



# Midtown Messenger

Volume 1

September 23, 2018

Issue 28

## OVERCOMING DISCOURAGEMENT

Ronnie Scherffius

There has never been a time more difficult than today. There has never been a society where men were more sinful and given to wickedness than our own. There has never been occasions where there was more reason for discouragement among God's people than there is today. This may be the attitude of some—but it is wholly without merit (cf. Gen. 6; Acts 8). Though we may be disposed to believe that discouragement is unique to our time and perhaps even to our lives, a quick glance through the Scriptures clearly demonstrate that even the most admired men and women of the Bible endured very discouraging times. Consider that Joseph was sold into slavery by his own brothers (Gen. 37); Moses endured the murmuring of God's people (Ex. 15, 16, 17, et al); Naomi lost both husband and sons (Ruth 1); Elijah was convinced he was the only one left faithfully serving God (1 Kings 19); Jeremiah became so discouraged that he decided to quit preaching (Jer. 20); Paul stood before the Roman Emperor defending the gospel—alone (2 Tim. 4:16).

From the youngest to the oldest—all experience discouragement. Discouragement can lead to anxiety and even depression. According to the ADAA (Anxiety and Depression Association of America) in 2016, 18% of the population of the U.S. age 18 and older were affected by anxiety (40 million adults!). One-third of the monies spent to treat mental health was used to treat anxiety (\$42 billion). It is common for people struggling with anxiety also to suffer from depression. Depression, if left unchecked, can lead to alcohol/drug abuse, chronic aches, phobias, loss of production at school/work, family/relationship problems, social isolation, eating

disorders, self-mutilation, and even suicide. There is no medical *cure* for anxiety only medicines for treatment, and in 2016, 10.7% of Americans were prescribed antidepressants—up from 1.8% in 1988! While there may be no *prescriptive cure*, there is a scriptural cure! Consider the following *treatments* for **Overcoming Discouragement**.

**Look up rather than down.** After settling the dispute between herdsmen and separating from his family, Abraham was told by God, “Lift up now thine eyes” (Gen. 13:14). Have you ever considered that when we lift up our eyes our focus changes from worldly to heavenly? Life is meaningless without a heavenly hope. Some place their hope in worldly possessions but earthly treasures are temporary. Jesus instructed, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal” (Matt 6:19-20). You will never see a U-haul following a hearse and there are no pockets in a shroud! Search the ancient tombs and one will discover the treasures of the Pharaohs remain. When man's hope and focus is on this world disappointment and discouragement are a certain consequence, but our hope is in heaven and heaven should be our focus.

Paul wrote, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. 3:1-2). The Hebrews writer posited that Jesus is our “hope” and

“anchor of the soul” (Heb. 6:18-20) and Paul admonished Titus that we should be “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:11-13). To the Romans, Paul would write “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:18). When we lift up our eyes and focus on things above we will soon realize that any loss, disappointment, difficulty, or discouragement is easily overcome by a heavenly hope!

***Count your blessings not your problems.***

Everyone has problems. Focusing on problems produces an attitude of self-pity. A short phrase in the most well known of all the psalms reads “my cup runneth over” (Psalm 23:5). Why do we always seem to focus on the *problem cup* rather than the *blessing cup*? Here is a novel idea, when struggling with discouragement we should sit down and make two lists — one list is our problems the other our blessings. Which list is longer? Which list is more positive? Which list draws us closer to God? Which list inspires us to help others? Which list helps us appreciate God’s blessings?

Consider the abundant physical blessings we enjoy daily: life and good health; access to good medicines; access to food; liberty and prosperity; freedom to worship God without fear; love of family and friends. And these pale in comparison to the spiritual blessings that we have in Christ: redemption and forgiveness of sins; fellowship with God; assurance of acceptable worship; knowing that God hears and regards our prayers. We often sing, “When upon life’s billows you are tempest tossed; When you are discouraged thinking all is lost; Count your many blessings name them one by one; And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.” By counting our blessings rather than our problems we **can** overcome discouragement.

Next week will note three other *treatments* for overcoming discouragement.

