



**GROW
IN
GRACE**
NEWSLETTER

Volume 46, No. 15, April 13, 2021 / 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!"***

THE MODERN CROSS VS THE REAL CROSS!

THE MODERN CROSS IS POPULAR among believers and non-believers as an ornament— cross rings, cross earrings, cross necklaces, cross tattoos, cross bookmarks, cross grave markers, etc.

THE MODERN CROSS is worn by priests, prostitutes, soldiers, Christians, and even terrorists. The sign of the cross is made by some before ball games or sports, by some before battle, by some at meals and by many in church. For many the sign of the cross is made at birth, baptism, communion, marriage, and death.

THE MODERN CROSS is cleaned up! NOW the cross is gold or silver and perhaps studded with diamonds or emeralds— whereas in ancient days people might see a cross and look away in disgust or ridicule it.

TODAY many will speak of the Cross with words like:

“Oh how lovely! How beautiful! It looks so nice! Where did you buy yours?” -- All things no first century follower of Jesus would ever utter.

THE REAL CROSS WAS and remains COSTLY! IT MUST BE TAKEN UP AND CARRIED! WHAT DID THE REAL CROSS COST? It cost GOD the Father His Son; and cost the SON— His life. **What does the Way of the Cross cost the true Christian?** EVERYTHING! Jesus said, *'Should anyone come after Me let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me!'*

The true follower of Jesus has forsaken self, has taken up his cross (instrument of death) and is following Jesus.

WE CAN WEAR a CROSS and look good! *HOWEVER, in MY heart have I crucified self, taken up MY cross DAILY?*

AM I following Jesus... walking in His footsteps?

THE REAL JESUS sweat Real drops of blood in the garden the night before He was crucified.

THE REAL JESUS prayed to the Father, *"if it is possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not my will but Thy will be done!"*

THE REAL JESUS: Within hours a scourged, bloody, and tortured **JESUS** carried a REAL Cross, shed REAL blood, suffered in a REAL body, and His REAL dead body was taken down and buried in a tomb.

At that Cross there were no cheering crowds, no wild adulation, no long ovation of applause—

ONLY jeers, mockery, curses, nails, and blood ***as the Son of God in astonishing mercy PAID with His life THE SIN DEBT of THE WHOLE WORLD of all the numberless multitude of***

those whom the Father had given Him! (John 6:37-40; 17:1-26)

In the *New Testament*,

1. A CROSS was the instrument of crucifixion, and hence it was used for the crucifixion of Christ itself (Eph. 2:16; Heb. 12:2; 1 Cor. 1:17, 18; Gal. 5:11; 6:12, 14; Phil. 3:18).

2. The word is also used to denote any severe affliction or trial (Matt. 10:38; 16:24; Mark 8:34; 10:21) — **to the Jew and Gentile alike THE CROSS was the great stumbling-block!**

EVEN SO,

Mark 8:34— “And when He [JESUS] had called the people unto Him with His disciples also, He said unto them, Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me!”

Hebrews 12:2— “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Matthew 16:24— “Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

Luke 9:23— “And He said to them all, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”

Luke 14:27— “And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be MY disciple.” (Author of article... unknown, edited)

THANKFULLY, ON THE REAL CROSS, JESUS SUCCESSFULLY PAID IN FULL, THE SIN DEBT OF UNLOVING, UNWORTHY, UNRESPONSIVE, HELL DESERVING SINNERS— WHICH SINNERS? THE ONES SPOKEN OF AS JESUS PRAYED HIS HIGH PRIESTLY PRAYER, AS RECORDED IN JOHN 17!

GLORY TO GOD: THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST demonstrated historically that the sacrifice of Christ for sin was sufficient, satisfactory, and accepted by God the Father!

