

## SCHEDULE OF ASSEMBLIES

Sunday morning worship (Bible study) .....	9:30 AM
Sunday morning worship (Preaching) .....	10:30 AM
Sunday afternoon worship (Preaching).....	4:00 PM
Wednesday evening worship (Bible Study).....	7:00 PM

## NEWS AND NOTES

**VISITORS:** If you are visiting with us, we welcome you and ask that you please sign our guest book and fill out a visitor's card and put it in the collection basket or give it to one of the men in the congregation.

**SCHEDULE:** The schedule for September is posted on the bulletin board so the men can see what their responsibilities are for the month.

**GOSPELL MEETINGS:** River bend Sept 24-29 with Greg Chandler weekdays 7:00 pm. Eastside in Athens with Josh Carter Sept 24-26 weekdays 7:00 pm.

**OUT OF TOWN:** Randy Elliott is now in Texas (in the Houston area) helping with the clean-up from Hurricane Harvey. Remember him in your prayers while he is away from us.

**SICK AND SHUT-INS:** Brenda Elliott is now home from the hospital and is doing out-patient therapy on her new knee. Sue Mauldin has pneumonia and is in North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo, MS in room 3321. Zola Basham's brother, Elmo Wilson is in the Booneville Hospital with pneumonia. Dottie Henderson's sister, Judy Thrasher, is back in Keller hospital. Helen Sparks has health issues that sometime keeps her from services. Brittney Day continues to have problems with her back and will possibly be having further treatment soon.

**PRAYER:** Remember the expectant mothers: Sarah (Bruce and Beulah Tooley's daughter) will be having a "C" section Tuesday to deliver the twins; also remember Lydia (Richard and Beth Hammock's daughter) who is also expecting.

**NOTE:** If you know of someone who should be mentioned, please tell the one who makes the announcements. To have information put in the bulletin please get it to Jerry before Saturday afternoon.

## POINTS TO PONDER

- He who can take advice is sometimes superior to him who can give it.
- Works without faith are as dead as faith without works.
- A man's character and a fence are alike; neither can be strengthened by whitewash.

# THE EASTSIDE REMINDER

2Pet 1:12-15

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**Editor's note:** Stephen Russell, the author of the following article is the grandson of Ed Bragwell, whom, probably most if not all of you know. Ed publishes an electronic paper called "Reflections" and I "lifted" the following article from it. If you would like to receive it via email, I am sure he will add you to his list. Stephen is one of our good, young, faithful gospel preachers and has demonstrated some keen insight regarding our reactions to the immorality surrounding us and sad to say, sometime among us. So, I commend this article to you for your consideration.

## REACTING TO IMMORALITY

By Stephen Russell

There have been many words put to print lately about various trends of immorality in the world around us. In particular, our state has recently been involved in the ongoing debate surrounding homosexual marriage and there is a movie recently released that further glorifies other forms of sexual deviancy. What is the Christian to make of all of this? Shall we take up some political campaign or protest to show our dismay? Perhaps we should go along making no comment at all because all of this "really has nothing to do with us." It is easy to get swept into one extreme reaction or another when such extreme positions are at play but let us not look to the world for our guide but to God's word.

In the first place, we do want to recognize that the world is always going to be at odds with the will of God. Men of all points in history have believed in their own capacity to “make the world a better place.” If we are not careful, we can get swept up in the notion that the right leader, the right law, or the right political system can save mankind. When God speaks of the world, He never speaks with the view that it will be saved but always to the view that the majority have always and will always turn away from Him (Matt. 7:13). That is not pessimism, that is reality of the history of God’s word and faith in what He says of the future. So, to some degree we must not allow ourselves too much shock and dismay when the world acts like...the world.

In addition to the recognition that the world is lost and dying, we also need to recognize the limitations of our place in this world. God has not called Christians to become political world leaders but to become quiet and consistent influences wherever they are. We influence by living lives that glorify God not ones that glorify a political party (Matt. 5:16). Our authority over those who defy God’s will is limited to those who are of our number and even that is only a matter of limiting our own contact with those persons (1Cor. 5:9-12). So, while we may want to take some forceful action, that is simply not what God has called for. In fact, in a world that was at least as immoral as our own time, Paul called for Christians to pray for leaders to the end that we may live a “tranquil and quiet life” (1Tim. 2:2).

Yet, while we should recognize the world for what it is and our limited capacity to bring about change, we don’t want to fall into the trap of thinking that such digressions in morality as we have seen in the last several decades are of no consequence to the Christian. In the first place, it is and should be a sorrowful thing to see immorality exalted. Some might say, “I am not surprised to see this.” Do you suppose the Lord was shocked to see the world digress into the state in which we find it in Genesis 6? The omniscient God is not shocked, but He is filled with sorrow (Gen. 6:6). We don’t need to become so calloused to sin that it fails to cause in us the reaction that it causes in God who has seen all the sin that has ever been committed and yet grieves. Many will mock us for our sorrow and even view our sorrow as another form of judgment. And yet like “righteous Lot” we are increasingly living in a world surrounded by sin and therefore our souls will be “tormented day after day by their lawless deeds” (2Pet. 2:8). But take heart, God has promised that

those who mourn are blessed, “for they shall be comforted” (Matt. 5:4).

The other thing that we must do in the face of such tremendous opposition is keep the faith. When we look at the numbers we can begin to question the rightness of our beliefs or the effectiveness of our efforts to influence. But consider the influence of men of God in other ages of debauchery. Noah is said to have been a “preacher of righteousness” and would have been so for at least 100 years. Yet the result of his preaching was the preservation of only eight souls (2Pet. 2:5). Isaiah is told to prophesy to the people not so that they would listen and change their hearts, but to, “Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Otherwise they might see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed” (Isa. 6:10). Can you imagine being told that no one would listen but that you must go and preach anyway. The response to truth may not be what we would wish it to be in a world so full of sin. But if Isaiah could continue to proclaim the truth in the face of such opposition as that, then surely, we can continue to proclaim it in face of what we see today.

It is a sinful world we live in. Let it break your heart, but let God also lift it back up. Don’t get carried away with the tactics of the world in trying to fight the world. But take up the armor of God and keep fighting on God’s terms (Eph. 6:12-18). And if you will do that, you will not win the world, but you and all those blessed few who will do likewise will most assuredly win the crown of righteousness (2Tim. 4:8).

## **YOU CAN CHANGE**

By Kyle Campbell

One of the biggest lies from the master of lies (John 8:44) is that once you are in sin, you cannot change. A good way to illustrate this is with homosexuality. The world says that once you are homosexual, it is not possible to reverse your sexual orientation. In fact, it actively resists even trying. However, homosexuals could repent in New Testament times (1Corinthians 6:9-11). Men and women constantly battle adultery, homosexuality, pornography, and other sexual sins, but lust can be overcome. Self-control is possible because the power of the gospel is greater than the power of the devil (1Corinthians 9:27; 1John 4:4).