

GROW IN GRACE NEWSLETTER

Volume 46, No. 19, May 11, 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!"***

MARRIAGE ACCORDING TO JESUS!

ACCORDING TO MANY PEOPLE— failing or failed marriages are comprised of the following two people: [1] A spouse who led or is leading the way in the paths of destruction; and **[2]** And a basically ‘innocent party’ spouse. (**Yes**, it would be common for one to be MORE to blame... maybe even MUCH more; **however**, I have noticed that the BLAME for failure is USUALLY the ‘other person!’)

EXTREME EXAMPLE: if one spouse is 99% at fault and the other spouse is only 1% at fault— BOTH have contributed... or ARE contributing to the failing of the marriage! HOWEVER, WITH THE 1% SPOUSE as clay in the hands of Jesus— GOD IS ‘INSIDE’ THE MARRIAGE... and miracles can happen! **Dear 1% Spouse! You hold a POWERFUL KEY!** Get Dr. Ed Wheat’s book, LOVE LIFE for Every Married Couple... and read, meditate, and apply the chapters titled— HOW TO SAVE YOUR MARRIAGE ALONE and REMOVING THE BARRIERS!

MOST HURTING, BROKEN MARRIAGES WHICH ARE SAVED from destruction are saved by JUST ONE SPOUSE YIELDING TO CHRIST in total commitment to please and manifest Jesus in the

marriage! THROUGH SUCH A SPOUSE— AMAZING MIRACLES CAN and DO TAKE PLACE!

TRAGICALLY, as marriage difficulties rise— many seem to believe that divorce is the only option. MOREOVER, multitudes justify divorce by pointing to the real and/or imagined failures of their spouse! And they proceed with the support of friends, pastors, theologians, books; and with the ENCOURAGEMENT of a friend's GOOD SECOND MARRIAGE!

PLEASE OPEN YOUR BIBLE: WHAT DOES JESUS ACTUALLY TEACH ABOUT DIVORCE? [Matthew 5:31-32; 19:1-12; Mark 10:1-12; Luke 16:18]... Those verses clearly reveal that:

*** **[1] Jesus ignored** the common opinions of the “religious” authorities of that day.

*** **[2] Jesus turned** to the Sacred Scriptures as the only real authority.

*** **[3] Jesus** (along with Paul) **went back to Genesis** when answering marriage/divorce questions. This is no surprise, for as John 1:1-3 and John 1:14 remind us— JESUS is the Creator God who is revealed in Genesis! So, of course, Jesus would go back to His original intention!

*** **[4] THUS, God's first word** (The first word of Jesus!) **on marriage is found in Genesis 1:27; 2:18-25. And as stated,** Jesus returned to Genesis when stating His position of proclaiming the permanence of marriage. Frankly, I do not find that God, that Jesus, has ever changed his mind! ***Genesis 1:27; 2:18-25 remain in effect in our sin polluted world!***

*** **[5]** Furthermore, Jesus told the Pharisees that the bottom line reason for the various divorce statements by Moses was because of ***“hardness of heart... but from the beginning [Genesis] it***

was not so.

*** **[6]** In fact, Jesus gave an addition to the Genesis teaching: ***“What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder”*** (Matthew 19:6; Mark 10:9)

SO, Jesus CLEARLY proclaimed the permanency of marriage between ONE MAN TO ONE WOMAN! **AND His disciples were absolutely stunned!** (Matthew 19:3-10)

THINK ABOUT IT: IF JESUS HAD simply agreed with any of the religious opinions of that day, it would have been no big deal. **The disciples were stunned BECAUSE they realized that Jesus had just closed down ALL the divorce loopholes!** Realizing that the duly married, (male and female), couple has no righteous exit from marriage other than death, (Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39) — **the Disciples were so stunned that they proclaimed, “If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is good not to marry!”** (Matthew 19:10)

BUT WAIT! YOU LEFT OUT DEALING WITH THE ‘EXCEPTION’ CLAUSE! OK, let’s deal with it: [1] **EVEN IF one grants that** the ‘exception clause’ of Matthew 5:31-32; 19:9 permits divorce — there is absolutely NO COMMAND, no requirement to divorce; and in Matthew 5 and 19 Jesus makes NO provision of marriage to someone else. **[2] AND THE HIGHER LAW** of Biblical Christianity is to be sacrificially redemptive toward sinners. God’s redemptive love is toward us WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS... God’s redemptive love is modeled by Hosea: ***‘GO BUY HER BACK and LOVE HER!’*** (Hosea 3)

[3] MOREOVER, in reality, Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 GIVE NO EXCEPTION for adultery; but rather for FORNICATION— WHICH would apply to a FORNICATION situation like Joseph thought he was facing with Mary: Matthew 1:18-23.]

