

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



January 29, 2017

Contact Us:

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325-646-7102
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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.

Four Ways to Be a Stronger Christian

The Christian life is a life of transformation. In Romans 12:2 Paul said, *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."* The transforming process takes both time and effort. It requires spiritual growth just as babies require physical growth. In 1 Peter 2:1-3 we find, *"Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious."* Babies grow one day at a time and it is the same for the spiritual growth of Christians. There is no shortcut to instant spiritual maturity. Being a Christian requires a lifetime commitment to growth (2 Peter 3:18). Ezra 7:10 explains, *"For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel."* From this verse we find four principles which we must follow to become stronger Christians.

First, **we must prepare our hearts.** Preparing our hearts requires the right attitude of submission to God's commands. When one of the scribes asked about the first commandment Jesus said, *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength"* (Mark 12:29-30). We must be dedicated to obedience with our entire being. How we care for our hearts is very important. Proverbs 4:23 states, *"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."* If we do not fully prepare our hearts to serve God we will always struggle in our faithfulness.

Second, **we must "seek the law of the Lord."** This means we should search for a greater knowledge and a better understanding of God's word. A strong faith requires knowledge. We need an accurate understanding of the commandments of God. In Psalm 119:10-12 the writer said, *"With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You. Blessed are You, O Lord! Teach me Your statutes."* God's commandments are so precious that we should seek them with complete eagerness and enthusiasm (Psalm 119:127). God's word is of such great value because it leads us to eternal life. [Jesus] explains, *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"* (Matthew 6:19-21). The only way we can

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"Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead." **Matthew 8:19-22**



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truly understand God's word is to study. 2 Timothy 2:15 commands, *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

Third, we must obey the things commanded by God. Knowing God's word is vital but if we do not obey the teaching, our knowledge will be of no value. In James 1:22 we find, *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”* Proclaiming our faith must be backed-up with action. Jesus asked in Luke 6:46, *“But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?”* If we love Christ we will obey His commands.

Fourth, we must teach the truth to others. In Mark 16:15-16 Jesus said, *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”* We must prepare ourselves to teach others about God. We must be ready to give a good Bible answer to those who ask us about spiritual things. Peter said, *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”* (1 Peter 3:15). Paul told Timothy that he had a responsibility to teach the things he had learned to others. In 2 Timothy 2:2 he said, *“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*

So, in Ezra 7:10 we find four principles which help us to be stronger Christians. Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments. If we follow his example, we will become stronger in our faith and better Christians. We must work in these four areas so that we might grow in our faith and become spiritually mature servants of Christ.

Russell Haffner

(WVBS Online School, January 2017 Student Newsletter)

The Sermon on the Mount: Raising the Standard

After describing what citizens of His kingdom should look like in the Beatitudes and then explaining how His followers should interact with the world around them (salt and light), Jesus now moves forward in Matthew 5:17-48 to relate life in the kingdom to the Old Testament Law.

Jesus begins by saying that He came not to abolish the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill them (5:17). The Law and the Prophets make up two of the main sections of Hebrew Scriptures, so Jesus here is basically referring to the entirety of the Old Testament.

Within Churches of Christ, we have sometimes been guilty of emphasizing so strongly that we are “New Testament Christians” – meaning that we are saved under the new covenant and that we enter that covenant as described in the pages of the New Testament – that we have given the impression that we don’t think the Old Testament matters very much.

But just so we’re clear, the Old Testament matters to us as Christians, a lot! Jesus says He came not to abolish the Old Testament, but to fulfill it: not only did Jesus follow the Law in His own life, He also fulfilled its prophecies, and accomplished its purpose.

Jesus goes on to tell His audience that unless their righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees – the well-respected religious leaders of the day – they will be unable to enter His kingdom (5:20). This helps us to clearly see an important point: rather than getting rid of the Law and letting people do whatever they want now that they are free of it, Jesus actually raises the standards of how people in His kingdom will live. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls His followers to the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct that the world has ever known.

Moving forward, Jesus will illustrate how the righteousness of His followers must exceed that of the scribes and the Pharisees by bringing up six different areas related to the Law. Each time, He will begin by saying, *“You have heard that it was said...but I say to you.”* When Jesus says this, He is not disagreeing with or contradicting the Law itself, but rather, is setting His interpretation of the Law up against the way the scribes and Pharisees interpreted it. Jesus came to fulfill the Law, not to abolish it, but that doesn’t mean that He is beholden to the traditions of men. As the “New Moses” who delivers God’s Law anew and as the one who is God with Us Himself, Jesus is the Divine Interpreter of the Law who gets to tell us what it means and how it applies.

We do not have the time to look at each of these six areas in detail, but Jesus relays a similar message time and time again:

- **Murder and Anger** (5:21-26): Jesus says it isn’t enough not to murder someone; it’s also improper for us to hold anger against our brothers and sisters and insult them. Furthermore, when we are at odds with one another, reconciliation is so important that it even takes priority over worship!

