

**Here’s the truth:** MOST ANGER and UNHAPPINESS in relationships is in direct proportion to the fact that someone has VIOLATED or neglected our rights and/or expectations— OR at least we believe that they have... OR... they believe that we have violated their rights and/or expectations! **ROOT PROBLEM? PRIDE HAS BEEN WOUNDED!**

**REALITY: MOST** fussin’ feudin’, fightin’, resentments, bitterness, and etc... are about UNMET rights and expectations... and wounded PRIDE! In such settings every time someone dishes out

an accusation of real or imagined unmet needs, rights, and expectations— usually the only thing accomplished is that the other party now has more ammunition.

**THIS BATTLE OF OPPOSING ACCUSATIONS** will provide enough ammo to shoot against one another until hell freezes. **[AND SETS THE STAGE FOR DEEPENING MENTAL, SPIRITUAL, and PHYSICAL deterioration, debilitation, and bondage!]**

**COMMON to these tragic wars are the battle tactics of**

(1) Defending self and accusing others; (2) Blame-shifting and putting up smoke-screens;

(3) Confessing the real or imagined sins/faults of the other person instead of obeying Scripture and only confessing OUR OWN faults (James 5:16; 1 John 1:9); and

(4) Gathering an army of supporters to promote ‘our side’ — thus, it is no wonder that ‘emotional blood and guts’ lie everywhere!

**BEWARE:** the longer these sin-filled-satan-pleasing tactics are used there will be growing hardness of heart, resentments, bitterness, hopelessness, emotional distress, destruction of families, destruction of churches, and above all a deepening REJECTION of Jesus Christ! [OBVIOUSLY, in such a mental environment, there will be seriously declining mental health!]

**GREAT TRAGEDY:** When fighting with carnal tactics— **no one is focused on heeding their God-given responsibilities!** Moreover we feel fully justified for not carrying out our God-given responsibilities— for, after all, ‘the other person’ - (spouse, fellow church member, relative, neighbor, or whoever) - is not carrying out theirs!

**“He/she/they are not meeting MY needs.** He/she/they are not loving me the way I NEED to be loved. IN FACT, he/she/they are being down-right evil toward me. I have it all documented— Therefore, I AM EXCUSED from my God-given responsibilities! **He/she/they need counseling**— I don’t... except to share how he/she/they have deeply wounded me! **Of course, I am not perfect; but** he/she/they are the ones with serious problems— not me!”

[MOREOVER, BECAUSE OF ‘IT, or HE, or HER, or THEM— THEY are the cause of my mental stress!]

**YES, from time to time,** others in our world do and say bad things and those bad things can wound and HURT.

**YES, there are times** when legitimate rights and expectations are not met. *However, none of this excuses us from our own God-given responsibilities; and NONE of them are the cause for our mental stress, confusion, and deep spiritual poverty!*

**TRAGIC TRUTH: So long as we insist on**

**(1) Pointing** our fingers at others; **(2) Confessing** their real or imagined sins; **(3) Accusing** others of failing to meet our rights/expectations;

**(4) REFUSING** to lay all of that ‘ON THE ALTAR’; AND

**(5) REFUSING TO FOCUS ON DOING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES** as an act of worship to JESUS— **love and hope will die; divorces will follow; and/or church splits; and mental, emotional, psychological deterioration will occur... all resulting from a deep grieving of the Holy Spirit!**

### **III. JESUS MODELS A RADICALLY DIFFERENT WAY!!**

1. JESUS had far worse and more BAD THINGS done to Him than we have had done to us!

2. Unlike us, JESUS did not deserve any of them!
3. Yet, Jesus was not destroyed by such evil. Hope never died! His JOY was never killed... or even hindered!
4. JESUS was not sidetracked from His God given RESPONSIBILITIES.
5. Jesus WAS NOT ever mentally/psychologically weakened, disturbed, or confused.

## **WHAT WAS THE SECRET OF JESUS?**

### **1. JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHTS!**

ALL through His life, death, and resurrection— Jesus Christ gives us a striking example of complete obedience and surrender to God. In the Book of Philippians, we read that although Jesus was equal with God, He humbled Himself to live among men and to redeem them from the bondage of sin. In order to fulfill the direction of God the Father, Jesus yielded His right to wealth, to a good reputation, to be served, to enjoy physical comforts, and to make His own decisions.

The evil that was dumped on Jesus was unspeakable— yet He never took His eyes off His responsibilities! HE FUNCTIONED IN PERFECT SANITY!

**“BUT I’M NOT JESUS!” \*\* I KNOW THAT! Neither am I!**

HOWEVER, Christians, by the Holy Spirit, have JESUS INDWELLING. We have divine life, divine power, and commands from Jesus to walk in His steps:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being

found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:5–8).

## **2. JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHT TO WEALTH:**

In order for Jesus Christ to redeem men and women from sin, He left the splendor, beauty, and majesty of heaven. Jesus is God, the Creator of all things; He had a right to enjoy all wealth and riches (see 6 Colossians 1:15–17), yet He confined Himself to the limited means of a carpenter’s household.

## **3. JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHTS TO A GOOD REPUTATION:**

In heaven, Jesus is continually worshiped and His name highly honored. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. When Jesus came into the world, however, He “made himself of no reputation” (Philippians 2:7). Rather than being born into wealth and prominence, Jesus was born into poverty and obscurity. Religious leaders claimed that Jesus was born of fornication.