QUESTION: Does the Holy Spirit move the Apostle Paul's pen to be **IN AGREEMENT** with what Jesus plainly taught?

1. Rom. 7:2-3; 1 Cor. 7:39— death ends a marriage.

2. 1 Cor. 7:10-11— The Holy Spirit moved Paul to say that he is only teaching what Jesus has set forth: **DO NOT PUT AWAY YOUR SPOUSE!**

3. STUNNINGLY, (to us!), those who are divorced are only given two options— 1. Get reconciled. 2. Or remain single. (1 Cor 7:11)

BUT... BUT... WHAT ABOUT 'DESERTION'... What is the meaning of the Holy Spirit's words, through Paul: "not under bondage" (1 Cor. 7:15)?

It is VERY popular to say that if a spouse 'deserts' his/her spouse... that the deserted spouse is free to divorce and to remarry.

REALITY: [1] The Holy Spirit DOES NOT mention remarriage in this verse at all. **[2]** LATER, IN REFERENCE TO WIDOWS...the concept of remarriage is set forth... but again, only as applying to widows (1 Cor. 7:39). **[3]** Furthermore, divorce and remarriage, prohibited in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11... would not be allowed in verse 15... for Scripture does not contradict Scripture.

[4] "The words "not under bondage" literally means "not enslaved." A deserted believer **is not so bound** to preserve the union that he or **she must follow the deserter around like a slave** seeking to maintain the marriage. Being enslaved is contrasted with being at peace.

Rather than being a slave to an unwilling spouse, the believer can be at peace in the midst of a difficult situation." (Quote from J. Carl Laney, the Divorce Myth)

BOTTOM LINE: JESUS did not/does not adapt to the age. When someone starts talking about a loophole for divorce— **Jesus STILL**

says,

“From the beginning, it was not so... what therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder!” (Matthew 19:8, 19:6)... **And the Holy Spirit has the Apostle Paul to fully agree with Jesus!**

BIG QUESTIONS:

MY MARRIAGE IS IN BIG TROUBLE... OR... I AM ALREADY DIVORCED and RE-MARRIED— HOW AM I TO APPLY THE ABOVE SCRIPTURES TO MY SITUATION? OR, simply, how am I to apply the above Scriptures to my PRESENT MARRIAGE?

FIRST THOUGHT... for those approaching marriage... or those presently in a troubled marriage: ** Allowing even the faintest possibility or option for divorce will sabotage your efforts in trying to work through a difficult marriage problem. You simply will not pay the high price of walking the Calvary Road if you are holding on to divorce as an option! *** DIE TO THAT OPTION. *** FOCUS ON THE LORD TRANSFORMING YOU... AND you may STUN THE WORLD as miracles of HEALING come to you, transform you... and then... begin to even transform your mate and marriage! [YES... GOD IS READY TO START WITH YOU— not him or her!!]

SECOND, IF there has already been a divorce and remarriage, then please hear this:

[1] There are no Scriptures that even hint that sins relating to divorce and/or remarriage are unforgivable. God hates divorce, (Malachi 2:16). He no doubt hates all sin. He will never place His blessing on sin. But some sins, God especially names as things He hates.

**** However, God delights in and blesses those with repentant, broken, and contrite hearts! (Psalm 51:16-17; Proverbs 28:13;**

Isaiah 57:15)

[2] HERE ARE IMPORTANT WORDS to those of you who are already divorced and remarried... even if more than once:

1. There is no New Testament Scripture that calls upon you to break up your present marriage. (If such was the will of God— then, 1 Cor. 7 would have to read a lot different!)

2. There is no New Testament Scripture that teaches that in order to show evidence of repentance, you will have to break your present marriage. (Again, if there were, then 1 Corinthians 7 would have to read very different!)

