

# 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



April 28, 2019

## 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

John Barnum

## 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.

## Are We Using the Right Measurements?

In just about any church building in the country, one can look around and, usually either in the back of the auditorium or somewhere in the foyer, see the standard of measurements used to determine the health of the congregation. If attendance numbers go down, sometimes we wonder and ask what is happening or, worse yet, even place blame on those we perceive are responsible. If the contribution number doesn't add up to the budget, it might not be that big of a deal for one or possibly two weeks; however, if there are too many weeks in a row where there is a deficit then the questions fly and the pondering as to why begins.

While I completely understand the reasoning behind needing to keep tabs on the temperature of a congregation's spiritual health, I wonder if in only keeping up with *attendance* and *financial* contributions, are we really getting the complete picture of health. It would be like someone going to the doctor for a check-up, and the doctor using the instrument to look in the ears, nose, and throat and coming to the conclusion that the patient was completely healthy. If that were you, you might be curious as to why he did not check your blood pressure, weight, hearing, sight, reflexes, and any other number of things the doctor usually checks on a well-ness check-up. In the same way, is it possible that by only looking at the two most posted measurements, attendance and contribution, we are only skimming the top of the surface of detecting spiritual health? What if we used other measurements as well?

**Perhaps shepherds might want to consider using at least two other spiritual measurements I believe deserve consideration:**

### 1) Number of Bible Readers (Daily or Completing the New Testament) in the Congregation.

In order for growth to occur, we first must define the category of growth we are interested in. Is it simply numeric? If that's the case, when the "going-gets-tough" or another congregation has something that is more attractive, the masses may just head right out the exit door. I'm not suggesting that numbers don't equal souls; however, what I want you to consider is that if spiritual growth is our goal, the souls will be added to the kingdom, thus increasing numeric growth. Along with this, those who are a part of the fold of the local congregation will be challenged to grow deeper spiritually, becoming more rooted and firmly grounded in the purpose they are to fulfill in the kingdom of God.

Throughout Scripture we are told of the enormous and eternal value of God's Word. It was Jesus who connected the dots between continuing in the Word of God, knowing the truth, and being one of His disciples (John 8: 31-32). In John 17:17, we see Jesus identify just exactly what the truth is when it He prayed, "*Sanctify them in truth; Your word is truth.*" The apostle Paul would challenge Timothy to be "*diligent*" about presenting himself as a workman who accurately handled the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15). It was Peter who—when writing to the Christians who were dispersed abroad—wrote, "*for you have been born again not of seed, which is*

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When he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ... The father said to his servants, "Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." Luke 15:20, 22-24



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*perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God” (1 Pet. 1: 23).*

With these descriptions and admonitions (along with countless others found throughout the Bible) doesn't it stand as a logical conclusion that if we want our congregations to truly grow with lasting growth then we need to be encouraging them to be in study of God's Word outside of the times we gather for worship? It's through the *study* of the Word that we encounter Jesus. It's through the *study* of the Word where we see the will of God revealed to us. It's through the *study* of the Word we come to understand that we have been given all things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). So, since the reading and studying of God's Word is that important, what if we started challenging our congregations to be regular Bible readers and Bible studiers? I know reading the Word doesn't always mean studying the Word, but we need to start somewhere. What if we posted the number of people who read their Bibles every day throughout the week or those who've completely read through the New Testament? Wouldn't we be getting a better sense of health than simply measuring those who showed up to worship once or twice a week?

## 2) Number of Personal Bible Studies Conducted in Our Local Community.

The hard truth is that when numeric growth is not occurring, many look around and begin diagnosing the situation. Everything from parking lots, pads on the pews, color of carpet, cleanliness of the building, Bible class selection, work of the elders, and of course the efforts of the preacher are all brought under the lens of the microscope as we seek answers. Many will offer solutions; however, few will take personal responsibility for the reason why numeric growth is not present and perhaps there's a shifting toward a decline. There's no doubt that the Bible teaches an underlying principle that God gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:7); however, what if we challenged the Christians in our local congregations in the area of planting and watering the seed—God's Word through personal Bible studies? What if we kept a running total of the number of personal Bible studies that have been conducted from week-to-week and posted an accumulat-

ed number on the measurement board for all to see?

The first thing that might come to your mind when reading that is, “There is no way the members at the congregation where I attend would go for that!” Some may even be concerned and say, “Are we really in the business of keeping tabs on people to make sure they are doing what needs to be done?” If either of these responses ventured through your head, you're not alone. Many to whom I have mentioned this seem to have a concerned or not so positive reaction, *but why?* Why is it that when we start talking about measuring the spiritual growth of a congregation by seeing how many personal Bible studies we've conducted do some become negative and concerned? It's not about controlling individuals any more than the doctor taking a blood pressure reading is about controlling the patient. The reading is simply a measurement as to the health of the patient and in our case the congregation.

