

# GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 45, No. 25, June 23, 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 JESUS CHRIST!"***

## **RESPONDING TO — "WE CANNOT WASTE THIS MOMENT!" — (Dealing with racism)**

*[INTRODUCTION NOTE: The following article is representative of the sincere mindset and positions of many Baptist leaders and others. It is receiving HIGH PRAISE. I accept that the intention is good. **We print the article 'as is' ... EXCEPT...** The photos of the 3 writers are omitted due to space restraints, we add a few 'caps' for emphasis; and clearly marked '**RESPONSES**' are added. These are issues which we all have to deal with... The responses are made so as to set before us the truth of God's Word.]*



### **ARTICLE: WE CANNOT WASTE THIS MOMENT** JUNE 4, 2020 **By Terna Jordan,**

**Charles Grant & Thomas Bester** *Tennessee Baptist Mission Board* / It's a familiar story.

Black man is taken into custody by a police officer and is murdered. Arrests follow, press conference held, speeches made, people march, people riot, politicians posture, reform is promised. Nothing changes. The pages of this tired script are frayed and stained with more African American blood. The sequels never end. But surely - *surely* - this time is different.

**[RESPONSE:** Even the introduction of this article is seriously problematic. WHY? Because **GENERALIZED ACCUSATIONS are presented as if** they are facts when, actually, jaded commentary is being set forth even in the opening paragraph. Tragically, their concern is SELECTIVE. Their concern does NOT include any

lamenting for the HUGE AMOUNT OF THE BLOOD being shed of African Americans by African Americans; nor do they express lament for the THOUSANDS of African Americans whose blood is shed every year by abortionist murderers. And no word of concern as to the 'blood-letting' of non-blacks.

IT IS TRUE, in America, we have a genuine problem with Police brutality; and it needs to be stopped! But we have to tell the whole truth— **the blood which is being unnecessarily split is from Americans from all skin colors.** Also, the problem is not helped **IF WE [1]** fail to recognize the strong reality of GOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT men and women; **and/or [2] IF WE** fail to encourage the many 'good cops'; **and/or [3] IF WE** fail to address the problems of growing lawlessness in the culture.

PEOPLE WHO ARE CHRISTIANLY SOLUTION ORIENTED [1] look at the BIG PICTURE; [2] team up with others for SOLUTIONS, rather than playing the 'BLAME OTHERS GAME'; AND [3] they open their Bibles!]

**ARTICLE:** This time America watched as George Floyd had his face ground into the asphalt for nearly 10 minutes as an officer's knee crushed his neck until he asphyxiated. It was brutal. It was inhumane. Another piece of the Black American soul died with George Floyd. Another piece of America's soul died in the streets of Minneapolis, snuffed out by the centuries-old racial prejudice that festers like rancid gangrene eating away at our society. We can't keep doing this to ourselves, but we can't seem to stop.

[RESPONSE: Sadly, the article presents a not so veiled slander of all white Americans because of a bad cop. However, his murdering hate is NOT "representative of the 375 million annual contacts that police officers have with civilians!" ... NOR ARE HIS ACTIONS representative of MOST REAL CHRISTIANS.

SADLY, the author is 'milking' the clearly unjustified, horrific murder of George Floyd as support to accuse white police and

white Christians of wholesale racism; and to thus, attempt to send white Christians on a guilt trip. AND THIS SORT OF THING IS WORKING in that many whites are bowing down, shining shoes, etc. This may look good on the Evening News; but it SOLVES NOTHING. **IT IS WASTING THE MOMENT. IT HAS NO HEALING GOSPEL FROM GOD!]**

**ARTICLE: Terna Jordan:** Time is moving on from the tension that boiled over in the wake of George Floyd's murder, and the fog that settled across our country is slowly starting to dissipate. However, we must not forget what happened. **Something must come from this moment that changes the future.** It must. Tennessee Baptists, black and white, we must decide what we will do with this God-given moment. Will this be a dividing wedge driving deeper separation, or be a divine agent that draws us together in the selfless humility found in the unity of the gospel?

**[RESPONSE:** Tragically the writers of this Baptist promoted article **only, at best, give lip service** to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. **The article does not** set forth the root problem of every human heart, Ephesians 2:1-3. **The article** is in total silence of the abundant examples and clear teachings in the Bible of how to respond to troubles, trials, tribulations, injustice, etc. **The article** is in total silence as to the TRANSFORMING POWER that comes from embracing the sovereignty of God **in the midst of the UNJUST EVENTS of life** that cross our plate. (Acts 4:23-33)

MOREOVER, **THERE IS NO 'SELFLESS HUMILITY'** and there is **no 'UNITY OF THE GOSPEL'** WHERE THE WORD OF GOD IS CLEARLY DENIED and REJECTED **as THE source** for understanding and **the source** for solution to the character problems of lovelessness, hate, slander, bitterness, racism, etc. **NOTE:** Later in our responses, we provide LINKS to BIBLE SATURATED messages from Dr. Voddie Baucham... a black brother who sets forth **God's way of racial reconciliation.**]

**ARTICLE:** To our African American brothers who stand in pulpits across our state offering encouragement and hope during your own anger and frustration, we as your TBMB Black Church Catalysts share your pain. Together we all have weathered the COVID-19 pandemic, but the **pandemic of systemic racism** has plagued Black Americans for centuries. We have all been horrified by the images of George Floyd crying out, “I can’t breathe!” His words speak for us all.