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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

Jan. 29 Exodus 35-37; John 17-19
Jan. 30 Ex. 38-40; Jn. 20-21; Acts 1
Jan. 31 Leviticus 1-3; Acts 2-4
Feb. 1 Leviticus 4-6; Acts 5-7
Feb. 2 Leviticus 7-9; Acts 8-10
Feb. 3 Leviticus 10-12; Acts 11-13
Feb. 4 Leviticus 13-15; Acts 14-16
Feb. 5 Leviticus 16-18; Acts 17-19

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



Visitation Meeting

- ◆ Each Sunday night immediately before the evening worship. Last week **42 contacts** were made.

Announcements

- ◆ There is a new **Spiritual Sword** available to pick up at the back of the auditorium. *"The Militant Church."*
- ◆ First Sunday Fellowship Meal will be next Sunday.

Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

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

Other Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ Feb. 3-4—4th Annual Make Me A Servant Workshop at Mt. Vernon, *"Rekindling the Fire."*
- ◆ Feb. 11-12—Equip Seminar @ Oldham Lane (Abilene), *"Why Suffering?"*
- ◆ Feb. 18—Ladies Day @ Cherokee Home for Children w/ Cathy Messecar, *"Choosing Frontier Faith."*
- ◆ March 5-8—Gospel Meeting at Rising Star w/ Mike Bonner.
- ◆ March 12-15—Gospel Meeting at Lake Shore Drive (Waco) w/ Jeff Jenkins.
- ◆ March 12-19—Young Men's Development Conference at Bryan/ College Station.
- ◆ March 26-29—75th Homecoming Lectures at Dripping Springs.
- ◆ April 2-5—Gospel Meeting at Hamilton w/ Denny Wilson.
- ◆ April 9-12—Gospel Meeting at 9th & Main (San Angelo) w/ Jason Rollo.
- ◆ April 16-19—Gospel Meeting at Bangs w/ Ronnie Hayes.
- ◆ April 30-May 3—Gospel Meeting at Gordon w/ Jessie Dickison.

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- ◆ **Adultery and Lust** (5:27-30): Jesus says it isn't enough to refrain from committing the physical act of adultery; it is also inappropriate to lust after other people. Lust is a particularly dehumanizing and selfish sin because it treats the other person as an object whose worth is only determined by their ability to fulfill your desires. We live in a culture that has a major problem with the objectification of women in particular, and in this climate, Jesus says it's not enough to simply avoid the physical act of sexual immorality; we are also to control our minds and avoid the dehumanizing act of lust.
- ◆ **Divorce** (5:31-32): Divorce was a hotly-debated topic in Jesus' day, and He sides with the strictest interpreters of the law, saying that anyone who divorces except for sexual immorality makes their spouse commit adultery (because the assumption is that both parties will get married again).
- ◆ **Oaths** (5:33-37): The Old Testament was clear that God's people were to be truthful, but over time, this had been perverted to the point that elaborate rules had been developed for ways you could make an oath or a vow, and that only oaths that contained God's name were binding. Jesus condemns this practice as ridiculous, and basically points out that the only reason that people would feel the need to take an oath to get people to believe them would be if their word in general was suspect. However, if we have a track record of being honest with other people, no oaths or vows are necessary. And this is precisely Jesus' point: don't make vows, but simply say "Yes" or "No" and be honest when you say them. The standard for living in Jesus' alternative community is absolute integrity and honesty, no elaborate oaths or half-truths.
- ◆ **Retaliation** (5:38-42): The Old Testament teaches the law of retribution (an eye for an eye) in multiple places as a legal principle to insure that fair compensation was made for any wrong that was done, but apparently the religious leaders of Jesus' day had extended this principle to personal relationships. Jesus makes it clear that this sort of retaliation is unacceptable for those who would follow Him, and using four examples from the present day, emphasizes that citizens of the kingdom operate out of interest for others rather than self-interest. We are to prefer nonresistance over retaliation, generosity over legal rights, and concern for others over concern for ourselves. We are to respond to oppressive behavior with the love of God.
- ◆ **Love Your Enemies** (5:43-48): The Law of Moses certainly taught the necessity of loving one's neighbor (Leviticus 19:18), but the hating of one's enemy was an inference made by those who wanted to limit the requirement to love. But Jesus says that His followers are not to treat enemies as enemies, but as people we love.

This concludes one of the most difficult sections of the Sermon on the Mount, difficult not because it is hard for us to understand, but because it is so hard for us to follow. Some of the things Jesus says here seem so extreme that it is tempting to say that what Jesus commands is impractical and would never work in the "real world." But remember: Jesus doesn't call His disciples to fit into the "real world": He calls us to change it by living as salt and light, faithful members of an alternative community.

Luke Dockery (start2finish.org)

Celebrate

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

February Birthdays: Karen Bland (1/29), Judie Turner (1/29), Cindy McCaghren (2), Johnny McCaghren (2), Peggy Chism (3), Carol Wilcox (5), Sue McAnear (6), Lundy Maninger (8), Patti Bannister (14), Larry Petty (18), Aaron Smith (21), Jack Turner (22), Jonathan Fuller (28).

