

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



November 27, 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.

Why Do People Interpret the Bible Differently?

One man is a member of *this* church because of *this* Biblical reason, another is a member of *that* church because of *that* Biblical reason. One man believes or practices *this*, another believes or practices *that*.

Why do so many people study the same New Testament, but draw different conclusions?

Concerning interpreting the Bible, G. H. Schodde writes,

A person has interpreted the thoughts of another when he has in his own mind a correct reproduction or photograph of the thought as it was conceived in the mind of the original writer or speaker. It is accordingly a purely reproductive process, involving no originality of thought on the part of the interpreter. If the latter adds anything of his own it is eisegesis and not exegesis. The moment the Bible student has in his own mind what was in the mind of the author or authors of the Biblical books when these were written, he has interpreted the thought of the Scriptures. (1489)

If God is the author of Scripture, it is true (John 17:17) and anyone who disagrees with truth believes myths (2 Tim. 4:4). And if Scripture is true, then it does not contradict itself. There is only one systematic message in it; there is "one faith" (Eph. 4:5). God never intended for us to have different interpretations. Instead, His desire is "that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10, ESV).

If I interpret the Bible differently than you, it is either because God was incapable of giving us a book that we could agree upon, or because there is a problem in how one (or both) of us is studying it. I choose to believe the latter.

If God is the author of the Bible, then all diligent students who read the Bible correctly will come to the same conclusion. God does not in one place teach that baptism is *essential* to be saved, while in another place teach that baptism is *optional*. God does not teach in one place that we can *choose* to obey Him, and then in another place teach that He nebulously predestines to save us *individually*. God does not in one place teach that a Christian can "fall from grace," while in another place teach that a Christian can never lose his salvation. **How could we have confidence in a man – let alone a God – who so contradicts himself?**

The idea that there are equally valid different interpretations of Scripture has caused many to disbelieve that the Bible is the Word of God (cf. John 17:20-21).

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"And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."
2 Peter 1:19-21



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If the Bible is really the Word of God, then we must believe that the problem of different interpretations rests not with the Bible, but with the people doing the interpreting.

Consider some reasons why there are so many different interpretations:

Ignorance

Both Jesus and the Jewish leaders accepted the Old Testament as the Word of God, but they had different interpretations about the subject of the resurrection. Jesus told them, “*You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God*” (Matt. 22:29). Even the disciples of Jesus did not expect Him to rise from the dead because “*they did not understand the Scripture*” (John 20:9).

Many today – even religious leaders and scholars – know only the passages that seem to teach what they already believe, but have not fully considered the context of those passages or have not studied other passages that would reveal the full truth.

Disbelief

Many refuse to believe in the power of God. They do not believe in the miracles recorded in Scripture, and the sovereignty of God over the physical world. Like the Pharisees who denied the irrefutable miracles of God (cf. Matt. 12:24-31) or the spectators who mocked the prophecies of Jesus as He hung on the cross (cf. Matt. 27:39-44), many rationalize away the supernatural power of God. This explains the ridiculous interpretations of the account of creation in Genesis 1 or the great flood in Genesis 6-7.

Sensationalism

The disciples had different interpretations about whether or not Jesus said John would never die (cf. John 21:21-23). The apostle John wrote, “*yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?’*” Why did some think Jesus said that John would never die? They wanted to believe the sensational.

Love for sensationalism is what drives many different interpretations. The “Left Behind” books and movies are popular because the false teaching of a supposed “rapture” is sensational. Great crowds will show up to churches to hear about “The Meaning of 666,” “The End of the World is Near” or “The Anti-Christ and Israel,” even though such predictions or supposed signs are proven wrong over and over again.

Not Loving Truth

Satan, the “*father of lies*” (John 8:44), had a different interpretation of Psalm 91:11-12 than Jesus, taking it to mean that Jesus could jump from the temple and not be hurt (Matt. 4:5-7). Satan pursued a lie, whereas Jesus loved the truth of God’s Word (John 6:38).

