

# 4th & Stewart church of Christ

"...upon this rock I will build my church;  
and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."  
~ Matthew 16:18



March 13, 2016

## Contact Us:

3201 4th Street  
Brownwood, TX 76801

325-646-7102

www.4thstreetcoc.org  
office@4thstreetcoc.org

## Meeting Times:

### Sunday:

Bible Study .....9:45 AM  
Worship .....10:40 AM  
Care, Inc. Service .... 2:30 PM  
Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class.10:00 AM  
Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

## Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

## Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... Don Smith

James Thomas

## Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

## Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children  
Gospel Broadcast Network  
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)  
House to House, Heart to Heart  
Mission Printing  
Rohan Jones, Africa  
The Truth in Love  
World Bible School

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

## “Why Am I Here?” (Part 5)

*"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup>Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ... <sup>5</sup>I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ... <sup>8</sup>By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."* (John 15:1-8)


In considering some of the biblical answers to the question "Why am I here?" we come now to a concluding, and *vital* thought: I am present in the world in order to please God *by bearing fruit in His kingdom*. In the passage above, John reveals that, while we enjoy a new life from the Christ, through His word, we stand in danger of being "**cut off**" if we do not bear fruit! Even those branches which do bear fruit will be "pruned" by God, so that they can produce even more fruit in the kingdom! If the "seed" of God's kingdom is His word (and it is, Luke 8:11), and we are the "increase" of its being planted (as in 1 Cor. 3:6), then one of the basic reasons our Father invested so much time and effort in us is so that we can multiply that investment (note the parable of the soils in Luke 8 - in the *good ground*, the seed was multiplied many times over).

The apostle Paul urges Christians to "*walk worthily of the Lord*" in Colossians 1:10, and thus be fruitful in every good work, and increase in the knowledge of God. He likewise encouraged the Galatian Christians (and hence, us) to cultivate in their lives the "fruit of the spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23), thereby showing us what sort of qualities in our lives will be pleasing to God. In a complementary passage, the apostle Peter admonishes saints to build into our lives the traits we have come to know as the "Christian graces" (2 Peter 1:5-8), promising that if we do, we will be "*...neither useless or unfruitful...*" (NASB) in the knowledge of our Lord.

In Mark 4:3-9 we have one of the records of the parable of the sower (or, of the *soils*), followed in vv. 14-20 by Jesus' direct explanation of it. While our "job" as Christians is to "sow the seed" of the kingdom, at the same time we all fall into one of the four soil categories ourselves, whether the hard-packed "wayside" ground, the stony, the weedy (thistles), or the good ground. Jesus pointed out in His explanation of the parable that the type of "soil" into which the seed of His word falls largely determines how that person will respond to it. What He leaves unsaid is that *each one of us is able to choose which kind of "ground" we want to be!* Yet only the "**good ground**" hearts *ever* manage to bear fruit! All the others are distracted, or lack the patience to see the word through to fruition, and thus become lost. We are only truly edified when **and IF** we make our hearts into fertile "soil," ready to receive the word of God, which is able to save our souls (Jas. 1:21).

Our heavenly Father as indeed been "mindful" of us, giving us the gift of His Son. The challenge we must face every day is whether or not we will serve **Him**, or abandon the "most excellent way" of salvation in Jesus Christ!

*Dave Rogers, The Midtown Messenger, 9/26/2004 (midtowncoc.org)*

 "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;...inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace." **Phil. 1:3-7**

# The Importance of “Small” Churches

Last week a rather large controversy spread like wildfire across Christian corners of the internet, as a rather interesting sermon video went viral. Andy Stanley, a well-known author and leader of a 30,000-plus member, multi-campus megachurch, caused the stir by making some questionable comments about small churches.

“When I hear adults say ‘Well I don’t like a big church, I like about 200, I want to be able to know everybody,’ I say ‘You are so stinking selfish. You care nothing about the next generation. All you care about is you and your five friends. You don’t care about your kids, anybody else’s kids... If you don’t go to a church large enough where you can have enough middle schoolers and high schoolers to separate them so they can have small groups and grow up the local church, you are a selfish adult.”

