



Contact Us:

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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 So Many Are Jumping on the Gay “Marriage” Bandwagon Today

Not long ago in our nation’s history, homosexuality was taboo. People commonly looked at homosexual behavior with disgust. Laws were enacted to outlaw various actions attributed to same-sex attraction. But now culture has very rapidly performed a 180-degree shift. A majority of Americans – particularly younger Americans – now approve of homosexual practice.

What happened? Those who support the acceptance of LGBT behavior adopted arguments that became particularly compelling to young people.

This should not come as a surprise to us. **The Bible teaches us that homosexuality is a subject by which it is easy to be fooled.** “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived: neither ...adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ...will inherit the kingdom of God**” (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

Here are some arguments that have proven to be very effective at duping people today:

1. Gay “marriage” has been packaged like a civil rights issue.

I think Millennials grew up reading in their history books about the 1965 civil rights marches in Alabama and thought, “I would have liked to have been a part of that.” Today, homosexuality has become the moral equivalent of being black. This is very interesting, as the social conversation about homosexuality is no longer about *what you do*, but about *who you are*. If I were a black man, I would be deeply offended by equating 2015 with 1965. Christians understand that in reality, the issue is not about identity, but about choice. You cannot choose to be black, but you can choose to practice homosexuality (cf. 1 Cor. 6:11). Your temptation does not define you, but your decision to act on your temptation does. Jesus was tempted, yet was without sin (Heb. 4:15).

2. Gay “marriage” has redefined love.

The words of John Mayer’s song, “*You love, who you love, who you love,*” resonate with people today. Most now think, “There’s enough hate in the world, and here are two men who love each other; what’s wrong with that?”

Our secular world has cheapened “love” to mean “sexual attraction,” and the marriage bed has become the pinnacle of romance. Society’s idea of marriage, which has devolved to merely signify a time-period of commitment, is only a shabby duct-tape attempt to replicate true biblical marriage.

Knowing the new definition of “love,” are you ready for the ramifications of this argument? If society supports a relationship simply because of “love,” what else must society eventually support? Surely a man can “love” his dog. Surely pedophilia can be committed within a “loving” relationship. Surely it is wrong to continue prosecuting teachers for “loving” some of their pupils. Surely a woman can marry several men with whom she is in love.

For Christians, it isn’t about consensual sexual intercourse, but about truly loving God and His Word. **It isn’t real love if I allow someone to enter into a relationship with me that God calls “sin.”** Eternity, after all, awaits us. A truly loving relationship is founded on the bedrock goal of helping one another get to heaven. It more closely resembles hatred if I am willing to place myself between someone else and heaven.

(Continued on page 2)

“Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, **He was moved with compassion for them**, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.”
Matthew 9:35-36



(Continued from page 1)

3. Gay “marriage” is now seen as progress.

Homosexuals have long been able to support one another and enter into covenants with one another. The Supreme Court on June 26, 2015 gave very few freedoms that were not already enjoyed by practicing homosexuals. But it isn’t about rights (they already had those rights); it is about gaining society’s approval.

When Lot had the audacity to deny the men of Sodom their demand to gang-rape his male guests, they replied, “*Now he has become the judge!*” (Gen. 19:9). Does this sound familiar to the argument used today? “Stop judging us.” “Who are you to say we are wrong?” It isn’t about rights; it is about finding affirmation after God has called certain behavior wrong. People don’t want to be seen as being on the “wrong side of history,” so they go along with this so-called “progress.”

4. Gay “marriage” has redefined tolerance.

If you refuse to endorse homosexual behavior, society will quickly label you as “intolerant.” That is because “tolerance” no longer means peaceful coexistence with contrary views and belief systems. Today, “tolerance” means full support. Either you embrace homosexuality or you are a rotten, bigoted person full of hate. (That escalated quickly, didn’t it?) In the eyes of society, it is impossible to be both compassionate to homosexuals while disapproving of their actions.

With this word game, no wonder young people are supporting gay “marriage” in droves. After all, who wants to be seen as a bigot? They don’t want their peers to think they are “closed-minded” – or worse – “intolerant” (gasp, the thought!).

Now that the courts, the media, and public opinion favor gay “marriage,” what can we do?

1. **Prepare for these arguments.** Sometimes we fail to keep ourselves up-to-speed with culture. We are often more aware of the problems of the past and easily have answers to those problems. But times have changed, and Satan has found new ways to package sin that will appeal to a new generation of thinking. Cultural Christianity has already bowed to the pressure to approve of gay marriage. Now, more than ever before, it is important to think like God thinks and live on every drop of God’s Word. “*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect*” (Rom. 12:2).

2. **Prepare our children for these arguments.** This goes without saying. But so many of my peers have left the Lord’s Church because their parents did not prepare them for these arguments. I know many children of preachers who have left the church because their fathers failed to equip them with ways to respond to postmodern and

emergent arguments in favor of homosexuality (and a host of other issues). From the very beginning, our children need to know what is *natural* and what is *unnatural* and *unpleasing* to God.