Today, there are plenty of people who simply do not love truth. As a result, they “*twist to their own destruction*” the Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:16) and will be eternally lost (2 Thess. 2:9-12).

Bad Attitudes toward Scripture

Many differences in religion are *not* a result of differing interpretations, but are a result of a low view of the *exclusive authority of Scripture*. To defend many of the different religious names people wear, the different churches they attend, and different practices they perform, they appeal not to Scripture, but to their own preferences. “Man can do whatever he wants in religion so long as the Bible does not specifically forbid it,” they say. How arrogant! These differences are not due to interpretation, but due to human additions to Christianity.

Conclusion

While many are honest in their interpretations, it is still possible that they are honestly mistaken. The most important requirement in correctly interpreting the Bible is the desire to know and do God’s will. Jesus said, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Matt. 5:6, ESV).

Ben Giselbach (plainsimplefaith.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

Nov. 27 2 Corinthians 12-13

Nov. 28 Galatians 1-3

Nov. 29 Galatians 4-6

Nov. 30 Ephesians 1-3

Dec. 1 Ephesians 4-6

Dec. 2 Philippians 1-3

Dec. 3 Philippians 4—Colossians 2

Dec. 4 Colossians 3—1 Thess. 1

“*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 **40 contacts** were made.

Announcements

- ◆ We are glad to have **Mike Lane** and his family with us today. Mike is a preacher student at Southwest School of Biblical Studies in Austin. He will be teaching Bible Class and bringing both lessons today.
- ◆ There is a signup sheet on the back table for the **“progressive dinner,” December 10th**. You need to sign up to help with appetizers, main course, or desserts. Appetizers will be at the McCaghren’s, main course at the building with the Fuller’s hosting, and desserts/singing at the Dennis’. Plan on attending!
- ◆ The next **“Digging Deeper” ladies study and fellowship** will be December 6th, 6:30pm, at the McCaghren’s.
- ◆ Next Sunday will be our First Sunday Fellowship Meal.

Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

- ◆ March 26-29—Spring Gospel Meeting with Russell Bell.

Other Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ Dec. 9-11—“Family Matters” Seminar @ Lake Shore Drive (Waco).

Whose Church Is It Anyway?

It has been a few years since I passed that little church building, but the sign certainly caught my attention. It read: “Evangelical Spirit Filled Orthodox Catholic Church of St. Thomas the Apostle.” It was likely a spin off from the Catholic Church that had been influenced by the charismatic movement of the 60’s and early 70’s. Eleven words without a single reference to God or Christ. One can only wonder what they believed, and since my schedule would not allow it I did not take the time to inquire. Were I a “non-Christian,” I might read the title on that church sign and wonder, “Whose church is it, anyway?”

While that particular title may be a little out of the norm, so far as the number of words used to identify the “church” that meets in that place, there are many “names” and “designations” being used to “denominate” the large number of small, independent, and novel churches cropping up all across our land. We now have the “Cowboy Church,” the “Community GLBT Church” (in case you did not get the GLBT, it stands for “Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender”), and the “Liberated Theological Free Thinkers” church (which by the way, is an amalgamation of atheists who have banned together to form a church for non-believers...really!). I have seen the “Harvest Church,” the “Palm Tree Church,” the “Fruit of the Spirit Church,” the “Little Country Church,” and the “Holy Spirit Filled Church” (all here in east Texas). In the past twenty years or so there has been a virtual explosion of independent churches cropping up and with them an attempt to come up with a unique name for a banner of identification. The most recent count of denominations in America has exceeded the imagination, not to mention the strange doctrines being taught and the so-called “worship” that takes place on any given Sunday. In fact, our society has become so inundated with these new churches that one wonders if the Lord has a church at all.

The Bible tells me that Jesus clearly promised, *“Upon this rock I will build my church”* (Matt. 16:18b). I am interested

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Celebrate

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

December Birthdays: Estelle Guthrie (7), Laverne Thomas (13), Veneta Nolen (17), Kaci Churchwell (18), Linda Griffith (20), Mia Stroope (22), John McCaghren (27).

