

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



July 3, 2016

Contact Us:

3201 4th Street
Brownwood, TX 76801
325-646-7102
www.4thstreetcoc.org
office@4thstreetcoc.org

Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study9:45 AM
Worship10:40 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.

POLECATS IN THE PARLOR

The late evangelist Billy Sunday is reported to have said, "Put a polecat in the parlor: which changes first? Parlor or polecat?" Please permit me to define a couple of words before I seek to make application of "Billy's bold assertion." A "polecat" is a sophisticated way of referring to a skunk. It is unlikely that folks in Texas and Oklahoma have heard such elevated terminology to refer to that little fury scavenger that few have ever seen up close except in their efforts to dodge the remains of what some poor unfortunate driver left in his tracks for you to thus endure. A "parlor" could refer to any meeting place where the air has a sweet aroma, produced by artificial air fresheners, perfumed women, and men with a heavy dose of "Old Spice" or "Brute" cologne. Now, try to imagine, if you will, just such a "parlor" that has been invaded by one of our West Texas skunks—it does not take a lot of imagination to envision the outcome, not to mention the hasty retreat of those in the parlor upon the arrival of the polecat, i.e. "skunk." One need not be a Solomon to realize that there have been some mighty drastic changes in the past thirty years with regard to the thinking and behavior of the Western world. There is little doubt that radical changes in sociology, politics, and even religion, have opened the door for polecats to invade the parlor. Consider the following.

First, in the realm of judicial expediency, swift and prudent punishment of the evil doer has been replaced with a greater respect for the criminal than the victim. Crooked lawyers, liberal judges, and a silent population have combined to produce a polecat in the parlor that is simply unbearable to those who have in years gone by enjoyed the sweet fragrance of judicial and social uprightness. The polecats of the liberal left have hijacked our constitution, harassed the law-abiding citizens, and hood-winked the people. All that remains is a stench of a political system that, in many cases, is as strong and repulsive as the road kill on our Texas highways. A case in point is the recent decision at the Department of Justice to expunge all references to Islam, jihadism, or "radical Islam" from the transcript of the recent event in Orlando, Florida—all in the name of political correctness. The common man wonders what has happened to the sweet aroma of judicial prudence that serves as a solid foundation of the nation for whom those judges serve.

Second, when it comes to ethics and morality, some things once labeled as "sin" have become socially and religiously acceptable. It used to be that adultery and fornication were abhorred, homosexuality was an absolute "no-no," gambling a vice, and drunkenness a shame to society. But the "polecats" have gotten into the parlor, and you can guess which has suffered. Men now glory in their ungodly behavior. "Gay pride," and "good times" have robbed our society of that pure and fresh aroma of moral decency that once filled our spiritual nostrils with a sense of moral integrity and righteousness. Indeed the moral consensus of our land is not what it used to be. In light of this it is refreshing to come across a news item that gives some glimmer of hope to a nation that has allowed the "polecats" to run rampant. I came across a little item on Fox news website this week that reported a sharp increase in the last ten years of teens who chose sexual abstinence over promiscuity. May their number increase.

Third, the "polecats" have made a stench of the sacred institution of marriage. Some no longer view marriage as a viable institution. Others chose to enter marriage, but not as a life long commitment. Still others have perverted the Biblical arrangement, calling for variety of family styles, including but not limited to same-sex marriage, multiple partners, and in one case, marriage of a man to his horse! The list goes on, but a "polecat" by any other name is still a polecat.

Finally, the "polecats" have infiltrated the realm of the sacred and holy. Modern day

(Continued on page 3)

"As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him. For who is God, except the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God? It is God who arms me with strength, and makes my way perfect." **Psalm 18:30-32**



A Secular Nation or One Nation Under God?

For some folks, nothing could be contemplated that would be more boring than reading or studying history. That is not the case for me. I enjoy reading history. It is fascinating to read and understand how people in the past lived their lives and dealt with the problems they faced. To know history is to know ourselves, because we are where we are and what we are due to the events and people that make up our own history.

There is no more exciting story of history than the story of the founding of the United States of America. July 4th of every year gives us the opportunity to celebrate the beginning of our country as 56 men declared *“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”*

That Declaration of Independence concludes with this powerful pledge *“And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.”* And so the path was chosen for the British colonies to become a free and independent nation. But it was not to be an easy path. The story of their struggles and the fortunes they sacrificed is one that all citizens should be familiar with.

