

# Second Street Church of Christ



September 16, 2018

## MINISTER

Doug English

## Office

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## SERVICE TIMES

Sunday Bible Class...9:00am  
Sun. Morn. Worship.10:00am  
Sunday Evening.....5:00pm  
Wed. Evening.....7:00pm

*Endeavoring to keep  
the unity of the Spirit  
in the bond of peace.  
Ephesians 4:3*

## Don't quit

*I* have often thought about Christians who left the faith. I'm certain they didn't plan to leave. Circumstances, or the unexpected, simply overwhelmed them. But you, my dear reader, can probably name a score of people who left. Paul saw the danger and urged us to "be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

When I see a Christian fall away I am anguished. How I wish I could have prevented it! How I wish I had known the right thing to say. Often, however, by the time they contemplate leaving, it is too late. Perhaps, I have often thought, I could tell them some things *before* the crisis sweeps in, so they will know what to expect: So, with that in mind, here are some things that I have always wanted to say:

**Determine at the start that you will serve God for life:** Jesus called on us to deny ourselves, take up his cross, and follow him (Matthew 16:24). Right now you need to determine to live and serve Christ for life before the hard times come.

- **Never underestimate the power of loneliness:** A young woman's husband cheated on her. She left him. I understood. A year later, however, she was living with another man. "Was he a Christian?" I asked. "No." "Any prospect of my studying the Bible with him?" "No." What happened, I asked. She admitted, "I was just so lonely." Dear reader, there are worse things than being alone. What we need instead is to nourish our loneliness with a closer relationship with God.

**Don't forget who you are, and who you serve:** We are "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:20). There is no higher calling!

- **Someone in the Church will disappoint you; that does not give you the right to disappoint others.** In other words, two wrongs do not make a right. It doesn't matter if someone else is hypocritical; that has no bearing on your commitment to Christ.

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## Announcements

**Welcome Visitors!!** You are our honored guest, and we are glad you came our way! We invite you back to our evening services at 5:00 and Wednesday Bible study at 7:00 pm.

**Assisted Living** devotional for the ladies every Thursday.



## Forgiveness

*And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another just as God in Christ forgave you.*

**- Ephesians 4:32**

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**If you are tempted to cheat on your spouse, remember, it was not God who suggested that this other person was a “soul mate.”** The wise man depicts the lips of an adulteress as “dripping honey” (Proverbs 5:3,4). A woman declared: “When I’m with (this other man), he makes me happy, and doesn’t God want me to be happy?” Let me reassure you, a nice person does not break up a marriage.

**Still, it will be hard. Expect that:** We are encouraged to “run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1). Sometimes hard times and opposition seem to emerge as a harsh surprise to Christians. Yet the Bible never promised us a rose garden. In fact, it suggests that we will have to struggle at times to make it.

- **Without question, the Christian life is worth it:** At the end of your life, you will be able to look back and say that serving Jesus was worth it.

I once knew an elderly gentleman, a faithful Christian, who was deaf. At his funeral I was able to say, “The first words Curtis Hendrix will ever hear will be the words of his Lord saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:21). Hearing those words will be worth it. Don’t quit!

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## The new birth

**D**uring the 1st century some rabbis described Gentiles as “a new-born child” when they converted to Judaism (Yebamoth 22a, 48b, 97b). Proselyting to Judaism required a baptism. During the same time that the rabbis were using this language of new birth, John the Baptizer was calling people to reorientate their lives with a baptism of repentance. (Luke 1:15-17; 3:3)

This was the religious background when Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish ruling class, visited Jesus. Jesus taught Nicodemus that no one can enter God’s kingdom unless he is born from above, namely “born of water and Spirit” (John 3:3,5).

With this teaching, Jesus highlighted humanity’s universal need for spiritual rebirth. However, this implied that even the Jews, including Nicodemus, needed to be “born of water and Spirit.”

Jesus’ words must have shocked him and certainly ran counter to common beliefs. The Jews were confident that their status as Abraham’s descendants meant they would participate in the kingdom.

Yet, Jesus’ words were wide sweeping, “Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must all be born from above’” (John 3:7). Jesus placed everyone outside of the kingdom in need of spiritual renewal!

Nicodemus either seems to have feigned ignorance because he did not like being placed outside or he misunderstood Jesus’ meaning. He questioned how a grown person could be born again. Jesus called his bluff. “*Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you don’t understand these things?*” (John 3:10).

This new spiritual beginning from above would occur by water and Spirit. For three reasons Jesus was not telling Nicodemus to be baptized with John’s baptism, but rather what would be required to enter God’s coming kingdom. First, even John was not in the kingdom (Luke 7:28). Second, the promise of the Spirit’s indwelling arrived after Jesus’ death with the inauguration of Christian baptism (Acts 2:38; 5:32). Third, being born of God from above requires believing in Jesus (John 1:11-13) which John’s baptism only anticipated (Acts 19:4-6). Jesus was, therefore, discussing approaching future events as he would later do with the Samaritan woman in John 4.

Early Christians understood Jesus to be teaching that baptism and renewal by the Spirit were required to enter God’s kingdom. In fact, from the second century forward, this became one of the early church’s most heavily cited baptismal texts. When people respond to the good news about Jesus, God rescues them from darkness and places them into the kingdom of his Son (Colossians 1:13).

Peter, who explained baptism’s role in Acts 2:38, also described how obeying the truth of the gospel’s message causes us to be born again (1 Peter 1:22-23). Similarly, Paul identified entering “newness of life” with one’s baptism into Christ’s death (Romans 6:3-4). Furthermore, his words “washing of rebirth and renewal by the Spirit” not only echoes Jesus, but also relates how someone enters into this new life Jesus provides (Titus 3:5). He affirmed in Galatians 3:26-27 that we become God’s sons and thus heirs when we rely upon Christ by being baptized into Christ.

The new birth is not something we can achieve by our own power. It is from above. God’s power continues to re-make and grant new spiritual life, if we will receive his Son.

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## SERVICE TIMES

### Sunday

**Bible Study**            **9:00am**  
**Worship**                **10:00am**  
**Evening**                **5:00pm**

### Wednesday

**Bible Study**            **7:00pm**

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Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is*  
for brethren to dwell together in unity!

**Psalms 133:1**

### Prayer List

Paula Wanner	David Alexander
Cassie Tierce	Rita Johnson
Betty Lindley	Francis Mortland
Barbara Trollinger	Lee Pounds
Ralph Montgomery	Linda Parker
Lou Dodson	Lynn Sander
Christian Harris	Pete Harris
Londyn Perry	Kaye Pope
Christy Hickox	Brenda Leatherwood
Susan Broussard	Kenneth Orrick
Tonia Martin	Misty Inmon
Julie Wilson	June Cooper
Henry Vandagriff	Lanetta Girod
Stephen Saponara	R. C. Byram
Naomi Rodgers	Willa Dean Thomas



The process for becoming a Christian is the same as it was over 2000 years ago!  
To become a Christian, one must:

*Hear the Gospel - Rom. 10:17*

*Believe the Gospel - Heb. 11:6*

*Repent of Sins - Luke 13:3*

*Confess Christ - Rom. 10:10*

*Be Immersed Into Christ - Acts 2:38*

*Live a Faithful Life - Rev. 2:10*

None of these alone will make you a Christian. These commands are from God and must be obeyed from the heart to become a Christian.



### September Birthdays

*Janey Dees 9/20*  
*Lisa McCollum 9/29*  
*Carol Taylor 9/30*

### September Anniversaries

*Jeffrey & LaSha 9/23*

*Sympathy*