

NEWS

Dorothy Reynolds was not in our service Wednesday night due to back trouble, and she is scheduled to have knee replacement surgery tomorrow, April 15th—**Nova Montgomery** has shingles and was not in our service Wednesday night—**Ricky Davis** is having two more chemo treatments—**Elaine Conradt** was sick a week ago Wednesday and last Sunday, but she was back in our service Wednesday night—**Karen Ferguson** was sick last Sunday and not in our services, but she was back with us Wednesday night—**Nedra** (continued on page 3)

ELDERS:

Bob Arnold 563-2977
Leon Goff 572-6809
Kendall Johnson 717-0265

DEACONS:

Ricky Davis 572-9428
Ken Ferguson 572-4135
Pat Marshall 572-9347

SERVICES:

Sunday

Bible Study 9:45 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 5:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Class 10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

PREACHERS:

Drew Nelson 254-541-3815
Leon Goff 572-6809

ASSIGNMENTS FOR:

April 21, 2019

Serving The Lord's Supper

Sunday Morning

Scripture: **Richard Montgomery**

Jerry Wildman **Kenneth Amerson**
Jessie Carillo **Carlos Garcia**

Sunday Evening

Jerry Wildman **Kenneth Amerson**

PRAYERS

Sun. AM—**Royce Gibbs (Opening)**

—**Shea Bilbo (Closing)**

PM—**Paul Chapman (Opening)**

—**Jeron McGough (Closing)**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A.M.—**Ken Ferguson**

P.M.—**Pat Marshall**

(call Pat Marshall if unable to serve)

Think It Over—If you were to die today...Where would you spend eternity? To all who love God, and to those who do not, but should, to all who are weary and heavy laden; to all who are lonely and sad; to all who sin and need a Savior, and to whosoever will come a hearty welcome is extended.

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Southside Church of Christ

Bulletin

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Number 15

The Comparison Trap

By *Tim Jennings*

The human ability to detect differences is astounding! In an instant, we can discern how a person feels by the slightest fall of their eyebrow or upward curve of their lip. We can distinguish between thousands of colors. We can feel the smallest scratch on that smart phone we just paid too much for.

When used correctly our ability to notice what is different protects us from danger and can inspire us to tremendous growth (1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Peter 5:3; 1 Timothy 4:12; Hebrews 13:7; 1 Corinthians 16:15-18). However, our ability to see differences has a dark side. It can drag us into the comparison trap.

Today, we can compare ourselves to others more than ever! Various forms of media confront us with the looks, skills, experiences and possessions of people around the world that are unattainable to most of us. These constant comparisons can lead to a deep sense of despair. Others exploit the platforms of comparison to show others how great they are. As a result, comparing ourselves to others can be more than a trap, it can become our prison.

Envy

The problem is we slip into the comparison trap without even knowing it. This happened one day to king Saul. David, his newly appointed commander, returned home from a successful campaign against the Philistines. The people poured into the streets to sing songs of joy to the king. However, the lyrics of their anthem struck a dissonant cord with Saul's self-esteem. They sang, "*Saul has slain his thousands, and David his*

tens of thousands'...this refrain galled him" (1 Samuel 18:7).

Saul didn't think about the security of the nation, the skill of David or the kindness of the women. Every good thing was hidden behind the thick cloud of comparison. So, the next day Saul tried to pin David to the wall with a spear.

Harmful comparison has a way of spoiling relationships, because envy sneaks in. Comparison becomes the sin of envy when we cannot appreciate the beauty, happiness or success of another person without immediately connecting it to us. Then resentment seeps in and anger begins to boil until our relationship is cooked!

In addition, comparisons can cause us to be obsessed with our limitations. Maybe David was a better soldier than Saul. So what? There will always be someone thinner, richer, smarter and better looking than you. Get used to it! If someone is good, that doesn't make you bad. Don't allow comparisons to cause you to focus on your limitations. God wonderfully gifted you to do what only you can do. So, do the best with what you have (Matthew 25:14-30). Otherwise the comparison trap will drive you into a fruitless life of bitter seclusion.

Compromise

The problem of comparison starts early in the story of Saul. The people said, "We want a king over us. Then we will be like all the other nations" (1 Samuel 8:19-20).

Later, Samuel calls this request a 'rejection of God' (1 Samuel 10:19). They wanted to be like the other nations rather than God's nation. This exposes another problem with making comparisons. It often leads to sinful compromise!

We compare ourselves to what others have and we compromise our commitment to God to get it. How constant and subtle is this temptation!? We crave what others possess and slip into greed. We love what someone wears and fall into sensuality. We long for the fun others experience and drop into hedonism.

We remove the bait of the comparison trap when we see the danger of evaluating things by external appearances. God is not so impressed with the wrapping paper as we are. "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7).

The next time you are so impressed with someone stop and ask, "Why do I find this so appealing?" If the answer reveals a fleshly appeal, say to yourself, "I value the condition of the heart, the destiny of my soul, and the pleasure of my Lord." Then the temptation to compromise will begin to melt away.

Arrogance

The most dangerous aspect of the comparison trap is it makes us arrogant. One of the first things Saul did as king was, "set up a monument to his own honor" (1

Samuel 15:12). Saul carefully crafted his 'news feed' to show that he was a little better than you (1 Samuel 15:30).

We fall into the comparison trap when we gain our self-worth by thinking we are better than others. We brag, boast and post to be known and admired. The comparison game can cause us to be over-impressed with ourselves and blind to our defects.

Jesus told a story about a man who arrogantly compared himself to others and thought, "I'm really something special" (Luke 18:11). But another man compared himself to God and prayed, "Have mercy on me, a sinner" (Luke 18:13). When we compare ourselves to others, we are tempted to be proud. When we compare ourselves to God, we see ourselves more clearly.

The next time you are tempted to think, "I'm better than them," remind yourself, "God knows the real me; the selfish, ugly, hurtful me. Thank you, God for your mercy. Help me share you to others."

Defining our self-image by comparing ourselves to others is a dangerous game. It is a path filled with despair, deception and pride. It's time to get out of the comparison game and find your identity in Christ. In him, you'll find a love beyond comparison.

Our Gospel Meeting

Is just two weeks away, April 28 through May 3rd, for our spring meeting of 2019. **Kris Emerson**, from Lindale, TX, will be our speaker. There will be the **regular times on Sunday**, then **week-night services at 7:30 pm**, and **weekday morning services Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 10:00 am**. Let's be working and praying for this meeting.

Gospel Meetings This Week

Tyrone Spencer is the speaker at Southside in Sulphur Springs, Today through Wednesday, 7:00 PM weeknights

Jason Lankford is the speaker at Saratoga, AR, today through Wednesday, 7:00 PM.

NEWS (continued from back page)

Jordan was still not feeling well last Sunday but she was back with us Wednesday night—**Mrs. Stout**, Charlyn Harrel's mother, had some tests this past week to try to determine whether she had a stroke—**Buford Guthrie**, passed away Thursday morning and there will be a memorial service in Duncanville on Main Street in the Lions Club building Wednesday at 11:00 AM. We extend our sincere sympathy to June and the Guthrie loved ones—Remember **June Johnson, Randy Blackmon, Teresa Tate, Bob Arnold, Frank White, William and Yvonne White, Willie Don Davis, Judy Hinson, Catherine Moss, Deborah Brown, and Duane McGough's father**—Remember our **Shut-ins: Carlos Barnes, James Johnson, Betty Rust and Wanda Sikes**.