

Midtown Messenger

Volume 2

December 1, 2019

Issue 48

PUT ON THIS COAT By: Ronnie Scherffius

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven” (Mt. 5:43-45).

It was the heart of the political season; election teams were in high gear. Reporters were ever on the alert and printing presses were running nonstop. The year was 1891. A member of the House of Representatives running for reelection was being hounded by a young reporter seeking to make a name for himself. The reporter was shrewd and persistent, quick to see an opportunity and skilled in making the most of it. The Congressman was understandably annoyed especially by the flagrant misrepresentation to which his words were daily subjected. Finally, the opportunity for retribution arrived!

On one occasion the reporter was ill, poorly dressed, and had a severe cough. That evening the Congressman took a closed carriage to a nearby town at which he had been scheduled to speak. The weather was wretchedly raw and cold. He had not travelled far when he heard the cough and knew the reporter was riding with the driver in the exposed seat. With a demanding voice he called to the driver, “Stop this carriage!” He quickly stepped out and stared sharply at the reporter.

“Get down off that seat young man,” he barked. Assuming the time for vengeance had arrived the reporter apprehensively stepped down and prepared for the harsh words that would cer-

tainly follow. “Here,” said the Congressman taking off his overcoat, “Put this on and get into the carriage.”

Surprised, the reporter looked guiltily at the Congressman and said, “I guess you don’t know who I am. I have been with you the whole campaign giving it to you every time you spoke and I am going over tonight to rip you to pieces if I can.”

The Congressman replied with a mixture of frustration and pity, “I know, but you put this coat on and get inside to warm yourself so you can do a good job.”

How easy it is to be kind to our friends and admirers. It takes little effort to show love to those we hold in high esteem. Yet, should we not also strive with equal compassion to show kindness to those who would do us harm and disservice? This is not easy. It is not a natural feeling to love your enemies. Were that the case we would not have been so admonished (Mt. 5:44).

The standard of love for others to which we are to strive is a high standard indeed, for it is the standard both set and demonstrated by our Creator: “he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Mt. 5:45). Let us strive to make even the day of our enemy a day of sunshine by letting the light of kindness of Christ shine in our lives. Let us provide good even to those who would do us evil if for no other reason than this, that we may be even as our “Father which is in heaven” (Mt. 5:46).

Do You Have What It Takes? By: Clay Bond

The book of Proverbs gives us some of the best counsel when it comes to daily Christianity. Solomon said,

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths (Proverbs 3:5-6).

The Godly life is truly the happiest and best way of life. God's Word has been handed down to us to instruct us in this noble pursuit (2 Timothy 3:16-17). To help us better understand the nature of the Christian life, the Scriptures describe it as a race in which we are competitors (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). In keeping with the athletic theme, the writer of Hebrews encourages each Christian to set aside *"every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us"* (Hebrews 12:1). As Christians, our goal in life must be to finish this all-important race. I'd like to share three things that you may find helpful.

First of all, we need to **Improve Our Concept of God**. Having the proper concept of God carries us through this race. The last thing we need to have in our minds is that God hates us, or that He wants us to fail so He can condemn us to be eternally lost. A false concept of God kept a whole generation of Israelites from entering the Promised Land. The idea that God was against them sealed their fate and can also withhold God's great blessings from us (Hebrews 3:17-19).

God loves us and wants us to be saved (1 Thessalonians 5:9; 1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9). He isn't looking for ways to trip us up, nor is He trying to entice us to sin so that He can punish us (James 1:12). It is not God's desire to see His children do a face plant on the race track of life. The Scriptures declare boldly that God is for us (Romans 8:31).

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand (Psalms 37:23-24).

Not only is He our help and guide as we face the challenges of life, He is the One who lifts us up in our inevitable moments of failure.

A second thing that helps us to finish the Christian race is to **Renew Our Confidence**. It takes confidence to live as a Christian. Satan has a dual purpose in mind here. First, he wants to convince us that we don't have what it takes to be faithful. If that doesn't work, plan B is to get us to put our confidence in ourselves. This is what many of the Christians at Laodicea did. They said, *"I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing"* (Revelation 3:17). Being overconfident in ourselves leads to a state of independence from God. We could call this self-dependence. This reliance on

our own righteousness leads to spiritual failure. Being overconfident in self is actually a misplaced faith which causes unfaithfulness toward God. The source of spiritual failure for many is simply an overconfidence in self and a lack of confidence in God!

