



Midtown Messenger

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The Lord's Church Is Still Different

By: Ronnie Scherffius

From its very beginning the Lord's church was different from any institution known to man. Because it originated in the eternal counsel of God it was different in origin (Eph. 3:11-2; Acts 4:28). Because its existence was foretold centuries before it was different in preparation (Joel 2:28-32; Isa. 2:1-5; Dan. 2:31-47). Because with it came salvation of lost man it was different in expectation (1 Pt. 1:10-12). And even though centuries have passed and countless counterfeits have sprung into existence the Lord's church is still different.

The Lord's church is different by its headship. The diversity of religious bodies spread across the landscape of humanity have their center of authority and headquarters on earth. The Roman Catholic Church has as its head the Pope. The Pope as the "successor to Peter" and the "visible head of the church on earth" stands as Vicar (deputy or representative) of Christ on the earth and head of the church. Under the Pope are the Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Such a hierarchy is without precedent in Scripture. The formation of such a governing system evolved over centuries and was not without great opposition.

As a reaction to Catholicism, seeds of reformation began to appear in the 14th and 15th centuries. Men such as Marsilius of Padua and John of Jandun began to oppose the hierarchy of the church and pushed for a more democratic structure where church authority was restricted to spiritual matters; where the people not the church elected their own bish-

ops; where the Bible not church dogma stood as the source of faith. About the same time William of Ockam, a Franciscan friar, began openly denying the infallibility of the pope claiming the Bible to be the only infallible source of authority. John Wycliffe opposed the papacy citing Scripture for only two church offices and openly renounced many Catholic practices. Wycliffe translated the Latin Vulgate (Catholic Bible) into English and would come to be known as *the morning star of the Reformation*. John Huss adopted Wycliffe's teachings, denied the pope as the head of the church, opposed many Catholic practices, and encouraged a return to the Scriptures. He was condemned by the Council of Constance and in 1415, burned at the stake. Huss is known to church history as *the John the Baptist of the Reformation*.

From seeds planted by these men arose more well-known 16th century reformers such as Martin Luther (Lutheran), Huldreich Zwingli, and John Calvin (Presbyterian). In a power play set in motion by the refusal of Pope Clement VII to grant Henry VIII a divorce from his wife, King Henry set himself up as head of the church in England, and in 1534 was officially made Supreme Head of the Church of England. In the 17th and 18th centuries, reformation groups continued to appear and by the end of the 18th century the Baptist and Methodist churches were as much a part of the landscape as the Lutherans and Presbyterians. Unfortunately, while many opposed the error of Catholicism their efforts fell short of restoring New Testament

Christianity and their work served only to initiate new religious bodies with heads and headquarters on earth. The true head of the New Testament church is Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23) who reigns, not from this earth but His throne in heaven (Dan. 7:13-14; Acts 2:33, 36; 1 Tim. 6:15; et al). The Lord's church is different.

The Lord's church is different by its doctrine. As noted above, Catholicism and Protestantism had their origins in the hearts and minds of men. As the Catholic Church evolved so did the doctrine and dogma that we know as Catholicism. Likewise, as protestant groups grew doctrines developed and creeds created which served as the foundational basis for their worship and practice. Church dogma, the works of Scholasticism, and the Apostle's Creed became sources of authority for the Catholic Church while Protestants developed their own Creeds, Confessions of Faith, Manuals, and Prayer Books.

The doctrine by which the Lord's church is directed is the Word of God. It was the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42), the gospel of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:16) received by revelation of Jesus Christ (Acts 2; Gal. 1:11-12; 1 Jn. 1:1-3) that was preached with divine authority (Mt. 28:18-20) by inspired men (1 Cor. 2:1-13) that swept through the Roman Empire and changed the course of humanity (Acts 17:6). It is this doctrine, the doctrine of Christ (2 Jn. 9) that ever stands as the final authority and only "creed" of the Lord's church. The Lord's church is different.

The Lord's church is different by its hope. The hope of all who stand as members of Catholic and Protestant churches have a hope that rests in the word and authority of men. These bodies originated, not with the seed that is the word of God but doctrines of men. Explaining the parable of the sower Jesus said, "The seed is the word of God" (Lk. 8:11). Preaching the gospel Paul said "I have planted" (1 Cor. 3:6). What did Paul plant but the gospel he had received by revelation (1 Cor. 15:1; Gal. 1:11-12)! Any religious body that has springs forth from teaching other than that heralded by the inspired apostles in the first century must stand on

the doctrine from which they sprang forth! Of such bodies Jesus said, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Mt. 15:13). The hope of those who are members of the Lord's church does not rest in the authority of men but in the power and promises of God (Eph. 1:18; Col. 1:15, 23; 1 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:2; et al).

Yes, the Lord's church is different. It can be neither substituted nor duplicated (Eph. 4:4). It will never be destroyed (Dan. 2:44; Heb. 12:28). The word on which it stands will never pass away (Mt. 24:35). The foundation on which it rests is unshakable (Acts 4:12; 1 Cor. 3:11). The hope it possesses is unparalleled. Where does your hope rest?

To Our Visitors: We welcome you to our service. Perhaps this is the first time you have visited us. It is our desire to have you return often and give us a chance to become better acquainted with you. You will find visitor cards on the back of the pew in front of you. Please fill one out.

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION:

Please welcome James and Emily Cammock who would like to be identified as working with the MidTown congregation. Their contact info is:

402 BUCKINGHAM
VICTORIA, TX 77904
512-914-9112

Also, please welcome Joe Akins who placed membership last week with the MidTown congregation. His contact info is:

504 KRAUSE
Victoria, TX 77901
901-302-8687

There are sticker labels to add to your pocket directory in the foyer.

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of September 22, 2019

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Jeff Harris
Scripture Reading: Kirk FitzSimmons

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Lupe Escojido
Fruit of the Vine: Clifton Rutherford
Offering: Bryant Siegel
Assist: Isaac Jobes, Manny Flonnory, Fred Scherffius

Sunday Evening: Lupe Escojido, Clifton Rutherford

Prayer

A.M. Closing: Ron White
P.M. Closing: Mark FitzSimmons

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Anthony Scherffius
Sun. P.M.: Mike McVey
Wednesday: Larry Nuckels

Ushers:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional: Ron White

Open/Close Building:

Sound System: Curtis Scherffius

Greeters: Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Prepare Communion: Dolan

TODAY! The annual Summer Youth Series Awards will be held immediately following tonight's evening services. After the awards there will be a congregational fellowship meal. Please bring a potluck dish.

Baby Shower

Ladies are invited to a baby shower for Emily Cammock on Sunday, Oct. 20th from 2-3:30pm at the home of Rita Davenport, 205 Amberglow Court.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Joe Akins, who was in the hospital last week.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 22: Summer Youth Series awards
Sept. 24: Tuesday's Men's and Ladies' Bible Class
Nov. 10-13: MidTown's Fall Gospel Meeting with Jason Rollo.

AREA EVENTS

Sept. 23: Digging Deeper with Wayne Jones @ Odem church of Christ
Oct. 18-20: Recharge Youth conference @ Weber Rd.
Nov. 9: Bible Bowl @ Weber church of Christ

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

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

Happy Anniversary: Paul & Laura Purswell (27)

BAPTISM

We rejoice in the baptism of Ashley Price last week. We pray that her walk with Christ will bear much fruit.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Mickey Tissue
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 September 15, 2019

Bible Class.....110
A.M. Worship.....138
P.M. Worship.....88
Wednesday Bible Study.....86

Offering \$3,251

THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT

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

Hebrews



SUPPORTED WORKS

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

GO PAPERLESS!

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