

NEWS

Betty Rust spent a few days in the local hospital due to having blood clots in both lungs. She is doing better now and she was released from the hospital last Tuesday—**Kenneth Amer-son** was having breathing problems last Sunday morning and was not in our service, but he was here Sunday evening—**Pat Mar-shall** has been sick for over a week with upper respiratory prob-lems and he has not been in our services the past week—**Randy Blackmon** has also had an upper respiratory infection and was not in our service this past week. (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:

January 5, 2019

Serving The Lord's Supper

Sunday Morning

Scripture: Matt Harrel

Jerry Wildman **Thomas Hockaday**
Jesse Carillo **Carlos Garcia**

Sunday Evening

Jerry Wildman **Thomas Hockaday**

PRAYERS

Sun. AM—**Dale Rockett (Opening)**

—**Ricky Davis (Closing)**

PM—**Ken Ferguson (Opening)**

—**Charles Davis (Closing)**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A.M.—**Ken Johnson**

P.M.—**Alec Capel**

(call Pat Marshall if unable to serve)

Think It Over—If you were to die today...Where would you spend eter-nity? 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.

Southside
Church of Christ
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Southside Church of Christ

Bulletin

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The Greatest Gift

By Russ Bowman

Not a Christmas goes by but what I think about it. There are many aspects of the holiday season that hold special memories for us all. It may be long trips in the car or on the train to see family. It may involve holiday dinners around a big table. Or perhaps those treasured recollections in-clude annual traditions - caroling or hunting trips or football games or pa-rades. In my childhood, the holidays were special and almost all of my memories are good ones. In fact, just a pause to remember brings a smile because of the flood of images that result. And, honestly, most of those images involve people and places - almost none of them involve things. Except for one.

Perhaps the greatest Christmas gift my folks ever gave me was in 1975. We generally exchanged gifts in our family on Christmas eve, and I honestly don't remember anything else about that particular evening. I have no idea about any gift I gave or received on that evening, save one. As we concluded our family tradition, Mom & Dad somehow persuaded me to go outside into the front yard. And there stood my most treasured Christmas memory - a Yamaha 125 MX motorcycle. I was thirteen years old. We lived out in the country on an old farm place, surrounded by acres and acres of cotton. And turnrows (dirt roads that ran between the fields). Someone who knew the country could travel halfway across the state and never get on a paved road. And now I could do just that.

To have a dirt bike in 1975 automatically made you cool. Kids at school looked at you differently. You carried yourself differently. You could show up at a school event with mud on your jeans not because you

were running irrigation pipe or chopping cotton, but because you had been out on your bike jumping bar ditches and climbing the steep sides of borrow pits. Add to that the fact that I had just grown eight inches in six months, I had long blonde hair, and I had been to the band banquet with Donna Taylor (and she kissed me). Life was good. My motorcycle was great. My folks were awesome.

And then, to my utter dismay, some six months later my folks decided to move outside of Houston. And they sold my motorcycle. Suddenly I lived on the edge of a concrete prairie with no turn-rows. My Yamaha 125 MX was replaced by a Schwinn ten-speed bicycle. I had no job. I had no girlfriend. I knew no one. Life was bad. My folks were... Well let's just say that my opinion had changed somewhat.

The loss of my greatest gift resulted in my greatest disappointment.

I've been preaching for over thirty-five years now and I'm becoming increasingly convinced of one prominent problem among followers of Jesus. We have been given the greatest gift that could ever be imagined. And we all too often take Him for granted. **Rom. 5:6f** notes, *"For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man some one would even die. But God demonstrates His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

Too many of us are so accustomed to the concept that it has lost its significance. What has happened to us spiritually somehow is overwhelmed by this temporal existence. Our worship suffers because we rarely feel true gratitude, and thus we either neglect the assembly or attend and simply go through the motions. Our character is moved as much by the expectation of others or allegiance to some dogma as it is by a passionate devotion to the Lord. Evangelism is almost non-existent merely because we no longer see the gift of Christ's sacrifice for what it is - my deliverance from death. To extend the illustration from above, the motorcycle sits in the yard, chained to the light pole so no one will steal it. But we don't ride it. We don't love it. It's lost its luster. Great gift, but no longer special.

What if, like my motorcycle, the gift were lost to us? I can't think about my dirt bike that I don't also remember the loss of it. And nothing ever replaced it. The ten speed bike just didn't do it. And even a couple of years later when Dad bought a couple of mo-peds, they just didn't replace what was lost. (Have you ever tried to jump anything on a mo-ped?) I suspect that now, almost forty-four years removed from that gift, it was partly the loss of it that made me appreciate it so much. But we cannot afford to lose the gift of Christ simply so that we might have a greater appreciation of Him. For if we forfeit God's gift, we lose forgiveness. We lose hope. We lose our Mediator. We lose our Father. We lose eternal life. We

lose citizenship in His kingdom. We lose communication with God. We lose the promise of His care. We lose the way of escape from temptation. We lose peace of mind. We lose incentive to godliness. We lose our influence for good. We lose the anticipation of a glorified, resurrected body.

We lose everything, if we lose the true greatest gift.

So, here is my plea. Appreciate the gift again. Give yourself to some meditation, some reflection, some reintroduction to the Son of God. I know it's the holiday season and there are many things that vie for our time and our attention. But please do not neglect the greatest gift, for nothing else that we can enjoy or experience can begin to approach the value of fellowship with Jesus Christ. Every other gift will pale in comparison, for they will offer no lasting satisfaction. Solomon was wise enough to appreciate the truth of that long before God sent His Son into this world. *"'Vanity of vanities,' says the Preacher; 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity' ...I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind."* (**Ecc. 1:2-14**). And his conclusion rings true today: *"Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all"* (**Ecc. 12:13**). May the Lord help us to be wise enough to recognize such, and grateful enough to passionately embrace the gift of Jesus Christ. If we don't the loss of that gift will finally prompt far more than disappointment.

—Focus Online (12/23/19)

Our Annual Friday Night Singing

Is coming up January 17, 2020. This will be our Seventeenth Annual Friday night singing. We have had great attendance every year. Be making your plans to be with us the third Friday night of January, the 17th. We plan to have Tim Stevens, Dane Shepard and Todd Dennis with us again to direct the singing.

The Kanaleys say Thanks

Kevin and Natalie want to express their appreciation to the members of the congregation who helped them by gifts of food as well as gift cards.

NEWS (continued from back page)
The Bilbo Family were still not able to be in our services the past week—**Tonette Harrel** continues to have problems which was thought to be gout, but now the doctor is not sure what may be the cause of her pain—Remember all of these in your prayers—Remember **Enoch Waldrep's brother, Kenny Ferguson, Marion Shurtleff, June Johnson, Randy Blackmon, Teresa Tate, Frank White, William and Yvonne White, Laverne McCurdy, Willie Don Davis, Judy Hinson, Catherine Moss, Deborah Brown**—Remember our **Shut-ins: James Johnson, Betty Rust and Wanda Sikes.**