

Youth NEWS



Thank you to the Verma Family for hosting the Youth/

Family Devotional yesterday!

The next Junior High/High School devotional will be Sunday, March 12 following evening service.

Education NEWS

Thursday Leadership Class

All men are invited to attend a weekly Leadership Development class here at the building at 7 p.m.

In Search of the Lord's Way

The lesson for Sunday, March 5 at 7:30 a.m. on KMOL is entitled, "What Happened to Sin?" A recent poll found three-fourths of Americans saying moral values in the United States are getting worse. Why is America becoming more immoral? We want to explore the causes of America's moral decline and what we can do about it.

SUNDAYS

Bible Classes9:00 AM
Morning Worship10:00 AM
Evening Worship 5:00 PM

Tuesdays (September through May)

Men's Bible Study 10:00 AM
Ladies' Bible Study..... 10:00 AM

WEDNESDAYS

Midweek Bible Study 7:00 PM

EVANGELIST

Ronnie Scherffius

SUPPORTED WORKS

James and Emily Cammock
Hamilton, New Zealand

John Moore
Bible Land Passages

Cecil Shaw
Ocho Rios, Jamaica

Student Support
Southwest School of Bible Studies

THE MIDTOWN MESSENGER IS THE WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST, 5901 N. MAIN, VICTORIA, TEXAS 77904 . 361-573-0030
www.midtowncoc.org

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR MID-TOWN MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

The Midtown CHURCH OF CHRIST Messenger

FEBRUARY 26, 2017

"Bootstraps?" by Ronnie Scherffius

The following is an excerpt from an article in the Victoria Advocate titled, "Nobody can pull themselves up by their bootstraps."

"The only reason we can go to heaven is because God so loved the world he gave his one and only Son. The only reason we can go to heaven is because Jesus loved you so much he took your place, suffered your punishment and died your death. He did it all for you. You can't even say I'm going to heaven because I found God or because I chose Jesus as my Savior. You didn't find God He found you. You didn't choose Jesus. He chose you. The reason you and I believe in Jesus is because the Holy Spirit came to us through his word and Sacraments and gave us faith. The only thing we are capable of doing on our own is rejecting him." (Andrew Schroer, Nobody can pull themselves up by their bootstraps; Victoria Advocate, February 18, 2017)

I do not know Andrew Schroer. I can only assume that he is a good man; a man who is morally upright and seeks the good of others. But I do know that the statements made by Mr. Schroer in the above quote are false and contrary to truth.

Mr. Schroer suggests that man cannot choose God or Jesus Christ. He further reasons that one's faith is due to the Holy Spirit coming upon him, in fact, the only reaction of which man is capable without the working of the Holy Spirit is to reject Christ outright. This is Calvinism at its finest, the false belief that man, who is born totally depraved and without even the desire to do good toward God, is dependent upon the irresistible grace of God that comes to man through the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit, which miraculous working allows one to receive Christ as his Savior. The only problem with this doctrine is that it contradicts the Bible.

In the parable of the sower, Jesus likens the hearts of man to various types of soil, wayward (hard), rocky (not much depth), thorny (full of the world), and good (honest and open to truth). Explaining the parable to His disciples, Jesus says of the good soil, "But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit" (Mt. 13:23) The seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11), and it is this medium through sowing, i.e., teaching and preaching, that a change is evidenced, not through a miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. Is this not what took place on the day of Pentecost when the first gospel sermon was preached? Consider the reaction of the believers, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37) These did not wait for the Holy Spirit but responded to gospel preaching!

Such was also the case in Corinth as we find when Paul writes, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I **preached** unto you, which also ye have **received**, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain" (1 Cor. 15:12). The Corinthians were not saved because of a miraculous working of the Holy Spirit but because, when the gospel was preached unto them they received it and were standing in it. In fact, Paul admonishes them to "keep in memory," (hold fast) what he had preached to them or their faith was vain (worthless) Here's a question for Mr. Schroer, "Since these had believed (and Paul says they had), was there some fault in the Holy Spirit's work that left their faith in jeopardy? Or is it the case that our faith is our own and dependent upon our decisions and/or actions?"

