



## Contact Us:

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## Meeting Times:

### Sunday:

Bible Study .....9:45 AM  
Worship .....10:40 AM  
Care, Inc. Service ..... N/A  
Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class ..... N/A  
Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

## Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

## Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... Don Smith

John Barnum

## Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

## Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children  
Gospel Broadcast Network  
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)  
Mission Printing  
Rohan Jones, Africa  
World Bible School

## An Open Letter to New Testament Christians Across the Globe

Dear Brother or Sister in Christ,

Imagine that it is July 19<sup>th</sup>, 64 AD. In the wee hours of the night, you look up into the wealthy district of Rome and you see mansions and temples engulfed in flames. You had heard rumors that the Emperor, Nero, wanted a much grander palace—and you suspect this fire was set deliberately so he could lay claim to the land he wanted. But within just a few days Nero spreads word that it was Christians who were responsible for the fire. You watch as many of your friends and family members are thrown into the arena with wild beast, crucified, or burned alive as living torches.

People you ate with, sang with, and prayed with are dying all around you very violent deaths. Nero finds the members of your congregation an easy target, and so he makes examples of them executing them with lavish publicity. And yet, you continue on—telling people about Jesus. After all, nothing can stop the wonderful news that Jesus brought to a dying world. Imagine hearing someone read Paul's letter to your congregation: "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (Rom. 8:35)*" And so, with renewed zeal and passion, you continue on about His work.

Fast-forward 1956 years, to the year 2020. Nero and his persecution of the church have faded into the past. The church has spread to most nations across the globe. And yet, the sweet message of Jesus has become quiet—almost silent—across the world.

Instead, it has been replaced by talk of a virus.

Instead, it has been replaced by divisions over masks.

Instead, it has been replaced by speculations of a vaccine.

Instead, it has been replaced by divisions over an election.

Instead, it has been replaced by cancel culture.

Instead, it has been replaced by social media posts and memes.

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Please practice COVID precautions,  
for your own safety and the safety of your brethren.**

Let us know if you want to study  
the Bible to know more about  
Christ and His Church.

(Continued from page 1)

Instead, it has been replaced by civil rights and racial justice.

Instead, it has been replaced by black lives matter.

Instead, it has been replaced by sex trafficking and porn addiction.

Instead, it has been replaced by talk of the roller coaster stock market.

Instead, it has been replaced by who has been elected in Washington D.C.

Instead, it has been replaced by unemployment and stimulus checks.

Instead, it has been replaced by protests and riots.

Instead, it has been replaced by division over the supreme court.

Instead, it has been replaced by news media that desires to control the public.

Instead, it has been replaced by fear of physical death.

The Good News of Jesus has stopped this year because Christians are divided, we have taken our eyes off of Christ, and we have set aside His commands until the pandemic ends. We have made bitter lines of division over whether we should gather together for worship or worship virtually. We have started worrying more about the physical health of people rather than spiritual health. We have said cruel and hurtful things or cast disparaging glances over whether someone was wearing a mask or not. And in doing so, we now resemble the very world we are supposed to be reaching out to. All the while Satan laughs.

Simply put, we have forgotten that it is not about us. It's ALL about Him, and Him alone. Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let

him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matt. 16:24). Wearing a mask or not wearing a mask does not make you a "better" Christian. Nothing we do compares to what Christ did on the cross! Kneeling for BLM events or not kneeling will not affect our salvation. It's not about whether or not you've been vaccinated. It's about taking up your cross and following after Jesus—the One who took your sins to His own cross.

Allow me to bring to your mind a few Scriptures that I pray you will honestly meditate on this week. I beg you to evaluate your own life in light of God's inspired Word:

**"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you..."** (Matt. 28:19-20).

**"When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, 'Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it'"** (Mark 8:34-35).

**"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"** (Matt. 10:28).

**"Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, 'Write: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them'"** (Rev. 14:13).

