

## Youth NEWS



The next Junior High/High School devotional

will be hosted by the Hutt Family on Sunday, March 12 following evening service.

## Education NEWS

### Thursday Leadership Class

All men are invited to attend a biweekly Leadership Development class here at the building at 7 p.m. The next class will meet on Thursday, March 16.

### In Search of the Lord's Way

The lesson for Sunday, March 12 at 7:30 a.m. on KMOL is entitled, "Christ Is Our Hope." When life fills with doubts and darkness, we look to Christ for our hope. Just as clouds can darken but not remove the sun, so life's troubles can darken our lives but not remove the source of all blessings! Let's hope in Christ, our Lord and our Savior!

### SUNDAYS

Bible Classes .....9:00 AM  
Morning Worship .....10:00 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

MARCH 5, 2017

"The Book of Life" by Ronnie Scherffius

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. Rev. 3:5.

No passage in all of Scripture possesses a more appealing possibility to mortal man than this! The book of Revelation very forcefully and deliberately instructs mortal man that not even the most powerful of God's enemies will prevail over His saints! To be clothed in white raiment and hear Jesus Christ confirm your name as a faithful child of God before the hosts of heaven is a thought that both satisfies the soul and stirs our inner man to zealous service for the kingdom.

But what exactly does it mean to have your name in "the book of life?" Many questions at once arise when we consider this book: what is the book of life; is it a literal book or is it but a figure presenting a heavenly truth; if it is a figure – from what does the figure originate; if one's name is found therein is it permanently affixed or is listing in this heavenly register conditional; what are some of the advantages of having your name found in this book?

### *The Book of Life: What Is It?*

The phrase "book of life" is found only eight times throughout the entire Bible, and seven of those are in the Revelation. Writing of those things Christ had "sent and signified," John contrasted unregenerate man "whose names are not written in the book of Life" (Rev. 13:8; 17:8) with those who refuse to worship and

serve the Roman emperor and who shall enter into the "holy city, New Jerusalem" whose name will be found "written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27). Is this book to which John refers a literal book? Is there a heavenly register in which the names of the righteous are recorded or is this simply figurative of the fact that God knows the names of all who are His? It seems unlikely, that the God of heaven who declares, "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done" (Isa. 46:10) has need of writing anything down for the purpose of keeping a record. Thus, it would seem that the "book of life" is simply a figurative expression of the righteous citizenry of the kingdom of heaven.

But what is the origin of this figure in which the names of those who possess spiritual life are recorded? History indicates that the Jews kept a register of their citizens. When one was born into a Jewish family his/her name was recorded into that book; at death the name was removed. This book is referred to various times throughout the Old Testament. Nehemiah spoke of this book as a "a register of the genealogy" (Neh. 7:5) and indicated that this register served the purpose of confirming one's lineage pertaining to the priesthood (Neh. 7:64).

In Messianic prophecy, the psalmist pleaded with Jehovah that his enemies be "blotted out of

the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous" (Psa. 69:28). Jehovah himself affirmed by the mouth of Ezekiel that the false prophets among the Jews would not have their names written in the book of Israel's citizens (Ezek. 13:9).

The use of such a registry was evidently early among Israel as Moses spoke of it (Ex. 32:32-33), and while there was an actual registry of the living populace of Israel, the Scriptures often refer to this book and use the concept of it figuratively of the righteous whose "citizenship" is in heaven.

### Conditions of Registration

As there were conditions of one's name being added to "the register of the genealogy" of physical Israel there are conditions of being added to the register of citizens of spiritual Israel as well. First, one had to be "born into" the nation of Israel. No one would argue that it is possible to be a citizen of a tribal nation if he has not been born into one of the families that make up that nation. Likewise, one must be born into the family of God in order to have his name added to that spiritual register David called "the book of the living." This birth is "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God" (1 Pet. 1:23) and is accomplished "with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:25). Jesus referred to this "washing" as the new birth (John 3:1-8) and the apostles taught plainly that without being born again, i.e., baptized into Christ, one cannot receive remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

It should be pointed out that when one died their name was removed from the register, after all, it was the book of the *living*. The purpose of this book was not to serve as a genealogical record, but a record of those who were among the living in Israel. Even so, when one of spiritual Israel, Christians, ceases to walk in the light of God and dies spiritually, his name is "blotted out" of that spiritual catalog of Christians. Yet, unlike those who died a natural death in Israel, a child of God who is dead in sin may have his name restored to the book of life.

### Advantages of Citizenship

Citizenship certainly has its advantages. As citizens of the United States we realize that there are certain advantages afforded us in this country others have not the right to possess. The greatest advantage of one's name being in the book of life is found in our opening text: "I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." (Rev. 3:5)

Another advantage one possesses having his name written in God's spiritual registry is the right to acceptably serve as a priest. Ezra, like Nehemiah, affirmed that those who "could not show their fathers' houses, and their seed, whether they were of Israel" but desired to serve in the temple were "deemed polluted and put from the priesthood" (Ezra 2:58-62). Under the law of Moses, only those of the tribe of Levi could serve as priests (Heb. 7:12-14), but under the new law of Christ all who are citizens of the kingdom are a part of that "holy priesthood" made fit by the blood of Christ "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5). Still, this great advantage and priceless privilege is afforded only to those who are born into that "spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2:5) and who maintain citizenship in that "holy nation" (1 Pet. 2:9) whose names are found written in the book of life. Is your name written there?

### Records You Helped Make For the Week of FEBRUARY 26, 2017

#### Attendance

Sunday Bible Class.....106  
 Sunday Morning Assembly.....148  
 Sunday Evening Assembly.....94  
 Wednesday Attendance.....99

**Offering: \$5,648.52**

## News & ACTIVITIES

### Today!

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

### Sunday, March 12

Daylight Savings Time.

### Wednesday, March 29

There will be a Fifth Wednesday Singing this month.

### April 2-5

Mark your calendars for the Spring Gospel Meeting entitled, "Some Questions About Jesus Christ and Salvation."

- Brookdale Team #1 will meet today.
- Thank you to all who attended and helped make the Teacher's Workshop a success!

### 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 **Ralph Young**, uncle of Bill Young. Also, we offer condolences to the family of **Demincio Rosas**, step-father of Debra Sanchez.



### MidTown Members:

Paul Atkinson  
 Buster Bailey  
 Jeff Cannady  
 Les Daltry  
 Jan Farris

### & Friends Family:

Victor Benitez,  
*brother of Virginia Escojido*  
 Bert Haynes,  
*father of Pam Stryker*  
 Glenna 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*

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

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 Arnots*  
 Sammy Snead,  
*brother-in-law of Ronnie Scherffius*  
 Prem Verma,  
*father-in-law of Archana*  
 Kennedy Young, Sr.,  
*uncle of Naomi Flonnory*