

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 44b, No. 1, January 8, 2019 / 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."***

GOD-FOCUSED VISION — For 2019 and Beyond!

"Where there is no vision, the people perish [CAST OFF RESTRAINT]; but he that keeps the law, happy is he." (Amplified— ***"Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], the people perish!"*** SO, when we have no REDEMPTIVE VISION OF GOD, drawn from God's Word— we have no godly standard for guidance; moral and spiritual anarchy unfolds!

Ephesians 1:16-19 is an example statement from God as to the sort of VISION WE MUST HAVE: "I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; *** That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you **the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him:** *** The eyes of your **understanding being enlightened;** *** that ye may know what is **the hope of His calling,** *** and what the riches of **the glory of His inheritance** in the saints, *** And what is the exceeding **greatness of His power** to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, (Eph. 1:16-19)

With no redemptive vision of God: I as an individual, or we as a local church, or as a nation— will have no standard by which we can live; and people will perish, cast off restraint!

THEREFORE:

I. Individually and as a congregation we must embrace a VISION OF SEEKING, KNOWING, and WORSHIPING GOD!

Daniel 11:32 tells of a time when the anti-Christ system shall SEDUCE many by means of flattery! HOWEVER, in the midst of such times God gives this promise: ***“That the people who do know their God shall be strong and do exploits ... they shall STAND FIRM and take godly action!”*** (KJV and other translations, here)

JESUS is the chief example, Matthew 4:1-10: When tempted by satan in the wilderness JESUS DEMONSTRATED the way and the resulting power of living with FOCUSED VISION upon His Father: **(1)** He knew His God, HIS FATHER... **(2)** He had hid HIS WORD in his heart. **(3)** HE FIRMLY RESISTED and defeated satan.

IN CONTRAST: Why do we so easily give in to sin and satan’s bait? Is it not obvious? "Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], the people perish— we have no POWER to restrain our flesh." ***THUS: IN THESE COMING DAYS, WE MUST CULTIVATE OUR FELLOWSHIP and COMMUNION with God... BECAUSE, *** The More we KNOW Him; the more we will LOVE Him; *** The more the love Him, the more we will OBEY Him; *** The more we obey Him, the more we will bring PLEASURE to Him; and *** HE WILL BE STRONG ON OUR BEHALF!***

JESUS MODELED THE WAY: *** Without His Father, HE COULD DO NOTHING! *** Without JESUS, we can do nothing. *** Through Him, WE CAN DO ALL THINGS!

We must cultivate fellowship and communion with Him... in prayerful meditation upon His Word, quickened by His Spirit!

II. WE must HAVE a Vision of the Judgment Seat of Christ!

The Holy Spirit has spoken through the Apostle Paul to say: "... for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Romans 14:10, 12)

MEDITATE UPON 1 Corinthians 3:11-17... Verse 16, reads: (Amplified Bible) "**Do you not know *and* understand that you [the church] are the temple of God,** and that the Spirit of God dwells [permanently] in you [collectively and individually]? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys the temple of God [corrupting it with false doctrine], **God will destroy the destroyer; for the temple of God is holy** (sacred), and that is what you are."

THE LOCAL CHURCH to which the Holy Spirit has joined us: ARE WE present and TOGETHER,

(1) Worshiping God; (2) BUILDING UP ONE ANOTHER in Christ; and
(3) IN ONE ACCORD taking the GOSPEL to our world and LIVING IT OUT before their eyes?

Or ARE WE desecrating, neglecting, and/or tearing down the local church?

DO WE LIVE to please the Lord? That will be the ISSUE at the judgment seat of Christ. We MUST HAVE a vision of the judgment seat of Christ.

"Where there is - 1. NO VISION OF GOD HIMSELF; 2. NO VISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST — people perish, living with NO RESTRAINT, feeding their flesh!

III. WE MUST HAVE A VISION OF the Horrors of Hell!

In Matthew 11:23, JESUS SAID, *"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell."* Hell will be the home of the unsaved, where they will be eternally tormented. **Where is Hell?** It is at the end of a life WITHOUT CHRIST. **When does Hell begin?** It begins the moment the unsaved person leaves this world.

