

Midtown Messenger

Volume 2

December 15, 2019

Issue 50

A CONSUMING FIRE

By: Steven Lloyd

The Lord cannot be approached any way we choose. He can only be approached on His terms. Israel was forewarned that if they approached Him on their own terms, there would be negative consequences.

For example, the garment to be worn by Aaron, the high priest when he entered the Tabernacle, had a golden bell attached:

“and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not.” (Ex. 28:31-35)

Aaron and his sons were to wear linen undergarments designed to cover their naked flesh so when they went into the tent of meeting, or when they came near the altar to minister in the Holy Place they did not die (Exodus 28:40-43). When they offered a food offering to the Lord, they were to wash with water “that they die not.” “So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not” (Exodus 30:20-21).

There are other texts containing warnings that could be included, but let’s take a look at some examples.

When Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, offered “unauthorized fire” at the tent of meeting, fire came out from before the Lord and consumed them (Lev. 10:2), much in the same way the same fire consumed the burnt offering described in the previous chapter. The Lord then said, “Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die:” (Lev. 10:9).

When Israel left Sinai they began to complain in the hearing of the Lord about their misfortunes.

And when the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the Lord, the fire was quenched. And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the Lord burnt among them. (Num. 11:1-3)

When the Lord’s anger was kindled against the people, He would, on occasion, strike them with “a very great plague” (Numbers 11:33). On another occasion, a man broke the Sabbath day by gathering sticks. They did not know what to do with him so they brought him to Moses. Moses inquired of the Lord, and the Lord said:

The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses (Num. 15:32-36).

You get the point.

Fred Hoppe worked around high voltage much of his life. He worked for the city of Pasadena, the city of Anaheim, and for Hampton Tedder. We sometimes refer to him as “crazy Fred” for his sense of humor, but Fred is nothing but serious when it comes to work. Fred has conveyed in specific terms I have forgotten how dangerous the environment was he worked in. But I have not forgotten how careful you must be when you enter one of these rooms or manholes. I worked in a few manholes myself. One wrong move and someone dies. Several did die in Pasadena.

Although no exact parallel can be drawn, I see some parallels. If you approach a high voltage power supply without the necessary precautions, you may die. For the ancient nation of Israel, if you entered the tabernacle or Temple God without the necessary precautions, you will die. Some did. Remember Nadab and Abihu. Remember the Sabbath breaker. Remember the number of times a plague broke out in the Israelite camp. Remember those who were bitten by serpents and died.

The writer of Hebrews looks back at the days Israel tested the Lord in the wilderness and writes:

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (Heb. 3:12-13).

And later he exhorts them to be grateful for the kingdom they had received and to offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for ...our God is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29).

THE SOUTHWESTERNER, *Southwest Church of Christ* weekly bulletin, December 2, 2019.
Steven Lloyd serves as Director of the Southwest School of Bible Studies

“And I Will Give You Rest”

“Back in 1839, James Espy claimed that rain could easily be produced by heating the air. But his plan to saturate parched farmland by building great log fires across vast stretches of the American West never materialized — for which Espy’s contemporaries were probably grateful! Later in the 19th century, a new theory emerged: loud noises would bring rain. This theory was put to the test in Texas, where Robert Dyrenforth piled up enough munitions for a small war. He blasted away at the skies, but as one observer wrote, ‘Dyrenforth attacked from the front and rear, by the right and left flank. But the sky remained clear as the complexion of a Saxon maid’” (Today in the Word, July 23, 1992).

For thousands of years, people have looked for the source of many parts of this world. Some have limited themselves by looking only for scientific solutions. Others have attributed the answers to man-made deities. And most have failed to see the real answer, the real source of this life. God is the creator and sustainer.

Colossians 1:16-17 says it best, “For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”

God has control of all things in this life, from something small like the rain to the vast interweaving fabric of the universe. Sometimes it’s easy to forget that if we will but let Him in, He could help us too. He can help with our small issues as well as the great ones. At times our problems feel like enormous burdens. We feel tired and overwhelmed. But through all of this, Jesus’ offer still stands, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-29). Will we take a hold of His outstretched hand?

-Selected-

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE
Week of December 15, 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: Kevin Sheeran
P.M. Closing: Don Lynn

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Anthony Scherffius
Sun. P.M.: Isaac Jobs
Wednesday: Kevin Sheeran

Ushers:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional:

Bryce Dolan

Open/Close Building:

Jobs

Sound System:

Curtis Scherffius

Greeters:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Prepare Communion:

Jeff & Kelly Cannady

Please update the Pocket Directory in the foyer for the 2020 Pocket Directory. If there are no corrections needed, please put a check mark. Also, please put an asterisk (*) next to each baptized member in your family.

Bridal Shower

There will be a Bridal Shower for Alex Scherffius on Sunday, January 5th, 2020 at the home of Nia FitzSimmons from 2-4pm.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Please pray for our ill members and shut ins.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 15: Annual White Elephant Exchange after evening service. Please also bring a finger food.
Dec. 17: Ladies' and Men's Bible Class @ 10am
Dec. 25: Singing night in lieu of Bible Classes

AREA EVENTS

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Kirk FitzSimmons (20), Kasi Jobs, Alex Scherffius (21)

Happy Anniversary: Pat & Josha Gooch (17)

Sign Up Sheets on the Bulletin Board:

Please sign up to update your family photo for the Pictorial wall directory on Sat., January 11, 2020. Also, Please sign up to Open/Close the building, Prepare Communion, and host Youth Devotionals for 2020.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Veronica Serenil
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 December 8, 2019

Bible Class.....	102
A.M. Worship.....	145
P.M. Worship.....	95
Wednesday Bible Class.....	90

Offering \$3,986

Reading for this week: Ephesians 4-6

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ. Ephesians 4:15



SUPPORTED WORKS

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

GO PAPERLESS!

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