In light of this Calvinist doctrine, i.e., of one's inability to understand/obey the gospel without a miraculous irresistible working of the Holy Spirit, an examination of Luke's comparison of the Thessalonians and Bereans is worthy of our attention: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). Considering this passage some questions are in order. First, why did the Bereans need to "search the scriptures" to see "whether these things were so?" Is this not the responsibility of the Holy Spirit? Second, how could these Bereans even desire to do such a thing inasmuch as they were born totally depraved in heart and mind? Third, why did the apostle Paul stand by and permit the Bereans foolishly to search the scriptures? Surely he was aware of the fact they could never understand the truth on their own.

Finally, what of the poor Thessalonians! Why did the Holy Spirit not have an effectual working on their hearts so that they might be saved? Whose fault is it if they are lost in eternity? According to Mr. Schroer's words it is the Holy Spirit who gives us faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). Does this not bring guilt and responsibility for these lost souls upon the Holy Spirit? Why did He not save them?!



SATURDAY, MARCH 4

Teach the next generation to know God

Teacher Workshop Presented By:
April Meacham & Teah McWhorter
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. @ MidTown
Lunch provided
RSVP at midtowncoc2017@gmail.com

Finally, the idea that we cannot choose God or find Jesus (through seeking Him) is wholly foreign to the Scriptures. Joshua admonished Israel "choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Josh. 24:15) and the Hebrews writer attested that God is "a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). The psalmist sang, "let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord" (Ps. 105:3) and "With my whole heart have I sought thee" (Ps. 119:10). Even our Lord admonished us, "seek ye first the kingdom of God" (Mt. 6:33) and even invited us "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Mt. 11:28). But all of these Scriptures mean nothing if the doctrine that Mr. Schroer and many others teach is true!

Of those things which he wrote, John said, "these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:30-31). Man does not have faith through a miraculous working of the Holy Spirit, but through hearing the word of God which we have through inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 2:1-13). Thus, Paul could write, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

No, man cannot save himself! and without the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross there could be no remission of sins for man (Heb. 9:22; Heb. 10:4). But man is capable of responding to the soul saving gospel of Christ when it is preached. And by one's obedience his faith is made complete (James 2:2).

News & ACTIVITIES

Today!

The Fourth Sunday Fellowship Meal will be held following evening services and will include the Annual Chili Cookoff! Please bring a dish, sides, desserts.



Sunday, March 5

The monthly Men's Meeting will be held at 3:30 p.m. here at the building.

- Brookdale Team #4 will meet today.

Records You Helped Make
For the Week of
FEBRUARY 19, 2017

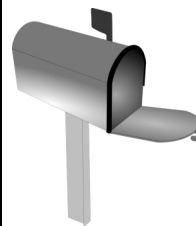
Attendance

Sunday Bible Class.....113
Sunday Morning Assembly.....149
Sunday Evening Assembly.....99
Wednesday Attendance.....99

Offering: \$4,860

MONTHLY Q&A SESSIONS TO BEGIN

You are encouraged to submit bible questions in a "mail box" in the foyer to be answered during a monthly Q&A session starting Sunday, March 26. Ronnie will answer the bible questions each fourth Sunday during the evening service.



Keep in PRAYER

IN SYMPATHY:

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Margaret Alexander.



MidTown Members:

Paul Atkinson
Buster Bailey
Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Jan Farris
Dee Gilpatrick

Betty Key
Kathy Laws
Sandy Malone
Ann Pantel
Glen Pitts
Angela Sneeringer-
Gonzalez
Mickey Tisue
Clark Withers

& Friends Family:

Victor Benitez,
brother of Virginia Escojido
Bert Haynes,
father of Pam Stryker
Glena Coon,
Bo Dykes and Doris
family of Peggy Matlock
Kim Neel-Farthing,
daughter of Joyce
June Green,
mother of Janice FitzSimmons
Amy Jamison,
daughter of Terry
Barbara Lopez,
mother of Rosalba Barton
Liz Lopez,
friend of Nina Siegel

Janell Marshall
*mother of Karon Barton's
sister-in-law*
Fred Porter,
brother-in-law of Della Rampley
Madeline Posey,
family of Julie Posey
Sarah Randle,
mother of Steve
Polly Ray,
aunt of Connie Cleveland
Scott Reeves,
*son of Sam and Leta
brother of Sherry Lynch*
Gary Rush,
friend of the Arnos
Sammy Snead,
brother-in-law of Ronnie Scherffius
Prem Verma,
father-in-law of Archana
Kennedy Young, Sr.,
uncle of Naomi Flonnory