

NEWS

- **William White** underwent surgery for his carpal tunnel last week. He will likely undergo another surgery.
- **Kenneth Amerson** is currently on a waiting list to undergo another procedure to put his heart back in rhythm. The expected date is February 2016.
- **Richard Tapparo** began last week a six month procedure for his sleep apnea. He will receive one treatment a month.
- **Carlos Barnes** has not been feeling well and missed several assemblies.

(continued on page 3)

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

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 6:00 PM

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

PREACHERS:
Jared Rogers 682-300-3602
Leon Goff 572-6809

**ASSIGNMENTS FOR:
 December 13, 2015**

**Serving The Lord's Supper
 Sunday Morning**

Scripture: Willie Don Davis

Luke Arnold **Andrew Arnold**
Kevin Kanaley **Jaron McGough**

Sunday Evening

Luke Arnold **Andrew Arnold**

PRAYERS

Sun. AM—Zac Willeford (Opening)
 —James Johnson (Closing)
PM—Randy Blackmon (Opening)
 —Ricky Davis (Closing)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A.M.—Leon Goff
P.M.—Kendall Johnson

(call Pat Marshall if unable to serve)

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

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

Bulletin

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

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Website: www.thesouthsidechurch.com

Volume XXII

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“Marriage Matters”

By Wilson Adams

...the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, Against whom you have dealt treacherously, Though she is your companion and wife by covenant. (Malachi 2:14)

“Oh, what a feeling!” –was for several years the slogan of the Toyota car company. Sadly, many go into marriage thinking that love is defined the same way. It isn't. Love, from God's perspective, is about doing, not feeling. Life is about commitment and the choices we make daily to honor that commitment. It's the opposite of selfishness.

“You don't know my mate...” True. But that doesn't change your love commitment and the vows you spoke on your wedding day. No place in Scripture do we find God's commandments to love our mate conditioned on anything they do or don't do. Our words on the day we married said that we would cherish and remain committed to this person “for better or for worse” and “until death do we part.” Do you remember saying that?

To my knowledge I've never heard the wedding vows read like this: “As long as we both shall feel like it.” On the contrary, you spoke words of verba solemnia (a solemn vow) that entered you into a covenant—not a contract. Your covenant was witnessed and sealed by God. Read the Malachi passage again (2:14). How seriously do you think God regards the vows of your marriage covenant?

Contrasting Contracts with Covenants Contracts and their accompanying paperwork are everywhere. By definition, a contract is an agreement between two parties in which both sides agree to certain conditions. Most contracts state that if one side violates the terms of the agreement, the other party has a measured recourse. For example, if you finance a car with a bank, the bank, in turn, can repossess the vehicle if payment is not made. We understand how that works.

Psalm 117

A wedding covenant is different. To some, marriages vows are interpreted to mean that “I will do my part as long as my spouse does his part.” That is not what you promised. Sometimes a spouse presents a laundry list of violations and failures by his/her mate as if such represents a breach of contract. The truth is, neither signed a contract that gives them an “out” if the other party fails to perform to their specifications.

What they entered into was a covenant. It was a vow before God that said “I am sticking with this person for the rest of my life. Regardless. Period.” We were specifically asked, “Do you promise to live with _____ for better or worse, in sickness and health, in good times and bad?” etc. And what did you say? Two words: “I do.” You made a covenant before God. “*What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate*” (Matt.19:6).

A covenant is an agreement by choice (no one forced you!) and is in no way dependent upon what the other party may do. It’s not about loving and honoring your mate as long as your mate loves and honors you. Like the parents adopting a child make a commitment to the child’s nurture and care, the adoption is not dependent upon what the baby gives them in return. It’s the same with the marriage covenant sealed before God. That’s why it’s called Holy matrimony. There is something very special, life-changing, and lifelasting happening here.

Committed Love We’re not into commitment much these days. In the past two years I have bounced from one cell phone company to the next in search for the best coverage, lowest cost, and shortest contract. And while that works with cell phone leases (“No long-term commitment required”), it doesn’t work with marriage. Here’s why: We

are not called to commit to the institution of marriage as much as we are called to commit to Him! God says, You commit to me and honor Me by fulfilling your marriage vows!

Sadly, few take this seriously (even among Christians). Nonetheless, it is a proactive decision that says “I am going to serve my mate in the way God directs regardless of what I get in return.” You may argue that no one does that, but you would be wrong.

When a couple brings a baby home from the hospital, they have a God-directed obligation to care for that newborn. And guess what? It won’t always be convenient—especially at 3:00 in the morning when it’s feeding time. And so you feed and rock and rock and feed and...what do you get in return? She spits up all over you! Yet you get up and do it again and again. Why? Because you enjoy losing sleep and smelling like spit-up? Hardly. You do it because you love that child and love is spelled C*O*M*M*I*T*M*E*N*T.

God gives all of us the ability to choose the right thing even when we don’t feel like it. If your spouse says something unkind to you, no one forces you to return evil for evil. If he/she is hurtful or fails to follow through on a promise, God gives you a choice of response—including grace-filled forgiveness. It comes down to a question of choice. And, in the end, all excuses aside, people pretty much do what they want to do.

Lucky Marriages “They are so lucky to have a good marriage!” Really? Hard truth lesson #1: There is nothing lucky about good marriages. That makes as much sense as telling someone that has worked for hours cleaning her house: “You are so lucky to live in a clean house.” Lucky? Are you kidding?

Houses don’t clean themselves and neither do marriages. It takes two people

dedicated to God, along with the daily grind of hard work and commitment. And a big dose of patience and forgiveness, too!

I don’t know about you, but Mr. Selfish rears his ugly head around our place way too often. Sometimes my old self comes creeping back into our marriage. And that’s when I have to remember my covenant with my wife and with God. It’s not about me. It’s about putting her first and doing whatever it takes to honor her. For when I honor her, I honor Him. After all, she is God’s daughter and that makes God my Father-in-law. It’s best I remember that.

Remembering Our First Love When Christ saw that the Ephesians had left their first love, He urged them to repent and “do the deeds you did at first” (Rev.2:5-6a). That’s great marital advice, too. Are you struggling with love, commitment, and intimacy in marriage? “Do the deeds you did at first.” Be proactive and the feelings will return. God expects no less.

God doesn’t want you to have a mediocre marriage. He wants you to find out the real meaning of words like “love,” “commitment,” “covenant,” and “forgiveness.” He enables you to make good choices and keep your promises. And while you cannot control others, you can control self. Our God can move mountains and save marriages! And...He can make the good ones even better.

(Condensed from the book, Marriage Matters) Wilson Adams, Biblical Insights, Sept. 2011, pp.10–11

Praise the Lord, all nations:
Laud Him, all peoples!
For His loving-kindness is great toward us,
And the truth of the Lord is everlasting.
Praise the Lord!

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NEWS (continued from back page)

- **Randy Blackmon** has been suffering from an upper respiratory infection.
- **Joyce Williams** was unable to be with us last Sunday due to her blood pressure.
- **The Moss Family** has been sick and unable to worship with us.
- **Carolyn Himes**, Jared Roger’s mother, has stopped her chemotherapy treatment. She will begin radiation treatment in January.
- Continue to remember **Peggy Bellamy, Kris Ferguson Jr., Relda Marshall, Michele Williams, Maurine Lee, Pat Brown, Dorothy and Charles Kyle, Judy Hinson, Deborah Brown, Tammy Willeford, Shirley Ferguson, Ronald Stringer.**
- Remember our **Shut-ins:** *Clayton Bellamy, Loyd Clark, Maurine Lee, Irma May, Lelda Thompson, Lanelle Latimer.*