

# Midtown Messenger

Volume 1

December 23, 2018

Issue 41

## *STANDING ON THE PROMISES OF GOD (III)*

*Ronnie Scherffius*

**W**e often sing the song, *STANDING ON THE PROMISES OF GOD*. Though some may doubt and wonder if God can/will keep His promises regarding man's salvation, we know that we can trust God to keep His word! Time will not hinder God from keeping His promises and neither will man's effort to interfere (even when trying to "help") with God's plans/purposes.

Though one may be confident in God's keeping of His promises while he lives, what if man dies before God's promise is fulfilled? How can God keep His promise of salvation to one who is dead?! This appears to have been a question among the Thessalonian Christians: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, **concerning them which are asleep**, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe (i.e., since we believe - *RLS*) that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. 4:13-14)

We know that we can stand on God's promise of salvation in Christ and that **not even the grave can hinder God from keeping His promises**. AND we know that because of the death and resurrection of Jesus himself!

Jesus promised that He would build His church: "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Mt. 16:18). The *hell* of this text is not the Greek term "gehenna" which is the place of eternal punishment (cf. Matt. 10:28), but rather "hades" and refers to the grave. Jesus was literally saying, "not even the grave" would keep Him from fulfilling His promise of building His church!

That Jesus went to the grave is undeniable. Jesus himself prophesied of it: "But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Mt.12:39-40).

Inspired men testified of Jesus death: "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost." (Mt. 27:50); "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost" (Mk 15:37); "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost" (Lk 23:46); "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (Jn 19:30).

Paul preached the death of Jesus: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, **and him crucified**." (1 Cor. 2:2); "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth (through his preaching!), **crucified among you?**" (Gal. 3:1)

Secular history also corroborates the inspired record of Jesus death! The Roman historian Tacitus wrote that Christians "had their denomination from Christus, who in the reign of Tiberius was put to death as a criminal by the procurator Pontius Pilate" (ca. 100 A.D.). BUT just as Jesus declared, the bars of death could not hold Him and His promise to build His church

was fulfilled (Mt. 28:6ff; Mk. 16:6ff; Lk. 24:1-7; Jn. 20:1-18; I Cor. 15:3-20; Acts 2). Thus we see, not even the physical death of man can keep the promises of God from coming to pass!

We can stand on the promises of God. God promised a Savior would come into the world - it came to pass (Mt. 1:18-25). God promised Christ would sit on the throne of David - it came to pass and continues (Acts 2:32-33; Hb. 1:1-3). God promised if we are faithful to His commands we will receive a crown of life (Rv. 2:10). God cannot and will not fail to keep His promises (Titus 1:2; Hb. 6:18). When we consider the promises of God the evidence is overwhelming: God has made promises in the past; at the proper time He kept every promise made; God has promised us salvation; the only conclusion must be that God will one day give His faithful children salvation in heaven. Time will not change that. The interference of man will not change that. Death cannot change that (I Thess. 4:16). Are you standing on the promises of God?

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### **Why Are We Breathing?**

In 2012 Tom Sietas, a free diver, broke the world record for the longest held breath. He stayed underwater for a “breathtaking” 22 minutes and 22 seconds!

Everyone who has held their breath for any amount of time knows how quickly the body begins to demand air. Breathing is an obviously vital part of life. Whether we stop breathing for 22 minutes or just for 30 seconds, everyone must eventually come back for air to continue living. Adam was the very first person to take a breath (Genesis 2:7). From this point on God has given life and breath to every person (Acts 17:25). This wonderful gift of life from God begs the question, “Why?” Why did God give us the breath of life? Why are we living and breathing? What is our purpose in this life?

King Solomon asked similar questions during his lifetime. In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon looked into almost every part of life in search for purpose and meaning. He experi-

mented with property, possessions, entertainment, wealth, intelligence, and promiscuous activities, but found them all to be pointless and futile (Ecclesiastes 2:1-11). Finally, after completing his search, Solomon revealed the true purpose in life: “The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

So, why are we living and breathing? What is the purpose of this life? According to Scripture, the purpose of this life is to honor God and obey His laws in the Bible. Even though people continue to search for meaning in a variety of unfulfilling ways, life’s true purpose can only be found in God.

