

GAME WARDEN CHAPLAIN'S CHAT



"WORDS OF LIFE"

When I was a kid, I had nicknames. Some were cool, like "Snake," and some were not so cool, like "Scotty-Potty," "Scott Rot," and my ultimately hated nickname, "Scott Pot could eat more snot!" The only benefit I have ever been able to find in these names is that because of them, I learned how to fight and protect myself; not a benefit I always used wisely, however. It's strange how in languages we can get so many words out of one "root" word. Take, for instance, the English word "Grace." Look at all the words we use daily that come from this one root word: Gracious, Grateful, Graceful, Graceless (of course, when someone trips, we use the last two synonymously tongue-in-cheek), Grace Period, and even Gracias (though that is Spanish co-opted into Texanish).

χαρις

This word, in New Testament Greek, is pronounced "Karis." I have a niece with this name. Some of the words we get out of it are, "charisma (ability to be liked), charismatic (someone who follows certain "gifts" of the Holy Spirit), or charismatize (to impress or influence others)." Yet, the simple form of the word "Karis" meant "having the ability to empathize with another." To give grace to someone is to be able to look past our own perceptions and their own weaknesses to accept them as valuable people. If you've been watching any news these few weeks, you'll have to agree that our society is long on judgement and short on grace at the moment. It reminds me of Jesus' words, "*Hypocrite! First take the log (judgement) out of your eye, then you will see clearly (give grace) to take the speck out of your brother's eye.*" Matt. 7:5 HCSB. Just a thought.

“Watching Ourselves”

My daughter-in-law is fabulous. She’s a fabulous wife, mother and friend. In fact, she attempts daily to be the best she can be at everything. It’s exasperating!! Not because she is who she is, but because I know I will NEVER measure up to who I want to be. She’s great. I’m, well, adequate at best. However, one thing I’ve learned from her is that I should never be satisfied with where I am.

I have learned so much from her, but probably the most important thing I’ve learned is that SOMEONE cares about me! - not just Kate, but our Lord. He has spent so much time and effort to make sure I am the best I can be. Not just someone with whom He can have a



relationship, but someone with whom he can share the most precious gift He can—Grace!! Sometimes I can get very down on myself. I get judgmental and even sarcastic about my life and the visual clues to my life. In doing so, I see myself only in terms of the “physical,” and not so much as the mental or spiritual. This is a disservice to God. Yes, He’s interested in the physical and mental, but He’s also interested in my eternal, my spiritual. It is because of this that He says, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16, NIV)

“Family Foundations”

Do you remember taking Chemistry? Well, they’ve found two new elements to add to our Periodic Table:

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Element Name: MAN

Symbol: XY

Atomic Weight: (180 +/- 50)

Physical properties: Solid at room temperature, but gets bent out of shape easily. Fairly dense and sometimes flaky. Difficult to find a pure sample. Due to rust & aging, samples are unable to conduct electricity as easily as young samples.

Chemical properties: Attempts to bond with WO any chance it can get. Sometimes becomes explosive when mixed with KD (Element: Child) for prolonged period of time (1 hour).

Usage: None known. Possibly a good methane source.

Caution: In the absence of WO, this element rapidly decomposes and begins to smell.

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Element Name: WOMAN

Symbol: WO

Atomic Weight: (don’t even go there)

Physical properties: Beautiful at any age. Boils at XY and may freeze at anytime. Melts whenever treated properly. Very bitter if mishandled.

Chemical properties: Very active. Highly unstable. Possesses strong affinity with gold, silver, platinum, and precious stones. Volatile when left alone. Able to absorb great amounts of exotic food. Turns slightly green when placed next to shinier specimen.

Usage: Highly valuable at Christmas. An extremely good catalyst for dispersion of wealth. Probably the most powerful income reducing agent known other than KD.

Caution: Highly explosive in inexperienced hands.

Now, I have no idea who came up with these two new elements, or their descriptions. Something tells me the description of WO is probably harsh while the description of XY is more true than we would like to think. You make that call.

The reason I think we even need to know these elements is because they are so prevalent in our world. They are all around us. In fact, many of us have chosen to purposely live with one or the other of these elements. For the most part, we’re happy with that element we live with, but there are times we simply don’t understand why that element exists!

I love the element I live with, very much. Yet, to be honest, there are many times I simply don’t understand the properties of that element. In fact, the properties seem counterintuitive. What I know for sure, is this: The same Creator who gave me the precious elements of gold, silver, engine oil and bacon grease, also gave me the wonderful gift of WO. He also gave me another name for it and a name I’m happy to call it every day: WIFE. You may call yours: HUSBAND.

Behind the Badge: A Personal Interview with AC Cody Jones

The blame for my positions squarely on AC Cody Jones' head! Because of that, I asked him, first, for an interview in case you don't know much about his own personal faith-journey. Here is that short interview:

What does your faith mean to you? My faith is a comfort, a peace and a guide for me daily. Each day brings new challenges and struggles, but my faith in God brings me peace to know that my time and the ways of this world are short, but eternal grace is my reward.

When did you come to this faith? I came to faith at the age of 11, I began to foster my own relationship with God and though struggles have come throughout my life I have trusted in him daily and he has seen me through it.

How does a difficult situation help or hinder your faith? While in Junior High, I experienced the loss of my best friend after a serious PWC accident. Through my faith, I am able see how God has guided me into a position to reduce these tragedies and help others who have experienced similar situations.



Additionally, having married my wife, I had the fortune opportunity to be a brother-in-law to Honey's amazing younger brother Christopher Dugosh, who was born with Cornelia DeLange Syndrome, which left him severely disabled. I have come to realize that this was one of God's ways of preparing our hearts for our third child Cullen Lei Jones who we adopted from China on May 12, 2015. Cullen, who has Albinism which severely affects his vision is legally blind and a blessing to our family.

"For we live by Faith and not by Sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). For it is this Faith, that brings me through difficulty to find the good in all of it.

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I've often told people who ask about faith that faith is like a jump from one level to the next, so to speak. In theological terms we call this, "fideism." It's where reason and logic stop short and we have to take that final leap upwards in order to reach it (faith). Perhaps you have a story, too. We would love to hear it. Let me know!

“A leader is someone who helps improve the lives of other people or improve the system they live under.” — Sam Houston

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