

NEWS

Charles Davis has been having tests done in Dallas this past two weeks. At last word there was still no diagnosis of why his blood count is low. He was still having tests and procedures the latter part of this past week—**Judy McGough** was not feeling well this past Wednesday night and was not in our service—**Hazel Busby**, the mother of Tom Davis' and Emily Latson's brother-in-law, Jerry Busby, Debbie Davis Busby's husband, passed away last Monday and her service was conducted Friday in Winnboro. We express our (continued on page 3)

ELDERS:

Bob Arnold 563-2977
Leon Goff 572-6809
Kendall Johnson 572-9306

DEACONS:

Ron Burns 577-9978
Ricky Davis 572-9428
Ken Ferguson 572-4135
Pat Marshall 572-9347

SERVICES:

Sunday

Bible Study 9:45 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

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

PREACHERS:

Jared Rogers 717-3788
Leon Goff 572-6809

ASSIGNMENTS FOR:

August 9, 2015

Serving The Lord's Supper

Sunday Morning

Scripture: Ron Traugher

Paul Chapman **Randy Blackmon**
Colton Fulmer **Jeron McGough**

Sunday Evening

Paul Chapman **Randy Blackmon**

PRAYERS

Sun. AM—Willie Don Davis (Opening)

—**Charles Davis (Closing)**

PM—Richard Tapparo (Opening)

—**Phil Brown (Closing)**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A.M.—Ken Ferguson

P.M.—Kendall Johnson

(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.

Southside
Church of Christ
P.O. Box 242
Mt. Pleasant, TX 75456

Southside Church of Christ

Bulletin

1220 E. Ferguson Rd. Mt. Pleasant, Texas 75455

(903) 572-2148

Website: www.thesouthsidechurch.com

Volume XXII

August 2, 2015

Number 31

The Blindfold of Self-Deception

By Tim Jennings

I used my credit card on a trip and within minutes my account was locked and I received a call from the fraud department. They wanted to make sure no one had stolen my card. I was thankful for their vigilance because we live in a world of deceit and betrayal. We know people will lie to take advantage of us, so we carefully watch for anything dishonest and are quick to expose it.

Yet, there is a deceiver that often goes undetected. He operates with our full approval and we yield to him our greatest assets. But in the end his lies lead us to ruin. The tragedy is this malicious deceiver is our own heart! Self-deception is the most prevalent form of fraud on the planet and one of the most difficult to detect. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick" (Jer. 17:9).

Self-deception is our ability to justify things we know are not right. This becomes a major problem in our relationship with God. It can cause a local church to think they are great when actually God sees them as "wretched, poor and blind" (Rev. 3:14-22). It can cause a believer to think they are saved, when in fact they are eternally lost (Matt. 7:21-23). It can cause a nation to feel secure when their enemies are breaking down the gate (Jer. 6:13-14; 8:10-11; 14:14-16; 23:16-18; 37:9-10). Self-deception is the blindfold we wear which hides the presence of the firing squad.

Yet, we gladly wear the blindfold of self-deception because **it allows us to pursue our selfish pleasures** without the pang of conscience. If you asked a Pharisee in Jesus' day, "Should you honor your parents?" He would

say, “Certainly!” “Why then are your parents starving when you have more than enough?” With a smile he would reply, “I’d love to help, but my money is dedicated to the Lord,” (Mark 7:9-13). Jesus saw through their rationalization and said, “You honor me with your lips, but your heart is far from me.”

They are not so different from some believers today who strongly affirm their love for God’s kingdom. They would take offense at being called materialistic or self-indulgent. Yet, their dreams are filled with cars and clothes, lands and houses, travel and entertainment. Like the Pharisees before them their religious heritage and activity has made them blind to the real object of their devotion.

We also wear the blindfold of self-deception because **it allows us to hide from that which is painful.** For example, Samuel caught King Saul in blatant disobedience, yet Saul surprisingly said, “Look Samuel, I’ve obeyed the Lord.” How could he be so blind? It is hard to admit we sin; that we care more about what people think than what God knows. So we weave a web of lies until we can no longer see our shame (1 Sam. 15).

Self-deception is difficult to detect so it is important for us to see its symptoms. For example, those who are self-deceived are..

* **Quick to justify themselves.** They

are more interested in expressing their desires than listening to others. “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice” (Prov. 12:15).

* **Quick to blame others.** The person who believes their problems are caused by others become blind to their own role and are doomed to repeat them (see 1 Sam. 15:15).

* **Quick to hide behind religion.** When questioned about their priorities they will talk about church attendance and good works as though that erases immorality and greed.

As difficult as it is to detect self-deception it is even harder to remove it. Yet, taking off the blindfold to see ourselves as God sees us is one of the most liberating things we can do! Here are a few exercises that will help you see yourself more clearly.

Question Your Own Virtue. Few people are willing to face their own faults so they live a flawed life. Tom, the main character in “Leadership and Self-Deception” only saw himself honestly when he “questioned his own virtue” (The Arbinger Institute, pg. 143). In other words, he was willing to admit he was wrong. “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). Those who are slow to

confess their errors are busy constructing lies to conceal them. Like a ruthless lawyer we must cross-examine our hearts as a hostile witness (2 Cor. 13:5).

Invite Others To Question You. Most people will not hear the truth about themselves because they only listen to their own propaganda. The way out of delusion is to have the courage to ask somebody to evaluate your thinking. Do you have godly advisers you regularly ask to evaluate your attitude and actions? If not, you are likely living in self-deception. “Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety” (Prov. 11:14).

Listen to God With A Commitment To Change. God’s word is like a mirror which exposes our true self (James 1:22-25). It examines each motive, analyzes each thought, and judges each action, until the real “you” is revealed. Then, you have a decision. You can bury the knowledge in the backyard of memory and continue in self-deception, or you can clean up what went wrong and live as God intended. If God’s word has not changed us lately we are living in self-deception.

It’s time to remove the blindfold of self-deception and remember, “man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7).

—Focus Online, 6/3/15

Gospel Meeting

Mike Pittman is the speaker in the meeting at the Hubbard St. church in Lindale, TX, beginning today, **August 2** and continuing through Friday night **August 7**, services at 7:00 weeknights.

Elders and Deacons Meeting

Is scheduled for Sunday, **August 16 at 4:30 PM.**

Rogers Move Delayed

Jared, Stacy and children did not get to move yesterday as planned. This was due to a delay in the appraisal. So they are hoping to get moved this week. So let’s stay in the help mood.

NEWS (continued from back page) sympathy to the family—**Madelyn Arnold** was sick Wednesday night and she and family were not able to be in our service—**Cory Steen**, son of a good friend of Richard Tapparo, is having complications from brain surgery he had to try to correct epilepsy seizures. Prayers are requested—Remember **Kris Ferguson, Jr., Relda Marshall, Pat Brown, Dorothy** and **Charles Kyle, Deborah Brown, Tammy Willeford, and Judy Hinson**—Remember our **Shut-ins:** *Clayton Bellamy, Loyd Clark, Shirley Ferguson, Lenelle Latimer, Maurine Lee, Irma May, and Lelda Thompson.*