A life lived for God is like a breath of fresh air in this spiritually polluted world. A life lived for God feels like a refreshing breeze and brings a sense of comfort, meaning, and sincerity. So many people are suffocating in an ocean of sin. The only way to breathe easy is to “fear God and keep His commandments” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

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### **Plan of Salvation**

- Hear the gospel.....Romans 10:17
- Believe in Christ.....John 8:24
- Repent from sins.....Luke 13:3
- Confess Christ.....Matthew 10:32-33
- Be baptized.....Mark 16:16
- Be faithful to death.....Revelation 2:10

**PRIVILEGED TO SERVE**

Week of December 23, 2018

**Sunday Morning:**

Announcements: Jeff Harris  
Scripture Reading: Isaac Jobs

**Lord's Supper & Offering**

Bread: Bryant Siegel  
Fruit of the Vine: Dennis Bryson  
Offering: Bryce Dolan  
Assist: Curtis Scherffius, Kirk FitzSimmons, Manny Flonnory

**Sunday Evening:** Bryant Siegel, Dennis Bryson

**Prayer**

A.M. Closing: Mike Atkinson  
P.M. Closing: Kevin Sheeran

**Ushers:** Don Lynn  
Allen Clifton

**Wednesday Devotional:** Steve Randle

**Open/Close Building:** Helen & Willie Cannady

**Sound System:** Will Burleson

**Greeters:**  
Allen Clifton  
Don Lynn

Prepare Communion: Scherffius

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**2019 POCKET DIRECTORY:**

Please update your contact information for the 2019 pocket directory in the foyer.

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Please sign up to prepare communion, open & close the building, and host youth devotionals for 2019. Sign up sheets are on the bulletin board in the hallway.

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Sunny Glen Children's Home is requesting the following items: toilet paper & cereal. Please place the items in the donation box in the hallway.

**IN NEED OF PRAYERS:**

BOB COON, brother of Peggy Matlock, who was diagnosed with cancer; DANNY MCRAE, brother in law of Sandy Bryson, who had liver and gallbladder surgery. He is at home recuperating; ALICIA HERNANDEZ, mother of Letty Randle, who was in the hospital for high blood pressure; DAMIAN BENITEZ, JR., nephew of Virginia Escojido, who is having health problems.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Jan. 4-6: Winter Retreat @ Leakey for Youth  
Jan. 6: Forever Young group meeting  
Jan. 12: GEMS meeting

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:**

Happy Birthday: Athena Scherffius (23); June Hawkins (27); Kelson Jacobs (28)

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**SPECIAL NOTE:**

If you would like to add items to the bulletin, please see Nina Siegel or email :  
office.midtownchurch@gmail.com

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**KEEP IN PRAYER**

MIDTOWN MEMBERS

Jeff Cannady                      Ann Pantel  
Dee Gilpatrick                      Clark Withers

SHUT-INS

Faye Henderson                      Sandy Malone

FRIENDS & FAMILY

Victor Benitez                      Vikram Gottam  
(brother of Virginia Escojido)                      (brother-in-law of Archana Verma)  
Kim Neel-Farthing                      Antonio Benitez  
(daughter of Joyce)                      (brother of Virginia Escojido)

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

# MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Minister:** Ronnie Scherffius  
**Secretary:** Nina Siegel

## TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00AM  
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM  
Sunday Evening Worship: 5:00PM  
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00PM

## RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of December 16, 2018

Bible Class.....97  
A.M. Worship.....104  
P.M. Worship.....73  
Wednesday Bible Study.....107

Offering      \$4,043

## QUICK REFERENCE

Use this quick reference to help you grow in knowledge:

### Prayer

Always give thanks.....1 Thes. 5:17f  
Fervent prayer.....James 5:16  
Heb. 4:16; James 4:2; Col. 1:9



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## SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli  
New Zealand - James & Emily Cammock  
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore  
Southwest School of Bible Studies - Cody Kilgore

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## MidTown Church of Christ

5901 N. Main  
Victoria, TX 77904  
(361) 573-0030  
[midtowncoc2017@gmail.com](mailto:midtowncoc2017@gmail.com)