Stanley has since posted an apology to Twitter and given an interview in Christianity Today to reverse his comments, and so I don’t want to make him the villain here. However, that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t examine these comments, mainly because I’ve seen this very attitude in the church. Thousands of Christians and families drive by multiple small churches every week in order to go to the big church for the very reason Stanley advocated for big churches. I understand that doctrine is the biggest consideration, and I understand the importance of finding a fit, but so many times the appeal of the large churches over the small have very little to do with those things.

Before discussing why small churches are important, I should point out that I don’t want to make the same mistake by demonizing large churches. Large churches have opportunities for outreach and financial support of mission works that small churches can’t even begin to imagine, and they have a number of other beneficial qualities. Instead, I want to focus on the value of small local churches, some of the advantages they hold, and why they aren’t detrimental to youth faithfulness. As a preacher for a congregation well under that arbitrary “200,” I can tell you that small churches offer great value in a number of ways.

## Family

One of the very things Stanley used in his case against small churches is one of the strongest qualities they have to offer. Whereas larger churches can cause people to get lost in the shuffle, or allow them to be almost completely anonymous and disengaged from the life of the church, that’s much more rare at small churches. No matter the church size, those close-knit rela-

tionships need to be a part of the church, and why this would be a strike against small churches is beyond me. The closer we are, the more we have opportunity to “bear one another’s burdens” ([Galatians 6:1](#)) and encourage one another in the faith ([Hebrews 3:12-15](#)).

## Chance to serve

What Stanley was getting at was a very dangerous attitude toward church involvement that is (unfortunately) held by millions of people today. Our attitude, to paraphrase President John F. Kennedy, should be, “Ask not what your church can do for you, ask what you can do for your church.” Millions of people in America have been sucked into the consumer-driven model for churches, where the church promises them all kinds of different services and asks nothing of them in return. That’s exactly the way many people choose their church home. Unless the churches with all-inclusive, age-segregated, specifically-targeted ministries, are careful in how they build a church family, young people can be deprived of the opportunity to mix with the wiser spiritual mentors who are available to them, along with being limited in their opportunities to serve. In smaller churches, the opportunities to serve begin the day one is baptized. The insinuation that small churches make young people hate the church is just crazy.

## Location

If young families aren’t supposed to be attending small churches, then it’s merely a matter of time before those congregations die out. And if they die out, that means everybody is going to be driving 20-30 minutes to the big church... and the potential to serve and reach out to people in every neighborhood and community in between will suffer. Being a part of a small church in a small community has opened my eyes to the amount of opportunities that would simply fall through the cracks if we all started driving into town to go to the big churches. Think about how much more difficult it is to invite a neighbor to church if that means an hour round trip. If the church is going to have a global vision, we have to take up the “go into all the world” commission – that includes small local communities – instead of the “if you build it, they will come” model of church growth.

Churches both small and large have their own unique advantages and potential drawbacks. Our concern should not be the size of our churches. Our concern should be whether our churches are acting as God would have them act, and whether we each individually have the proper attitude toward our relationship with the church.

*Jack Wilkie (focuspressblog.com)*

## Television

[The Truth In Love](#) (Robert Dodson)

Sunday @ 7:00am on KTAB

[In Search of the Lord’s Way](#) (Phil Sanders)

Sunday @ 7:30am on KTAB

[Life In The Light](#) (Chris McCurley)

Sunday @ 10:30am 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

**Mar. 13** Hebrews 2-4

**Mar. 14** Hebrews 5-7

**Mar. 15** Hebrews 8-10

**Mar. 16** Hebrews 11-13

**Mar. 17** James 1-3

**Mar. 18** James 4—1 Peter 1

**Mar. 19** 1 Peter 2-5

**Mar. 20** 2 Peter 1-3

*“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)



“Old Time

Gospel Singing”

March 26, 2016 6:00pm

Remember the Singings we used to have?  
Let's start a new (old) tradition!

