



## Contact Us:

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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

John Barnum

## Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

## Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children  
Gospel Broadcast Network  
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)  
Mission Printing  
Rohan Jones, Africa  
World Bible School

## If Not Now, When? Self-Edification

When I was a very young married man, my late wife Bonnie and I along with our first child, Rebecca, moved to Memphis, Tennessee. We lived in a cottage behind a church building, in which were living a brother and a sister who had been placed into foster care. Bonnie and I were new parents ourselves, and we had become foster parents, too. It wasn't long until a third child was introduced into the home, a 13-year-old boy; the other two children were maybe 6 and 11.

The boys shared a room in which were bunk beds—one over top of the other. The younger boy who had already been there informed the new arrival that the bottom bunk was already occupied and that the older boy had to climb up to the top bunk. That arrangement, though, lasted only one night because the new kid was a bed-wetter! The younger boy who the day before insisted that the older boy take the top bunk now adamantly demanded that he would have the top bunk and that the bed-wetter would have the bottom bunk.

However, even that sleeping arrangement was not entirely satisfactory because the bed-wetter would turn on the light in the middle of the night to take the sheets off of his bed—which disturbed the sleep of the other child. We really didn't know what to do, but neither did we want him sleeping the balance of the night on any other furniture in the house. Sadly, we would find him in the morning sleeping in the bathtub.

Another oddity about the 13-year-old boy was that he was not accustomed to dressing himself. His mother had treated him as though he was an infant in her arms all of his 13 years. He didn't know how to dress himself! Noting that and the bed-wetting, we sought medical consultation for him. The conclusion was that the boy had no physical conditions underlying his bed-wetting and ineptitude at even dressing himself. The poor child was the victim of his mother's care for him.

Over time in the home, the 13-year-old made improvements whereby he stopped wetting the bed and learned to care for himself. Yet, whenever he visited his mother overnight, he returned to us as a bed-wetter and less capable of caring for himself. He relapsed each time his mother cared for him once more.

In the case of this boy's relationship with his mother, her help harmed him. It was not some medical condition that resulted in wetting the bed and his inability to provide for his own most basic care. Doubtlessly well meaning, nevertheless, this boy's mother crippled her son, who otherwise was as normal and as capable as any other healthy boy his age.

Not to this degree, but every set of parents struggles with when to lessen their care and control over their children as the young ones mature. The 13-year-old boy is an extreme example of too much help for too long that impaired or hurt rather than helped him toward maturity as a young man. I don't know where he is nearly 50 years later, but I'm certain that the lingering affect of his early childhood relationship with his mother has affected him in a negative way.

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Let us know if you want to study  
the Bible to know more about  
Christ and His Church.

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## The Moral of the Story

Why do you suppose that I told you all of this? What is the point I'm trying to make? How does any of this apply to the topic at hand, "If Not Now, When? Self-Edification"?

Every baby born into this world is completely helpless and entirely dependent on others for his or her care and wellbeing. A baby needs someone to provide shelter, clothes, feeding, bathing, medical attention, love and so much more. As parents, we are to love our children (Titus 2:4). If we do not provide for our households, we are alienated from God's approval of us. *"But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever"* (1 Tim. 5:8).

If years go by and our child remains a baby in either mind or body, we know that something is horribly wrong. We would seek medical advice because every parent wants his or her child to be healthy in body and in mind. Parents want their children to grow to maturity academically and physically.

The same reasoning applies to Christians as individuals, as congregations and as a brotherhood. In the beginning, more help is necessary for babes in Christ, but at some point, babes in Christ, churches and a brotherhood ought to move in the direction of maturity. Parental-type help needs to diminish as Christians, congregations and the brotherhood mature and take upon themselves a greater responsibility. However, just as in the real-life illustrations mentioned earlier, continual too much help has a crippling affect. It stops being helpful and becomes harmful.

How long have you been a Christian? How long has it been since the congregation you attend was established? **If not now, when will individual Christians and congregations lay the groundwork for and progress to the point of relying principally upon themselves for their own edification?** Lectureships, seminars and workshops have their place, but they dare not

become the substitute for maturity among Christians, congregations and a brotherhood. This is your Christianity about which we're talking. This is your brotherhood.

Most brethren are capable of teaching within their local congregations. We cannot substitute the preaching and teaching by other brethren for one's own spiritual growth. If a person **only** relies on others for preaching, teaching, evangelism and financial support of the local congregation, the Lord's church will not sufficiently mature or ever be all that it could and ought to be. There may be some things that one cannot do himself or herself, but each child of God needs to do what he or she can for himself or herself.

