



**GROW  
IN  
GRACE**  
NEWSLETTER

Volume 44b, No. 28, July 23, 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.”***

## **BIBLICAL REVELATION AS TO MAN’S FREE WILL!**

**Gospel messengers (Christians!) who proclaim the GOOD NEWS of Christ cry out, “*Repent, ye therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out...*” (Acts 3:19); **OR:** “*...WHOSOEVER* believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16); **OR:** “*For WHOSOEVER* shall call upon the name of the LORD shall be saved.” (Rom. 10:13) **Note: God does not** place any road block; God does not prohibit nor hinder any lost soul from repenting and believing! However, **because of man’s sin slave nature**, just as it was impossible for dead Lazarus to come out of the tomb by his own doing— **Even so, ONLY GOD is powerful enough to bring a DEAD IN SIN sinner to repent, to believe, to call upon Jesus!****

**HERE IS GOOD NEWS:** Sin hardened sinners are made willing by the Holy Spirit’s QUICKENING (Eph. 2:1-10) and by means of the GOSPEL which is the power of God unto salvation. **Thus, as** Christians OBEY the Great Commission in planting and watering the gospel— it is **GOD HIMSELF who gives the INCREASE!** (1 Cor. 3:6) YES, **“The WIND of the Spirit blows!”**— (John 3:8)

**BUT WHAT ABOUT MAN'S FREE WILL? WELL, it is true—GOD HAS GIVEN humans a 'FREE WILL!'** Fundamentally, God has created man with the ability to make CHOICES; and calls upon humans to make choices; and humans are responsible for their choices! HOWEVER, THERE IS MUCH confused and wrong teaching/beliefs about FREE WILL — because of failing to make proper distinctions! **Man's FREE WILL is VERY DIFFERENT, for example, when** he was in a state of INNOCENCE, prior to sin; **than after** he sinned and immediately DIED SPIRITUALLY. **SO, IN THIS ARTICLE** we will set forth and seek to make proper DISTINCTIONS between, **(1)** Man in innocence; **(2)** Fallen Man; **(3)** Redeemed Man; and **(4)** Glorified Man. **We will look at each of these in relation to \*Free Will, \*Sin, \*God, and the \*Holy Spirit.**

### **\*\*\* FIRST STAGE: MAN IN INNOCENCE in GENESIS**

**1. FREE WILL—** Genesis clearly reveals that Adam and Eve began **totally free!** They were willing and able to choose, to reason, to plan, and to have dominion with a spirit of wisdom, and in a state of innocence. **They were ALIVE to God.** The Tree of Life was a gracious provision to sustain and empower; and revealed their need for dependence upon and fellowship with God. There was no hindrance to their Free Will.

**2. SIN—** Adam and Eve were **free. They were also able to sin;** but in the beginning they had not done so. The LORD GOD had placed them in the Garden with clear instructions and gracious provisions. To disobey would be sin. **IF they freely chose to sin, they would immediately DIE spiritually and in time, die physically. (Tragically, this happened!)** But in the beginning they had perfect fellowship with God and there was no sin found in them.

**3. GOD—** Again, Adam and Eve were **spiritually ALIVE** to God and enjoyed perfect communion with God. They were free and able to choose fellowship with God, free and able to worship and to know God intimately; and for a time they did just that!

**4. THE HOLY SPIRIT—** Genesis does not give specific verses connecting Adam and Eve with the Holy Spirit. It is possible that for them to partake of the Tree of Life would have been for them to experience DIVINE INFLOW of the Holy Spirit in some way. **But regardless of just how it all worked out**, they were in perfect harmony and in LIVING, unhindered fellowship with the great TRIUNE GOD— **Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!**

### **\*\*\* SECOND STAGE: FALLEN MAN IN SIN**

**1. FREE WILL—** Adam and Eve, of their own FREE WILL, chose to sin and immediately **DIED** spiritually. Their ability to have communion and fellowship with God **DIED**. They still had a FREE WILL! **All humans since are still FREE**, willing and able to plan, to reason, to rule, and to make choices. **Fallen man is FREE to do what he wants to do! But that is the problem! Fallen man is now spiritually DEAD and does not want to please God!** He wants to continue to sin. He has dominion on earth and makes choices that are deeply stained by pride, selfishness, and rebellion. He is DEAD in sin. ***The lost man's FREE WILL is a slave to sin, self, and satan.***