On top of being able to more accurately discern the spiritual health of a congregation, I propose to you that by keeping a running total of the personal Bible studies conducted by the disciples in the congregation, you will perhaps provide better answers when people ask, “Why are we not growing?” or “Why are we decreasing in attendance?” As I said earlier, there will be an endless offering of conclusions to answer these and other questions like these; however, very few of them will ever be centered on the individual asking the right questions. In other words, when someone ask, “Why are we not growing?” most likely they won't answer, “We aren't growing because I am not studying the Bible with anyone” or “We are not growing because in a year, as a congregation we have only conducted five personal Bible studies and brother Smith is responsible for 4 out of the 5.” However, what if you could help change the mentality within the congregation to take personal responsibility? Wouldn't that be a huge step in the right direction of growing into spiritual maturity? You know the answer to these questions, and your congregation would be blessed by such.

There's no doubt in my mind that everyone who has taken the time to read to this point in the article is concerned about the health of the congregation where you attend.

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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

[video.wvbs.org/access/interactive-bible-reading-plan/](http://video.wvbs.org/access/interactive-bible-reading-plan/)

**Apr. 28** Leviticus 10—12

**Apr. 29** Leviticus 13—15

**Apr. 30** Leviticus 16—18

**May 1** Leviticus 19—21

**May 2** Leviticus 22—24

**May 3** Leviticus 25—27

**May 4** Numbers 1—3 (video)

**May 5** Numbers 4—6

*“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 **49 contacts** were made.

### Announcements

- ◆ We will be starting a **new class this Wednesday evening: Servant Training**. Please be praying for the class and plan to attend. You will be blessed and challenged.
- ◆ **Tammie Ross** has volunteered to be the **coordinator for Ladies Day this year**. Be watching for more details.
- ◆ **Cherokee Day @ Cherokee Home for Children** is this Saturday, **May 4th**. A BBQ lunch will be served at noon. This is a great opportunity to take them some needed items and see first-hand the good work there that you help support as a member of this congregation. More information is available on the bulletin board.

### Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

- ◆ August 6—We host Summer Youth Series
- ◆ Oct. 27-30—Fall Gospel Meeting w/ Bryan Braswell

### Other Upcoming Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ May 5-9—Focal Point (San Marcos)
- ◆ May 28-31 (Tu-F)—Gospel Meeting @ Meridian w/ Ross Haffner
- ◆ June 5-9—Men's Development Conference (College Station)
- ◆ June 23-27—Junior Camp.
- ◆ July 8,9,11,12—Deaver-Rodriguez Debate @ Ft. Sam Houston church of Christ, San Antonio
- ◆ July 14-19—Senior Camp.
- ◆ August 16-22—Polishing the Pulpit (Sevierville, TN)

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We all love it when the attendance and budget numbers are up. However, many times those numbers are going to be down. The intent behind even introducing these additional spiritual measurements is because we must transition our thinking into our responsibility to help disciple further their spiritual growth and let God take care of the numerical growth. When we are maturing in the faith, we will always be pleasing to God. That can't be said simply because the numbers on the board are increasing. There are large congregations that are spiritually dead. Each congregation would be blessed if they would reconsider the standard of measurements when it comes to the health of their congregations.

Joe Wells (plainsimplefaith.com)



"The Singing Evangelist"

"A Real Preacher's Preacher"

JULY 10, 1931 - APRIL 25, 2019

**TOM HOLLAND**

## Celebrate

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

**May Birthdays:** Caroline Dennis (4/30), Ian Barnum (5), Rosa Fuller (6), David Milam (7), Barbara Bannister (10), Billy Chism (15), Caitlyn Settles (15), Gracen Hardy (30).

**May Anniversaries:** Joe & Lasha Dennis (6), Ryan & Tammy Rudloff (7).

*Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...*



## Records

	Apr. 14, 2019	Apr. 21, 2019
Bible Class	30	51
AM Worship	44	61
PM Worship	42	39
Wednesday PM	30	40
Contribution	\$2,135	\$2,004