Jesus told about two men— One was a beggar; the other a rich man. (Luke 16:19-31 *** The rich man died and in Hell, he lifted up his eyes, being in torment— out of a life of luxurious sin and into the torments of Hell. **Hell is at the end of a Christ-less life!**

BUT surely you know that in Luke 16, Jesus did not use the STRONG word for hell, **Gehenna**; but the weaker word for hell, **Hades!**

YES, and using the word Hades, JESUS SAID that the man was in torment (vs 23)... tormented in flames (vs 24)!!

IN THE LAST BOOK OF THE BIBLE, as the Holy Spirit moved John's hand, there is the reality that **those who TAKE THE MARK of the anti-Christ system will EXPERIENCE the holy Wrath of God... and be 'TORMENTED WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE in**

the presence of JESUS, the Lamb of God; and such ones get NO REST day or night... (Revelation 14:9-11)

TRAGICALLY, MANY WILL ONE DAY HEAR JESUS SAY: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. 26:41) **Who is going to Hell? Who is in Hell?** Revelation 21:8 says, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whore mongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

In Mark 9:43-48 five times we read where Jesus said, "The fire is not quenched." A person who rejects Jesus Christ is going to a place in eternity where Jesus said the fire is never quenched. It never goes out.

"Well, I don't like to hear talk about Hell. PASTOR, YOU SHOULD NOT PREACH ABOUT HELL... you will run folks away... YOU ARE MAKING CHILDREN AFRAID!" **And yet on other issues:**

1. We tell our children, "Now, that hot stove will burn."
2. We correct our little child as he stands by the fire and we say, "It will burn." We tell them it is dangerous. It will kill them.
3. We point to the street where the automobiles run and say, "Those cars will hit you and kill you."
4. We point to the water and say, "Be careful; you can drown in it."

And the Word of God points to Hell and says to the sinner, "YOU LIVE AND ABIDE UNDER THE WRATH OF GOD! HELL IS where you will go if you are not saved."

During World War II, it is said that when London was being bombed, and it looked as if LONDON would be bombed into the ocean by the German Air Force, **AND AS people WERE running and screaming for shelter, a woman was heard to say, "This is hell!"** A Christian man heard her and he said, **"No, Ma'am, this is not Hell."** She said, "How do you know?" **HE SAID: "I saw a man giving out some GOSPEL tracts a short while ago. There will never be a GOSPEL tract given out in Hell...** In Hell there is no hope. Someday this horrible WAR will all end, but Hell? NEVER!

"Where there is, 1. NO redemptive vision of God; 2. NO vision of accountability at the JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST; 3. And NO VISION OF HELL— people perish and are unrestrained.

IV. WE MUST HAVE the Vision ... THE HEART OF JESUS FOR Lost Souls!

Matthew 9:36 says, "But when JESUS saw the multitudes, he was **moved with compassion on them**, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd."

On another day, JESUS WEPT OVER A WHOLE CITY: LUKE 19:41-44

⁴¹ Now as He drew near, **He saw the city and wept over it,**
⁴² saying, **"If you had known,** even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make for your peace!* **But now they are hidden** from your eyes.

⁴³ For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side,

⁴⁴and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you did not know the time of your visitation.**”

PLEASE NOTICE:

Jesus DID NOT blast the city for their wickedness or berate them for their neglect. JESUS WEPT that they had squandered their day of hope and peace!

DO YOU AND I at SOUTHSIDE have a CHRIST-LIKE vision of and response to lost souls?

1. LET US GATHER UP all of our conversations, thoughts, and prayers of this past week: **How much of it was thought, talk, prayers, and/or labors, and/or TEARS OF GRIEF on behalf of some lost soul in our community?**

2. LET US EVALUATE our calendars of the last 30 days... and LOOK AT HOW WE SPENT OUR TIME—

*** HOW MUCH WAS SPENT BUILDING BRIDGES TO THE LOST; and/or LEAVING A TRAIL OF GOSPEL TRACTS; and/or SETTING ASIDE TIME TO EVANGELIZE?

*** Did we have FOCUS upon BEING ON MISSION so as to live and to TELL the gospel where we work, live, or go to school; making sure that we left a fragrance of CHRIST-LIKENESS?

*** OVER the last 30 days... looking back at how we spent/used out time and resources: What does this investigation reveal about my priority to PRAY FOR MISSIONARIES and/or TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO HAVE MORE MONEY FOR MISSIONS?