February Anniversaries: Billy & Peggy Chism (26).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Jan. 15, 2017	Jan. 22, 2017
Bible Class	45	54
AM Worship	63	69
PM Worship	45	52
Wednesday PM	46	48
Contribution	\$1,633	2,246

Privileged To Serve

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

This Week: 1/29/17		Next Week: 2/5/17		January 2017 Make Announcements: John Barnum Prepare Communion: McCaghren Family Clean Building: McCaghren Family
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Song Leader: Mike Bannister		
Greeters	Maninger Family	Hank Wheeler, Jessica Stultz		
Opening Prayer	Randy Huckaby	Allen Griffith		
Communion	Ken Maninger*, Chase Churchwell Joe Dennis, Caleb Dennis	Don Smith*, Samuel Hairston Allen Bland, Tom Wilcox		
Closing Prayer	Gene Bannister	Willie Henderson		
Attendance Cards	Ian Barnum	Jaceten Evetts		
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox	Song Leader: Ken Maninger		February 2017 Make Announcements: James Fuller Prepare Communion: Allen & Linda Griffith Clean Building: Joe Dennis Family
Opening Prayer	James Fuller	Matthew Hairston		
Scripture Reading	John Barnum	James Fuller		
Communion	Ken Maninger	Don Smith		
Closing Prayer	Allen Griffith	Gene Bannister		
Wednesday Devotionals:	February 1 Prayer Night	February 8 Joe Dennis	February 15 Rafe Smith	February 22 Tom Wilcox

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 January 15, 2017

Sunday Class **Romans 4:9ff**
 Wed. Class **After Baptism, Then What?**

The Challenge of Following Jesus (Matthew 8:18-22)
 In our text, we find Jesus responding to two individuals regarding the matter of discipleship.

- The hasty scribe who needed to count the cost of discipleship.
- The hesitant man who needed to learn what it means to be a disciple.

I. One Must Be Willing to Count the Cost.

A. The Scribe's Offer – "I will follow You wherever You go."
 B. Jesus' Reply – "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."
 1. Jesus informs the scribe that He was homeless.
 2. To follow Jesus would mean to leave all.

C. One Needs to Count the Cost Before Becoming a Disciple.
 1. As Jesus told the multitudes who followed Him (Luke 14:25-33).
 2. In our zeal to win souls, do we neglect to tell people the cost of becoming disciples?

II. We Must Be Willing to Pay the Price.

A. The Disciple's Request – "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."
 B. The Master's Response – "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."
 1. Jesus often made it clear that to follow Him meant putting Him before family.
 C. We Need to Pay the Price of Being Disciples.
 1. As disciples, we are taught there may be a price to pay to remain faithful.
 a. As Paul taught the new disciples on his first journey (Acts 14:21-22).
 b. As Paul wrote to Timothy at the end of his life (2 Tim. 3:10-12).
 2. Far too often, disciples today want to first "bury the dead", such as:
 3. In our zeal to provide for our families, do we forget that we are disciples of Christ?

In an age of easy believism, do not forget "The Challenge of Following Jesus".
 This is one of the paradoxes of Christianity: the salvation that Jesus offers is a free gift, but it comes at a high cost.
 Have you counted the cost? Are you willing to pay the price? Both are required to follow Jesus!

Trust Psalms – Psalm 23 – "Satisfied with God"
 No indications are given concerning the time or circumstances of writing. This psalm has been called "The Pearl of the Psalms."
 The relationship with God is described as an intensely personal one. We learn that true peace is rooted in an unwavering fellowship with God.

I. The Faithful Shepherd (1-4).

A. "The LORD is my shepherd" – pictures the sustaining relationship a shepherd has with his sheep.
 B. "I shall not want" – I will not lack for anything.
 C. "He makes me to lie down in green pastures" – the child of God shall not want for sustenance.
 D. "He leads me beside the still waters" – "waters at rest" – a quiet pool away from the hurry and worry of life.
 E. "He restores my soul" – "He returns my soul to me" – God gives His children reassurance when they are discouraged and disheartened.
 F. "He leads me in the paths of righteousness" – the follower of God will not want for direction and guidance.
 G. "For His name's sake" – for the honor of His name, God leads His own.
 H. God's people do not lack companionship even in the toughest times – "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me."
 1. The shepherd walks near to steer them past dangerous places.
 2. David changes from referring to God in the third person (He) to referring to Him in the second person (You).

I. "Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" – the rod is a weapon, the staff is an instrument of service. The sheep have no reason to fear.

II. The Gracious Host (5-6).

A. "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies."
 1. The scene he relates is that of a well-set table for guests.
 2. Evil surrounds the table, but is powerless to disturb the occasion.
 B. "You anoint my head with oil" – the perfumed oil of hospitality.
 C. "My cup runs over" – the cup He pours is always filled to the brim.
 D. "Surely [Only] goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."
 E. "And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."
 1. Continual fellowship with God, the owner of the house.
 2. He will forever be satisfied with God.