December Anniversaries: Allen & Linda Griffith (20), David & Glenda Milam (20), Ken & Jo Maninger (25).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Nov. 13, 2016	Nov. 20, 2016
Bible Class	44	58
AM Worship	64	84
PM Worship	56	46
Wednesday PM	40	31
Contribution	\$1,684	\$2,412

	This Week: 11/27/16	Next Week: 12/4/16		
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	November 2016 Make Announcements: Ken Maninger Prepare Communion: Mike & Patti Bannister Clean Building: John Barnum Family December 2016 Make Announcements: Gene Bannister Prepare Communion: John Barnum Family Clean Building: Huckaby / Bland	
Greeters	Tom & Carol Wilcox	Allen & Linda Griffith		
Opening Prayer	John Barnum	Gene Bannister		
Communion	Joe Dennis*, Caleb Dennis Ken Maninger, Chase Churchwell	Don Smith*, Larry Petty Ryan Rudloff, Hank Wheeler		
Closing Prayer	Allen Griffith	John Barnum		
Attendance Cards	Jaceten Evetts	Ian Barnum		
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: James Fuller	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox		
Opening Prayer	Allen Bland	James Fuller		
Scripture Reading	Tom Wilcox	Randy Huckaby		
Communion	Joe Dennis	Don Smith		
Closing Prayer	Gene Bannister	Allen Griffith		
Wednesday Devotionals:	November 30 Tom Wilcox	December 7 Prayer Night	December 14 Don Smith	December 21 Joe Dennis

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 November 27, 2016

Sunday Class **Mike Lane**
 Wed. Class **Singing & Prayer**

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right here in three simple, but profound words. The first of these is the word "I." This simple pronoun suggests the builder, and since it is Jesus Who is doing the speaking, then the builder is Jesus Himself. Any religious institution designed, organized, and built by someone other than Jesus is bogus and exists without divine authority. Joseph Smith may have organized and built the Mormon church, but he did not build the church about which I read in the New Testament; in fact, he was not even alive when the church came into existence. The same could be said about every single denomination in existence today.

The second word for consideration is the word "church." Our English word translates the Greek word 'eklesia,' and means the "called out." Those who make up the church are no more and no less than the saved and redeemed. Why men cannot grasp the force of this simple concept is a mystery to me. If one were present on the Day of Pentecost when the Gospel was first preached to that multitude, and were he to be among the number who, in obedient faith, responded to the Gospel, he would have been added to the church that they were added to in Acts chapter two (Acts 2:41, 47). Here is a sobering question that begs consideration by anyone seeking the truth of the matter: "If I do exactly what they did in Acts chapter two, what would I be? Would I be a Baptist? Would I be a Methodist? Would I be a Mormon, a Seventh Day Adventist, a Pentecostal, a Presbyterian, a

Catholic, or any other of the myriad denominations that exist today?" The answer to any of these is a resounding, "No!" Those who obeyed the Gospel were Christians only, and they were added to the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16, Acts 2:47).

The third word for consideration may very well be the most impressive word among the three. It is the word "my." The church belongs to Jesus. He planned it, purchased it with His blood (Acts 20:28), and will save it in that final day (Eph. 5:23). If it is the case that it is HIS church, would it not be proper to say it is "Christ's church"? Who would suggest otherwise? By the same token it is proper to speak of those congregations that are made up of the saved as "the churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16). Where, then, is the authority [either by example, inference, or command] for any designation the likes of which we see on church buildings in our city, not to mention across this land and throughout the world? Dear reader, will you take just a moment, pick up your Bible, and search its pages? Is there just ONE reference in the Holy Book that contains the name of that religious organization to which you have entrusted your eternal soul? Why not pick up your Yellow Pages, turn to the section on "churches," and put a scripture by every name that appears in the New Testament. You may find yourself asking the same question I have asked: "Whose church is it, anyway?"

Tom Wacaster