But all too often, revisionist historians have neglected to tell the story of what those 56 men and many others sacrificed to give us the land of the free and the home of the brave. Of particular concern is the revisionist purpose to convince modern Americans that these men set out to establish a purely secular society, devoid of any religious influence or presence. We learn such is not the case when the facts are examined. When they are, it becomes clear these were men who believed in God and regarded themselves as Christians who sought the will of God in their lives and the life of the country they were hoping to establish.

The case can almost be made by a casual examination of the above two quotes from the founding document signed by such founding fathers as Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Adams, John Adams, John Hancock, Benjamin Franklin and others. These men signed their names and pledged all they had and their sacred honor in support of a document that declared the rights for which they were willing to fight and die came from their Creator. This was self-evident. No argument needed to establish these self-evident truths. Would these men so pledge if they did not believe in a Creator?

They concluded their declaration by signing their names to a plea for protection by divine Providence. Many have claimed these men were Deists. A Deist believes in a Supreme being, but the god of

the Deist is a god who is uninvolved in the world he created. The classic description of the god of the Deist is of a god who created the world and then left it to its own devices. He is likened to a clockmaker who would wind up a clock and then leave it to run down without further concern. But if these men believed that, why look to this Creator who grants the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to guard those rights or protect those who sought them through His providence? The god of the Deist would have no interest in so doing. But the God of the Bible is a God who is seen in the scriptures as a God who is providentially involved in the lives of His people.

Even more telling are the words of some of the founders themselves. John Quincy Adams, son of John Adams, and sixth president of the United States said the following in speeches celebrating the signing of the Declaration of Independence: *“From the day of the Declaration, the people of the North American Union and of its constituent states were associated bodies of civilized men and Christians... They were bound by the laws of God, which they all, and by the laws of the gospel, which they nearly all, acknowledge as the rules of their conduct...”* (1821)

“The Declaration of Independence cast off the shackles of this (British) dependency. The United States of America were no longer colonies. They were an independent nation of Christians.” (1837)

In 1892, in a decision in the case "Church of the Holy Trinity verses the United States," the Supreme Court of the United States made the following statement: *“These, and many other matters which might be noticed, add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that this is a Christian nation...”*

Finally, consider the words of our first and arguably our greatest President, George Washington, in his famous farewell address: *“Of all the dispositions and habits which led to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports... And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government.”*

A secular nation devoid of religious influence where God is not welcome in its hallowed halls or public places? When we examine a few facts we can easily see such a conviction is not consistent with the facts of history. Let us pray that our great nation will once again find its roots and again draw from them the strength that made it the greatest nation the world has ever seen.

Michael D. Greene

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

July 3	Matthew 7-9
July 4	Matthew 10-12
July 5	Matthew 13-15
July 6	Matthew 16-18
July 7	Matthew 19-21
July 8	Matthew 22-24
July 9	Matthew 25-26
July 10	Matthew 27-28

“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

- ◆ Each Sunday night immediately before the evening worship. Last week **25 contacts** were made.

Announcements

- ◆ **Fellowship Meal** following this morning’s worship.
- ◆ **Summer Youth Series** Tuesday evening at Dublin.
- ◆ **Ladies Meeting**—Tuesday evening @ 6:00—Jessica’s house (1601 Austin Avenue)—planning session for Ladies’ Day.

Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

- ◆ August 9—We host area Summer Youth Series.
- ◆ October 16-19—Fall Gospel Meeting with Jacob Rutledge.
- ◆ October 29—2nd Annual Ladies Day.