**"For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"** (2 Cor. 5:1).

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**Television**

In Search of the Lord's Way (Phil Sanders)  
Sunday @ 7:30am on KTAB  
Life In The Light (Chris McCurley)  
Sunday @ 10:00am on KTAB

**Radio**

Preaching the Word (Michael Light)  
Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3

**Internet**

TheGospelRadioNetwork.org  
Gospel Broadcasting Network (Gbnv.org)

**God's Plan for Redeeming Man**

**Hear** Learn the saving message of Christ's sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17).  
**Believe** Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24)  
**Confess** Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33)  
**Repent** of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5)  
Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being **baptized** for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)  
**Live faithfully** (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)

**Bible Reading Schedule**

[video.wvbs.org/access/interactive-bible-reading-plan/](http://video.wvbs.org/access/interactive-bible-reading-plan/)

**Dec. 27** Zechariah 4—6; Proverbs 27  
**Dec. 28** Zechariah 7—9; Proverbs 28  
**Dec. 29** Zechariah 10—12; Prov. 29  
**Dec. 30** Zechariah 13—14; Prov. 30  
**Dec. 31** Malachi; Proverbs 31  
**Jan. 1** Matthew 1—4; Ps. 1 (videos)  
**Jan. 2** Matthew 5—7; Ps. 2 (video)  
**Jan. 3** Matthew 8—10; Ps. 3 (video)

*"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

(2 Timothy 2:15)



**Visitation Meeting**

- ◆ Last week **30** contacts were made.

**Announcements**

- ◆ Due to the continued presence of the COVID virus within the congregation, the schedule will remain the same at least through the first week of January. It will be reevaluated on a week by week basis. For now, we will continue to **assemble for Sunday morning worship only**. The worship assembly, as well Sunday evening and Wednesday evening lessons, will be live-streamed over our Facebook group.
- ◆ **Please continue to practice common sense prevention measures.** (Wear mask, limit personal contact, social distance, use hand sanitizers, etc.)
- ◆ Continue to pray for the church and our country.

**Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart**

- ◆ March 14-17—Spring Gospel Meeting w/ Jon McCormack

*(Continued from page 2)*

**“For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s”** (Rom. 14:8).

**“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ”** (Phil. 3:18-20).

**“So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord”** (2 Cor. 5:6-8).

Church it is time we take up our swords once again, be unified, and behave as though we really crave heaven. Do you long to be with Jesus? There is no telling how much damage we have done to the body of Christ (and future generations of our children) by demonstrating to the world we are scared of death and would prefer to stay in this present world. If Christians in Rome under Nero can spread the Good News under fear of crucifixion and being burned alive, then certainly we can keep it going during a pandemic. Take up your cross and follow after Him. Not when the pandemic is over. Not when the vaccine has reached 75% of the population. Not when people agree with your political or social views. Take up your cross TODAY and follow after Him!

May our great God be merciful and gracious for our apathy and fear.

I love you—and I long to be with you in heaven,

*Brad Harrub (focuspress.org)*

**Celebrate**

*“Rejoice with those who rejoice...” (Romans 12:15)*

**January Birthdays:** Kyle Duaine (11), Rachel Smith, (15), Bruce Blasingame (16), Bennie White (16), Tom Wilcox (17), Jaceten Evetts (20), Mattison Churchwell (25), Jacey Dennard (27), Charles White (30).

**January Anniversaries:** None.

*Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...*



**Records**

	Dec. 13, 2020	Dec. 20, 2020
Bible Class	—	—
AM Worship	33 + [18]	30 + (14)
PM Worship	[22]	[16]
Wednesday PM	[17]	[16]
Contribution	\$2,389	\$1,567

	This Week: 12/27/20	Next Week: 1/3/21		
<b>Sunday AM:</b>	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox	Song Leader: James Fuller	<p><b>December 2020</b>  <b>Make Announcements:</b>                      James Fuller  <b>Prepare Communion:</b>                      Tom &amp; Carol Wilcox  <b>Clean Building:</b>                      Randy &amp; Laura Huckaby</p> <p><b>January 2021</b>  <b>Make Announcements:</b>                      Don Smith  <b>Prepare Communion:</b>                      Barnum  <b>Clean Building:</b>                      Barnum</p>	
<b>Greeters</b>	_____	_____		
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Johnny McCaghren	John Barnum		
<b>Communion</b>	Dex Dennard*, Coyce Reed	Randy Huckaby*; Kyle Duaine		
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Don Smith	Ryan Rudloff		
<b>Attendance Cards</b>	_____	_____		
<b>Sunday PM:</b>	Online	Online		
<b>Opening Prayer</b>				
<b>Scripture Reading</b>				
<b>Communion</b>				
<b>Closing Prayer</b>				
<b>Wednesday Devotionals:</b>	December 30 Online	January 6 Online	January 13 TBD	January 20 TBD

## Search the Scriptures

Be like the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

### Studies for the week of December 27, 2020

Sunday Class ..... **Cancelled**  
 Wed. Class ..... **Exodus 30:11**

#### Sin

##### I. What is Sin?

- A. Anyone who seeks to do the will of God ought to know what sin is and that the wages of sin is death, i.e., spiritual separation from God (Rom. 6:23; Isa. 59:1-2).
- B. There are various words used in the Greek NT to describe sin.
- C. Sin is the breaking or transgression of the law (1 Jn. 3:4); lawlessness.
- D. Sin is not only doing what God forbids; it is also the failure to do what God demands of us (Jas. 4:17).