Some of us have struggled to breathe since the 1950s. We know the injustice that oppresses our people while we wait for the promised hope of equality in America or the justice that never arrives. **We have endured the violence of silence from white people** – many of them brothers and sisters in Christ – who stand passively by, avoiding our struggle and are “more devoted to ‘order’ than to justice,” as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., wrote to white clergy members almost sixty years ago in his *Letter from Birmingham Jail*.

**[RESPONSE:** The article continues with no gospel, with no Biblical teaching as to how to deal with one’s own sin, with no Biblical revelation as to how to be triumphant over even the most extreme injustice which DOES OFTEN HAPPEN in a fallen, sin-laden, satan dominated world. THIS IS TRAGIC.

ALSO, the article continues to be greatly focused on ‘milking’ the horrific murder of George Floyd to accuse all white people of being guilty of facilitating a *‘pandemic of systemic racism’... AND there is the accusation of “**violence of silence from white people** – many of them brothers and sisters in Christ – who stand passively by, avoiding our struggle...”*

GOSPEL REALITY: I, for one, cannot join with THESE and the many other Baptists who are on [1] a path that is in denial of the GOSPEL; and [2] on a path that has no solution to black or white racism.

**REALITY:** Whenever one's solution to the problems of life [racism included] is built around CONFESSING the real or imagined sins of others, and built around demanding the other person to change, and built around refusing to deal first of all with one's own sins and failures — **SUCH PATHS ARE filled with hypocrisy and DOOMED TO FAILURE, for they REJECT the clear words of JESUS: Matthew 7:1-5.**

Thankfully, the Bible unfolds the histories of people who suffered incredible INJUSTICE... and these people were NOT DESTROYED, or hindered, or crippled for life, EXAMPLES: **Joseph, Job, Daniel, the Apostle Paul, and most of all, JESUS.**

IT IS NOT WHAT OTHERS HAVE DONE or FAILED to do that destroys and ENSLAVES— rather, it is OUR own wrong RESPONSE! Our response makes us or breaks us. AND THANKFULLY, Ephesians 2:1-22 unfolds the deep roots of all sin, including racism; and unveils the ONLY SOLUTION. AGAIN... BY ALL MEANS PLEASE LISTEN/WATCH the Bible preaching of Dr. Voddie Baucham.... LINKS are below.]

**ARTICLE: Charles Grant:** But brothers, take heart. We have endured. We will endure. We *must* endure. We must endure for the sake of the millions of African Americans and other people of color who live in this country and do not yet know Jesus Christ as their Savior. We must labor for their salvation while we labor for justice. To our white brothers who stand in pulpits across our state, we plead with you to bear our burden with us in love. We are encouraged by our white brothers who have reached out to us over these past several days to voice support and prayer. We are encouraged by white friends who watched the brutality of George Floyd's death and have refused to stay silent. Many have said for the first time that they "get it;" that in some remote way they better understand our struggle. We are encouraged because we believe God is using these days of turmoil to do a new work in the lives of many, especially a younger generation, who recognize the

sin of racism and the need for their gospel walk to mirror their gospel talk.

**[RESPONSE:** Tragically, the authors of this article are NOT FOCUSED on DOING JUSTICE. They show no concern about turning from their own racism; *(They may well subscribe to the tragic deception that only white people can be racists!)* With much approval from Baptist leadership, they focus on and call for all white Christians own up to their sin of racism and **'their need for their gospel to mirror their gospel talk.'** THE ARTICLE IS the opposite of the Biblical call for each of us 'TO CONFESS and turn from OUR OWN sin' ...and then to WALK the walk of true Christian living, as, for example, is set forth in Romans 12:14-21. INSTEAD OF POINTING ACCUSING fingers and blaming others— God's way of overcoming evil is to "OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD!" **Evil is increased when any of us go down paths of rejecting Romans 12:14-21.**