AS ANOTHER HAS STATED: THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST was God the FATHER’S, “Amen!” To Christ’s, “It is finished!” SO, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is exceedingly critical! (1 Cor. 15)

*** However, IF Jesus HAD FAILED to make sufficient propitiation— there would have been no resurrection!

*** AND, IF Jesus had not been born of a virgin by the agency of Almighty God; and IF Jesus not lived a sinless life— HE would not have qualified to make propitiation! THUS, THE VIRGIN BIRTH and sinless life OF JESUS are also absolutely VITAL!

NO EVENTS IN ALL OF HUMAN HISTORY ARE MORE VITAL THAN

[1] THE VIRGIN CONCEPTION/BIRTH OF JESUS;

[2] THE SINLESS LIFE OF JESUS;

[3] THE SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH OF JESUS; AND

[4] HIS RESURRECTION!

*[1] CHRIST'S VIRGIN CONCEPTION/BIRTH WAS GREETED with glorious WONDER and WORSHIP *** from angels, *** from in Elizabeth's womb by John the Baptist, and from the likes of *** shepherds, *** aged Anna and Simeon, and *** the Magi! [However, thereafter, the Holy Spirit gave no instruction nor any report of even one birthday celebration for Jesus!]*

*[2, 3, 4] JESUS CHRIST'S sinless life, His substitutionary death, and His resurrection: FROM the lips of Jesus, WE KNOW EXACTLY how Christians are CALLED UPON, BY JESUS HIMSELF, to REMEMBER these most important events of history—
THE LORD'S SUPPER!
PERIOD.*

AGAIN, AS VITAL as the Virgin Birth, THE SINLESS LIFE, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ are-- the NEW TESTAMENT SURPRISES US GREATLY! HOW SO? The New Testament offers NO day of celebration as to the Birth of Christ, His sinless life, or His Resurrection! NEITHER Jesus NOR His Apostles ever call upon Christians to set aside a day to remember His birth, His sinless life, or His resurrection! INSTEAD, JESUS commands us to remember Him and His sacrifice as we come to the LORD'S TABLE!

MOREOVER: THE Holy Spirit DID NOT move Paul to write— *'God forbid that I should glory, save in the resurrection...'* **BUT RATHER — the Holy Spirit has PAUL to TESTIFY: "GOD FORBID THAT I should glory, SAVE IN THE CROSS!" (Gal. 6:14)** GOD, CLEARLY CALLS FOR OUR FOCUS TO BE ON THE PRICE PAID TO COVER OUR SIN DEBT!

HOWEVER, HUMANLY SPEAKING: It is much more ‘pleasing’ to glory in the hope of resurrection— **THAN TO BE confronted with and called upon to focus on CHRIST ON CALVARY paying MY sin debt;**

THAN TO BE called upon to ‘Deny myself, TAKE UP MY CROSS DAILY, and FOLLOW JESUS!’ (Luke 9:23)...

OR TO BE PLAINLY TOLD, “Whosoever does not bear his cross, and come after Me, CANNOT be My disciple!” (Luke 14:27) SADLY, MULTITUDES have rejected the WAY OF THE CROSS!

YES, it is much more pleasing to enjoy the fun of what MEN HAVE ORDAINED as Christmas— than to behold and follow in the steps of New Testament Christians! IN THE YEARS AFTER HIS BIRTH, they CELEBRATED, (NOT Christmas) but THE BIRTH OF CHRIST:

1. *“And the Word (Jesus) became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.”* (John 1:14)

2. *“Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift.”* (2 Cor. 9:15)

3. *“...Jesus Christ: Who being in the form of God,...took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men...he humbled Himself ...unto death, even the death of the cross.”* (Phil. 2:1-11)

4. *“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: GOD WAS MANIFEST IN THE FLESH.....”* (1 Tim. 3:16)

Let us give preeminent focus to the absolutely astounding:

God came in the flesh to save undeserving rebels (That's us!) from the just and eternal wrath of God in hell! He came to set rebels free from self, sin, and satan.

He gives us new hearts and makes us His own sons and daughters; and makes us His servants, His friends, His saints, and His co-laborers!