3. **Start with the basics when talking to people who support gay “marriage.”** When talking to my friends and neighbors who practice or approve of homosexuality, I rarely talk about the *sinfulness* of homosexuality. Why? **They don’t know what sin is.** Before you can establish that practicing homosexuality is wrong, there is a host of other issues one must first understand. First, one must believe in the God of the Bible. Second, one must believe in the Bible and the extent of its authority over our lives. One must understand the concept of *sola scriptura*, that the Bible is not a fluid document, and that God’s Word never takes a back seat to culture. Third, one must grasp the concept of sin, know Who Jesus is, and understand the nature of salvation. **If someone does not understand these things, they will never understand the truth about homosexuality** (and they will look at you like a close-minded, intolerant bigot).

4. **Think about our words.** Because culture now supports gay “marriage,” it is important to choose our words carefully. There are more people who want to demonize your biblical convictions than there are people who tolerate (the old meaning of the word) them. **Before you write or say anything, just assume your words could easily appear on the front page of tomorrow’s newspaper.** In other words, **don’t say stupid things.** If you consider how your words could be interpreted from all sides, the truth will become even brighter.

5. **Model biblical sexuality.** The darker our world becomes, the brighter Christianity should shine. Sin brings guilt, confusion, sadness, and doubt. Christians should model what a happy marriage looks like! A truly happy and fulfilling life can only be found in living God’s Way – following His law rather than our own reasoning (Prov. 14:12; Eccl. 12:13; Eph. 2:10).

6. **Rejoice when we feel the pressure.** One of the greatest honors is suffering for Christ’s sake. Secular America is particularly hostile toward New Testament Christians. When we face name-calling, loss of opportunity, fines, or lawsuits – we should rejoice! Knowing how unworthy I am of God’s grace – it is an honor to be shamed because of the Name I wear. Glory in these verses:

“For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake” (Phil. 1:29).

“Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name” (Acts 5:41).

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:10).

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

| | |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| Feb. 5 | Leviticus 16-18; Acts 17-19 |
| Feb. 6 | Leviticus 19-21; Acts 20-22 |
| Feb. 7 | Leviticus 22-24; Acts 23-25 |
| Feb. 8 | Leviticus 25-27; Acts 26-28 |
| Feb. 9 | Numbers 1-3; Romans 1-3 |
| Feb. 10 | Numbers 4-6; Romans 4-6 |
| Feb. 11 | Numbers 7-9; Romans 7-9 |
| Feb. 12 | Numbers 10-12; Rom. 10-12 |

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



Other concerns:

- ◆ Several were mentioned Wednesday evening that are struggling with sin and/or other struggles of life. Please continue to keep these in your prayers

Visitation Meeting

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

Announcements

- ◆ First Sunday Fellowship Meal following services this morning.
- ◆ Ladies—if you plan on going to the Ladies Day at Cherokee on the 18th, please let Cindy McCaghren know by next Sunday, so she can RSVP.

Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

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

Other Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ **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.

Meeting in a Cabin by the Creek

A brother in Christ said it during a church business meeting about the legal challenges facing the church. We were talking about whether the church could continue to preach on the subject of biblical marriage. For transparency’s sake, allow me to disclose that the topic was whether preachers could still declare that gay marriage was not biblical marriage, whether the church would come under legal pressure to not say so.

Christians are, as it turns out, already responding to this challenge

Some suggest Christians vote for certain candidates, express our views in the political arena. Friends, the last time I checked, Christians also have first amendment rights. As long as this is so, this is an avenue we can legitimately pursue.

Sadly, others Christians have already caved in. They have adopted the world’s perspective on these vital issues. They argue that in the name of love and grace the church should cease to be “judgmental” over these issues. From comments I have heard in person and on read social media these Christians need not fear legal or government censure. No ungodly jurist, no representative of the ACLU will ever bother these congregations. Why would they? What they believe is what the world believes. They have dissolved their convictions into the effluent of worldly thinking.

Of course we can consult godly, Christian lawyers for advice and assistance. At this point that, too, is still a right in our nation.

But my brother in Christ said something that has struck me as deeply, profoundly true.

“Brother Stan,” he began, “when ‘they’ sue us and take away our church building, and you begin preaching in a cabin by the creek, we will be there with you.”

Make no mistake, beloved, for its first two thousand years there have been more church meetings in cabins than in ostentatious church buildings, more worship in the elements than in air conditioning. Christians have huddled in basements and in forests, hill-sides and shacks to worship God according to the word of God. They may not have worshiped in comfort, but they have maintained their integrity.

“Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life” (Matthew 19:29).

I hope this country never comes to the point where Christians lose their meeting houses over points of conviction. But if they “come after” us, the church must still be the church, and God’s people must still be God’s people.

Next Sunday, if necessary, will you join me in worship in a rugged cabin by the creek?