Not anywhere should Christians and the Lord's church resemble a bed-wetting 13-year-old child who cannot dress himself or a grown man such as my brother who is a virtual vagrant with a mental impairment. Please understand that I am not making fun of the 13-year-old boy or of my brother, and I'm not trying to offend you either. We just need to be all that we can be for our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Biblical Observations

An interesting paradox appears in Galatians 6. Verse 2 reads, *"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."* However, verse 5 says, *"For each one shall bear his own load."* Which is it? Should we expect someone else to bear our burdens or do we need to bear our own burdens or load? Though the KJV refers to "burdens" in both verses, two different Greek words with slightly different meanings underly them. The *"burdens"* in verse 5 refer to something to be carried, but *"load"* or *"burdens"* in verse 2 refer to something that is heavy. Therefore, the normal or ordinary things (v. 5) are to be borne or carried by individual Christians because they do not need any help with them. On the other hand, heavy burdensome things that are too heavy for one person to bear or carry alone (vs. 2) require assistance from other Christians.

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### Television

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/)

**April 19** Genesis 5—6; Psalm 110  
**April 20** Genesis 7—8; Ps. 111 (video)  
**April 21** Genesis 9—10; Psalm 112  
**April 22** Genesis 11—12; Psalm 113  
**April 23** Genesis 13—14; Psalm 114  
**April 24** Gen. 15—16; Ps. 115 (video)  
**April 25** Genesis 17—18; Psalm 116  
**April 26** Genesis 19—20; Psalm 117

*"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

- ◆ Last week **52** contacts were made.

### Announcements

- ◆ **All services at the building have been cancelled for April.** We will live stream to our “4th and Stewart Church of Christ” Facebook group Sunday morning and Wednesday evening.
- ◆ An **updated directory** was sent out by email this week. For those who want paper copies, they will be available when we begin meeting at the building again.
- ◆ All upcoming area Gospel Meetings, Ladies’ Days, etc., to my knowledge, have been cancelled or postponed.

### Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

- ◆ October 11-14—Fall Gospel Meeting w/ Denny Wilson

### Other Upcoming Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ June 21-25—Junior Camp
- ◆ July 12-17—Senior Camp

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Borrowing the concept, let’s apply that to ourselves, to our congregations and to the brotherhood. We have the responsibility to do for ourselves what we can do for ourselves, but shame on us if we expect others to do for us what we should do for ourselves. Contrariwise, there is no shame or embarrassment for accepting help from others for the things that we cannot do for ourselves without help.

From the first century through the present, there has always been the problem of spiritual immaturity. It is worldwide and spans the centuries from the establishment of the Lord’s church to our modern world. This is not a unique situation anywhere on earth. However, it is something that Christians everywhere need to consider.

The first century Corinthian church was a mess. Every chapter of 1 Corinthians attempts to correct something that those Christians were doing incorrectly. One of the problems was spiritual immaturity. *“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to **babes in Christ.** I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able”* (1 Cor. 3:1-2). The writer of Hebrews also addressed the widespread immaturity among first century Christians.

*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment* (Heb. 5:12—6:2).

Likewise, the apostle Peter noted the same first century problem. *“As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby”* (1 Pet. 2:2).

### Conclusion

If not now, when will individual Christians and congregations lay the groundwork for and progress to the point of relying principally upon themselves for their own edification? Resources are fine, but you need to use them rather than to be used by them. Do for yourselves what you can do for yourselves. Prepare yourselves and help others prepare themselves to be more capable servants of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Louis Rushmore (Gospel Gazette Online, March, 2020, p. 2)

## Celebrate

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

**April Birthdays:** Vickie Tallent (4), Lasha Dennis (6), Ginger King (8), Jimmie Claborn (9), Kristi Maninger (9), Becky Smith (9), Darlene Smith (10), Caroline Dennis (30).

**April Anniversaries:** John & Tina Barnum (8).

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



## Records

|              | Apr. 5, 2020 | Apr. 12, 2020 |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Bible Class  | —            | —             |
| AM Worship   | [52]         | [58]          |
| PM Worship   | —            | —             |
| Wednesday PM | [33]         | [50]          |
| Contribution | \$1,365      | \$2,022       |

