

## SPRING FORWARD YOUR CLOCKS SATURDAY NIGHT ONE HOUR!



Volume 45, No. 9, March 3, 2020 / 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.*

### APPLAUSE/HAND-CLAPPING IN A WORSHIP SERVICE?

**FIRST, A QUESTION: In light of all the serious matters in the world and in our lives today, why give a flip about whether or not to have hand clapping/applause in a worship service? WHY? BECAUSE THE WORSHIP OF GOD MATTERS SUPREMELY!**

**In Christian worship, God is the focus— not man.** We gather as a church \*\*\* **to prostrate** ourselves before God in submission to His Word; \*\*\* **to offer unto Him** honor, praise, and adoration; \*\*\* **to recognize, proclaim, and rejoice** in God's glory, greatness, power, victory, majesty, and rule; \*\*\* **and to offer unto Him** ourselves and offerings. **CHRISTIAN worship is all about what God receives, and NOT about what we get or what we like!**

Josh Buice, in the Thrill of Worship through Biblical Preaching, writes: "When the church learns the thrill of worshipping God through biblical preaching— the gimmicks of modern day light shows, movie clips, rock concerts, and all of the goofy trends will

become boring and sad imitations of the genuine worship of God that comes through real Bible preaching.”

### **Hand Clapping/Applause— a Little History!**

**The historic place for such is the theater, the sports arena, the social gathering, political speeches, and etc.** Applause during a Christian Worship Service tends to **shift the focus** from the vertical to the horizontal. It spotlights human talent/performance while making God and His truth secondary.

**SADLY, much that goes on today** in the way of worship services is about pleasing/impressing folks so that they will come back— therefore, it has to be FUN or entertaining! The music may be contemporary, southern gospel, or more historic classical; the preaching must be brief and have humor; but regardless— **the KEY issue is the ENJOYMENT and pleasure of the crowd!**

**FURTHERMORE:** Hand Clapping/Applause for a truth presented in a sermon is a poor substitute for an open response of ‘AMEN!’— IN OTHER WORDS, “So be it in my life O LORD!” There is no commitment to godly repentance and obedience with hand clapping!

**Hand Clapping/Applause: This practice often picks winners and losers. One brother stated, "At a college I attended, an 'applause meter' was used to select the prize winners in amateur-hour-type programs. We clapped with all our might in an effort to drive the indicator up for our favorite competitor. In a similar fashion, congregations are now VOTING with applause for their favorite performances at church!"** This is all very sad, as the purpose in worship services is to bring offerings of praise and

worship **exclusively** to God— not to PRAISE TALENT; nor to entice or stroke egos.

**REALITY WAKE UP CALL:** *It is a tragic fact that a number of talented young people who WON THE APPLAUSE and PRAISE of congregations became addicted to the RUSH that applause gives. NOW THEY themselves are WORSHIPPED as rock, rap, country, and/or 'Christian' musicians. Likewise, a growing number of pastors are 'worshipped' similar to rock stars.*

**PROTEST:** "Scripture is only one source about this expression of worship. The Holy Spirit is the other authority! We've prayed about it and are led by the Holy Spirit!" In other words, MULTITUDES value their SUBJECTIVE, claimed 'being led by the Holy Spirit' over the pure OBJECTIVE TRUTH of the infallible Word of God.

**MULTITUDES love to speak of** "God telling them one thing or another; **or of** God telling them to do this or that"... **or of** ... "Being led by the Spirit to go here or there or to do this or that." **Granted**, the whole Christian life is one of "following Jesus!" and of "being led by the Holy Spirit" (John 10:27-28; Romans 8:14) **However**, the Holy Spirit, (who breathed out the Word of God!), will NOT lead contrary to the Word of God.

**BEWARE:** *When we reject the pure objective Word of God and elevate our subjective leadings above the Word of God— deadly, cancerous deception easily gains authority!* **REALITY:** Many reserve to themselves the right to choose practices and styles in accordance with their likes and personal preferences. What the Bible says or models is of little or of no authority— certainly of no absolute authority. Subjectivity reigns.