REALITY: If these Baptist gentlemen want to give a mighty Holy Spirit witness to **"millions of African Americans and other people of color who live in this country and do not yet know Jesus Christ as their Savior"** ... (and likewise, the same word to whites) — there must be full heart submission to Romans 12:14-21. HOWEVER, let NO ONE wait for others to get on this God-designed narrow way... We must start with the POWER OF ONE Christian, black or white! MIRACLES OFTEN START WITH JUST ONE who is walking IN THE STEPS OF JESUS! (1 Peter 2:17-22)

NO ONE WHO KNOWS HISTORY can deny that the whole world has been and is filled with those ENSLAVE and/or treat others badly. The dark skinned of the human race have, (it would seem to me), more ill treatment than many. **Be that as it may, THE BIBLE IS FILLED** with accounts of God's redeemed who were TREATED BADLY; and the Bible clearly set's forth the paths of amazing victory. **Sadly, such paths of victory are absent in the Baptist article.]**

**ARTICLE:** Will our journey with each other be easy? No, but it is long overdue. We share a deep history of hate and mistrust. However, we must climb in the boat together and pass from the shores of racial division to the Promised Land of unity where love and peace reign among the races. It may not happen until we are in God's eternal presence, **but slaying the satanic dragon of racism begins by praying** "Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven," then arm-in-arm, doing the hard work that ends in a genuine embrace while standing on the level ground found at the foot of the Savior's cross.

[RESPONSE: NO. **It will DO NO GOOD** for blacks or whites to say 'nice sounding words' or to pray "*Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven,*"... **IF AT ONE AND THE SAME TIME** ... we seek solutions to 'race-related sins' by NON-BIBLICAL paths, as those set forth in this Baptist approved article. The gentlemen of this article have written... with the laude and approval of many... **an article that DOES NOT SET FORTH the FOUNDATIONAL and necessary BIBLE TRUTH:**

**[1] Every human heart** has the same sin, self, satanic problem, and are all naturally under the holy wrath of God! (Eph. 2:1-3) **[2] The only SOLUTION,** (to whatever the sin problem is)... is this: **GOD MUST GIVE LIFE. FOLKS MUST BE BORN AGAIN... ONLY THE GOSPEL brings a NEW, HOLY, HATE-DEADENED, GRACEFUL FORGIVING, LOVE-FILLED WAY OF LIFE!** (Eph. 2:4-10; 1Cor. 13)

**NOTE:** Rest assured that TYPICAL BAPTISTS WILL protest— "Well, OF COURSE, we believe the Bible and the gospel of Christ and the need for new birth!" **REALITY:** It matters not if one claims to believe GOOD TRUTH— **if at the same time their/our lifestyle and teaching is in denial of JESUS! He will say to many religious leaders, "I never knew you; depart..." — Matthew 7:21-23.]**

**ARTICLE: Thomas Bester:** How do we get there? **First,** recognize that pro-life means more than anti-abortion. Last

summer when a thousand of us Tennessee pastors signed the “I Stand for Life” petition to support pro-life legislation in our state, we made a commitment to the unborn. However, standing for life must mean standing for *all* life; for black lives, white lives, Asian and Latino lives, old lives, young lives... *all lives*. As we seek justice for the unborn, may we be diligent to seek justice for everyone else.

[RESPONSE: NO. FIRST, moved upon by the Holy Spirit, we must receive and act upon GOD’S REVELATION, found in places like, Ephesians 2:1-22. WHY? The GOSPEL is the only way to tear down RACIAL SIN walls and experience Godly reconciliation! A VERY DEAR BLACK BROTHER, DR. VODDIE BAUCHAM in the following messages unfolds MUCH NEEDED BIBLICAL TRUTH:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoJGYCc7EUg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qZdlseCkZc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFNOP2lqwoY&t=182s>

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**ARTICLE:** Next, I strongly encourage my white brothers and sisters to take the initiative to seek out an African American and simply ask to hear their story. Just listen with an open heart and open mind. Our journey is considerably different from yours. Ask God to give you the humility that leads to understanding. You do that when you answer a Great Commission call to go to the nations and advance the gospel. We ask that you’d make the same commitment to understand our culture.

[RESPONSE: This is Good counsel IF... [1] There is the reality that EVERYONE ‘has a story’ and EVERYONE has hurts and everyone has healing needs! [2] So, it would be a good thing for blacks and whites and/or whoever to take good honest glances at their/our past, but with no ‘guilt dumping’ on each other! [3] AND then TO FOCUS ON building a NEW CULTURE in Christ and around Christ... and in RECEIVING ONE ANOTHER in the same way that Christ receives us. (Ephesians 2]