##### II. Various Kinds of Sin.

- A. **Worldliness:** *lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and pride of life* (1 Jn. 2:15-17).
- B. **Works of the Flesh** (Gal 5:19-21).
- C. **Wicked deeds** (1 Cor. 6:9-10).
- D. **Godlessness and wickedness** (Rom. 1:18-32).
- E. **Deeds of Darkness** (Eph. 5:1-12).
- F. **Earthly Deeds.**
- G. **Godlessness in the last days** (2 Tim. 3:2-8, 13).
- H. **Sexual Sins:** Sexual Immorality; Adultery; Homosexuality; Incest; Bestiality; Lust/Lasciviousness.
- I. **Sins of the Heart** (Prov. 4:23; Mt. 12:34-35; 15:19): Anger; Partiality; Envy/Jealousy; Prejudice; Thanklessness; Pride/Arrogance; Selfish Ambition; Bitterness/Revenge; Greed/the Love of Money.
- J. **Sins of the Tongue:** Lying; Gossip/Slander/Blasphemy/Busybodies; Angry Outbursts/Unjust Criticism/Ridicule; Idle Talk; Profanity; Sowing Discord; Boasting.

##### III. What Sin Will Do.

- A. **There are always consequences to sin.**
- B. **Sin causes us to lie to ourselves.**
  - 1. Men have always thought that sin should be softened.
  - 2. "Do not be deceived..." (1 Cor. 6:9; 15:33; Gal. 6:7; 1 Jn. 1:8).
- C. **Sin Brings Punishment** (Gen. 3:17-18; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:56; Rom. 6:23).

It is because of our sin problem that the Gospel is such "good news!"

"...**but** the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23b).

"And such were some of you. **But** you were washed, **but** you were sanctified, **but** you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

#### The Sermon on the Mount: Introduction and Setting

"The Sermon on the Mount is probably the best-known part of the teaching of Jesus, though arguably it is the least understood, and certainly it is the least obeyed. It is the nearest thing to a manifesto that He ever uttered, for it is His own description of what He wanted His followers to be and to do."

The Sermon on the Mount abounds in contrasts. The first half features contrasts between what the Jews had been taught and what Jesus taught. The second half is characterized by contrasts between the two ways a man can choose to go.

##### I. How do we approach the Sermon on the Mount?

- A. How others have approached it.
  1. Interim Ethic Approach.
  2. Existential (Demythological) Approach.
  3. Legalistic Approach.
  4. Preparation for the Gospel (Lutheran view).
  5. Liberal Approach.
  6. Dispensationalist Approach.
  7. Christological Approach.

B. May I suggests instead: It calls to the church; points to heaven; pierces your soul; cries for Calvary; requires reality; and pictures Jesus.

##### II. How do we understand the differences between Matthew and Luke?

- A. Like Matthew 5-7, Luke 6:17-49 (1) begins with "Beatitudes," (2) ends with the wise and foolish builder, (3) contains the golden rule, commands to love our enemy and turn the other cheek, prohibitions against judging, and the illustrations of a log/speck in the eye and a tree and its fruit, and (4) is followed by the account of Jesus going into Capernaum.

- B. However, there are marked differences. (1) Both sermons contain information the other does not have. (2) Matthew contains 107 verses, Luke only has 30. (3) Luke's beatitudes are strictly physical, Matthew's are spiritual. (4) Matthew's was delivered on a mountain, Luke's on a plain.
- C. This was likely the same basic sermon, preached on two different occasions.

##### III. The Setting of the Sermon (Mt. 5:1-2; Lk. 6:17-19).

- A. Jesus had just chosen His 12 apostles to carry on His work after His death.
- B. He was addressing a Jewish audience during the Jewish Dispensation.
- C. Jesus has to go up on a mountainside because of the crowds.