



SOUTHSIDE MIDWEEK NEWSLETTER 4.22.20

The Chosen – Barrett

“This is the best TV show I have ever watched,” exclaimed my daughter, Milbrey Ann, after finishing Episode 7 of *The Chosen*. “I agree,” shouted William, “this is definitely my new favorite TV show.” That is high praise from my youngest two children. Now, I recognize they are not Siskel & Ebert, but their opinions of the new TV series *The Chosen* are valuable. Allow me to explain. Perhaps your evenings have been like mine during this time of quarantine. We’ve had more Family TV/Movie Nights in the last four weeks than in the previous four years combined. I have introduced my children to one of my favorite TV shows as a kid, *The A Team*. After all, what could be better than hearing Hannibal Smith say, “I love it when a plan comes together” after a successful mission? We excitedly watched the first episode of ESPN’s *The Last Dance*. After all, what could be better than re-watching Michael Jordan and his Chicago Bulls win their sixth NBA Championship, especially during this time without live sports. We completed Season 1 of the new Disney TV series *The Mandalorian*. After all, what could be better than a Star Wars TV show, especially one that stars Baby Yoda? But then it happened; we found a show better than all three of the ones I just mentioned. We started watching Season 1 of the TV series *The Chosen*. If you have not heard of it, here is how it is described on its website:

“*The Chosen* is the first-ever-multi-season TV show about the life of Jesus. Created outside the Hollywood system, *The Chosen* allows us to see Him through the eyes of those who knew him. No matter where you are at in your journey with Jesus Christ, this TV show is for you.”

The first season includes eight episodes filled with unforgettable scenes of Jesus calling his disciples to follow Him. You will be moved to tears as you watch such an unlikely cast of characters being chosen by our Lord and Savior. I cannot think of a better reason for you to turn on your TV than to watch *The Chosen*. I give it my highest recommendation. But don’t take my word for it; allow the words of the famous TV critics, Milbrey Ann and William, motivate you to begin watching it tonight. You will be thankful you did.



How to watch *The Chosen*: Watch for free on the mobile app. You can get it at www.thechosen.tv/app or search “The Chosen” in your Apple or Android app store. From the app, you can stream to your TV using another device, such as Roku, Apple TV, or Chromecast.

Note: *The Chosen* is a crowd-funded TV series, so you can purchase a Pay-It-Forward package in the app. This not only gives you lifetime digital access to *The Chosen*, but it helps send streams all over the world to others who may not otherwise have the chance to watch.

Lean In - Kevin

Most of you who are married in our Southside family have heard about Marriage Refreshment, our six week journey of encouraging healthy habits in our marriages. So far we've had over two dozen couples finish (or endure) the class. I have a principle from Marriage Refreshment to share with you today.

My guess is that many of you may be spending more time together as a couple than you ever have since you were dating. My next guess is that at times you've enjoyed this unexpected season and at other times you get a little tired of too much togetherness. In the pre-marital assessment we use for couples, one of the questions is something like this: I believe once we're married, the additional time we spend together will help solve our problems. Most of the time these starry-eyed couples respond with a "strongly agree". Mary and I then have to gently let them know – that's the wrong answer. Spending more time practicing unhealthy patterns in a marriage won't improve things at home. To experience a healthier relationship, we will need to find ways to live out healthier patterns of behavior.

The key phrase we continue to throw out in Marriage Refreshment is "LEAN IN". Leaning in has the potential to change unhealthy behavior and attitudes in our marriages. Leaning in is thinking of our spouse first. Leaning in is meeting a known need or desire before any prompting occurs – or joyfully meeting a need after a prompt. Leaning in is continuing to listen, ask questions, support. Leaning in is creating space for the pursuit of spiritual growth and individual needs. Leaning in is fully embracing the task of knowing one another, getting a PhD in your husband or wife. I need to pursue a PhD in Maryology. Leaning in assures your wife or husband that you are all in, you will always be here, you're this person's greatest fan and they are a treasured gift from God.

So, while you're spending a little more time together, find a few ways to lean in to your wife and to your husband. Also, give some consideration to signing up for the next Marriage Refreshment course. We hope to begin June 7.

A Shepherd's Prayer - Tom

So we've been doing our part to "flatten the curve" and protect one another for several weeks now, and if you're like me, you're eager to be face-to-face with God's family again. One blessing of meeting together two or more times a week is that it makes **encouraging one another** (Acts 14:22, 2 Cor. 13:11, 1 Thess. 4:18, 5:11, 14, Heb. 3:13, 10:25) almost automatic. We see each other, we express our love for one another by smiles, greetings, sharing a few words, listening to each other with a genuine interest— and thanks be to God, we depart mutually encouraged. This is a frequent small miracle and a great blessing. This mutual encouragement is also an essential practice in the Christian faith, souls weighing in the balance (Heb. 3:12-13), requiring way beyond the time and abilities of the church leaders alone. Especially in these crazy times I would encourage all of us to consider how and who we can encourage each and every day that the pandemic keeps us apart, being intentional, genuine, and consistent ("as long as it is called "Today"). Reach out by text, phone, email or letter to those you miss, and to someone you would not ordinarily connect with in this way, because sadly for now, we won't have the luxury of seeing each other at a church service. "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds... encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Heb. 10:24-25).

With this in mind, here is my prayer for us this week: Our wonderful and glorious Father in heaven, we thank you for the blessing of being a part of your family as we go through the trials and joys of this earthly life. With each passing day we recognize, joyfully, that our salvation is through Christ alone, and we desire to be more and more obedient to you in response to your overwhelming grace. Lord, these recent days have presented us with unique challenges and opportunities. Help us to make the most of every opportunity. We stand in amazement at how you can and do work your good will through us, even though we are flawed and frequently miss the opportunities that you put before us. I pray that you would strengthen each one of us by your Spirit to reach out and encourage one another every day. Thank you for the honor of serving you, and for the grace in which we stand. We pray in Jesus name.