

GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

PLEASE USE the Grow in Grace Newsletter for your own spiritual growth; and **AS A RESOURCE** to help equip you to MINISTER to others! **Volume 47, No. 39, October 4, 2022** / 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!”***

SUNDAY CHURCH-WIDE WORSHIP SERVICES— Here is very important truth to help guide us!

I. A flyer for a ‘Worship Conference’ focusing on music/worship proclaimed that they would feature ‘worship events’... which would put the attendees, “... in touch with the power and love of God.” On the surface, that promise may seem rather harmless; HOWEVER:

Pastor Todd Pruitt wisely responds: “Jesus is the only mediator between God and man. He alone is the One who brings us to God!” [In the conference FLYER], Music and “the worship experience” are viewed as means by which we enter the presence of God and receive His saving benefits. There is simply no evidence whatsoever in Scripture that music mediates [brings] direct encounters or experiences with God. This is a common pagan notion. It is far from Christian. **In True Worship Vaughan Roberts offers four consequences of viewing music as an encounter with God. I will summarize them.”**

1. God’s Word is marginalized. In many Churches and Christian gatherings it is not unusual for God’s Word to be shortchanged. Music gives people the elusive “liver quiver” while the Bible is more mundane. Pulpits have shrunk and even disappeared while bands and lighting have grown. **But faith does not come from music, dynamic experiences, or supposed encounters with God. Faith is birthed through the proclamation of God’s Word ([Rom 10:17](#)).**

2. Our assurance is threatened. If we associate God’s presence with a particular experience or emotion, what happens when we no longer feel it? We search for churches whose praise band, orchestra, or pipe organ produce in us **the feelings ... the subjective experiences we are chasing.**

3. Musicians are given priestly status. When music is seen as a means to encounter God, worship leaders and musicians are vested with a priestly role. They become the ones who bring us into the presence of God rather than Jesus Christ who alone has already fulfilled that role! ***[NOTE: And in this environment, preachers become showmen and story tellers instead of preachers of the Word of God!]***

4. Division is increased. If we identify a feeling as an encounter with God, and only a particular kind of music produces that feeling, then we will insist that the same sort of music be played regularly in our church or gatherings... Others depend upon a different kind of music to produce the feeling that is important to them, then division is cultivated. And because we routinely classify particular feelings as encounters with God our demands for what produce those feelings become very rigid. This is why so many churches succumb to offering multiple styles of worship services. **By doing so, they unwittingly sanction division and self-centeredness among the people of God.**

Scripture is full of exhortations to God’s people to sing and make music to the Lord. Our God has been gracious to give us this means to worship Him. **But it is important to understand that music in our worship is for two specific purposes:** to honor God and to edify our fellow believers...” [Todd Pruitt, Pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Harrisonburg, Virginia.]

MAN-CENTERED WORSHIP HAS SIMILARITIES TO A COCAINE RUSH! (The following is edited from Sam Williamson, Beliefs of the Heart)

I once met with a man — let’s call him Nathan — who described himself as a, “recovering charismatic.” He was open to it; but his experience of modern worship gave him pause. As he grew up, his mother frantically,

obsessively moved rapidly from one worship experience to the next. After Toronto she visited Florida, then Bethel Church, and then anywhere she heard “something” was happening. **Worship music unceasingly blared throughout the house.**

She seemed to need its euphoric “oomph” to motivate her for the tiniest of tasks. Wiping kitchen counters took the combined efforts of Matt Redman, Chris Tomlin, and Paul Baloche. Don’t ask what spring cleaning required. **But she remained anxious, fearful, self-concerned, and neglectful of her husband and sons.**

She’d say, “I just want to go where God is working,” but it really seemed she just wanted an escape, a place where her problems could be sedated. After describing all this, Nathan added,

“A friend of mine became a crack addict. Frankly I didn’t see much difference between him and my mom. They got their highs in different ways, and their lives remained a mess.”
“I wonder,” he continued, “if modern worship is like a cocaine rush?”

I’m Sympathetic: Nathan’s description of his childhood experiences startled me. **I was a worship leader for years, and I often tried to stir up feelings!** I loved to hear someone say, “Wow, that worship was great; I really felt the Lord’s presence.” Now I wonder about our pursuit of euphoria in worship.

