

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 8, 2018

Contact Us:

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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:

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.

Abraham's Justification

Most of the writing we have seen by our brethren on this subject over the past 40 years dealt primarily with the fact that James and Paul were not contradictory though Paul teaches justification by faith and James teaches justification by works. Paul nowhere even implies that we are justified at the point of faith or by faith alone. Nor does James suggest that the good works a man may do are the grounds for his justification or that it was not based on his faith. In fact, he specifically affirms the necessity of faith demonstrated by obedience. In our judgment, this aspect of the subject has been well covered by our brethren.

The reasoning has been something like this: Abraham was justified (declared to be just) when he offered his son on the altar (Jas. 2:21). This shows that *"faith without works is dead,"* and that faith was perfected by obedience (Jas. 2:20). The principle is true in our justification (salvation from past sins). We trust in God, but until that trust leads us to obey God in baptism, we are not justified by our faith.

The reasoning is true, and the conclusion is valid. However, it seems to me that there is an additional truth that needs to be emphasized. Neither Moses, Paul nor James were talking about Abraham being saved from his past sins and being translated into a different kingdom or a relationship as in the case of an alien sinner today. We have heard it discussed in such a way as to make it almost sound as if Abraham got forgiveness of his sins by offering Isaac on the altar! The impression may be left that up to that time Abraham was out of fellowship with God – as an alien sinner – and when he offered his son he was justified – forgiven, as a man is forgiven at the point of baptism!

We judge this to be an erroneous concept. It is similar, in our judgment, to using Noah's case to try to prove that Noah would have gone to hell if he had died before the flood. After all, does not the Bible plainly say that he *"prepared an ark to the saving of his house"* (Heb. 11:7)? Doesn't Peter plainly tell us *"Noah was saved by water, the like figure whereunto baptism saves us"* (1 Pet. 3:21)? Certainly so, but Noah was not saved from his sins by the ark, nor by the flood, but his physical salvation is a type or figure of our salvation from sins at the point of baptism.

We can properly use him as an excellent illustration of the necessity of an **obedient** faith. *"Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so did he"* (Gen. 6:22). We may properly conclude that if he had not used gopher wood, or had substituted his will for God's will, he would have been displeasing to God. We may not properly conclude that Noah was out of fellowship with God before the ark was built, and the building of the ark, entering it or the flood somehow washed his sin away and justified him in the same sense the alien sinner is justified from his past sins at baptism.

The real point is that **each step along the way**, Abraham was justified by faith. Note carefully: When all God required Abraham to do was **trust**, then Abraham stood in the right relationship with God (was justified) when he obeyed **that** command and trusted. When God required Abraham to **act** on his faith, his faith could not be reckoned unto him for righteousness until he **acted**.

In Genesis 15:6 we find, *"And he believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness."* This does not prove that Abraham was lost until this time, nor does the fact that James 2:23 says, *"the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness"* mean that God in some fashion and for some reason held Abraham's sins against him until he offered his son but reckoned him righteous from then on! The truth of the matter is that at every point where God commanded and Abraham had enough faith to obey, he stood justified – counted to be righteous – in the right relationship with God.

There is no difference in the policy stated by the Lord in Exodus 23:7, *"I will not justify the wicked"* and in Romans 4:5 where he *"justifies the ungodly."* He never did and does not now justify the ungodly **in the practice** of their ungodliness. Adulterers, liars and murderers have to quit their wickedness. They are still ungodly in the sense that they are not righteous through their own law keeping. So, they are forgiven through their faith in Jesus, as they demonstrate

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that faith in obedience.

The fact that Genesis 15:6 says, “He believed God and he counted it to him for righteousness,” in no wise suggests that he had not believed God before, nor that he was not in **every previous** or subsequent case “justified” when he thus trusted in God. If we conceive of “justification” as a **once-for-all** judicial act in which God takes away our past sins, then we become confused. Instead, we understand that when God said in Genesis 12:1, “Get thee out” and he in faith obeyed, he was justified (Heb. 11:8). When God said in Genesis 15:1-5 that he would have a son, and Abraham believed Him, he was justified (Romans 4:3). When he said in Genesis 22:2, “Take now thy son—and offer him for a burnt offering” and he had enough faith to obey, he was justified (Jas. 1:21). At **any** and every point in his life, he was justified by his faith. Note carefully: When asked to **accept a statement**, no matter how difficult to believe, he trusted God, he stood approved of God **at that point**. When asked to **obey a command**, and he in faith obeyed that command, he stood approved of God **at that point**.