3. GATHER UP ALL OF OUR THOUGHTS, WORDS, WORRIES, CONCERNS AND PRIORITIES: WHERE IS OUR BURDEN FOR THE

LOST? PERSONALLY, UNLIKE JESUS, I HAVE SHED NO TEARS FOR OUR CITY, OUR STATE; OR OUR NATION... DID ANY OF US? QUESTION: Where is MY HEART, WHERE IS your heart... WHERE IS OUR HEART when it comes to the souls of men?" **REALITY, I CAN:**

1. Regularly invite people to OUR CHURCH SERVICES. SIMPLY ASK:

"DO YOU ATTEND church anywhere regularly?" IF NOT, invite them to SOUTHSIDE. Sometimes— just asking the above question will open the door to share some of the blessings of the LORD you and others experience from the LORD and in the local assembly!

2. INITIATE, like the Woman at the Well, in John 4— in overflow from your fellowship with Christ and fellow saints in Christ, GO TELL someone what JESUS HAS DONE FOR YOUR SOUL... TELL THEM of the blessings of JESUS in and through the local Church family!

IN THE COMING WEEK... WHERE EVER WE GO IN SUMNER COUNTY... WE WILL SEE at least a few of the Tennessee MULTITUDES who wander as sheep without a shepherd:

***** WHO WILL WEEP? *** WHO WILL PRAY? *** WHO** give tracts, give testimonies... build bridges of love... Invite others to Church services?

PASTOR, HERE'S THE DEAL: [1] You organize and plan a VISITATION PROGRAM; and [2] you PLEAD for us to be a part of it; [3] I PROMISE TO PRAY ABOUT IT!

DEAR CHURCH MEMBER: You and I BOTH must respond to the clear Word of God... and we must remember that JUDGMENT DAY IS COMING. **HERE IS THE REAL DEAL: GOD HAS ALREADY SET UP HIS METHOD: [1]** To be a genuine Christian is to be a SHEEP

of the LORD JESUS CHRIST; and **[2]** He has already assigned, commissioned, and empowered His Sheep by the HOLY SPIRIT to GO and PREACH THE GOSPEL! **[3]** Let us heed His voice!

"Where there is, 1. NO VISION OF GOD HIMSELF... 2. NO VISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST; 3. NO VISION OF HELL; 4. AND NO HEART FOR LOST SOULS— people perish!

V. WE must HAVE A VISION OF OUR GREAT NEED TO BE A PRAYING CHURCH! Prayer is not an option. A great MODEL prayer for our congregation is in, ACTS 4:23-33. (More on this point, later.)

"Where there is, 1. NO VISION OF GOD HIMSELF; 2. NO VISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST; 3. NO VISION OF HELL; 4. NO HEART FOR LOST SOULS; 5. No congregational Prayer— people perish!

VI. WE MUST HAVE A VISION OF HEAVEN: HOPE of SEEING JESUS, face to face, SERVING Jesus, REIGNING with JESUS (Revelation 22:3-5) is, as God reveals In 1 John 3:2-3 — a PURIFYING HOPE! (More on this point later)

"Where there is, 1. NO VISION OF GOD HIMSELF; 2. NO VISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST; 3. NO VISION OF HELL; 4. NO HEART FOR LOST SOULS; 5. No congregational Prayer; 6. And where there is NO VISION of Heaven and NO HOPE of SEEING JESUS face to face— people perish!

Proverbs 29:18: "Where there is no vision, the people perish [CAST OFF RESTRAINT]; AMP - Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], the people perish.

Grace to one and all! James Bell

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

MONDAYS: Jail Ministry— (This ministry is ON HOLD... PRAY FOR opening of doors!)

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, JANUARY 22, 2019 @ 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 @ 8:00am:** Men's Fellowship/Bible Study! **(STUDY: THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN!)** ENTER AT THE back of Church building... under the drive-thru awning. **[DOORS OPEN FOR FELLOWSHIP, Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits & Donuts at 7:30am!]**

SHARE the Preaching of the Word of God!

<http://www.southsidegallatin.org/>
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SUNDAY SERVICES: January 13, 20, 27

9:30am— Sunday School classes for all ages

10:45am— Sunday MORNING WORSHIP service

SPECIAL NOTES FOR VARIOUS SUNDAYS:

1. January 13— Faithful Men meet @ 5:30pm

2. January 20— at the close of the regular Morning Worship; we enter into the SACRED TIME OF WORSHIP at the LORD'S TABLE.

***** Sunday Evening HOME GROUPS**

3. January 27, at 6:00pm— Equipping Disciples... presently 'SHEPHERDING THE HEART OF A CHILD