ONE WISELY SAID: “If we continually try to bring back those exceptional moments of EMOTIONS/FEELINGS, **it is a sign that IT IS NOT GOD we want— BUT EXPERIENCES!**”

Most catechisms that I’ve studied say humans are designed to worship God and to enjoy Him. **But the purpose is to worship God— joy is simply the result. Unfortunately, it seems to me that the purpose of modern worship services is simply to stir up good feelings. DANGER:** are we MERELY competing with our media-dominated culture by using musical abilities to titillate the emotions of the worshiper?

SURELY, WE KNOW THAT— The problem with the world is self-centeredness; from Hitler-like dictators grabbing for power to three year-old boys making a mountain of matchbox cars to keep them from a younger brother. (Not to mention what you and I do.) **Self-centeredness is the cause of** all wars, divorce, betrayal, theft, and every miserable part of human history. We are all thinking of ourselves.

And seeking the “rush” in worship is simply another example of concentrating on ourselves (though we may fail to recognize it because it’s disguised as “worship”).

WHAT ARE WE TO DO?

Real Christian worship is the solution for self-centeredness. **IT IS fixing our mind on the Ultimate OTHER, [ALMIGHTY GOD!]. IT IS a heart-gaze on God, contemplating** the majesty and glory and goodness of God. **IT IS** consciously staring at His unimaginable love, His unstoppable power, His ultimate justice, His grand and glorious SOVEREIGNTY; His attention to the sparrow’s needs, and His care for every human being. **REAL Worship is attributing** ultimate value to the Ultimate Being who is ultimately beyond us; and yet who is **beside us** as we sit in our desk chair **and in us** as we wash the dishes.

Real worship involves an intense focus (of heart, mind, soul and strength) on the beauty of God. It is looking, gazing, meditating, and reflecting on the majesty of God. **It is seeing Him for all HE is— SOVEREIGN LORD, Master, King, Father, Shepherd, and Friend.** And, yes, seeing His glory WILL often move us to joy as well.

REAL Worship Changes Us: When we SET our heart gaze on CHRIST, the Ultimate Star; when we let HIS beauty and light penetrate our soul— then we’ll be changed forever. Anxiety, grasping for euphoria, selfish ambition, and even self-consciousness will cease. **WE WILL worship and adore the Creator not the creation.**

Real worship of the real God does, in the end, bring real life. I'm in favor of experiencing God. I hope I do more. I hope you do too. But the experience is a result of worship (at least sometimes) not the purpose.

A STATEMENT OF CORPORATE WORSHIP PHILOSOPHY! (Adapted from Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, MN. And other sources)

OUR WORSHIP services are to be corporate expressions of our members' love for the God of the Bible. Because worship is an expression of love for God, we come together not to seek first what we may receive out of worship – although we receive and need much – but how we may first through His enabling grace render our service of worship to the supreme God.

GOD IS SUPREME ([Rom. 11:36](#); [Acts 17:24-30](#)). **Our public worship will focus on God.** We will seek to aggressively know Him through His Word and wholeheartedly respond to His supremacy in biblically appropriate ways as a people of God in corporate worship.

GOD IS HOLY ([Lev. 11:44-45](#)). "Holiness" is the term given to God to set Him apart from anything and everything else. In [Ex. 15:11](#) Moses asks, "Who is like you among the gods, O Lord who is like you, majestic in holiness?" ***Because there is no other god like the God revealed in the Bible, we will encourage individuals to be enthralled by Him so as to be eagerly overflowing with praise, thanksgiving, fear, repentance, confession, prayer, and obedience through humble dependence on Him. We will, by our lives and our words, shout joyfully of the wonders of this God.*** Our worship of the Holy God should compel us to be individuals characterized by holiness as well.

God Has Chosen to Dwell Among His People Through His Spirit ([1 Cor. 3:16](#)). Corporately, God is present when His people gather together. His presence is seen most clearly in our lives when we allow God's Spirit to fill (control) us to such an extent that others see Christ in our lives as we fellowship, love, serve, sing, listen, respond, etc. **Furthermore,** God's Spirit is present whenever the truth of God is proclaimed in an understandable way. Therefore, through the lives of Spirit-controlled people and the passionate

proclamation of God's Word, our desire would be that a believer leaves our corporate worship time saying,

"I have met with God today," and the unbeliever would declare, ***"Certainly God is among you"*** (1 Cor. 14:25). ***[NOT BECAUSE OF DRUMMED UP EMOTIONS; BUT BECAUSE OF ENCOUNTERS WITH TRIUNE TRUTH — Father, Son, Holy Spirit — by means of the Holy Spirit of Truth QUICKENING the Scriptures (The Word of Truth) to us!]***

GOD IS TRUTH (Is. 65:16). God expects truth in worship (John 4:23). All aspects of a worship service should be **shaped by and permeated by** the Word of God. Only the truth of Christ (John 17:17) which is the word of Christ (Col. 3:16) has any sanctifying impact on the believer and can draw the unbeliever.