Stan Mitchell (higerground.live)

Celebrate

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

February Birthdays: Cindy McCaghren (2), Johnny McCaghren (2), Peggy Chism (3), Carol Wilcox (5), Sue McAnear (6), Lunday 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. 22, 2017 | Jan. 29, 2017 |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Bible Class | 54 | 47 |
| AM Worship | 69 | 59 |
| PM Worship | 52 | 42 |
| Wednesday PM | 48 | 38 |
| Contribution | 2,246 | 2,352 |

Privileged To Serve

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

| This Week: 2/5/17 | | Next Week: 2/12/17 | | February 2017 Make Announcements: James Fuller Prepare Communion: Allen & Linda Griffith Clean Building: Dennis Family March 2017 Make Announcements: Don Smith Prepare Communion: Randy & Laura Huckaby Clean Building: James & Cindy Fuller Jessica Stultz |
|-------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|--|
| Sunday AM: | Song Leader: Mike Bannister | Song Leader: Mike Bannister | | |
| Greeters | Hank Wheeler, Jessica Stultz | James & Cindy Fuller | | |
| Opening Prayer | Allen Griffith | Tom Wilcox | | |
| Communion | Don Smith*, Samuel Hairston Allen Bland, Tom Wilcox | James Thomas*, Larry Petty Hank Wheeler, Randy Huckaby | | |
| Closing Prayer | Willie Henderson | Ken Maninger | | |
| Attendance Cards | Jaceten Evetts | Aaron Smith | | |
| Sunday PM: | Song Leader: Ken Maninger | Song Leader: James Fuller | | |
| Opening Prayer | Matthew Hairston | Gene Bannister | | |
| Scripture Reading | James Fuller | Allen Griffith | | |
| Communion | Don Smith | James Thomas | | |
| Closing Prayer | Gene Bannister | Mike Bannister | | |
| Wednesday Devotionals: | February 8 Joe Dennis | February 15 Rafe Smith | February 22 Tom Wilcox | March 1 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 February 5, 2017

Sunday Class **Romans 4:13ff**
 Wed. Class **After Baptism, Then What?**

Moved by Compassion (Matthew 9:35-38)

"But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd" (36).

I. Jesus' Compassion for the Lost.

A. Jesus Had Compassion for the Lost.

- As mentioned on numerous occasions (Matt. 9:36; 14:14; 15:32) and toward various individuals (Mark 1:40-41; 5:1-20; Luke 7:11-15; Matt. 20:29-34).
- He was moved with compassion when He saw lost people.

B. His Compassion Moved Him.

- To heal the sick and demon-possessed, raise the dead, and feed the hungry.
- To personally teach those in need of a Shepherd (Mark 6:34).
- To call upon His disciples to pray for more laborers (Matt. 9:37-38).
- To send out His disciples as laborers (Matt. 10:1-7).

II. Our Compassion for the Lost.

A. Do We Have Compassion for the Lost?

B. How Can We Develop Compassion?

- Letting God teach us how to love (1 Thess. 4:9; 1 John 3:16-17).
- Spending time around people.
 - To love people, we need to get to know them.
 - We need to beware of becoming isolated from people – Jesus was often moved by compassion when among the people.

C. How Should Compassion Move Us?

- To do whatever we personally can do.
 - Such as teach others (Mark 6:34).
 - Unable to teach? Then compassion should move us to:
 - Learn to teach others (Heb. 5:12; 1 Peter 3:15).
 - Make arrangements for others to be taught (John 1:45-46; Acts 10:24, 33).
- To seek to involve others in saving the lost.
 - By praying that the Lord will send more laborers (38).
 - By sending out others to teach (Matt. 10:1, 5-7).

Without compassion for the lost, there is no motivation.

With compassion for the lost, we will not rest until we are doing something.

May the example of our Lord Jesus, whose compassion moved Him to save us, burn in our hearts until we too are "Moved by Compassion"!

Royal / Messianic Psalms

The Psalms and Isaiah are the most quoted OT books in the NT. The major points of emphasis concerning the coming Messiah:

- Is the Anointed King (2:4).
- Has a holy status and has been empowered for His task (89:20ff).
- Is over all (8:6).
- Is zealous to do God's will and pays the price for that zeal (69:9).
- Will be a Priest/King (110:1-4).
- Will be rejected by men (118:22).
- Is the "Son" of God (2:7).
- Is God Himself (45:6 = Heb. 1:8).
- Is the Lord (102:25ff).
- Is the servant of the Lord (69).
- Is the Victor (68:17-18 = Eph. 4:8).

Psalm 2 – "Opposing God and His Anointed"

Even though an earthly king is the principle topic of this royal psalm, the earthly king prefigures a greater King, the antitype Jesus Christ.

I. What the Nations Are Doing (1-3).

- David says that these nations are "plot[ting]," counseling "together," and taking a stand "against" God and "His Anointed."
- The rulers are saying to one another, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us."

II. What God Does (4-6).

- He "shall laugh" at what these nations are thinking and planning.
- God will "speak to them in His wrath."

III. What the King Says (7-9).

- God has adopted ("begotten") this chosen one as His king.
- God will give "the nations for [an] inheritance" to His king.
- The king "shall break [all enemies] with a rod of iron."

IV. What the Nations Should Do (10-12).

- They should "serve the Lord with fear."
- They are to recognize His "Son" as the true King – "kiss[ing]" Him.
- Those who rebel will "perish" in their undertakings.
- In light of all the forgoing facts, the kings of the earth should resolve to "put their trust in Him," that is, in God.