JESUS only went about doing good— even so, He lost popularity and his character was maliciously slandered.

Christ’s ultimate humiliation came when He was arrested, falsely accused, and crucified. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Galatians 3:13).

**REALITY:** Regardless of the cost, Jesus lived on earth to please His Father. He did not come to be served. He did not come to demand His rights. He did not react in anger when He was violated. He stayed focused on doing His Father’s will.

**THUS, HE WAS ANOINTED WITH THE OIL OF GLADNESS ABOVE ALL OTHERS!**

## **JESUS MODELS FOR US THE REALITY that Joy and Happiness and MENTAL SOUNDNESS are not dependent upon Others Treating us Right!**

1 Peter 2:19-21: “For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:...” (NKJV)

**STRONG REALITY:** When I do not have joy and gladness and peace it is because of my own failure to walk in the steps of JESUS. I may or may not have grief and sorrow from the wrong of others toward me— but those are ‘clean wounds’... and they will heal as I walk with Jesus.

**THE THING that destroys me and weighs me down with UNHAPPINESS and HOPELESS is my own response of REFUSING my God-given responsibilities and replacing them with defensiveness and accusations— thus, RECEIVING self-created ‘dirty, infected wounds’ which breed resentment, bitterness, hardness of heart, and growing mental instability.**

### **4. JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHT TO BE SERVED:**

As the Creator of every living person, Christ has the right to have others serve Him. However, when Jesus came to earth, He did not demand the service of others. Instead, He took opportunities to demonstrate humble service. Jesus was sensitive to the needs of those around Him. He healed the diseased, delivered those possessed with evil spirits, restored the disabled, provided food for the hungry, and more.

**On the evening of Jesus' betrayal and arrest, He washed the feet of His disciples.** “. . . He said unto them, [AND TO US!] Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, **happy are ye if ye do them**” (John 13:12-17).

**Happiness IS NOT IN having my rights and expectations met!**

**Happiness IS IN serving UNWORTHY others because we want to please Jesus in gratitude for all JESUS has done for us!**

The attitudes and actions of 'others' may or may not deserve that we serve them— however, **JESUS ALWAYS DESERVES** that we heed his Word and walk in His **SERVING** footsteps!

Dr. Ed Wheat, author of **LOVE LIFE FOR EVERY MARRIED COUPLE** reveals that at the beginning of his Christian life his wife and children were unresponsive to both the gospel and to him. He states that, **“prolonged rejection... drove me to the Word of God to learn exactly what I should do.** I learned that it was my responsibility to love my wife the way Christ loved me. Many times I did not feel like loving her, for rejection, even quiet, courteous rejection is hard to handle. **BUT I DID IT OUT OF OBEDIENCE TO GOD!** I found that as I put the principles of the Bible into practice and as I really learned how to love my wife, **this became PLEASURE as well as responsibility. OBEDIENCE TOOK ON THE BRIGHT COLORS OF JOY!**” (Yes... the Way of the Cross is THE KEY to mental and spiritual health!)

## 5. JESUS YIELDED HIS RIGHT TO MAKE HIS OWN INDEPENDENT DECISIONS:

Perhaps the most difficult right to yield is that of making final decisions. Yet, if we do not fully yield this right to God, we will not develop a spirit of meekness or walk in true humility before God. Jesus lived in complete surrender to God's direction. **When Christ was twelve years old**, He understood His calling and expressed His desire to be about His heavenly Father's business. (Luke 2:49.)  
 9 He yielded to God's direction through His IMPERFECT parents and waited until He was thirty years old to begin His public ministry. (Luke 3:22-23.)

**During His ministry years**, Jesus made no decisions independently but did only what His heavenly Father directed Him to do. (John 8:28.) Continually, His attitude was "not my will, but Thine be done" (Luke 22:42). When Christ was arrested and placed under civil authorities, God carried out His ultimate will through their decisions. (John 19:11, 28-30.) Jesus' obedience to the directions of His Father enabled Jesus to complete the work He was called to do and to fulfill the Scriptural prophecies about His life. (Philippians 2:9-11).

Jesus gave two specific words as to the disposition/attitude He maintained while on earth— **MEEKNESS and LOWLINESS of heart!** Every step of the way as He YIELDED HIS RIGHTS, He was revealing meekness and lowliness.

**Being channels for MEEKNESS and LOWLINESS is the grand and open secret of happiness and peace in relationships!**  
 "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

**MEEKNESS:** “DEAR JESUS, I THANK YOU for sins forgiven and for NEW LIFE in Christ; and, therefore, I totally embrace YOUR call for me to do MY GOD-GIVEN RESPONSIBILITIES as an act of worship to you, regardless of what others in my life may or may not be doing, leaving all results in your hand.

**LORD JESUS, you are worthy that I serve** and worship you in this manner! I yield all of my personal rights and expectations to God, SO THAT I am ‘clay in His hands’ for Him to accomplish His will in my life!

I belong to JESUS. JESUS has exclusive right to manifest HIMSELF in and through me for His glory.

**Any attitude, word, or deed, (DESIRING TO COME FROM ME), which does not manifest CHRIST and please Christ— I REJECT!** I die to my supposed ‘rights’ and I embrace my God-given responsibilities!”

Grace to all in Christ! James Bell [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, October 9 @ 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!**

**SHARE the Preaching of the Word of God!**

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**SUNDAY SERVICES: September 2018— 30**

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

***SPECIAL NOTE: September 30— 6:00pm, an Evening of Praise and Scriptures***