

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



December 31, 2017

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.

4 Spiritual Resolutions For 2018

Time truly waits for no man. The year has sped by quickly and here we are at the end of 2017. As we approach a new year, this is the time that most people begin to set goals and make resolutions. Almost half of the United States engages in making yearly resolutions, though we all could admit that we struggle to keep them. You may feel that you are not the goal setting type, but I would beg to differ. You may not call them goals or resolutions but we all have things we want to accomplish.

One writer has said we can't help but set goals for ourselves, it is how we are wired. Many want to lose weight, learn a new skill, or finish school in the new year. While these are good goals, from the spiritual side of things there are goals that deserve more of our energy and attention. Let me offer a few suggestions for goals in 2018 and how we can go about achieving them.

Study A Neglected Book of The Bible

Let's admit it, we are all guilty. There are certain books of the Bible that we do not spend as much time with as others. Some of the more neglected books in the Bible are books like Leviticus, Judges, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, The Minor Prophets, 2 Corinthians, and 2 & 3 John. Maybe you could think of others. Make this new year the year you give attention to at least one of these books we often overlook. Jesus said we are to live by every word that comes from God (Mt. 4:4). Paul told Timothy that all scripture is inspired and is profitable for the Christian (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Maybe we sometimes neglect certain books because we believe they do not apply to our lives as much as others like Proverbs or the gospels. If we read some of these books and take time and study them, we will be surprised at how they address things we face in our daily lives. A suggested way to get into this would be to give yourself a time frame. Set aside or month a two that you will spend with the book you choose and stick with it. Read it through several times in one sitting. As you read, write down questions you have from the book and go back later and study them more in-depth with a good commentary. Also, as you read, write down things that God is teaching the immediate audience but also things that apply to you.

Reading the Bible through every new year is great, but what if along with your regular reading you devoted a few days a week for a month or two to get to know a book of the Bible that you have ignored or perhaps never studied at all?

Lead Someone to Christ

When is the last time you led someone to Jesus? If we are supposed to be fishers of men and we never catch any, can we really be called spiritual fishermen? Part of our failure in personal evangelism may be from us not planning to succeed. We think that if an opportunity comes by we will take it, but if not so be it. This is a recipe for failure. Jesus was successful in saving souls because he knew his purpose and worked toward that end (Lk.19:10).

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Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Phil. 3:12-14



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Think of one person you want to reach out to this new year with the gospel, or maybe a couple of people in your sphere of influence, and get to work leading them to Jesus. Many say, "We are not responsible for others response, all we can do is plant the seed." This is true, but we can often do more than we think. A few ways to accomplish this goal is to pray to God for open doors (Col. 4:2-3). Paul was an inspired apostle and he often prayed for evangelistic opportunities and courage to speak boldly when they presented themselves (Eph. 6:18-20; 2 Thess. 3:1-2). Along with prayer, get to know people just for the sake of being friendly and kind and watch how those relationships can blossom. Learn what other people are like and show genuine interest.

Paul was such an effective evangelist because he knew human nature and was sensitive to the cultures of others (1 Cor. 9:19-22). Live a godly life before others and speak openly about what God has done and is doing in your life when the opportunity presents itself (Mk. 5:19).

I know that each individual is responsible for how he or she responds to the gospel, but if we are prayerful and intentional we can accomplish more than we think. Think souls and try to win one. It may be one more this new year than you won last year and that would be worth it.

Prayer and Fasting

Maybe this new year you would like to get serious about prayer (1 Jn. 5:17). Paul said we should pray without ceasing but sometimes our prayer lives are more sporadic than we would like to admit. Our goal should not be so vague that we say we simply want to pray more. We need to be more specific. Daniel had a custom of praying three times a day (Dan. 6:10). David said God would hear his voice in the morning and three times throughout the day (Ps. 5:3, 55:17). Set aside times of prayer and stick to them.

Have you ever fasted? I know fasting can be empty and abused but there is also value in fasting. Saying no to food so that we can devote more time to God is a good thing. Jesus gave instructions on how fasting can be done properly, and the early church engaged in fasting (Mt. 6:16-18; Acts 13:3, 14:23). We should too. Find a set time this year, even if it's just once for a part of the day and commit to fasting and focusing more on God.

Remove A Habitual Sin

We do not need to wait until the new year to get rid of sin. We need to confess and forsake sin as soon as we know of it (Prov. 28:13; 1 Jn. 1:9). There are some sins that may be re-occurring in our lives that we have not broken ties with. Jesus said we should not hesitate to take radical measures to get sin out of our lives (Mt. 5:29-30). Make this the year that you get rid of little besetting sins like gossip, sarcasm, lust, lying, and rudeness.

Stay close to the word of God. Find someone who will hold you accountable and be serious about getting rid of sin in 2018. When we are too comfortable with sin we need to remember that the payment for sin is death (Rom. 6:23; Jas. 1:14-15).