**ARTICLE:** Finally, speak out and step out. Be a voice for change and an agent for action. Be the change you want to see in the world. It won't be easy. Trust us, we know, but **God reaps a mighty harvest through the seeds of repentance.** Dr. King had a dream where one day this nation will rise and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, **that all men are created equal.**" That is still our dream as African Americans, and it should be the dream of Americans of every race and creed. There has been much to tear us apart since Dr. King's words echoed across the Reflecting Pool, and the death of George Floyd is the latest shard to shred the cultural fabric. Would it be to God that it would be the last. But for it to be the last, we all must act. **We cannot waste this moment. B&R** (<https://baptistandreflector.org/we-cannot-waste-this-moment/>)

**RESPONSE: I personally believe that, (in spite of his feet of clay, his failures, and we all have them), Dr. King said and did many positive things in a very difficult hour. HOWEVER, to deal with the DEEP NEEDS of this present hour... to quote Dr. King gives no LIFE GIVING POWER. WE MUST, INSTEAD, TURN OUR HEARTS and EYES EXCLUSIVELY UPON JESUS, His Word, and His Holy Spirit!**

**Into an ancient world** of hate, ugly racism, injustice between Jew, Gentiles, Samaritans; and into a world that included slavery—**JESUS CAME**— and He taught, **and He became** the only propitiation for sinners; **and He started** building His New Testament church; **and His Holy Spirit** had the Apostles to write LETTERS for the church, for all time. ONLY THE GOSPEL of Jesus finds every human here: Ephesians 2:1-3; and BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH, GOD sets folk free from Ephesians 2:1-3; and HE GIVES TRANSFORMING LIFE: Ephesians 2:4-10! .... and SUCH SAVED individuals experience the utter breaking down of racial walls and we go forth as ONE BODY IN CHRIST. REALITY: **What we find in the Word of God is RADICALLY DIFFERENT from the humanistic culture-based religious counsel of this Baptist letter!**

This Baptist letter was no doubt written by nice and sincere gentlemen. But the problem is this: The letter has no GOOD NEWS, HAS NO GOSPEL; No Divine authority; and thus MISSES way of peace! THIS BAPTIST LETTER **stands in denial of** the SUFFICIENCY of Scripture in dealing with GIANT ISSUES facing Christians and churches of 2020— **it found no value in turning to the Word of God for SOLUTIONS**. Many will love it. BUT UNLESS the BIBLE IS A LIE, the article will ultimately only bring the fruit of eternal waste. LET US FLEE TO CHRIST, SIT AT HIS FEET, AND BE HEALED!]

**Grace and Peace to all in Christ!** James Bell

### **NEWS NOTES:**

**1. Saturday, June 27, \*\*\* 8:00am — Men's Bible Study: Studies in Titus.**

**2. Sunday, June 28, 9:30am Sunday School:** Nursery, Children's classes, Youth, and Adult classes scheduled. **10:45am WORSHIP!**

**3. SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 6:00PM— Christian Discipleship for the whole Church Family: Otto Koning, Sr. ... THE PINAPPLE STORY!**

**4. WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ SOUTHSIDE: 6:30pm— \*\* Adult Prayer Service // \*\* Young FAMILIES Prayer Service // \*\* Youth Bible Study**

**5. NEXT Ladies Bible Study, July 7! (Prayer time, 10:30-10:45am) BIBLE STUDY @ 11am... studying Women of the Bible**

### **\*\*\* REMINDERS as to CHURCH SERVICES IN JUNE \*\*\***

**1. IF YOU ARE SICK... OR** if you are presently in a state of high immune deficiency or if (at home or work) you are caring for one who is sick— WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT ATTEND any of our gathered services. [If you have •

**Fever; • Coughing; • • Chills; • Headache; • Sore throat; etc.... **please stay home!]****

2. You may or may not wear a mask or gloves... WE do not require such.

3. **WE encourage 'social distancing'**— 6ft apart... MOST OF ALL, WE ENCOURAGE LOVING ONE ANOTHER, RESPECTING EACH OTHER ON MATTERS LIKE THIS.

4. WE EXPECT THAT EACH OF YOU WILL DO YOUR PART IN personal hygiene. ***IF you use the restrooms— please wash your hands with SOAP before leaving... and once outside the bathroom... use nearby SANITIZER.***

5. **REMEMBER, CHILDREN IN THE WORSHIP SERVICE...** THEY ARE NOT TO BE OR TO GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT A PARENT AT THEIR SIDE...

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6. **FOR THOSE AT HOME: THE 10:45am LIVE STREAMING** of the worship service for June 7... **SIMPLY GO TO OUR CHURCH WEBSITE: [www.southsidegallatin.org](http://www.southsidegallatin.org)**

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**7. LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD BY MAIL or ONLINE GIVING:** SUCH funds, (if checks), make out to Southside Baptist) — MAIL TO: Southside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1594, Gallatin, TN 37066 OR, you may choose to GIVE, via ONLINE GIVING @ **<https://southsidebaptist.breezechms.com/give/online>**