The same principle applies to us. We must understand that “justification” does not always refer to an alien sinner having his sins removed. When Jesus said in Matthew 12:37, “by thy word thou shalt be justified,” he did not mean that if somehow the alien sinner says the right words, he will be saved (justified) from his past sins!

Just as in Abraham’s case, if God says, “Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins” (Acts 2:38) and a man replies, “I do not intend to do that. I will get remission by praying,” he will **not** be justified or get remission of his sins. On the other hand, when Simon heard Peter say, “Repent and pray...” (Acts 8:22), if Simon had said, “No, I must be baptized again,” he would not have been justified.

When God asks me to believe that the same Jesus who was crucified and resurrected will come back for His saints, I stand in the right relationship with God (justified) when I **trust** in His word. When He asks me to partaker of the Lord’s Supper on the first day of the week as a **demonstration** of my faith in that, I do **not** stand in the right relationship with God (justified) if I refuse to do it. The fact that I was justified **from my sins** when I accepted His grace in obedient faith by being baptized for the remission of sins does not mean I stay justified in any disobedient act.

There is no comfort in God’s Word for the man who **assumes** he can be justified **at any point without doing** what God says do. If God says, “Trust and **wait**,” then one must do that. If God says, “Trust and **act**,” then one must do that. It has always been so.

T. Pierce Brown (deceased)
(gospelgazette.com/gazette/2018/jul/page6)

The Church that Belongs to Christ

The language the New Testament was written in is *koine* Greek. Greek is a case-based language, and by that we are referring to a grammatical category determined by the syntactic or semantic function of a noun or pronoun. The case value reflects the grammatical function performed by that word in a phrase. For example, in Romans 16:16, Paul stated, “All the churches of Christ greet you.” In this instance, the prepositional phrase, “of Christ,” is a possessive genitive. A possessive genitive is where the head noun (church) is owned by the genitive noun (Christ). Thus, Paul spoke of the church being owned by or belonging to Christ.

While this may seem like nothing more than a lesson in grammar, it is of vital importance in how we view the church. Jesus had previously said He would build His church on the truth of Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Son of God (Mt. 16:16, 18). The purchase price of the church was the blood of Christ, shed on the cross (Acts 20:28). Christ is head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23) because of Who He is and what He has done. He has all authority (Mt. 28:18), and so it is His will, which is in harmony with that of the Father (Jn. 3:35; 6:38), that the church must follow (Eph. 5:24).

It is totally and completely logical, and appropriate then, for the church to wear the name of the Lord. For religious groups to identify their denomination by something other than He who died for the church and possesses it, shows it cannot be the one, true church that Christ established. One example of such is a group called the Church of the Apostles. The apostles, as important as they were, and as significant as their work was, never referred to the church as belonging to them. Paul actually addressed this principle when he wrote to the church in Corinth. “What I am saying is this: One of you says, ‘I belong to Paul,’ or ‘I belong to Apollos,’ or ‘I belong to Cephas,’ or ‘I belong to Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in Paul’s name?” (1 Cor. 1:12-13). What does it say about people’s attitude toward Christ and His church when ownership is attributed to someone or something else?

There is something else we have to consider in this, too.

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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

July 8 Psalms 102—103

July 9 Psalms 104—105

July 10 Psalms 106—107

July 11 Psalms 108—109

July 12 Psalms 110—111

July 13 Psalms 112—113

July 14 Psalms 114—117

July 15 Psalms 118:1—119:24

“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 **41 contacts** were made.