Other Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ July 15-17—Gospel Meeting @ Smithfield (Ft. Worth)—“Cross Examination: Examining the Testimony of the Witnesses” Tavaris Armstrong.
- ◆ July 16—Ladies’ Day @ Smithfield—“A Study of Psalm 51” Sandi Smith.
- ◆ July 17-22—Senior Camp
- ◆ August 5-7—Discipleship U.—Dripping Springs, TX.
- ◆ August 19-25—Polishing The Pulpit—Sevierville, TN.
- ◆ Sept. 10—Teacher’s Workshop @ Cleburne.
- ◆ Sept. 16-18—5th & Grape Lectureship
- ◆ Oct. 1—Ladies Day @ Dublin.
- ◆ Oct. 6-8—Texas Ladies for Christ Retreat [Brady]
- ◆ Oct. 9-12—Lubbock Lectures
- ◆ Oct. 9-12—Homecoming Lectureship @ Rising Star
- ◆ Oct. 27-29—ACS Class: “The Bible and Archaeology” (Dewayne Bryant)—Dripping Springs, TX

(Continued from page 1)

“televangelists” as well as the hypocritical religious elite have wrecked havoc upon the word of God. John has told us to “try the spirits, for many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). I wonder if Billy Sunday had this inspired passage in mind when he asked the question about the “polecats in the parlor”? It is incredible the naivety of the human race. It seems the more ridiculous a religion, the more the unbelieving and ignorant are anxious to embrace its tenants. The Bible speaks of such as those who have closed their spiritual eyes and ears to the truth. But can I be so bold as to suggest that such masses of deluded souls suffer from some kind of spiritual sinus infection in which they simply cannot (or will not) smell the stench of error that is repulsive to our God and truth loving men and women! Tragically, religious perversion has done more to discredit Christianity in the eyes of an unbelieving world, than perhaps any other single effort on the part of Satan. During my first visit to Russia in September of 1993 I was asked on more than one occasion what I thought about a certain “prophet” who had predicted the world would end in November of that year. Curiously, I had also been asked a similar question on our trip in 1994 on a prophecy of the second coming in November of THAT year. Well, we are all aware of the fact that Jesus did not come in 1993 OR 1994. Brother Duncan made some very significant remarks about the effect of such foolishness upon those who have never taken the time to investigate the Christian faith. He wrote, “Is it any wonder that so many intelligent people reject anything that claims to be based on the Bible? When people claiming belief in God and allegiance to the Bible take such ridiculous positions, it causes people who are unfamiliar with the Bible to think the Bible is a ridiculous book.” You and I enjoy the fragrance of Christianity as it should be. Too bad some of the “polecats” have infiltrated some of our congregations and made a mess of all that is holy.

Before I leave this “stinkn” article with you, maybe a word needs to be said about the gradual desensitization that is taking place in our country, yea the world. A skunk evidently has become so accustomed to his odor that it does not seem to bother him in the least. I have been told that someone who lives with the animals soon grows accustomed to the smell. What really scares me is the fact that too many politicians, social workers, and so-called religious leaders have grown accustomed to the stench that has been left by the polecats in the parlor!

Tom Wacaster

Celebrate

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

July Birthdays: Laura Huckaby (6), Jason Warman (6), Chase Churchwell (11), Cindy Fuller (12), John Barnum (26), Jack Hill (26).

July Anniversaries: Allen & Karen Bland (27).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	June 19, 2016	June 26, 2016
Bible Class	44	38
AM Worship	67	55
PM Worship	45	35
Wednesday PM	44	40
Contribution	\$1,941	\$1,802

Privileged To Serve

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

This Week: 7/3/16		Next Week: 7/10/16		July 2016 Make Announcements: Gene Bannister Prepare Communion: Johnny & Cindy McCaghren Clean Building: Johnny & Cindy McCaghren Hostess Committee: Jessica Stultz's group August 2016 Make Announcements: John Barnum Prepare Communion: Randy & Laura Huckaby Clean Building: Joe Dennis Family Hostess Committee: Laura Huckaby's group
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Joe Dennis	Song Leader: James Fuller		
Greeters	Tom & Carol Wilcox	Allen & Linda Griffith		
Opening Prayer	Allen Griffith	Gene Bannister		
Communion	Ken Maninger, Chase Churchwell John Barnum, Larry Petty	Tom Wilcox*, Ryan Rudloff Don Smith, Randy Huckaby		
Closing Prayer	Gene Bannister	James Thomas		
Attendance Cards	Caleb Dennis	Ian Barnum		
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: Joe Dennis	Song Leader: James Fuller		
Opening Prayer	Don Smith	Allen Bland		
Scripture Reading	James Fuller	Hank Wheeler		
Communion	Ken Maninger	Tom Wilcox		
Closing Prayer	Randy Huckaby	John Barnum		
Wednesday Devotionals:	July 6 Prayer Night	July 13 Don Smith	July 20 Joe Dennis	July 27 Allen Griffith