4th & Stewart church of Christ  
3201 Fourth Street  
Brownwood, Texas

Gospel Meeting

March 27-30, 2016

“Great Things About Christianity”

4th & Stewart church of Christ  
3201 Fourth Street  
Brownwood, Texas

Service Times & Topics

Saturday (3/26)	6:00pm	Old Time Gospel Singing
Sunday	9:45am	The Greatest Love
	10:40am	The Greatest Book
	6:00pm	The Greatest Chapter
Monday	7:00pm	The Greatest Verse
Tuesday	7:00pm	The Greatest Mission
Wednesday	7:00pm	The Greatest Decisions

Lunch will be provided after services Sunday Morning.  
Snacks & fellowship after Monday & Tuesday evening services.

Celebrate

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

**March Birthdays:** Jonathan Fuller (2/28), Ken Maninger (4), Allen Griffith (20), Mileen Kahlich (21), James Thomas (23), Jessica Stultz (28).

**March Anniversaries:** James & Cindy Fuller (2), Randy & Laura Huckaby (23), Tom & Carol Wilcox (23).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Feb. 28, 2016	Mar. 6, 2016
Bible Class	54	44
AM Worship	59	77
PM Worship	40	42
Wednesday PM	43	49
Contribution	\$2,057	\$2,537

# Privileged To Serve

"...be ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1)

This Week: 3/13/16		Next Week: 3/20/16		March 2016	
<b>Sunday AM:</b>		Song Leader: Mike Bannister		Song Leader: Mike Bannister	
<b>Greeters</b>	Mileen & Ashley Kahlich	John Barnum Family		<b>Make Announcements:</b> John Barnum	
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Allen Griffith	Gene Bannister		<b>Prepare Communion:</b> Tom & Carol Wilcox	
<b>Communion</b>	Randy Huckaby*, Tom Wilcox Hank Wheeler, Ryan Rudloff	Joe Dennis*, Caleb Dennis Ken Maninger, Chase Churchwell		<b>Clean Building:</b> Fuller / Stultz	
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Gene Bannister	James Fuller		<b>Hostess Committee:</b> Cindy McCaghren's group	
<b>Attendance Cards</b>	Jaceten Evetts	Chase Churchwell		<b>April 2016</b>	
<b>Sunday PM:</b>		Song Leader: James Fuller		Song Leader: Tom Wilcox	
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	John Barnum	Don Smith		<b>Make Announcements:</b> James Fuller	
<b>Scripture Reading</b>	Don Smith	Allen Griffith		<b>Prepare Communion:</b> Allen & Linda Griffith	
<b>Communion</b>	Randy Huckaby	Joe Dennis		<b>Clean Building:</b> M&P Bannister / Greer	
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Ken Maninger	Hank Wheeler		<b>Hostess Committee:</b> Jessica Stultz's group	
<b>Wednesday Devotionals:</b>	March 16 Joe Dennis	March 23 Allen Griffith	March 30 Gospel Meeting	April 6 Prayer Night	

## 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 March 13, 2016

Sunday Class ..... Michael Stock—Philippines Missions Work  
Wednesday Class ..... Authority & Inspiration of the Bible