Renewing confidence is trusting that *"the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken"* (Proverbs 3:26). When our confidence is in the Lord we understand that He will help us overcome anything that gets in our way as we run the Christian race. He is the one who keeps us from falling and presents us *"faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy"* (Jude 24). Renewal happens day by day as we grow in the knowledge of God's Word (2 Corinthians 4:16; Colossians 3:10). Renewing our confidence allows us to approach life with boldness and do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13).

Finally, we can finish the Christian race by **Improving Our Commitment**. No matter how committed we are there's always room for improvement. We are supposed to be *"fervent in spirit; serving the Lord"* (Romans 12:11). If we are NOT totally committed to serving the Lord, we will find it hard, perhaps impossible, to be faithful to Him. Who then is a faithful and wise servant? The one whom the Lord finds doing when He comes (Matthew 24:45). A Christian who is totally committed is not going to give in to discouragement and distraction. He's going to finish his race like the Apostle Paul, whose commitment to live for Christ every day enabled him to finish his course (Philippians 1:21; 2 Timothy 4:7). If you want to finish your race, commit to grow in your knowledge of God's word (2 Peter 3:18).

As you improve your concept of God, you will find that you desire to know more about Him. As you learn who God truly is, your confidence as you run the Christian race will be renewed. As you run hard toward the finish line, you will find yourself becoming more and more committed to serving Christ (Philippians 3:13-14).

This marathon is not easy, nor is it free of challenges and hurdles. There is much for us to overcome. At times we will get tripped up. We may even fall, but we have to get back on our feet and keep pressing toward that finish line (Philippians 3:14). The wise man said, *"For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again"* (Proverbs 24:16). No matter what challenges we face, the determination that we can do this in Christ is what keeps us faithful until the end (Revelation 2:10). We have to be resolute that when we fall we are going to get back up and finish what we started. He has what it takes to carry you through the race. **Do you have what it takes?**

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of December 1, 2019

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Jeff Harris
Scripture Reading: Fred Scherffius

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Bryant Siegel
Fruit of the Vine: James Cammock
Offering: Doug Jobs
Assist: Kirk FitzSimmons, BJ Davis, Desmon Flonnory

Sunday Evening: Bryant Siegel, James Cammock

Prayer

A.M. Closing: Mark Jones
P.M. Closing: Steve Randle

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Kevin Sheeran
Sun. P.M.: Isaac Jobs
Wednesday: Doug Jobs

Ushers:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional: Bryant Siegel

Open/Close Building: Jobs

Sound System: Curtis Scherffius

Greeters: Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Prepare Communion: Jeff & Kelly Cannady

Note for Bible Classes:

Today starts our new quarter for Bible Classes.

There will be a Bridal Shower for Emily DeDear at the home of Athena Scherffius on Sunday, Dec. 8th from 2-4pm. Emily is registered at Target and Bed, Bath & Beyond.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Please pray for our ill members and our shut ins.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 1: Men's Business Meeting @ 3pm
Dec. 3, 10, 17: Ladies' and Men's Bible Class @ 10am
Dec. 6: Ladies Kitchen Gadget Exchange at the home of Kasi Jobs at 6:30pm.
Dec. 8: Bridal Shower for Emily DeDear
Dec. 14: GEMS @ 9am at the Scherffius home
Dec. 14: Jr/Sr. high devo @ 6pm at the Scherffius home
Dec. 15: Annual White Elephant Exchange after evening services
Dec. 25: Singing night in lieu of Bible Classes

AREA EVENTS

Dec. 6-8: Science vs. Evolution with Jeff Miller @ Mathis church of Christ in Mathis, TX.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: June Fielder (1), Ashlee Purswell (2), Jackie Rutherford, Larry Nuckels (3), Kin Marie (4), Mara Hutt (5), Jerri Jeffres (7)

Happy Anniversary: Robert & Jill Powers (1), Jeff & Kathy Laws (7)

TODAY! There will be a Men's Business Meeting today at 3pm at the building.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Veronica Serenil
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 November 24, 2019

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|----------------------------|-----|
| Bible Class..... | 135 |
| A.M. Worship..... | 159 |
| P.M. Worship..... | 101 |
| Wednesday Bible Class..... | 71 |

Offering \$3,785

Reading for this week: Romans 7-8

Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!
Romans 7:24-25



SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore
Southwest School of Bible Studies - William Pedigo

GO PAPERLESS!

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