Announcements

- ◆ Ladies—**Registration is now open for the Texas Ladies in Christ Retreat, Oct. 4-6.** You can register at www.texasladiesinchrist.org.
- ◆ **Summer Youth Series** Tuesday evening at Dublin, 7:00pm. Topic: *“Remember You Are a Servant”*.
- ◆ Our own Shannon, Jessica, and Joe Dennis will be part of the cast of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat the next two weekends at the Lyric Theater (July 13-15, 20-22). The play is a musical loosely based on the story of Joseph (Genesis 37-50).

Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

- ◆ August 14—Host Summer Youth Series. Ismael Berlanga from San Saba will be our guest speaker. Topic: *“Remember You Are An Epistle.”*
- ◆ October 14-17—Fall Gospel Meeting with Jacob Rutledge. *“The Church Shaped by Scripture”*
- ◆ November 3—Ladies’ Day w/ Evelyn Bonner

Other Upcoming Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ July 15-20—Senior Camp
- ◆ July 28—VBS @ Hamilton
- ◆ Aug. 3-5—Discipleship University (Dripping Springs)
- ◆ Aug. 17-23—Polishing the Pulpit (Sevierville, TN)
- ◆ Oct. 4-6—Texas Ladies in Christ Retreat (Brady)

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The language of the New Testament itself tells us that since the church is owned by or belongs to Christ, then the church must be in submission to the will of Christ if it is to offer us life and salvation in Him. Paul was clear what the consequences are if we alter His message of truth. *“As we have said before, I now say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, a curse be on him!”* (Gal. 6:9). It is not in our purview to change what our Lord in Scripture defined the church to be, how the church is to function or what life in the church is to be. We can say, “Well, I believe,” “I feel” or “I want,” but the fact of the matter is none of that matters. It goes back to Whom does the church belong? Did we die for the church? Are we divine so we know what the church needs or how it should function? Is there any evidence in Scripture that we are granted the authority to shape the church according to human desires?

The church offers us the greatest blessings when we submit to God’s will, when we allow Christ to be our Head and lead us in His way, as well as when we seek to glorify Him and find our purpose in Him. The church was not established for our enjoyment and entertainment, but for the glory of God in Christ. Being added by the Lord means we seek Him to mold us in His image, to help us fulfill His purposes for our lives and to find the goal of eternal life. These things transcend the short-term goals of fleshly pursuits. They are the only ways for us to be part of His kingdom, for our Lord to perfect holiness in us and to assure us of eternity (2 Cor. 7:1).

We must be sure we are of the church that is Christ’s possession. We must live as He has prescribed for us to live. Only His people, who today are His church, will gather around His throne in Heaven. *“But if I should be delayed, I have written so that you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth”* (1 Tim. 3:15).

Robert Johnson (gospelgazette.com/gazette/2018/jul/page3)

Celebrate

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

July Birthdays: Laura Huckaby (6), Jason Warman (6), Chase Churchwell (11), Cindy Fuller (12), Tre’ Rayon (24), John Barnum (26), Jack Hill (26).

June Anniversaries: Mike and Ginger Adams (2).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	June 24, 2018	July 1, 2018
Bible Class	49	48
AM Worship	68	63
PM Worship	40	41
Wednesday PM	42	41
Contribution	\$2,327	\$2,141

	This Week: 7/8/18	Next Week: 7/15/18		
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: James Fuller	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	<p align="center">July 2018 Make Announcements: Ken Maninger Prepare Communion: Johnny & Cindy McCaghren Clean Building: Johnny & Cindy McCaghren</p> <p align="center">August 2018 Make Announcements: Gene Bannister Prepare Communion: Randy & Laura Huckaby Clean Building: Dennis Family</p>	
Greeters	Tom & Carol Wilcox	Allen Griffith & Hank Wheeler		
Opening Prayer	John Barnum	Gene Bannister		
Communion	Tom Wilcox*, Ryan Settles Hank Wheeler, Ken Maninger	Allen Griffith*, Jack Turner Joe Dennis, Caleb Dennis		
Closing Prayer	Allen Griffith	James Fuller		
Attendance Cards	Jaceten Evetts	Aaron Smith		
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: James Fuller	Song Leader: Ken Maninger		
Opening Prayer	Randy Huckaby	Randy Huckaby		
Scripture Reading	Don Smith	Tom Wilcox		
Communion	Tom Wilcox	Allen Griffith		
Closing Prayer	Ryan Rudloff	John Barnum		
Wednesday Devotionals:	July 11 Rafe Smith	July 18 Joe Dennis	July 25 Don Smith	August 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 July 8, 2018	Sunday Class Romans 13:1
	Wed. Class TBA