I don't know what your goals are for the new year, but I hope you accomplish them. Do not neglect the spiritual goals that you can reach this new year. Blow the dust off the neglected books in your Bible and dig in. Lead a soul to Jesus or at least give it a try. Engage in the spiritual disciplines of prayer and fasting and uproot sins that may have had a hold on you for a long time. Christians are goal-oriented people. Let us strive for what really matters in the new year (Phil. 3:12-14).

Hiram Kemp (1stcenturyfaithtoday.com)

The Real Meaning of Matthew 18:20

"When two or three are gathered in My name, there I am in their midst."

To be sure, these are words of reassurance. But don't misapply Matthew 18:20. It isn't a therapeutic passage for Christians who are depressed over a shrinking membership roster. Jesus isn't talking about low attendance numbers or being forced to worship in a hotel room with your family when there isn't a local church with which to worship.

In fact, these two or three were **not gathered to worship**. They were gathered to verify the repentance or impenitence of a Christian guilty of sin.

The context of Matthew 18:15-20 is church discipline. Jesus says, "If you choose to preserve the holiness of My church, I will be with you the whole time – no matter the pushback you receive."

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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 @ 10:00am 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

Dec. 31 Malachi 3-4; Revelation 21-22

Jan. 1 Genesis 1-3 + videos

Jan. 2 Genesis 4-7 + videos

Jan. 3 Genesis 8:1-11:9 + videos

Jan. 4 Genesis 11:10-14:13

Jan. 5 Genesis 14:14-18:8

Jan. 6 Genesis 18:9-21:21

Jan. 7 Genesis 21:22-24:27

"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 **37 contacts** were made.

Announcements

- ◆ We will have a **New Year's Eve Party** following services this evening. Bring snack/finger foods, games, etc.
- ◆ Our **daily Bible reading schedule** this year will follow the **"Interactive Bible Reading Plan" provided by WVBS**. In addition to the daily reading, there are videos available online introducing each book and providing other interesting information corresponding to the daily reading.
- ◆ There will be a **baby shower**, Saturday, January 6, from 2:00pm to 4:00pm, in our fellowship hall, for **Caitlyn and Ryan Settles**. They are expecting a girl, **Riley**. Selections are at Wal-Mart.
- ◆ On Wednesday evening, **January 10th**, **Delton McGuire** will present a lesson entitled **"Social Media for Grandparents."** In today's world of sexting, cyberbullying and online predators, it is important that we can talk to our youth about these things from a Christian perspective.

Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

- ◆ **Dec. 31—New Year's Eve Party.**
- ◆ **March 25-28—Spring Gospel Meeting w/ Rick Brumback.**

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The real meaning is this: During the incredibly difficult time when Christians must deliver an impenitent member of the church to Satan, the church needs to find great comfort knowing that Jesus is there with them.

Look at what is going on in Matthew 18. A sin has been committed in the church (verse 15). The Christian who is guilty of that sin refuses to repent (verse 16). The whole church knows about this sin (verse 17). When the church agrees to sever its social relationship with the erring Christian, it does so with the authority of heaven (verse 18).

Then Jesus puts His own authority behind this decision in two (2) ways:

- 1. Jesus invokes a Jewish courtroom principle from Deuteronomy 19:15-19 that says "two or three witnesses" must agree in order to bring a legally binding charge against someone.** Jesus is putting this part of the Old Law back to work under the New Law. These "two or three" (probably the leaders – usually the elders – who actually make the decision for the whole church to remove someone from their fellowship) are now legally bound – or covenanted – to one another in the law of the Kingdom. Jesus is binding His church together with glue.
- 2. Jesus guarantees that agreement with His own presence.** "When you do this for My church, I'm there. You have My seal of approval. You represent Me, just as the temple once represented God's authority and blessing."

Make no mistake; it's nice to know that when even just a handful of two or three Christians gather together to worship, Jesus is with them. **Yet bear in mind, however, that Jesus is with two or three Christians in that sense just as much as He is with one Christian who may be forced to worship alone.**

In Matthew 18:20, Jesus is giving courage to Christians who are terrified about formally recognizing the lost condition of a Christian who has chosen sin over Jesus. **He is with you when you choose to protect the purity of the church.** He is validating the leaders of the church as they protect the flock in much the same way that Paul said he would be with the Corinthians "in spirit" as they disciplined the man who was sleeping with his stepmother (1 Cor. 5:3-5).

By implication, when we refuse to protect the purity of the Lord's bride, we are refusing the very presence of Jesus in our midst.

Ben Giselbach (plainsimplefaith.com)

Celebrate

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

January Birthdays: Rachel Smith (15), Tom Wilcox (17), Anita Boyd (19), Jaceten Evetts (20), Mary Chadwell (22), Mattison Churchwell (25), Karen Bland (29), Judie Turner (29).

January Anniversaries: None.

