

Midtown Messenger

Volume 2

August 11, 2019

Issue 32

The Lord's Church Is Different (II)

by: Ronnie Scherffius

We noted last week that even those who are not members of the church of Christ readily admit the Lord's church is different. We especially noted the distinctiveness of the Lord's church regarding its establishment. The Lord's church did not evolve as a Christian institution over the course of centuries only ultimately to be identified as the Catholic Church. The church about which we read in the New Testament does not have its origins in the Reformation of the 16th and 17th centuries which has come to be identified with the rise of Protestant Denominationalism. No, the Lord's church originated in the eternal counsel of God and was established in the first half of the first century in the city of Jerusalem when repentance and remission of sins in the name of Jesus Christ was first preached to lost humanity. (Eph. 3:8-11; Lk. 24:44-49; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:22-47) Let's note just another way in which the Lord's church is different from the religious institutions of man.

The Lord's church is different by its fellowship. Churches of Christ do not practice "interdenominational fellowship." First, the New Testament church is not a denomination; it is not to be a part of nor is it to promote division or a party spirit. (Jn. 17:20-21; Acts 2:42; 4:32; Cor. 1:10-12; 11:18; 12:25; Eph. 4:1-7; et al) Second, the Lord's church is not to have fellowship with those who do not follow the doctrine of Christ. (1 Tim. 6:3-5; Acts 2:42; 2 Thess. 3:14; Gal. 1:6-9; Rom. 16:17; 2 Cor. 6:14-18) The fellowship of those who are of the New Testament church is restricted and limited to those who are of

"like precious faith" (2 Pt. 1:1) and who continue steadfastly in the apostles doctrine. (Acts 2:42; 1 Jn. 1:1-7)

Some suggest that *any and all* who profess to be Christians should work together one with another in Christian fellowship. Such is an impossibility according to Scripture. John warned: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 Jn. 4:1) Just because someone claims to be a Christian and attends worship services on a regular basis does not mean they are of God! The doctrine they teach and practice must be according to that taught by the apostles and inspired prophets of the New Testament church. (Acts 13:1; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14) John further admonished, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 Jn 1:10-11) Paul gave a similar warning when he admonished young Timothy: "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." (1 Tim. 5:22) To "lay hands" on someone was to acknowledge agreement with their doctrine and practices, and to enter into fellowship with their labors. (cf. Acts 13:1-3; Gal. 2:9)

The false notion that the church may be in fellowship with those who hold not the truth of God's Word is soundly refuted by the simple question, "what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14) "Light" refers to the light of God and those who "walk in the

light” do so only by continuing in the things declared by inspired writers of the New Testament. (1 Jn. 1:1-3; Acts 2:42) To be in fellowship with any outside of the light severs one’s fellowship with God! (1 Jn. 1:5-7) The folly of the idea that those with opposing doctrinal views may walk in fellowship as Christian brethren was evidently set forth by the prophet Amos long ago: “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3) To ask the question is to answer it!

The Lord’s church is different by its fellowship. The Lord’s church does not and cannot have Christian fellowship with those who disagree with and hold opposing views to the “wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the doctrine which is according to godliness.” (1 Tim. 6:3) Some might argue that such an attitude is narrow minded and even conceited. The words of Peter address such an attitude: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **a peculiar people**; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath **called** you **out of darkness into his marvelous light.**” (1 Pt. 2:9) Having been called out of darkness into the light of God by the gospel of Christ we have no right to have fellowship with those in the darkness of Catholicism, Protestantism, and manmade tradition. If we are to be acceptable to God, we must walk according to His rule. If we are to continue in His light, we must be different.

God Keeps His Promises

By: Brett Petrillo

I’m sure I’ve seen hundreds of them over my lifetime. And yet, I still find myself staring, completely awestruck when a storm passes by and a brilliant rainbow is left for our viewing pleasure. My mind always comes back to the same question, “Why do we have rainbows?” I don’t mean all the technical jargon about prisms and the color spectrum. I mean, why do we have rainbows in our world at all? The answer comes from Genesis 9.

