

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 44b, No. 46, November 28, 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.***

MINISTRY and MISSIONS in a 'BLACK FRIDAY' WORLD

MISSIONARIES are too often suffering from a shortage of finances. NOT A FEW ARE BEING BEATEN DOWN IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE, often deep wounds are in their families— AND who is praying for them? As to finances, we must ask ourselves if we are being faithful with 'unrighteous mammon?' THIS IS NO SMALL ISSUE! WHAT IS MY/our ATTITUDE TOWARD MONEY and TEMPORAL STUFF?

JESUS STILL SAYS: Luke 16:10, ***"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."*** ***"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, [deceitful riches; or in 'money matters'] who will commit to your trust the true riches?"*** If we will not be faithful in financial matters, and if we will not allow God to be *first* concerning money issues, how can He trust us with the true riches of His grace? ***WE CANNOT serve God and mammon!*** (Luke 16:13) **Stingy giving and stingy living is rooted in love for mammon and/or what mammon buys!** **Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:24:** ***"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise and be against the other. You cannot***

serve God and mammon (deceitful riches, money, possessions, or whatever is trusted in)."

POSITIVE GIVING EXAMPLES OF SOME WHO GOT IT RIGHT!

1. In 1935 R. G. LeTourneau irrevocably assigned over 90 percent of the company's profits to the LeTourneau Foundation. The foundation gave millions to other organizations engaged in Christian work. **Countless Christian schools** and organizations in America have been the recipients of his gift of giving. **Scarcely a mission field exists** in all five continents where some devoted worker has not been aided through money from this foundation... millions of dollars have been given to further the Lord's work.

LeTourneau said: "MY PHILOSOPHY has been— we should serve God because we love, not because we are making a bargain with Him. Many marriages go on the rocks because it was a bargain rather than love. You do something for me and I'll do something for you. In the same way people say, IF I DO THIS FOR GOD will He also do something for me? That's not love, it's a bargain."

"I often say, if you love the LORD you will serve Him and if you are not serving Him it proves you don't love Him and if you don't love Him it proves you don't know him. MY MOTTO has been— not how much of my money do I give unto the LORD; but how much of God's money do I Keep for myself?"

LeTourneau said: "If you get a vision of what our salvation cost, see Christ on the cross, the cruel nails in his hands and feet, the mocking crowd and the weight of our sin... paying the penalty for you and for me— it will put your service and giving on a different plane. He gave himself willingly to give us salvation from sin. If this grips us, we can't help but love Him. We will say with the song writer— Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all!

Only the grace of God can save us from a superficial declaration of love for God.

True love based on an understanding of God’s grace and deep gratitude for the gift of salvation through our LORD Jesus Christ— these will settle the problem of “what should I give God” because my thinking will be turned around to consider that all I am and have belong to Him and I am a steward for Him while serving Him in this life.

It’s easy to sing, “Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold. Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.” Only God’s grace in a life can make it come true. Man, selfishly inclined, can’t do it in his own power— IT TAKES GOD’S POWER! [The above is from R. G. LeTourneau’s autobiography, Mover of Men and Mountains]

OBJECTION: That’s well and good for LeTourneau— He was rich! I am poor!

2. A GIVING EXAMPLE FROM THE POOR: “Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. **They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor.** But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. For I can testify that **they gave not only what they could afford, but far more.** And they did it of their own free will. They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem. They even did more than we had hoped, **for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord** and to us, just as God wanted them to do.” (NLT- 2 Cor. 8:1-5)

3. THE SUPREME EXAMPLE OF GIVING IS FROM THE RICHEST... who became the POOREST! Yes, the Birth of Jesus Christ marked the beginning of the grandest, most costly missionary journey of all time— truly, the richest became the poorest!

REALITY: All local church missions/evangelism and all missions and evangelism to the ends of the earth FLOW OUT FROM the original MISSIONARY, JESUS, who GAVE ALL for undeserving sinners!

BUT WHAT DOES ALL THIS HAVE TO DO WITH the TITLE of the article: **CHRISTIAN MINISTRY and MISSIONS in a 'BLACK FRIDAY' WORLD!?** With my Bible open, I study all the Biblical revelation about the birth of Christ. I study all of the Biblical revelation about those who first responded to the birth of Christ.

I read in the Epistles of the New Testament all of the references to the grand news of the first coming of Jesus Christ.

WHAT I FIND AND DON'T FIND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IS STUNNING TO MY 'CULTURE INDOCTRINATED' MIND, EMOTIONS, AND HEART! **Why?**

BECAUSE MY CULTURE, (BOTH 'PROFESSING CHRISTIAN' AND OPENLY SECULAR), DESIRES that I blindly accept what culture says. It matters not at all what the Bible says. Culture will use the Bible to 'justify' what culture promotes; but culture will not accept the simplicity of just exclusively honoring the Word of God!

CULTURE promotes a 'BLACK FRIDAY' MAMMON WORLD!