JOY! WONDER! Giving Thanks! Praising and CELEBRATING Jesus Christ! TELLING THE GOOD NEWS into all the world, till He comes back! And there is a great cloud of witnesses who are calling for us to follow in their steps—

“O Come, let US adore HIM!”

YES, it is much more pleasing to enjoy the fun of what MEN HAVE ORDAINED as Easter— than hearing JESUS crying out: “My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?”... as He willingly became our sin-bearing Substitute!

MAN'S RELIGIOUS CELEBRATIONS produce a lot of passing, pleasing emotions and experiences; but lack lifestyle TRANSFORMATIONS into Christ-likeness.

REALITY: Jesus was anointed with the OIL OF GLADNESS as a result of His obedience to His Father...

AND SO SHALL WE BE anointed with the Oil of overflowing HOLY SPIRIT gladness and growing likeness to Christ ... as we heed HIS voice:

"...THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME!"

Grace and Peace in Christ! James Bell

www.southsidegallatin.org

NEWS NOTES:

EVERY Saturday, * 8:00am — Men's Bible Study: *THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS!*** (*Doors open by 7:30am... coffee, juice, donuts, and Hardee's Biscuits are available!*)

***** NEXT Ladies Bible Study— Tuesday, April 20, 11:00am: Women of the Bible: A Poor Widow, II Kings 4:1-7!**

SUNDAYS: April 18, 25

***** Sunday School at 9:30am:** Nursery, Children's classes, Youth, and Adult classes.

***** WORSHIP SERVICE at 10:45am!**

Additional Sunday Events for April 2021:

1. April 18, LORD'S SUPPER, at end of Morning Worship; and HOME GROUPS in the evening.

2. April 25, 5:00pm - 6:00pm- Church Wide DISCIPLESHIP... Dealing with Difficult Problems, videos by R.C. Sproul

TUESDAYS: WEEKLY Youth Group Meeting, ages 12 and up ... Tuesdays a 7:15pm... at Jaden and Rhi's home...

**WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ SOUTHSIDE: 6:30pm—
Come in by the back ‘double doors’ under the Drive Thru
awning!**

*** Adult Prayer Service ** Young FAMILIES Prayer Service**

***** HEALTH REMINDERS as to CHURCH SERVICES**

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; **or if** you have • **Fever;** • Coughing; • • Chills; • Headache; • Sore throat; etc.], **please stay home!**

2. IF YOU ARE HEALTHY and well... you may or may not choose to wear a mask... or gloves... WE do not require; we WILL NOT provide such. WE CONTINUE to encourage FREEDOM... as to ‘social distancing’— give sensitivity and respect one to another. **NOTE: In addition to carefulness, good hydration, good nutrition, and sleep— ALSO: so as to SEEK TO HAVE A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM... I PERSONALLY TAKE ELDERBERRY, VITAMIN C, ZINC, GINGER, VITAMIN D, Quercetin, and a good multi-vitamin that includes fiber.**

LET each of us DO OUR PART IN personal hygiene. **IF you use the restrooms— please wash your hands with SOAP; and use nearby SANITIZER.**

***** FOR THOSE AT HOME: TO RECEIVE LIVE STREAMING FOR APRIL 18; OR to connect with our YouTube page,**

GO TO: www.southsidegallatin.org

******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>

IT IS A MATTER OF SAFETY for all: NO UNSUPERVISED CHILDREN ANY WHERE IN THE CHURCH BUILDING!

AS A CHRISTIAN, I AM CALLED TO GIVE JESUS CHRIST NUMBER ONE PRIORITY! THEREFORE, IN RESPONSE to the sacrificial love of JESUS CHRIST, I CANCEL and/or I WILL ALLOW NO OTHER PLANS SO THAT I CAN ASSEMBLE WITH FELLOW SAINTS at the following appointed time: April 18, 2021: (1) Sunday School @ 9:30am; (2) Worship @ 10:45am... WHICH WILL **INCLUDE THE LORD'S SUPPER!**