# Privileged To Serve

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

	This Week: 4/28/19	Next Week: 5/5/19		
<b>Sunday AM:</b>	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	<b>April 2019</b> <b>Make Announcements:</b> Don Smith <b>Prepare Communion:</b> Randy & Laura Huckaby <b>Clean Building:</b> Randy & Laura Huckaby  <b>May 2019</b> <b>Make Announcements:</b> Ken Maninger <b>Prepare Communion:</b> Johnny & Cindy McCaghren <b>Clean Building:</b> Johnny & Cindy McCaghren	
<b>Greeters</b>	Mileen & Ashley Kahlich	John Barnum Family		
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Tom Wilcox	Ken Maninger		
<b>Communion</b>	Ken Maninger*, Chase Churchwell Vernon Zier, Caleb Dennis	Tom Wilcox*, Coyce Reed Ryan Rudloff, Randy Huckaby		
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Allen Griffith	John Barnum		
<b>Attendance Cards</b>	Aaron Smith	Ian Barnum		
<b>Sunday PM:</b>	Song Leader: Joe Dennis	Song Leader: James Fuller		
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	James Fuller	Allen Griffith		
<b>Scripture Reading</b>	Kevin Ross	Don Smith		
<b>Communion</b>	Ken Maninger	Tom Wilcox		
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	John Barnum	Mike Bannister		
<b>Wednesday Devotionals:</b>	May 1 Prayer Night	May 8 Joe Dennis	May 15 Rafe Smith	May 22 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 April 28, 2019

Sunday Class ..... 1 Corinthians 3:14  
 Wed. Class . Servant Training: What Does the Lord Require of You?

#### Forgiving Myself

##### The Peace of Living With Our Past

Though we believe in God's mercy, it can be difficult to feel forgiven. If we are willing to take three very simple steps, we might be able to come to grips with a past that has a grip on us.

#### I. Accept God's Love.

- A. A string of OT statements might help (Ps. 34:18; 51:17; Isa. 57:15; 66:2).
- B. A special NT story might also help (Lk. 15:11-32 – The Prodigal Son).
  1. The story opens with the sins of a selfish son.
  2. The story climaxes with the love of a merciful father.
    - a. Look at what this father *did* (20).
    - b. Look at what this father *felt* (20-23).
    - c. Look at what this father *said* (24-32).

#### II. Believe God's Promises.

- A. The Bible is very clear in its teachings about the conditions FOR salvation.
  1. Some things are absolutely essential.
  2. To begin with, God's grace is essential.
  3. Still further, the blood of Jesus is essential.
  4. Finally, our faith is essential.
- B. The Bible is equally clear in its teaching about the conditions OF salvation.
  1. We can know we are in a saved condition.
  2. At least three men were inspired to record this kind of confidence.
  3. These same three men (Paul, Peter, John) were also used to tell us that we can enjoy the same peace of mind they possessed.

#### III. Trust God's Grace.

- A. First, there is David in the Old Testament (Ps. 51; 32).
- B. Second, there is Paul in the New Testament (1 Tim. 1:12-17).
  1. Paul had a hard time moving beyond his violent history.
  2. Note the five things Paul did to invite God's grace into a life soiled by sin.
    - a. Paul talked to Jesus and thanked Him for the blessings of His grace (12).
    - b. Grace kept Paul from being harder on himself than he had to be (13).
    - c. Paul emphatically pointed to grace as the blessing that changed his life.
    - d. Paul talked about Jesus' grace (15-16).
    - e. Paul took the time to praise God for His grace (17).

#### Paul's Admonition to Hold Fast to the Head (Col. 2:16-23)

##### Avoiding Human Practices (18-19)

- I. "Let no one cheat [keep defrauding] you of your reward [prize]" (18a).
  - A. By enticing the Colossians away from the realities Jesus brought, the false teachers would be "cheating" [defrauding] them of their "reward" [prize].
  - B. All people have free will and are not pawns in God's hand.
- II. "Taking delight in false humility and worship of angels" (18b).
  - A. Paul warned against "false humility"; in every religions group there are some who take pride in their piety, which they display with false humility.
  - B. Paul also warned against the "worship of angels"; not only can the manner of worship be wrong, but also the object of worship can be incorrect.
- III. "Intruding into those things which he has not seen [or "has seen"]" (18c).
  - A. The exact meaning of this phrase is uncertain.
  - B. Had these false teachers actually seen something, had they hallucinated, or were they lying about having seen visions when they had seen none?
- IV. "Vainly puffed up [inflated without cause] by his fleshy mind" (18d).
  - A. Some false teachers had a "false humility", others "puffed up" with conceit.
  - B. Those who claimed to have seen visions were given unwarranted respect and prestige, causing their teaching to be accepted above Jesus' teaching.
  - C. Christians can have confidence in what they have obtained through Jesus.
- V. "And not holding fast to the Head" (19a).
  - A. Of greatest importance is the Christian's relationship with Christ.
  - B. If anyone within the body of Christ discontinues holding to the head, he becomes an apostate.
- VI. "From whom all the body" (19b).
- VII. "Nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God" (19c).
  - A. Paul used two Greek present participles, *nourished* and *knit together*, to let the Colossians know what they must do to grow.
    1. Both Greek words express continued action.
    2. Jesus wants His followers to be one and not divided.
  - B. Nourished and knit together, the maturing process of the body continues.
  - C. False teachers had severed their relationship with the head, the only source of growth.