**Note:** When we say that fallen man is FREE to do what he wants to do— that does not mean that fallen man is able to impose his will upon God. **GOD alone has the ULTIMATE FREE WILL.** God carries out His purposes, regardless of what man does. **AND so far as salvation is concerned:** God prohibits NO ONE. ***Jesus says, “Come to Me!” “And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” (Rev. 22:17)***

**WE MUST remember: All who enter this fallen world TODAY are dead in sin**, dedicated to the fashions of this world, demonized, disobedient, dominated by carnal passions, desires prompted evil imaginations rule, and they are DOOMED under the wrath of Holy God. (Eph. 2:1-3) **EVERY FALLEN HUMAN NATURALLY loves sin, hates God (Rom. 8:7), loves darkness (John 3:19), will not come to the light (John 3:20), will not come to Christ (John 5:40), is dead in sin (Eph. 2:1; Col. 3:13), will not seek God (Rom. 3:10-12), loves the praise of man (John 5:42-44; 12:43), cannot receive the Spirit of truth (John 14:17; 1 Cor. 2:14), is satan controlled, and under the just wrath of God (Eph. 2:1-3).**

**ALL OF THESE VERSES SHOUT** THAT GOD REALLY MEANT IT WHEN HE WARNED THAT THE WAGES OF SIN WOULD BE DEATH! And they SHOUT that for such ones to be saved, they will need MORE THAN God merely providing salvation and then **leaving salvation up to ‘a mere chance’ for man to exercise his free will.** (Ephesians 2:1-10)

**2. SIN—** Fallen man is free and able to sin. Indeed, he loves sin and is a slave to sin. Even his ‘good’ deeds are tainted with sin. His heart is deceitful above all things. (Jer. 17:9) He is a sinner by nature and a sinner by choice. He is dead in sin. **His FREE WILL is a slave to sin!**

**3. GOD—** Fallen man is free to choose to worship, to submit to God. He is free to so choose. No one stops him. God places no fresh evil in his heart. **HE IS FREE, BUT HE WILL NOT.** He is free but wholly unwilling. Again, fallen man’s FREE WILL is a SLAVE TO SIN. He will not seek God, although he may seek God’s blessings. But in reality, just as the Bible clearly states, fallen man

hates God, loves sin and darkness and will not come to the light.  
**(See earlier verses)**

**4. HOLY SPIRIT—** Obviously, fallen man is not indwelt by the Holy Spirit. In fact, the New Testament clearly states that he **'cannot receive'** (John 14:17) the Holy Spirit; and has no natural ability to receive the things of the Spirit of God. (1 Cor. 2:12-14) He is in darkness. (Col 1:13) These verses reveal stunning reality as to the depth of man's lostness! **They, likewise, reveal the necessity of the sequence of Ephesians 2:1-10!**

### **\*\*\* THIRD STAGE: REDEEMED MAN**

**1. FREE WILL—** Redeemed man is free, willing, and able to make choices, to reason, to plan, and to have dominion! **NOW**, he/she is **EMPOWERED by the indwelling Holy Spirit!** He/she is now BORN AGAIN, and sees, and has entered into the kingdom of God! (John 3:3, 5) **The FREE WILL of the redeemed is now ALIVE SPIRITUALLY.** We still have the capacity to choose to sin; but now we are LED by the Holy Spirit and **our WILLS ARE NO LONGER dominated SLAVES to sin, self, and satan.** (Romans 6-8)

**2. SIN—** Yes, the redeemed person is still able to sin. He does sin. But he is no longer dominated by nor a slave to sin. He has a growing hatred of sin. He is progressing out of sin. He repents of sin. He will be chastened if he does not repent of sin. (Rom 6; 1 John; Heb 12:5-11)

**3. GOD—** The redeemed person is ALIVE IN CHRIST. He is spiritually alive to and in fellowship with the great Triune God. He KNOWS God and desires to know Him more. He is a son/daughter of God, **born not of the will of man or the flesh— but born of God.** He is a walking miracle of God's mercy, love, and grace.

