

Midtown Messenger

Volume 1

May 27, 2018

Issue 11

TAKING UP OUR CROSS (conclusion)

Ronnie Scherffius

Jesus declared, “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Mark 8:34). In order for us to take up the cause of Christ we must also take up our cross. Taking up that cross involves *courage* and *resolve*; courage to take up the cross, courage to carry the cross and resolve to continue steadfastly in the faith. In addition to these enduring qualities, there are two other particulars that must be noted as we consider taking up our cross and following after Jesus.

Taking up our cross includes obligation.

Webster defines obligation as “the binding power of a vow, promise, oath or law.” An obligation binds us to something or to someone. Some examples include: a military contract which binds one to the service of his country; a financial contract such as a bank loan binds one to fiscal obligations; a service contract such as a contract with an energy company binds one to obligations governed by services and time. While it is true that for a fee or with the proper contacts these contracts can be nullified, the obligations we make when we take up our cross are not easily broken.

“No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62). We are obligated (bound by the virtue of our vow to Christ) to teach others and spread the borders of the kingdom (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; 2 Tim. 2:2). We are obligated (bound by the virtue of our vow to Christ) to worship and serve Him only (John 4:24). We are obligated (bound by the virtue of our vow to Christ) to love Him supremely and place all in the world secondary to His cause (Mark 10:17-22; 1 Tim. 6:9-10, 17-19). Jesus was not obligated to go to the

cross for us but His love for humanity compelled Him. In order for us to access the blessings found in that love we are obligated to take up our cross.

Taking up our cross involves sacrifice. Jesus affirmed this timeless truth: “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself” (Mark 8:34). The fact that there are obligations to be met demands there will be sacrifices! As parents we have obligations to our children – do we sacrifice for them? Husbands have obligations to their wives and wives have obligations to their husbands – do we sacrifice for our spouses? Higher education demands obligations to the educational institution – do we make sacrifices to improve ourselves? The point is that in our daily lives we understand that obligation involves sacrifice; though Jesus was not obligated to die for man, obligating Himself to the cross demanded sacrifice on His part.

As Christians, we may be called upon to sacrifice in order to remain faithful to Christ and maintain our obligations to Him. Like Peter, Andrew, James and John we may have to sacrifice our vocation. As in the case of Paul we may have to sacrifice social or even political status. The day may come when we, like our brother Stephen in the first century, must take a firm stand and sacrifice our own lives. Although we sacrifice our time, money and wants, Jesus sacrificed ALL when He took up His cross. If we are to take up our cross we must be willing to do the same.

Taking up our cross results in salvation.

When Jesus took up His cross it made salvation possible for all men: “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it

pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven” (Col. 1:18-20). When we, through obedience to the souls saving gospel of Christ, take up our cross we obtain that salvation made possible by His cross.

It could be said that the Christian life begins at the foot of Christ’s cross but it continues by us taking up our own. What is involved in such a life? Courage – Resolve – Obligation – Sacrifice – which results in Salvation. Have you taken up your cross?

The Police Manhunt In My Backyard

By: Brett Petrillo

From my office window, I watch as two police cars went screaming by. I became especially interested as three more soon followed. Since I live close to the church building, I always wonder if the police are heading to my house. Today they were –sort of. The police weren’t going specifically to my house, but to the specific area around my house. A criminal was at large and they had the location narrowed down to my house. Soon they were knocking on our door and began searching all around our house and backyard, including the kids outdoor play-set and our chicken coop. Thankfully, they did not find the person in our backyard or any of the surrounding yards. Unfortunately, the person remained at large.

A short while later, several police cars and a tow truck went to work removing an abandoned vehicle just outside the church building. Apparently, this same criminal had abandoned his car at the building and then fled into my neighborhood. The police did tell us that the man was not considered dangerous but that they were still looking for him. We never did hear if he was caught.

After all the excitement settled, my mind started churning about all the different possibilities that could have occurred. What if this man had been violent and dangerous? What if he had forced his way into the church building or even into my own home?

Would we have been ready for such a situation?

Questions like these can make us want to put our families in a bubble. While scary, this situation caused me to lean back with a calm reassurance. Here are a couple of those comforting waves that washed over me.

God Rewards The Faithful. This doesn’t mean God has put a hedge of protection around us. What it means is that even if the worst possible scenario had occurred, the reward of heaven is there for us when we are faithful. God hasn’t promised that the Christian life will be completely absent from tragedy and heartache (consider the fate of the disciples, Jesus, the prophets, etc). The end of this life simply would have meant the beginning of our heavenly reward. What a reassuring thought that is in the face of tragedy.

God Will Repay. There is no doubt there would have been inexpressible heartache had something happened to my family or to the people at the church building. Thank the Lord nothing did. However, had something occurred, another comforting thought would have been that the Lord would punish the evil (Romans 12:19). God would repay what was due to the person. God would take care of the situation at the Judgment Day (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; Matthew 25:31-46).

