

# GROW IN GRACE NEWSLETTER

**Volume 45, No. 43, October 23, 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."***

## **WHEN TRUTH FACED FLAMES— Thomas Cranmer!**



### **Thomas Cranmer, martyred March 21st 1556**

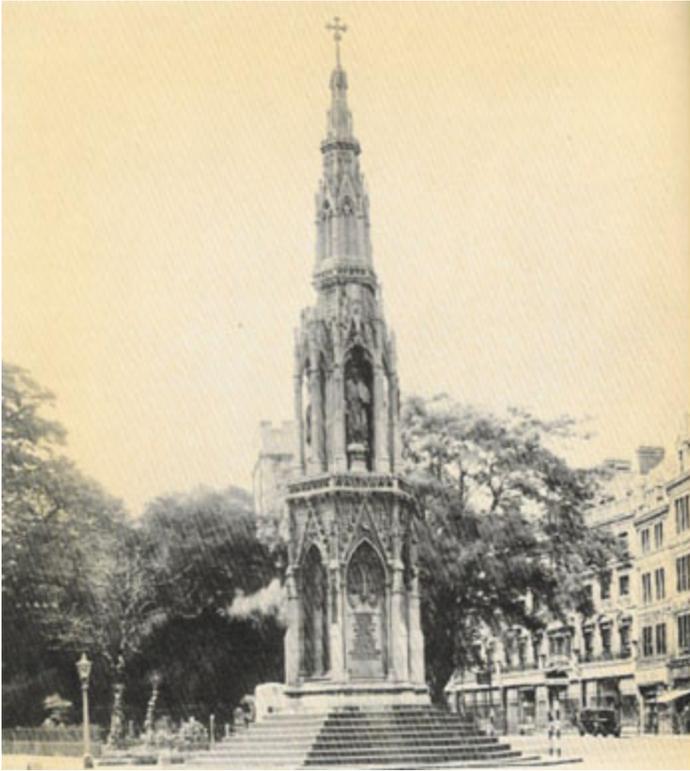
(acknowledgments to the National Portrait Gallery)

**WHAT IS MY HOLD ON TRUTH?** Is it of such importance to me that I would be prepared to be put to death for what I believe? True martyrdom is not an issue about

‘suicide bombers’ armed with weapons, intent on killing as many people as possible - but rather about **men and women IN CHRIST** whose only ‘weapon’ is the love of God in Jesus Christ!

**Stephen Neill has written**, ‘throughout the centuries, the Church of Christ has survived only because **there has been within it a sufficient number of men and women who were willing**, if need be, cheerfully to die for Him’ (Christian Faith Today,

Pelican, p.181). **If it becomes once again the turn of Christ's followers in the West to face physical persecution to the point of death** - (as is the case in numbers of countries today!) -



It will not, of course be the first time. IF YOU visit Oxford, England, in the center of the city, where Broad Street meets St Giles— you will see **The Martyrs' Memorial**, a tall structure resembling the spire of a cathedral, rising up from its surround of steps. **It was erected to remind England of certain prominent martyrs of the sixteenth century Reformation.**

**THEREFORE**, tribute must be paid to the martyrdom 462 years ago - on March 21st, 1556 - of **Thomas Cranmer**, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his dying refusal to bow to the will of England's Roman Catholic Queen, 'Bloody Mary,' as she became dubbed.

Hers was the achievement of accomplishing the death by fire of numerous English Protestant pastors and lay people, in her determination to reverse the effects of the Europe-wide Reformation, which was giving to English people worship that was freed from superstition - and the Bible in their own language. [**Added Note:** There is a special sense of tragedy today because in 2018, many in the Church of England have and are forsaking the Reformation and reuniting with the horrific errors of Rome!]

**Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley, and Thomas Cranmer** - all Protestant bishops - were burnt at the stake, in a spot marked today by an iron cross, set in a pavement outside Balliol College. Scorched doors, set between the quads of Balliol College, can still be seen, as sombre relics from that funeral pyre; **grim reminders of what - in Mary's reign - it could cost someone to declare personal belief in the sole sufficiency of Christ's atoning death for salvation!**

**[BUT GLORIOUS REMINDERS that there were these and many others before us today... who believed that JESUS CHRIST and His gospel of GRACE was worth living for and worth dying for!]**

In 1555, Bishops Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley died at the same spot that Cranmer was to die six months later. Faggots were piled around them and gunpowder was placed around their necks, tied as they were to a single stake. As a lighted faggot was placed at Ridley's feet, **Hugh Latimer called out:**

***"Be of good comfort, brother Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust never shall be put out!"***

**On March 21st, 1556 it was Cranmer's turn.** Having steered the church through the many turbulences of the Reformation; having given England **the Great Bible** of 1538 and the **Book of Common Prayer** (1552), he was also responsible for the **Articles of the Church of England**, which feature thirty-nine statements of Biblical truth as they affected many of the errors and issues of that time.