(Eph. 1:1-13; 2:1-10; John 1:13-14; Titus 3:6-7; John 6:37; Phil. 3:7-10)

**4. HOLY SPIRIT**— There is, in the ways of God, a point in time in which so many things are happening... and they seem to us to be in one set of sequence... and in some aspects some seem almost simultaneous— but God’s Word reveals this: **IT IS the ministry of the Holy Spirit** upon and through the Word of God and the Gospel of God to convict sinners of sin, righteousness, and judgment. (John 16:7-14) **AND, IT IS the ministry of the Holy Spirit to QUICKEN THE DEAD, to give life to the spiritually dead**— which is a far greater miracle than that of Jesus raising Lazarus from physical death.

Repentance and Faith are GRACE GIVEN! (Eph 2:8-10; Acts 11:17-18) **Thus, Jesus tells Nicodemus, “YOU MUST be born again.” BUT HOW? WHAT ARE THE STEPS?** The answer of Jesus throws us upon God.

**He does not give ‘steps’... He says: ‘THE WIND BLOWS!’** The wind of the Spirit gives new life. He gives life to the dead. (John 3:8) He indwells. He baptizes into the sphere, the life and communion with God. He FILLS and commands the believer to be FILLED, etc. (John 3:5-8; 16:7-11; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13-14; Eph. 5:18) **JESUS and JESUS ALONE is the Author and the Finisher of our faith! (Heb. 12:2)**

**\*\*\* FOURTH STAGE: GLORIFIED MAN**

**1. FREE WILL**— The glorified man will be free in the fullest and best of all possible ways. He will rule and reign with Christ for all future time and eternity. There will be perfection of wisdom and freedom of will in the ultimate sense. **For there will not be ANY**

**conflict of will**— for the will of glorified man will be symphonized with God’s holy and perfect will!

**2. SIN**— Redeemed man is saved from the penalty of sin; and he is being saved from the power of sin by the very life of God in his soul. **BUT THE GLORIFIED MAN is saved from even the presence and possibility of sin; and he will be free from all of sin’s consequences.** (Rev. 21:1-5; 27)

**3. GOD**— The glorified man will enjoy perfect fellowship with God. His WILL is perfectly FREE from even any inclination to sin. He will be a LIVING DISPLAY, an eternal TROPHY of God’s amazing grace! (Eph. 1:3-23; 2:6-7; Romans 8:28-39)

*[Revelation 22:1-5 — NO ONE IN HEAVEN glories in the free will of man!]*

**4. HOLY SPIRIT**— Again, the glorified man is in a relationship of absolute perfection with God. All that he is and all that he has is the result of the manifold operations of the Holy Spirit of God. For all eternity, the glorified saints of God in Christ will rule and reign with Christ and DISPLAY the outshining radiance of Christ-likeness in perfection. (Romans 8:29; Rev. 22:1-5)

**BOTTOM LINE: We live in a time when very few Christians are AMAZED BY GRACE. It is my hope that meditation upon these Scriptures will serve to call us—**

**(1) To great WONDER AND AMAZEMENT at the mercy, love, and grace of God;**

**(2) And therefore, move us to fresh GRATITUDE and WORSHIP;** and

**(3) A newly empowered FLEEING from the sin** which so easily besets! (Romans 12:1-2);

**(4) And a BOLD CONFIDENCE** in the power of the Gospel to save the lost! (Rom. 1:14-16)

**Great Grace to all!** / James Bell /  
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## **SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:**

**TUESDAYS:** Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care Nursing Home. Meet at the front door at **5:15PM.**

**WEDNESDAYS:** → **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE** → Enter via **IRON STEPS, side door.**

**WEDNESDAYS:** → **6:30pm— Youth** Activities and Bible Study— enter, side double doors.

**WEDNESDAYS:** → **6:30pm— Young Family Prayer Time!** THIS IS a time of Bible study and prayer geared toward **families with children in the nursery and pre-K class.**

**\*\*\* LADIES BIBLE STUDY— NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON AUGUST 6, 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's Fellowship/Bible Study:** EVERY SATURDAY @ **8:00am: (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!]**

## **SUNDAY SERVICES, JULY 28**

**9:30am— Sunday School Classes for All Ages**

**10:45am— Sunday Morning Worship Service**

### **SPECIAL EVENT:**

**JULY 28 — 6:00pm - 7:00pm, Church-wide  
EQUIPPING DISCIPLES by developing  
Christ-honoring Marriages:**

**Paul David Tripp's 'WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?  
(Redeeming the Realities of Marriage)**