Black Friday 2019, as you know, is the day after Thanksgiving, November 29, 2019. MEGA millions of shoppers will hit stores and websites during the Black Friday weekend. [IN 2018: "On average, shoppers spent about **\$1,007.24 each**. Of that, they'll spend \$637.67 on gifts. Another \$215.04 will go for food, decorations, flowers, and greeting cards. They'll also spend \$154.53 to take advantage of the seasonal deals and promotions." <https://www.thebalance.com/what-is-black-friday-3305710>]

AT THE SAME TIME MANY "**Americans give Jesus a head nod** at Christmas but spend most of the season pleasing their eyes, ears, and taste buds with decorations, music, and meals!" "Many celebrate Christmas the way most have celebrated Halloween -- the fun

traditions without sharing the religious significance." *[The quote is from Brooklyn Lowery, a write, in 2010, for LifeWay Christian Resources]*

PLEASE NOTE: THERE ARE MANY FINE AND WONDERFUL THINGS PROMOTED AND DONE EVERY DECEMBER. Many acts of kindness and compassion are done by Christians and non-Christians alike. Many sincere Christians seek to HONOR CHRIST in many ways!

BUT FOR THE MULTITUDES, even in the churches— THE SPIRIT OF BLACK FRIDAY overwhelms... again and again! (Just follow the money!)

We should not be surprised,

FOR: *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise and be against the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (deceitful riches, money, possessions, or whatever is trusted in)."*(Matt. 6:24)

REALITY: THE BIRTH OF JESUS WAS/IS ALL ABOUT THE RICHEST who became the POOREST! The Birth of Jesus Christ marked the beginning of the grandest, most costly missionary journey of all time!

THUS, All local church missions/evangelism and all missions and evangelism to the ends of the earth FLOW OUT of the original MISSIONARY, [JESUS], who GAVE ALL for unworthy sinners!

AND AS CHRISTIANS: WE ARE CALLED TO **CHRISTIAN MINISTRY and MISSIONS in a 'BLACK FRIDAY' WORLD!** BEWARE OF BEING OVERCOME and blinded by the BLACK FRIDAY SPIRIT. Here is just one example:

WHAT FOLLOWS is a word for word Face Book conversation **exactly as posted; from 7 different people.** They were all confessing Christians.

And I genuinely suspect that all of them had a desire to honor Christ— but were torn and overwhelmed by the PREDOMINATE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON:

[1] “152 days until Christmas! Love the holidays... it's the days leading up to it with madness... and then it's wintertime... sigh”

[2] “I can't even think about that right now. It seems that I have so many other things to get through first.”

[3] “I always wonder why all kids programs are scheduled then?? Why music recitals etc with everything else we have to do?”

[4] “EXACTLY!!”

[5] “I wish it was just a relaxing time when we could enjoy ourselves with our families and friends, and not just a time of negative financial impact and stress!”

[6] “So, let's start now... I feel better already! Family, food, fun... period.”

[7] “Amazing: The New Testament Christians did not have, did not celebrate ‘our Christmas’ in any shape, form, or fashion. THEY DID rejoice in and celebrate the glorious reality that GOD HAD COME IN THE FLESH! They did not celebrate on a 'day'... but in their LIFESTYLE ... For example:

Paul has been teaching about Elders and Deacons in 1 Timothy 3:1-15... And then he JUST EXPLODES with spontaneous worship: *“And without controversy GREAT is the mystery of godliness: **GOD WAS MANIFEST in the flesh.... etc.!!**”* OR... as in 2 Corinthians 9:1-14 he has been speaking much about generous giving... but suddenly, he BURSTS FORTH: ***“THANKS BE TO GOD for His UNSPEAKABLE GIFT!”***

THERE WAS A THREE-FOLD RESPONSE to the 7th person’s comments:

[1] “Oh no let’s not talk about that!!!!”

[2] “dislike”

[3] “ugh!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” (That’s how many ‘explanation marks the person put!)

Yes... Jesus is telling the truth: Matthew 6:24, KJV:

*“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. **WE cannot serve God and mammon.**”*

The Birth of Jesus Christ marked the beginning of the grandest, most costly missionary journey of all time! **THUS,** All local church missions/evangelism and all missions and evangelism, (to the ends of the earth!) FLOW OUT FROM the original MISSIONARY, [JESUS], who GAVE ALL so as to bring salvation to unworthy sinners!

AND WE ARE CALLED TO

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY and MISSIONS in a ‘BLACK FRIDAY’ WORLD! WE CANNOT SERVE TWO MASTERS— we will FAVOR one and resent the other! One will get FIRST PLACE; the other will get excuses and left-overs!

Grace to all in Christ! James Bell

www.southsidegallatin.org

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

http://www.southsidegallatin.org/Listen_to_other_sermons_on_sermonaudio/

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**. Enter at double doors, under AWNING.

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY: NEXT MEETING scheduled for JANUARY, 2020 @ 11:00am; Continuing in LUKE.** ENTER at the back of the church building, *[Under AWNING, 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... DOUBLE DOORS, under the drive-thru awning. **[DOORS OPEN FOR FELLOWSHIP, Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits, & Donuts at 7:30am!]**

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR DECEMBER, 2019

December 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

ALL 5 SUNDAYS: Sunday School at 9:30am /Worship at 10:45am

ADDITIONAL NOTES... ABOUT EACH SUNDAY:

- 1. December 1 — NOON, Covered Dish Fellowship Meal!** (NOTE: 'Lunch or Brunch' items are welcome at the NOON FELLOWSHIP!)
- 2. December 8— 5:30pm... Monthly Faithful Men's Meeting**
- 3. December 15— DURING** the worship hour,

*** **The Choir and/or others...** will share extra music, as we REJOICE in the BIRTH OF CHRIST]; **** WE WILL PREACH the Word of God; **and**

***** **Conclude with the LORD'S SUPPER!**

4. December 23— NO evening service

5. December 30— NO 5TH Sunday Evening Service