Possessing a superb command of scholarship and of the English language, none of his opponents could match him in debate or writing. **All his theology was based on the experience and the finished work of Jesus Christ.**

**He was already in the Bocardo prison in Oxford, when Latimer and Ridley died;** indeed from there he watched them as they were taken to the stake. It may even be that he was compelled to witness their deaths personally. Having valiantly defended his Reformation beliefs on numerous occasions - often being denied access to his writings and documents - Cranmer was to spend some two and a half years in his prison.

**The loneliness of his ordeal, coupled with what today we would call a form of brain-washing on the part of his persecutors, induced him to sign a document, recanting his cherished beliefs and upholding the teachings and supremacy of the Roman Pope.**

It looked as though Mary's triumph would be complete - with the apparent collapse in spirit of this pivotal Protestant figure. Surely the English Reformation could now only fall with Cranmer's confession and subsequent execution as a heretic. **Yet Cranmer's was but a momentary faltering of nerve!**

Taken out to die on the morning of March 21st, 1556, Thomas Cranmer - led from the Bocardo to St Mary's Church and escorted with psalm-chanting Spanish friars on each side - was ready with his final ringing testimony to the truths for which he had always striven. It was a very public moment.

**As for his forced recantation: “And forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, therefore my**

***hand shall first be punished; for if I may come to the fire, it shall be first burned.”***

He was not able to get much further. Furious hands seized him and hurried him away down Brasenose Lane, and to the very spot where Latimer and Ridley had died earlier. Bound with steel around his waist, the fire roared up, and Cranmer held his right hand directly in the flame, as he cried out, **“This hand hath offended!”**

‘This,’ writes Archbishop Marcus Loane, ‘was recantation of a kind which none could undo; a Sign of Faith which no one could misread. **His patience in torment, his courage in dying,** won admiration even from hostile members of the crowd which looked on. He stood firmly in the same place, ringed with flame, lapped with fire; and stirred no more than the stake to which he was bound, only lifting up his eyes and crying so long as his voice would allow, **“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!”**’ (*Masters of the English Reformation*, Church Book Room Press, 1954, p.240).

**Are these reminders of the Reformation an embarrassment to some?** I hope not. There are certain dates that are worth noting for their significance, and this is one of them - March 21st, 1556 - a day when one of England’s great giants died a martyr’s death, and with it changed the direction of England’s history. (The above is edited from an article by Richard Bewes, **A Remembrance of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer,** **Reformation** **Martyr.**

**In Revelation 2:10, JESUS SAYS,** 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold the devil is about to throw some of you into prison that you may be tested, and for 10 days you will have

tribulation. **Be thou faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life!**

**POLYCARP, a disciple of the Apostle John, is an outstanding example of being faithful unto death.** According to reliable history, he was burned at the stake in 155 A. D. He had been asked to say, “Caesar is Lord,” but he refused.

When Polycarp was brought to the stadium, the Proconsul urged him, “Swear, and I will set you at liberty; reproach Christ.”

**Polycarp answered,** “Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me any injury; **how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?”** When the Proconsul again pressed him, the old man answered: “Since thou art vainly urgent that I should swear by the fortune of Caesar, and pretendest not to know who and what I am, hear me declare with boldness, **I am a Christian!”**

**Then the Proconsul said,** “I have wild beasts at hand, to these will I cast thee, except thou repent.” Again, “I will cause thee to be consumed by fire, seeing thou despisest the wild beast, if thou wilt not repent.” **Polycarp replied,** “Thou threatenest me with fire which burneth for an hour, after a little while is extinguished; but art ignorant of the fire of the coming judgment and of eternal punishment, reserved for the ungodly.” **Shortly, thereafter, he was burned at the stake.**

**In Matt. 10:28 the Lord said, “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell.”**

Thus we see that physical death is not to deter us from faithful service and devotion to our Lord.