God Doesn’t Guarantee Tomorrow. This may not sound all that reassuring, but in a way it is. See, we don’t have any guaranteed amount of time (James 4:13-14; Luke 12:16-20). Every moment is uncertain, which is exactly why it’s so comforting knowing that no matter what tomorrow holds, as long as we live right, there is nothing to fear. Sure, tomorrow isn’t guaranteed, but for a faithful Christian, heaven is most certainly guaranteed (Revelation 2:10). We are grateful for today, but we are also grateful for when there is no longer a tomorrow.

There are so many uncertainties in life. There are so many tragedies that can arise. For each and every one of them, it’s always better to be a Christian. If we can’t find reassurance in God’s promises for the future, then we might not be ready. Use today to make the necessary changes.

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of May 27, 2018

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Bryant Siegel
Scripture Reading: Sammy Scherffius

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Lupe Escojido
Fruit of the Vine: Will Cleveland
Offering: Anthony Scherffius
Assist: Jeff Cannady, Isaac Jobes, Brant Jacobs

Sunday Evening: Lupe Escojido, Will Cleveland

Prayer

A.M. Opening: Kevin Sheeran
A.M. Closing: Robert Powers
P.M. Opening: Don Lynn
P.M. Closing: Wayne Martin

Ushers: Steve Randle
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional: Lupe Escojido

Open/Close Building: Steve Randle

Sound System: Will Burleson

Greeters:

Will Cleveland
Allen Clifton
Steve Randle

Prepare Communion: Connie Kasper

TODAY! There will be a teacher appreciation meal for teachers and their families after evening worship.

We will have guest speaker Don Walker kick off our Wednesday Summer Series on Sunday, June 3rd. The Theme this year is "The Denomination Risen Up Among Us". A schedule of the Wednesday Summer Series may be picked up in the foyer.

Bible Q&A

This evening, Ronnie will answer the following Bible questions:

1. Is there any reason given as to why the tribe of Manasseh split?
2. What is the difference in being added to the church and being joined to the church? (Acts 2:47)
3. Is the recent move of the US Embassy to Jerusalem of any consequence in terms of a sign as it relates to Scripture? Do the Jewish people have a divine right to the land? Is the formation of modern-day Israel a fulfillment of the prophecy" in Luke 21:24? Does this mean the times of the Gentiles has been fulfilled? Please explain.
4. In Matthew 24:39-41 we read, "One will be taken and one will be left" yet 2 Peter 3:10 states "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." So how can one be taken and one be left?

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

STEVE RANDLE, his brother Cecil was taken off of respirator and cousin Maxine Spenser who passed away.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 27: Teacher appreciation meal @ the building after evening services

June 3: Don Walker kicks off Midtown's Summer Series

June 3: 55+ group meeting at 3:30 pm @ the building

June 6: Wednesday Summer Series—Daniel Garza

June 9: Combined young kids & Jr/Sr High Devo @ the building @ 5:30pm; boys bring drinks, girls bring desserts

July 28: Midtown hosts Summer Youth Series @ 5pm

IN THE AREA

May 23-28: Young Men's Development Conference @ Bryan-College Station

June 7: Summer Youth Series @ 7pm—Riverside

June 21: Summer Youth Series @ 7pm—Mathis

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Bryant Siegel (29); Marla Sample (30); Myra FitzSimmons, Charlie Mabe (June 1); Abigail Pawlik, Valerie Ramsey (June 2)

Happy Anniversary: Brant & Anna Jacobs (30); Kevin & Imelda Sheeran (31)

BAPTISM

We rejoice in the baptism of Kirk FitzSimmons last Wednesday night and pray that his walk with Christ will bear much fruit.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS

Roy Arnot	Sandra Marie
Jeff Cannady	Ann Pantel
Dee Gilpatrick	Glenodine Pitts
Lucille Hawkins	Della Rampley
Faye Henderson	Bob Smith
Sandy Malone	Clark Withers

FRIENDS & FAMILY

Bert Haynes (father of Pam Stryker)	Vikram Gottam (brother-in-law of Archana Verma)
Victor Benitez (brother of Virginia Escojido)	Mary Younglove (grandmother of Naomi Flonnory)
Kim Neel-Farthing (daughter of Joyce)	Cynthia Sneeringer (mother of Angela)
Sarah Randle (mother of Steve)	Antonio Benitez (brother of Virginia Escojido)
Cole Ohrt (friend of Ann Pantel)	

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

MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders:

Will Cleveland
Tom Pitchford

Deacons:

Adrian Cannady
Mark FitzSimmons
Doug Jobs
Bryant Siegel

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 May 20, 2018

Bible Class.....107
A.M. Worship.....152
P.M. Worship.....94
Wednesday Bible Study.....100

Offering \$4,808

QUICK REFERENCE

Use this quick reference to help you grow in knowledge:

Christians

Disciples calledActs. 11:26
Acts. 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16; Gal. 2:20

**SUPPORTED WORKS**

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

GO PAPERLESS!

Want the digital version?

Email us at midtowncoc2017@gmail.com

To receive the MidTown Messenger in your inbox
or visit www.midtowncoc.org

MidTown Church of Christ

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