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Dec. 17, 2017	Dec. 24, 2017
Bible Class	53	45
AM Worship	61	62
PM Worship	44	37
Wednesday PM	38	25
Contribution	\$1,766	\$1,258

	This Week: 12/31/17	Next Week: 1/7/18		
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox	Song Leader: Joe Dennis	December 2017 Make Announcements: James Fuller Prepare Communion: Dennis Family Clean Building: Randy & Laura Huckaby	
Greeters	Allen & Linda Griffith	Maninger Family		
Opening Prayer	Gene Bannister	James Fuller		
Communion	James Thomas*, Jack Turner Ken Maninger, Chase Churchwell	Ken Maninger*, Chase Churchwell Larry Petty, Ryan Rudloff		
Closing Prayer	Allen Griffith	Rafe Smith		
Attendance Cards	Jaceten Evetts	Aaron Smith		
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox	Song Leader: Joe Dennis		
Opening Prayer	James Fuller	Gene Bannister		
Scripture Reading	Ryan Rudloff	John Barnum		
Communion	James Thomas	Ken Maninger		
Closing Prayer	Joe Dennis	Allen Griffith		
Wednesday Devotionals:	January 3 Prayer Night	January 10 Delton McGuire	January 17 Rafe Smith	January 24 Don Smith

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 December 31, 2017

Sunday Class **Romans 8:38**
 Wed. Class **Old Testament History: Genesis 9:26**

<u>Resolutions from Hebrews</u>	<u>Reminding Christians of Our Salvation & Our Inheritance & Our Hope</u> <u>Titus 3:4-7</u>
<p>I. Resolutions concerning our <u>Attitude</u>.</p> <p>A. Let us fear (4:1).</p> <p>B. Let us be diligent (4:11).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work out your salvation (Phil. 2:12). 2. Be diligent to make your calling certain (2 Pet. 1:10-11). <p>C. Let us hold fast (4:14).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold to the end (Heb. 3:6). 2. Hold without wavering (Heb. 10:23). <p>D. Let us boldly ask for help (4:16).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do we really believe that the Lord is our help? (Heb. 13:6) 2. God wants us to ask (Mt. 7:7-11). <p>II. Resolutions concerning our <u>Growth</u>.</p> <p>A. Let us go on to perfection (6:1).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A desire for the word (1 Pet. 2:1-2). 2. It is the purpose of the church (Eph. 4:11-16). <p>B. Let us draw near (10:22).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not with just words or actions, but with our hearts (Isa. 29:13). 2. Must purify and have confidence (Jas. 4:8). <p>C. Let us consider one another (10:24-25).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage and build each other up (1 Thess. 5:11). 2. Love not in words, but with deeds and truth (1 Jn. 3:18). <p>III. Resolutions concerning our <u>Produce</u>.</p> <p>A. Let us lay aside every weight (12:1).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We must leave the world behind (1 Pet. 4:1-2). 2. We cannot shrink back into worldly ways (Heb. 10:35-39). <p>B. Let us run with endurance (12:1). We cannot give up (Phil. 3:10-14).</p> <p>C. Let us show gratitude (12:28).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We need to be appreciative of God's blessings (Lk. 17:11-19). 2. We need to acknowledge them in prayer (Eph. 1:15-16). 3. Thankful in song (Col. 3:15-16). 4. Continually offer the sacrifice of praise (Heb. 13:15). <p>D. Let us go forth (13:13-14).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will meet resistance (1 Pet. 4:14). 2. But we are not looking for a place in this world (Heb. 11:15-16). 	<p>Reminding Christians of the Importance of Good Works. (3:1-2).</p> <p>Reminding Christians of Our Past Life (3:3).</p> <p>Reminding Christians of Our Salvation and Our Inheritance and Hope (3:4-7).</p> <p>I. In spite of our sinful life before conversion, we can still be saved from our sins!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. "God our Savior" (4). B. Several things that are absolutely essential for any person to be saved. <p>II. No one could be saved without the kindness of God (4).</p> <p>III. No one could be saved without the love of God our Savior toward man (4).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. The magnificent love of God is one of the richest themes in the Bible! B. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 Jn. 4:19)! <p>IV. The kindness and love of God our Savior "appeared" (4) – a reference to the time that Jesus came to this earth.</p> <p>V. No one can be saved by, "works of righteousness which we have done" (5).</p> <p>VI. It is according to God's mercy that we are saved from our sins (5).</p> <p>VII. God saves us, "through the washing of regeneration" (5).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. "Regeneration" = a beginning again, a new birth. B. The water in Jn. 3:5 and the washing in Titus 3:5 refer to baptism in water. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The word translated "washing" means, "ceremonial washing referring to baptism". 2. The fact that this word refers to water baptism is seen in other passages of Scripture (Eph. 5:25-27; Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5; Heb. 10:22). <p>VIII. Closely connected with this washing of regeneration is the "renewing of the Holy Spirit".</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. "Renewing" = to make new. B. The agent whom God employs to create this new birth is the Holy Spirit. <p>IX. In v. 6 Paul said God had poured out something on "us" abundantly. The Holy Spirit or salvation?</p> <p>X. Paul began verse 7 with the word "that".</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. "That" indicates a purpose of the main verb in v. 5 ("saved"). B. "That" we are also "justified by His grace" (7). C. "That" we could "become heirs according to the hope of eternal life".