After flooding the entire earth, God said this, “I set **My bow in the cloud**, and it shall be for a sign of a **covenant between Me and the earth**. It shall come about, when I bring

a cloud over the earth, that the bow will be seen in the cloud, and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and **never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh**” (13-15).

The reason rainbows exist at all is because of the covenant God made with all creation — He will never flood the entire earth again. Rainbows exist as a reminder of God’s promise. Have you ever noticed that most rainbows come after the storm has passed? It’s almost as if, now that the storm is over, God is saying, “Look, I have kept my promise.”

While the rainbow is an important promise for our physical safety, it’s also a reminder to us that God keeps all of His promises (Hebrews 6:18; Titus 1:2; Numbers 23:19). This is such a comforting thought.

At that point when we are saved from our sins (Acts 2:38), God doesn’t speak from heaven and send a dove down from the heavens on us. There is no rushing feeling of the Holy Spirit coming upon us. We know we’ve been saved because God has promised us as much when we obey Him (1 Peter 3:21; Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16). It’s comforting to know this.

I’ve never seen heaven. I’ve never seen God’s form like Moses once did (Exodus 33:18-20). But I know God has promised that His faithful servants will reach heaven and be with Him for all eternity (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17). I so long for this day!

We serve a God who keeps His promises. Let’s praise Him for doing so. Let’s thank Him for the blessings He has promised us. Let’s not take these promises for granted.

But let’s also not forget the promise we have made. When we became Christians, we made a covenant with God to serve Him for life. Too often we forget this covenant or take it lightly. Let’s also be people who keep our promises. Let’s honor the Lord with a full life of obedience and faithful service.

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE
Week of August 11, 2019

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Bryant Siegel
Scripture Reading: Isaac Jobs

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Mark FitzSimmons
Fruit of the Vine: Doug Jobs
Offering: Bryce Dolan
Assist: Kirk FitzSimmons, Scott DeDear, Brant Jacobs

Sunday Evening: Mark FitzSimmons, Doug Jobs

Prayer

A.M. Closing: Mike Atkinson
P.M. Closing: Lupe Escojido

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Kevin Sheeran
Sun. P.M.: Larry Nuckels
Wednesday: Kevin Sheeran

Ushers:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional:

Daniel Garza

Open/Close Building:

Sound System:

Don Lynn

Greeters:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Prepare Communion:

Jeffres

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION:

Please welcome Mark & Gloria Jones who requested to be identified with the MidTown congregation last week. There are sticker labels to add to your pocket directory in the foyer. Their contact info is:

206 YELLOWSTONE
VICTORIA, TX 77904

GLORIA'S CELL IS 361-571-4473

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Virginia Escojido's co-worker, Kirk Fowler, whose mother Debbie Fowler is sick with cancer. Lee Fitz-Simmons, who requested prayers on his behalf.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug. 11: Jr/Sr. High devotional at the White's house.
Aug. 11: Singing at the Morales home.
Aug. 16: 55+ older get together @ 6pm here at the building. Please bring sandwiches and chips.
Sept. 10: Men's and Ladies' Tuesday Bible Class
MidTown's Fall Gospel Meeting—Nov. 10-13 with Jason Rollo.

AREA EVENTS

Sept. 21: San Pedro C of C Ladies' Day in San Antonio

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Will Burleson (11); Don Lynn (13); Scarlet Atkinson, Lupe Escojido (14); Marguerite Arnot (15)

Happy Anniversary: Mike & Julia Atkinson (14)

The Ladies Bible Class will meet at Jason's Deli for lunch on Tuesday, August 27 at 11:30am. This will be a time of fellowship and discussion for the upcoming year. All ladies are invited and encouraged to come.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Mickey Tisue
Clark Withers

SHUT-INS:

Faye Henderson
Sandy Malone

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 August 4, 2019

Bible Class.....98
A.M. Worship.....125
P.M. Worship.....81
Wednesday Bible Study.....84

Offering \$3,769

THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT

Each week will focus on reading a portion of the New Testament, each reading will only take 30 minutes:

1 Corinthians 5-14



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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