# Privileged To Serve

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

|                               | This Week: 4/19/20    | Next Week: 4/26/20    |   |                      |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|----------------------|
| <b>Sunday AM:</b>             | Online Only           | Online Only           | <b>April 2020</b><br><b>Make Announcements:</b><br><hr/> <b>Prepare Communion:</b><br><hr/> <b>Clean Building:</b><br><hr/><br><b>May 2020</b><br><b>Make Announcements:</b><br>James Fuller<br><b>Prepare Communion:</b><br>Johnny & Cindy McCaghren<br><b>Clean Building:</b><br>Johnny & Cindy McCaghren |                      |
| Greeters                      |                       |                       |   |                      |
| Opening Prayer                |                       |                       |   |                      |
| Communion                     |                       |                       |   |                      |
| Closing Prayer                |                       |                       |   |                      |
| Attendance Cards              |                       |                       |   |                      |
| <b>Sunday PM:</b>             | Cancelled             | Cancelled             |   |                      |
| Opening Prayer                |                       |                       |   |                      |
| Scripture Reading             |                       |                       |   |                      |
| Communion                     |                       |                       |   |                      |
| Closing Prayer                |                       |                       |   |                      |
| <b>Wednesday Devotionals:</b> | April 22<br>Cancelled | April 29<br>Cancelled | May 6<br>Prayer Night   | May 13<br>Joe Dennis |

## 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 19, 2020

Sunday Class ..... **Cancelled**  
 Wed. Class .... **Attitudes of a "Spiritual" Child of God (Gal. 5:22-23)**

| Why Did My Savior Come to Earth?<br><i>"I Have Come That They May Have Life,<br/>       and That They May Have It More Abundantly"</i><br><i>"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (Jn. 10:10).</i><br>John 10 is a continuation of Jesus' confrontation with His critics concerning the healing of the man who had been born blind.<br>Where is the abundant life to be found?<br>I. <b>Follow the Good Shepherd</b> (Jn. 10:4, 27).<br>A. Thieves and robbers (cf. v. 8) are "in it for the money".<br>B. The best of human shepherds are just that – human shepherds.<br>II. <b>Know the Good Shepherd</b> (Jn. 10:14, 27).<br>A. It is entirely possible to follow somebody one does not know.<br>B. Paul: "...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death" (Phil. 3:10).<br>C. This kind of knowledge is not about knowing only facts; it is about knowing a person.<br>D. Knowing or believing the facts is not to be equated with living the kind of life Jesus is describing in John 10.<br>III. <b>Know the Voice of the Good Shepherd</b> (Jn. 10:3-4, 27).<br>A. We know the voice of those we love.<br>B. John 6 is an interesting study in many ways.<br>1. Jesus attracted a large following, who knew His voice in different ways.<br>2. Two different reactions to what they heard.<br>a. "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more" (v. 66).<br>b. Peter: "You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (vv. 68-69).<br>IV. <b>Make a Decision/Commitment.</b><br>A. An abundant life is not the result of circumstances.<br>B. An abundant life is about relationship; specifically, a relationship with Jesus.<br>C. <b>Talk to Others</b> (Ps. 23:1-3).<br>D. <b>Talk to Him</b> (Ps. 23:4-5).<br>E. <b>Talk to Myself</b> (Ps. 23:6). | <b>Attitudes of a "Spiritual" Child of God (Galatians 5:22-23)</b><br>The apostle Paul, in Galatians 5:22-23, gives a concise list of the characteristics of a "spiritual" child of God.<br>I. <b>"Love" is an Attitude of God's "Spiritual" Child.</b><br>A. What does the word "love" mean?<br>B. How does love manifest itself? (1 Cor. 13:4-8).<br>C. Love is a necessity.<br>II. <b>"Joy" is an Attitude of God's "Spiritual" Child.</b><br>A. What does the word "joy" mean?<br>B. Joy is closely connected to grace.<br>III. <b>"Peace" is an Attitude of God's "Spiritual" Child.</b><br>A. What does the word "peace" mean?<br>B. What hinders peace?<br>C. What attitudes are needed to produce peace?<br>IV. <b>"Longsuffering" is an Attitude of God's "Spiritual" Child.</b><br>A. What does the word "longsuffering" mean?<br>B. Longsuffering is a virtue that characterizes God's nature.<br>V. <b>"Kindness" is an Attitude of God's "Spiritual" Child.</b><br>A. What does the word "kindness" mean?<br>B. Why is it important to possess the fruit of kindness?<br>C. How can we manifest and practice the fruit of kindness?<br>VI. <b>"Goodness" is an Attitude of God's "Spiritual" Child.</b><br>A. What does the word "goodness" mean?<br>B. Biblical admonitions to be good.<br>VII. <b>"Faithfulness" is an Attitude of God's "Spiritual" Child.</b><br>A. What does the word "faithfulness" mean?<br>B. Practical ways to practice faithfulness.<br>C. What helps are available to assist us in our faithfulness?<br>VIII. <b>"Gentleness" is an Attitude of God's "Spiritual" Child.</b><br>A. What does the word "gentleness" mean?<br>B. Why is gentleness so important?<br>IX. <b>"Self-control" is an Attitude of God's "Spiritual" Child.</b><br>A. What does the expression "self-control" mean?<br>B. Why is self-control important? |
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|--|---|