<u>Fellowship in the Gospel (Phil. 1:5)</u>	<u>Commonly Held False Doctrines Concerning God</u>
<p>I. Fellowship in the Gospel (1:5).</p> <p>A. A Christian life is a life that is in fellowship with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit – and all others in fellowship with the Godhead (1 John 1:3-7).</p> <p>B. "Fellowship," <i>koinonia</i>, can be defined as partnership, joint participation, financial contribution, etc.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This fellowship had begun when Paul and Silas visited Philippi on the second missionary journey.</li> <li>It continued as Paul travelled to Thessalonica, Corinth, etc., and even to Paul's present imprisonment.</li> </ol> <p>II. Fellowship in the Spirit (2:1).</p> <p>A. Fellowship in the gospel was made possible by the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>B. Paul stresses the overall subject of unity in Christ: "being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind..." (2:2).</p> <p>C. They did have wonderful fellowship in the kingdom.</p> <p>D. The miraculous gifts united them in Christ.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of those gifts was to reveal the truth and to demonstrate that the message was of God (Heb. 2:1-3).</li> <li>The miraculous was to last till the "perfect" was come.</li> </ol> <p>E. Christians still have that fellowship from the Spirit through the "perfect law of Liberty" (James 1:25).</p> <p>III. Fellowship in Labor (2:20-24).</p> <p>A. Being in Christ brings a much cherished companionship in His service.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul had a deep appreciation and concern for the church in Philippi, and was disheartened not knowing how they were.</li> <li>His hope was to send Timothy to Philippi, so calm his fears.</li> </ol> <p>B. Timothy was an unusually fine young man, who was courageous, unselfish, and unwaveringly loyal to the cause of Christ.</p> <p>C. The young man Timothy and the apostle were companions in labor.</p> <p>IV. Fellow Soldiers in Christ (2:25).</p> <p>A. We are soldiers in the middle of battle.</p> <p>B. Both Paul and Epaphroditus were true soldiers.</p> <p>C. Our Captain is Jesus Christ.</p> <p>D. Let us, like Paul, Epaphroditus, and Timothy, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim. 6:12).</p> <p>May we also so live as to receive that crown.</p>	<p>I. Some teach there is only one person in the Godhead.</p> <p>A. Arguments for only one person in the Godhead.</p> <p>B. Arguments for three persons in the Godhead.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scriptures which clearly show the usage of the word "one." <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gen. 2:24 "a man...joined to his wife...<u>one</u> flesh"</li> <li>Gen. 11:6 "the people are <u>one</u>..."</li> <li>Gen. 41:1,5,25 "The dreams of Pharaoh are <u>one</u>"</li> <li>John 17:21-22 "that they all may be <u>one</u>...<u>one</u> in Us...<u>one</u> just as We are <u>one</u>"</li> </ol> </li> <li>The "Oneness" doctrine contradicts the following passages: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Cor. 15:24 "<u>He</u> (Christ) delivers the kingdom <u>to God the Father</u>."</li> <li>Acts 2:24 "<u>whom</u> (Jesus of Nazareth [v. 22]) <u>God raised up</u>"</li> <li>John 16:16 "<u>I go to the Father</u>"</li> <li>John 1:18 "No one has seen <u>God</u>... The only begotten <u>Son</u>...<u>He</u> has declared <u>Him</u>"</li> <li>John 4:34 "<u>My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me</u>"</li> <li>John 6:38 "<u>I have come...not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me</u>"</li> <li>Heb. 5:8-10 "a <u>Son</u>...called by God as High Priest"</li> <li>Heb. 9:14 "...the blood of <u>Christ</u>...through the eternal <u>Spirit</u> offered Himself...to <u>God</u>"</li> <li>John 15:1 "<u>I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser</u>"</li> <li>John 12:49 "...the Father who sent Me gave Me a command..."</li> <li>Matt 24:36 "...that day and hour no one knows...but My Father only"</li> <li>John 14:28 "<u>I am going to the Father, for My Father is greater than I</u>"</li> </ol> </li> <li>Passages that mention the Father and the Son: Matt. 11:27; Mark 13:32; John 3:35; 5:20,23; 2 John 9; Heb. 10:5. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is Jesus deity? Heb. 1:8; John 1:1-3,14</li> </ol> </li> <li>Passages which mention all three in the Godhead: 2 Cor. 13:14; Matt. 28:19; 1 John 5:7.</li> </ol> <p>II. Some teach that there are many gods.</p> <p>III. Some teach that we can become gods.</p> <p>IV. Some teach that God was once a man.</p> <p>V. Some teach that we cannot know for sure that God exists.</p>