Therefore, the truth of God will be proclaimed through preaching, singing, praying, repenting, giving, observing the Lord's Table, testifying, etc. When we respond to God in song, **the primary characteristic of our songs will be that they are theologically accurate.** These songs may be new choruses, traditional hymns, or other songs; as long as they are theologically accurate, they are acceptable. ***Any instrument, arrangement, or sound that detracts from the primacy of the message will be discarded or refined so that it promotes the message of truth. The musical accompaniment is not to be the focal point of worship—the message of truth will be.***

GOD KNOWS OUR HEARTS (Is. 29:13, Matt. 15:7-9). *God is not pleased with vain worship. Vain worship is characterized by things such as personal convenience and entertainment, lack of preparation, mindless participation, irreverence, and apathy. Heartfelt worship is marked by personal sacrifice and giving, preparation, focus, reverence, and enthusiasm.* **True worship comes from the heart of individuals who are allowing the Word of God to "dwell in [them] richly" (Col. 3:16).** Our goal therefore is to engage our minds and hearts to meditate and apply great spiritual truth put to song and proclaimed through preaching.

Because worship begins with an internal response to the truth of God, we understand that external music cannot create worship and cannot make us feel and/or experience true worship.

Therefore we will not make it our goal to feel a certain way. A sense of blessedness (awe, joy, peace, exhilaration) and a sense of our unworthiness before a holy God ([Is. 6:5](#)-- sorrow, remorse, fear) **are both by-products of a heart responding appropriately to God.**

GOD CREATED THE PHYSICAL BODY ([Gen. 2:7](#)). God created man as both a material (body) and immaterial (heart/soul/mind/spirit/will/etc.) being and declared both elements of man “good.” **Worship in the Bible often includes appropriate physical manifestations in the body such as singing, raising of hands, bowing down, and RESPONDING WITH ‘AMENS and HALLELUJAHS’.**

God demands, however, that our bodies be under the control of a Spirit-led heart and mind ([Eph. 5:18](#)). While we encourage the freedom to express one’s self physically in worship, these expressions should not draw undue attention to one’s self because our focus in corporate worship is on God.

GOD IS WORTHY ([1 Cor. 10:31](#); [14:40](#), [Col. 3:23](#)). God is pleased as we seek to do all that we do in a manner of excellence for His glory. **God is not pleased with mediocre efforts and half-hearted commitments.**

GOD IS ALIVE (Ps. 115; [Jer. 10:10](#); [Dan. 6:19-28](#); [1 Tim. 4:10](#)). We will expect fresh expressions of God’s work in the hearts of His people. We will encourage a freedom in worship that is God-honoring and authentic, allowing for biblically appropriate responses to God’s multifaceted glory as we meditate for extended periods on His supremacy. **[IN BIBLICAL, CORPORATE WORSHIP, ‘AMENS and HALLELUJAHS’ should often be expressed!]**

GOD HAS RENEWED HIS PEOPLE’S HEARTS ([2 Cor. 5:17](#)). God has made His children new creations— having regenerated the hearts of those who have placed their faith in His Son. **Believers have the capacity to offer sacrifices of praise to God.** Therefore we will design worship services mainly for the benefit of believers, as we express corporately our passion

for the holiness of God, reflecting it so clearly and joyously that unbelievers who are present may also be awakened and give Him glory.