3. Those of you with a previous marriage and divorce in your background— many of you did what you did with some preacher's blessing! Yet, you still have guilt! The wonderful solution, in all of these kinds of cases is to,

(1) Take God's point of view! You missed the mark of God's standard. Call sin what it is! It's sin! Make no excuse. With a broken heart for missing God's good way— receive, and rejoice in God's forgiveness.

(2) Maybe you are the "innocent" party! Even so, it is highly unlikely that you are totally without sin! (1 John 1:7-10) **SO, Follow Daniel's example.** He was a very godly man who experienced much hardship due to the sins of others in Israel. **Yet, when he prayed, he did so, saying, "WE SINNED...!"** Read Daniel 9! **NOTE: FOLLOW THIS PATH and you will NEVER AGAIN 'confess the real or imagined sins of your 'EX' BEHIND THEIR BACKS... SEEKING to justify yourself! WE ARE NOT TOLD TO CONFESS THE SINS OF OTHERS... WE ARE only TOLD TO CONFESS OUR OWN SINS!**

(3) Experience God's blessing and favor by committing to

spend the rest of your life showing forth an incredible pattern of God's love and mercy **in your present marriage!**

(4) OPENLY TESTIFY... in a way that will HELP SAVE STRUGGLING MARRIAGES: “My previous spouse **and I** failed to experience God's all powerful love in our marriage. In **our** ignorance and/or rebellion— **We both** contributed to the failure of that marriage!” (Give no further details! NEVER again SIN by speaking negatively about your EX behind their backs! We are not to speak negatively about others BEHIND THEIR BACKS; we are to CONFESS our own sins... not the sins of others! (1 John 1:8-10; James 5:16)

“My present marriage? Well, my present spouse and I have repented of our past sins against God and our former mates. **Our present marriage**, (while not an example of God's clearly commanded pattern), **is an example of His amazing mercy and grace!** And we are committed to glorifying God in this present marriage, “till death do us part!”

(5) OPENLY TESTIFY: “PLEASE, please, those of you struggling in your marriage— it would break our hearts if you used our 'good second marriage' as any part of your excuse for wanting to divorce and find someone else. **Our present marriage** is successful only because we are now doing what we failed to do the first time— namely, submitting to God and submitting to one another in the fear of God!”

TO ONE AND ALL: Remain in your present marriage and/or as much as possible seek reconciliation and be a channel for God's unconditional, sacrificial, forgiving love— which He delights to pour out on **the unlovable, the undeserving, and the unresponsive.** *Besides, your marriage vow before God was “...till death do us part!”*

FINAL NOTE: [1] Yes, in our sin-filled world, there are times when for sheer safety of life and limb of the wife and children— there may need to be a time of protective separation. [2] Even so, all the more is the need for the REDEMPTIVE VISION of Jesus for the sin enslaved!

[3] MOREOVER, many 'wars' in families will fade from or never get to red zones of physical danger if the following Scriptures are heeded:

1 Peter 2:19-21; 3:1-17; Romans 12:14-21.... BY EVEN JUST ONE SPOUSE!

LET US GO FORTH MODELING A BOLD LIFESTYLE OF COMMITMENT TO HOLY AND SACRED MARRIAGE!

Abundant Grace to all 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, May 18, 11:00am: Women of the Bible! [SAPPHIRA: Acts 5:1-11]**

SUNDAY SERVICES: May 16, 23, 30

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

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

Additional Sunday Events for May 2021:

1. **May 16, LORD'S SUPPER, at end of Morning Worship; and HOME GROUPS, in the evening.**
2. **May 23, 5:00pm-6:00pm-** Church Wide DISCIPLESHIP... NEW STUDY... to be announced!
3. **May 30, 5:00pm-FIFTH SUNDAY Church-wide ** SINGING/PRAISE to the LORD; ** SCRIPTURE; and ** a message from the Word, Luke Haskins!**

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

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

***** 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; use nearby SANITIZER.

***TO RECEIVE LIVE STREAMING FOR MAY 16;
OR simply to connect with our YouTube page, for a variety of messages— GO TO: www.southsidegallatin.org***

****** LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD BY MAIL or by 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>