**IN CONTRAST, THE WORD OF GOD MODELS worship services which are** focused on the preaching of the Word of God, bringing conviction and repentance of sin; and then **OVERFLOWING** in praise and worship. Such worship services bring worshippers into fresh encounters with Almighty God, sending them/us forth in **AWE** of God, and in glad obedience to God. **AND**, an overflow result is that we are built up, edified in the faith!

**HERE IS an objective look into the Scriptures.**

**I found 9 references in the Bible to Hand Clapping; and all are in the Old Testament:** Psalm 98:8; Isaiah 55:12; Ezekiel 25:6; 2 Kings 11:12; Job 34:37; Lamentations 2:15; Job 27:23; Psalm 47:1; Nahum 3:19.

**In these 9 references** there are 4 Hebrew words used to express the action of clapping. And all of them convey the idea of striking something or someone. When used in conjunction with the Hebrew word for *HAND*, then hand clapping or "the striking of hands" is the literal action the word reveals.

**Depending on the context, these words were used for,**

- (1) An expression of joy** as when Joash ascended the throne.
- (2) An expression of disgust or anger** as with Balak being angry with Balaam.
- (3) An expression of malicious glee** as from those who rejoiced over Niveveh's impending judgment from God; or as from those who rejoiced over the ruins of Jerusalem.
- (4) An expression of joyful worship to God as found in Psalm 47.**

**REALITY:** In CONGREGATIONAL worship scenes in the Old Testament, or the New Testament, or of WORSHIP IN HEAVEN—

there is no evidence of hand clapping. [ONE possible EXCEPTION is Psalm 47:1... more on this later in this article.]

### \*\*\* An Old Testament WORSHIP SCENE!

**Nehemiah 8:1-8** <sup>1</sup> And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; **and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses**, which the LORD had commanded to Israel. <sup>2</sup> And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.

<sup>3</sup> **And he read... from the morning until midday**, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; **and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.** <sup>4</sup> **And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood....**

<sup>5</sup> **And Ezra opened the book** in the sight of all the people;... **all the people stood up:** <sup>6</sup> **And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground.**

\*\*\* **What can we learn** from this worship scene? The focus of this congregational worship is all **upon God! It is focused on God's Word which points us in the path of being/getting RIGHT WITH GOD** and leads to the worship of God. The congregational worship response to the Word of God is '**AMEN**' ... "So be it LORD!"

\*\*\* **A NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP SCENE! Acts 2:41-47** <sup>41</sup>... and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. <sup>42</sup> **And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers....** <sup>46</sup> And they, continuing daily with one accord in the

temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, <sup>47</sup> **Praising God,** and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” ***CLEARLY: Congregational worship in the New Testament was all about God and His agenda!*** Moreover, the New Birth brings about AUTOMATIC DISCIPLESHIP.

**With new hearts,** new Christians have an awesome **indwelling compelling** for sitting at the feet of Jesus in the Word of God! AND: They are drawn to fellowship with other believers; and they are drawn to worship at the LORD'S TABLE; and they are drawn to prayer with other saints; and they are drawn to ministries of doing good one to another. THEY GIVE PRAISE to God; and they evangelize! In other words, they are led by the Holy Spirit! (Romans 8:14)

**\*\*\* HERE IS a WORSHIP SCENE... in HEAVEN! Revelation 19:** <sup>1</sup> And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, **Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:** <sup>2</sup> For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. <sup>3</sup> **And again they said, Alleluia** And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. <sup>4</sup> And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, **Amen; Alleluia.** <sup>5</sup> And a voice came out of the throne, saying, **Praise our God,** all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. <sup>6</sup> And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, **Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”**

\*\*\* **THESE VARIOUS BIBLE WORSHIP SCENES REVEAL, (1)** the total **GOD FOCUS** of true worship. **(2)** The genuine emotion, intensity, and VERBAL nature of God-focused congregational worship! **(3)** Various POSTURES in true worship— Kneeling, Standing, Bowing, and the LIFTING UP OF HANDS. **And in CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP— praise is prominent! “AMEN! ALLELUIA!” (4) MOREOVER, EVERYONE IS PARTICIPATING—** there are no spectators: **“AMEN! ALLELUIA!” “Salvation to our God who sits upon the throne, and unto the LAMB!”** (Revelation 7:10)

**NOTE: in all of the congregational worship scenes recorded in the Bible— Hand Clapping/Applause is absent!**

[This is not to say that there is **NO SITUATION** where Hand Clapping would be appropriate, as to experiences in **genuine Christianity**. (Psalm 47:1) But surely, whatever God has made prominent in worship— well, we should get in step!]