## **Martyr's Oath!**

*In the twenty first century there are lands where Christians face death on a regular basis. From such lands have come what is called, the Martyr's Oath. **It is reported that it is** not uncommon to hear of Christians even incorporating it in their wedding vows, as they begin their lives together as evangelists and church planters in lands where conversion to Jesus as Lord is a capital offense.*

**In years past, (I do not know about today), the graduating students,** (of the Emmanuel Bible Institute, Kota, India, which was begun by Bro. M. A. Thomas), **would take the following vow publicly during the commencement... a final requirement before they could receive their diploma. At the climax of the ceremony, these graduates rise to their feet, raise their hand, and repeat similar words to these:**

*TODAY, I stand as a dead man. I declare that in Jesus Christ, I am saved by His blood, and thus I am dead to sin, and no longer dead in my sin. TODAY, I stand and declare that I surrender my will and my life, to His will and His life. **I shall go where He sends me,** without asking questions.*

***I shall go to whomever He sends me,** without seeking fame. **I shall preach** to everyone, even if they hate me. I am an Ambassador of the Cross, and must deliver the Message. **I shall pour my life out** to reach my family, my friends, my neighbors, and my city.*

*I embrace the shame of the Cross and I fear nothing but God. I welcome suffering, shame, persecution, beatings, imprisonment and death, but I will not be silenced. **If I am killed, I pray that my blood should be a harvest for souls. This is my city. I dare not do less.***

Following their being graduated, each student was given three items, and only three items. As they walked across the stage and received their diploma following their oath, **each graduate took into his possession: a new Bible, a new bicycle... and a one-way train ticket to their field of service. They had no "Plan B."**

**The Christian Soldier's Creed**, author unknown

**I am a Soldier** in the Army of the True and Living God. The Lord Jesus Christ is my Commanding Officer. The Holy Bible is my code of conduct. Faith, prayer, and the Word are my weapons of warfare. I am being taught by the Holy Spirit, Trained by experience, Tried by adversity and Tested by fire. I have been called by this Army by Jesus Himself and I am enlisted for Eternity. I will be translated from this Army's earthly duties when Jesus Calls me home; But by God's grace I will not get out, sell out, be talked out, or pushed out. By His grace, I shall be faithful, reliable, capable, and dependable.

When God calls me for duty, I am ready. If He needs me to teach in the Sunday school, to visit the Prisoner, to help at a Mission, to cook for the Hungry, **clean a commode**, or Pray in the Gap. He can use me because I am there! **I am a Soldier.** I am not a baby. I do not to be pampered, petted, primed up, pumped up, picked

up, or pepped up. **I am a Soldier.** No one has to call me, remind me, write me, visit me, entice me, or lure me. **I am a Soldier.**

**I am a Soldier.** I am not a wimp. I am in place, saluting my King, Obeying His orders, Praising His Name, building His Kingdom! No one has to send me flowers, gifts, food, cards, candy, or give me handouts. I do not need to be cuddled, cradled, cared for in special ways or catered to. I am committed. **I am a Soldier.** I cannot have my feelings hurt bad enough to turn me around. I cannot be discouraged enough to turn me aside. I cannot lose enough to cause me to quit. When Jesus called me into this Army, I had nothing. If I end up with nothing, I will still come out ahead. **I am a Soldier.** I will win.

My God has and will continue to supply all of my need. I am more than a conqueror. I will always triumph. **I am a Soldier.** I can do all things through Christ. Devils cannot defeat me. People cannot disillusion me. Weather cannot weary me. Sickness cannot stop me. Battles cannot beat me. Governments cannot silence me and Hell cannot handle me. **I am a Soldier.** Even death cannot destroy me. For when my Commander calls me from this battlefield, He will promote me to Captain and then allow me to rule with Him. **I am a Soldier** in the Army of my Lord, and I am marching on, Claiming VICTORY. I will not give up, pull up, or shut up. I will not turn around. **I am a Soldier,** marching Heaven bound. HERE I Stand!

Abundant Grace to all! 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, November 6 @ 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!**

[http://www.southsidegallatin.org/Listen\\_to\\_other\\_sermons\\_on\\_sermonaudio/](http://www.southsidegallatin.org/Listen_to_other_sermons_on_sermonaudio/)

**SUNDAY SERVICES: October 28**

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

**SPECIAL NOTES: October 28 — 6:00pm... Church-wide  
EQUIPPING HOUR, presently: SHEPHERDING A CHILD'S  
HEA'T!**

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**2. NOVEMBER 4 — 6:00PM... John MacKay,  
the 'Creation Guy' from DownUnder!**

**THEME: 'How marvelous are Thy works O LORD!'**

**(A look at how powerful and clever the Lord Jesus  
is...**

**in Creation, Flood, and Salvation!)**

**— 6-7pm and Great Q & A till 7:30pm — Suits all  
ages!**