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 July 3, 2016

Sunday Class **Romans 1:11ff**
 Wed. Class **How can we identify the NT church today?**

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>God is Perfection</u></p> <p>God's perfection is an attribute that incorporates all His other attributes.</p> <p>I. Man's Only Constant Is Change.</p> <p>A. God is immutable – He cannot change His being, His character, His promises, His commands, or His purposes.</p> <p>B. God told Moses, "I AM WHO I AM" (Exod. 3:14) – He cannot become any greater, for He is perfect "as is."</p> <p>II. Perfectly Perfect.</p> <p>A. Change is inevitable for humanity – but not for God.</p> <p>B. Any change at all would indicate some kind of imperfection.</p> <p>C. For those of us accustomed to the Judeo-Christian worldview, the unchangeableness of God is something taken for granted – but the unpredictable nature of the gods was a fact of life in the ancient world.</p> <p>III. Can God Change His Mind?</p> <p>A. Even if God cannot change in His character, purposes, or nature – can He still change His mind?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Many people assume that He can – isn't that a positive quality? It is, but only for limited or flawed beings. <p>B. God exists on a higher plane than we do – so there are several reasons why God cannot change his mind.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> We change our minds because we simply prefer another option at a given time – God is constant and His character is faultless. We change our minds because we become aware of new information – there is nothing of which God is not aware. We change our minds because someone forces us to do so – God does not change His mind on a whim. <p>C. Narratives in which God appears to change His mind are often those that deal with the threat of punishment or judgment – if the subject repents, then God's wrath is withheld.</p> <p>D. Prophecy almost always has a conditional element – stated or not.</p> <p>E. Sometimes what seems to be God changing His mind is actually a new stage in His plans.</p> <p>F. God "repented" (Jonah 3:10; Gen. 6:6) – what does that mean?</p> <p>IV. God's Word Stands Forever.</p> <p>A. In the end, God's perfection should be comforting.</p> <p>B. His word is eternally true and cannot be annulled by anything.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Commonly Held False Doctrines Concerning Final Things: Matthew 24</u></p> <p>I. Background to this chapter.</p> <p>A. Jesus foretold Jerusalem's destruction (Luke 19:41-44; 23:27-31).</p> <p>B. Context of Matthew 24.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 23:1-33 – Jesus denounces actions of the Scribes and Pharisees. 23:34-39 – Gives a direct warning of Jerusalem's destruction. <p>II. The magnificent temple and its buildings.</p> <p>A. Background.</p> <p>B. The apostles show Jesus the temple and its buildings (1; Mark 13:1).</p> <p>C. The reply of Jesus (2).</p> <p>D. The apostles' questions (3; Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> When will these things be? What will be the sign of Your coming? What will be the sign...of the end of the age? <p>III. The time frame when the first of "these things" was to be fulfilled – "this generation" (23:36; 24:34).</p> <p>A. Jesus describes many things which would tell "when" the temple buildings would be destroyed (6,8,33).</p> <p>B. Jesus placed a definite time frame when all "these" things would be fulfilled.</p> <p>IV. The discourse of Jesus.</p> <p>A. Many will try to deceive (4-5).</p> <p>B. There will be wars and rumors of wars (6).</p> <p>C. There will be famines, pestilence and earthquakes (7; Acts 11:28).</p> <p>D. Christians will be persecuted (9-10).</p> <p>E. Enduring to the end (12-14; Col. 1:23).</p> <p>F. "When you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel..." (15; Daniel 9:23-27; Luke 21:20).</p> <p>G. Flee into the mountains (16-20).</p> <p>H. Great tribulation (21-22).</p> <p>I. False Christs shall appear (23-28).</p> <p>J. Immediately after the tribulation of those days (29-31).</p> <p>K. Signs given (32-33; Luke 12:40).</p> <p>V. Jesus addresses the end of time.</p> <p>A. No man knows when that day will come (24:36-41; Mark 13:32).</p> <p>B. The need to be prepared (24:43-51; 25:1-46).</p>
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