### ***WHAT ABOUT PSALM 47:1-3?***

***“O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.”*** **NOTICE:** In Psalm 47:1, the action **clearly is** one in connection with worship to God.

\*\*\* **Clearly it is not** applause from a congregation's pleasure from a religious performance; OR applause to encourage or praise a performer! There is no connection between this verse and most of the hand clapping/applause that goes on in churches today.

CONCLUSIONS: IN **Nehemiah 8:1-6; Acts 2:41-47; Revelation 19:1-6— THESE 'WORSHIP SCENES' revealed:**

**[1]** The true worship of the true God is totally focused on praise, worship, honor, submission, and adoration of God Himself.

**[2] Such worship is EXPRESSIVE: There are AMENS! There are HALLELUJAHS!** There are repeated calls to PRAISE THE LORD! There are various POSTURES which convey various heart attitudes. There are LIFTED HANDS! (Nehemiah 8:6; 1 Chronicles 16:8-36; Psalm 108:48; Revelation 7:9-12; Psalm 95:1; Ephesians 5:19; Psalms 28:2; Psalm 88:9b; Psalm 134:1-2; Nehemiah 8:6; 1 Timothy 2:8)

**[3] MOREOVER:** The true worship of God is IN SPIRIT. It is in accordance with the Spirit, quickened by the Spirit.

**THE SPIRIT OF GOD is—**

(1) The **HOLY Spirit!** The true worship of God is always HOLY WORSHIP. It is never sensuous. It always encourages HOLINESS.

(2) The Spirit of **TRUTH!** **He is** the Spirit of Truth. Jesus is the Living Truth. The Bible is Divine Written Truth, without mixture of error. **God's words are Spirit and Life!** (John 6:63)

(3) And the Holy Spirit's **mission to Believers** is to EXALT JESUS and to BRING to REMEMBRANCE the things that Jesus taught. (John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:13-14) True worship is all about TRUTH — Jesus, the LIVING TRUTH! His written TRUTH, the Word of God; AND the Holy Spirit of Truth!

BELOVED! LET US GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD IN SPIRIT and in TRUTH!

James Bell / [www.southsidegallatin.org](http://www.southsidegallatin.org)

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

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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**. Enter at double doors, under AWNING.

\*\*\* **LADIES BIBLE STUDY: NEXT MEETING** scheduled for **MARCH 17<sup>th</sup> 2020 @ 11:00am; NEW STUDY ==> LESSONS FROM WOMEN IN SCRIPTURE!** 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:** **(WE ARE STUDYING THE GOSPEL OF 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!]**

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### **SUNDAY SERVICES FOR MARCH— 8, 15, 22, 29**

**\*\* Sunday School— at 9:30am**

**\*\* Worship at— 10:45am**

**ADDITIONAL NOTES... ABOUT EACH SUNDAY:**

**SATURDAY NIGHT, MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>...  
SPRING FORWARD YOUR CLOCKS  
ONE HOUR!!**

**\*\* MARCH 8 ... IMMEDIATELY after the Morning Worship...  
A CHURCH WIDE OPEN FORUM as to the call to receive  
Jaden Allen as an Elder!**

**\*\* MARCH 8 ... FAITHFUL MEN, 5:30pm, the 1689  
Confession of Faith**

**\*\*\* MARCH 15 ... LORD'S SUPPER... after the morning  
worship service**

**\*\*\*\* MARCH 22 ... CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP FOR ALL ... at  
6:00pm (SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Otto Koning, reveals the  
moment when God so worked in his life... that the TRIBALS said**

of him—“YOU’VE BACOME A CHRISTIAN!” It’s all in the PINEAPPLE STORY!)

**\*\*\*\*\* MARCH 29... CHURCH-WIDE EVENING OF SINGING AND SCRIPTURE SHARING (Connect with Adam or Bradley about participating!)**