## **The Spider Living In A Man’s Ear**

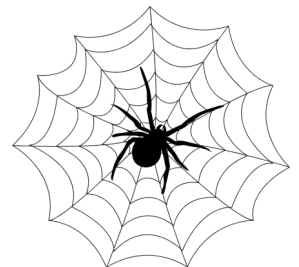
By: Brett Petrillo

The Chinese man felt discomfort in his ear in the middle of the night but just tried to sleep it off. By morning, the discomfort was still there and he was even hearing noises like someone was beating a drum. Wisely, he went into the doctor right away. Doctor Cui Shulin and his nurses took a look and found a spider in his ear. Not only was the spider living, but it had already spun a complex series of webs in the ear canal to help shield itself. Thankfully, the doctor was able to extract the spider by spraying water into the man’s ear canal. The man suffered no injuries from the uninvited guest.

Stories like these are how nightmares are born. For a person who squirms around spiders, this one sends chills down my spine like no other. I don’t ever want a spider on me. Having a spider IN me? I just hope the Lord comes back first.

We’ve all had smaller encounters with uninvited guests. A gnat in the eye. Swallowing a bug. And each time they are gross and troublesome. But none of these compare to one particular unwelcome visitor who has wiggled into all our lives: Satan.

No, Satan hasn’t literally camped out inside us, but the sinful effects of his work in this world certainly have. The more we let the webs of sin entangle our lives, the harder it becomes to escape (Hebrews 12:1). We have to work constantly to not even allow him a foothold (Ephesians 4:27). The Chinese man had the right idea. He noticed the problem and immediately took steps to solve it. The quick solution is the same for us. Don’t let the sin spider continue to spin its webs in your life. Take care of it right away.



## PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of September 23, 2018

### **Sunday Morning:**

Announcements: Jeff Harris  
Scripture Reading: Dylan Herring

### **Lord's Supper & Offering**

Bread: Doug Jobes  
Fruit of the Vine: Lupe Escojido  
Offering: Bryce Dolan  
Assist: Scott DeDear, Isaac Jobes, Don Lynn

**Sunday Evening:** Doug Jobes, Lupe Escojido

### **Prayer**

A.M. Closing: Larry Nuckels  
P.M. Closing: Kevin Sheeran

**Ushers:** Don Lynn  
Allen Clifton

**Wednesday Devotional:** Steve Randle

**Open/Close Building:** Will Burleson

**Sound System:** Michael Page

### **Greeters:**

Will Cleveland  
Allen Clifton  
Don Lynn

Prepare Communion: Kelly Cannady

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**Sunday, September 30:** Cody Kilgore will be preaching our Sunday Morning Adult Bible Class, Morning Service and evening service. Please make plans to attend!

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## FALL ONE DAY MEETING

Sunday, October 21, 2018

Guest Speaker: Cody Westbrook

Cody will be preaching the Morning Adult Bible Class, Morning Service and 1pm service. The 1pm service will be conducted by the young men of our congregation.

There will also be a potluck meal after morning service. Please bring a potluck dish to feed your family and a visitor.

## IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

BEN AND MILLIE JAMISON'S FAMILY, Ben's brother Joe has pneumonia and Joe's granddaughter, Adrianna has cancer; CHARLES RAMSEY, brother of Herb Ramsey, who was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer; THELMA DEYTON, mother in law of Roy and Marguerite Arnot's daughter, who broke her hip.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 25: Ladies/Men's Bible Classes  
Sept. 30: Cody Kilgore will be preaching  
Oct. 2: Ladies/Men's Bible Classes  
Oct. 7: Forever Young game night  
Oct. 9: Ladies/Men's Bible Classes  
Oct. 14: Jr./Sr. high devo

## IN THE AREA

Sept. 29: Ladies' Day @ Portland C of C  
Oct. 5-7: Freddie Anderson @ Weber Road C of C

## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Jack Jobes (25); Bill Young (27); Tam Archer (27), Violet Pantel (28)

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## KEEP IN PRAYER

### MIDTOWN MEMBERS

Jeff Cannady	Della Rampley
Dee Gilpatrick	Clark Withers
Ann Pantel	

### SHUT-INS

Faye Henderson  
Sandy Malone

### FRIENDS & FAMILY

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

**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 September 16, 2018

Bible Class.....120  
A.M. Worship.....153  
P.M. Worship.....108  
Wednesday Bible Study.....126

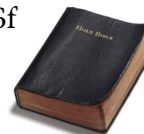
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**QUICK REFERENCE**

Use this quick reference to help you grow in knowledge:

**Growth**

Grow in virtues.....2 Peter 1:5-11  
Mature in Christ.....Heb. 5:12-14  
2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:10; 2 Tim. 3:16f

**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!**

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**MidTown Church of Christ**

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