GOD IS LIGHT ([1 John 1:5-10](#)). As children of God, we are to walk in the light. We will strive for authenticity and transparency and vulnerability always— public or private. Publicly in worship, we will strive to be real before God and each other. We will confess public sin publicly and private sin privately and admit openly our imperfections. **BELOVED! LET US GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD!**

James Bell / www.southsidegallatin.org

SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

SUNDAY SERVICES: OCTOBER 9, 16, 23, 30 / 2022

1. * Sunday School at 9:30am:** Nursery, Children's classes, Youth, and Adult classes. **2. *** WORSHIP SERVICE at 10:45am!**

ADDITIONAL SUNDAY SERVICES in October:

***** [1.] 10/9/22 ... 5pm** Training Faithful Men

***** [2] 10/16/22 ... AFTER the MORNING service: THE LORD'S TABLE...**

***** [3] 10/23/22 ... FOURTH SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP SERVICE at 5PM.** (Adam, Bradley, and others give specific preparation for this Service.... and, this month, **LUKAS HASKINS** is scheduled to preach.)

***** [4] 10/31/22... FIFTH SUNDAY EVENING- Rest/ministry as you are led**

NOVEMBER SCHEDULES WILL BE NORMAL! BUT BECAUSE OF SOME DIFFERENCES, WE GIVE ADVANCE NOTICE OF SUNDAYS IN UPCOMING DECEMBER and JANUARY:

1. December 4 & 11—regular schedules

2. December 18—regular MORNING SERVICE, with the LORD'S SUPPER ... and....

2b. DECEMBER 18, 5PM... Adam, Bradley, Choir, and others will lead us in a SPECIAL TIME of SONGS and SCRIPTURES ... IN GRATITUDE FOR JESUS, THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT!

3. DECEMBER 25... 10:45 WORSHIP SERVICE, CONCLUDING WITH THE LORD'S SUPPER. (No. S.S. or evening service)

4. JANUARY 2023—[1] January 1, Sunday School and Worship Service, only. **[2] January 8**, Sunday School and Worship Service, and FELLOWSHIP MEAL; **[3] January 15**, Sunday School and Worship Service, and FAITHFUL MEN, 5PM; **[4] January 22, Sunday School and Worship Service, and LORD'S SUPPER;** **[5] January 29**, (Adam, Bradley, and others give specific preparation for this Service... and, this month, **Jim Barnhouse** is scheduled to preach.)

EVERY SATURDAY*** 8:00 AM, — Men's Bible Study! (*Doors open by 7:30am... coffee, juice, donuts, and Sausage Biscuits are available!*)
[STUDYING IN JEREMIAH]

***** NEXT Ladies Bible Study, OCTOBER 11, @ 11:00 AM**
[JOHN 7:37-39]

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

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS: 6:30pm— come in back 'double doors' under the Drive Thru awning! ** Adult Prayer Service ** Young FAMILIES Prayer Service [ADAM or Jaden weekly communicate as to LOCATION]

***** 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... TO GIVE via ONLINE GIVING:
<https://southsidebaptist.breezechms.com/give/online>

HEALTH REMINDERS as to CHURCH SERVICES AND as to Responding with WISDOM and NOT fear IN SEEKING TO KEEP AS HEALTHY AS

WE CAN— SO AS TO BE ACTIVE IN THE KINGDOM BUSINESS OF THE LORD!

1. IF YOU ARE SICK... [OR if you are 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!**

[A GUIDE— IF WITH WHAT YOU HAVE, YOU WOULD GO TO WORK, THEN COME AND GATHER WITH THE SAINTS!]

2. WHEN YOU COME ... you may or may not choose to wear a mask... WE CONTINUE to encourage FREEDOM as to ‘social distancing’... masks ... vaccine choices, etc. — PLEASE HONOR THE LORD, by continuing to give sensitivity and respect one to another.

3. In addition to carefulness, good hydration, good nutrition, and sleep— ALSO: SEEK TO BUILD UP A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM! I PERSONALLY TAKE ELDERBERRY, VITAMIN C, E, ZINC, GINGER, VITAMIN D, Quercetin, a good multi-vitamin that includes fiber... And Ivermectin. LET each of us DO OUR PART IN personal hygiene — please wash your hands with SOAP; and use nearby SANITIZER.

4. HERE IS AN EDUCATIONAL resource from ... FROM Doctors who successfully treat covid-19 patients! => <https://breggin.com/covid-19-home-treatment/> //// Peter McCullough, MD, BRIEF. EXCELLENT: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAHi3lX3oGM>

The PDF booklet: A Guide to Home-Based COVID Treatment can be downloaded ... **focus is on PREVENTION and early treatment:** COVID Treatment - Truth for Health Foundation <https://www.truthforhealth.org/patientguide/patient-treatment-guide/>