<p align="center"><u>The Parable of the Sower</u> Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15</p> <p>Jesus Himself gives the title for this parable: "<i>The Parable of the Sower</i>" (Mt. 13:18). Not only is this parable titled by Jesus, it is also interpreted by Him. A subtitle of this parable could be: "<i>The Heart's Reception of the Word of God.</i>"</p> <p>I. The Sower – "<i>Behold, a sower went out to sow</i>".</p> <p>A. If seed is going to be sown, there must be a sower: no sower = no crop. B. This sower cannot be slothful (he "<i>went out to sow</i>"); no activity = no crop. C. The sower will engage in a unique task.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sowing is hard work. Sowing is long work – working from sun up until sun down. Sowing is lonely work – one person in a field alone almost all day. Sowing is patient work – it does not bring immediate results. <p>D. Brethren, we must be the sowers of seed. If we don't go, who will?</p> <p>II. The Seed – "<i>The seed is the word of God</i>".</p> <p>A. Two lessons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> No seed = no crop. The wrong seed = the wrong crop. <p>B. Jesus' words of the Great Commission harmonize with the words of the parable (Mk. 16:15).</p> <p>C. We could spend much time on a study of the seed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The seed is the Word of God (2 Tim. 4:2). The seed is powerful (Heb. 4:12; Jas. 1:21-22). This seed is incorruptible (1 Pet. 1:22-23). This seed produces after its kind. <p>III. The Soils.</p> <p>A. Soils represent four different types of hearts. "<i>Which soil represents me?</i>"</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The wayside soil (Lk. 8:12). The rocky soil (13). The thorny soil (14). The good soil (15). <p>IV. The Substance – "<i>some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty</i>".</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> If we keep sowing, we will reap (Ps. 126:5-6). The sower will usually reap much more than he sowed. 	<p align="center"><u>Paul's Prayer for the Recipients' Deeper Understanding of the Purpose of the Church (2) – Ephesians 1:20-23</u></p> <p>II. The Purpose of the Glorious Church (1:3 – 3:21).</p> <p>B. Paul's Prayer for the Recipients' Deeper Understanding of the Purpose of the Church (1:15-23).</p> <p>3. God's power demonstrated (20-23).</p> <p>a. The power of God was demonstrated in Christ's resurrection: "<i>[the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe] ... which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead</i>" (20a).</p> <p>b. He not only raised Christ from the dead but also exalted Him: "<i>And seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places</i>" (20b).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The exalted Christ is "<i>far above all principality and power and might and dominion</i>" (21a). The exalted Christ is "<i>far above ... every name that is named</i>" (21b). These statements are true "<i>not only in this age but also in that which is to come</i>" (21c). <p>c. By His great power, God put everything under the domain of Christ: "<i>And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church</i>" (22).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> "<i>Put... under</i>", a military term meaning "<i>to put in subjection under one</i>", as troops are put under the commanding officer. This is the first time Paul mentioned "<i>the church</i>" in the letter; however, the entire letter is about the church, and the mention of it here demonstrates its exalted status in the purpose of God. Notice that God "<i>gave Him (Christ) to be head</i>" to the church. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> He has been given as God's gift to the church as its head. "<i>Head</i>" – "<i>anything supreme, chief, prominent;...master, lord</i>". The church "<i>is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all</i>" (23). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> This verse depicts the church as "<i>His body</i>". <ol style="list-style-type: none"> For a time Christ has a physical body in this world Now He has a spiritual body in this world: the church. The church is also "<i>the fullness of Him</i>" – filled to completeness. Christ <i>fills all in all</i>. <p>As the Sovereign Lord, Christ is empowered by God to be all that He is.</p>
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