

Midtown Messenger

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Issue 23

A Bible Believing People

By: Wayne Jackson

One of the significant features of the church of Jesus Christ is its attitude toward the Holy Scriptures. This is especially true in terms of the nature of the Bible and its inherent authority. Informed Christians operate under the conviction that the Scriptures are from God and through them, the divine Mind has been revealed. If God exists—and the evidence for such a belief is very compelling—and if human beings are rational creatures made in the divine image (cf. Gen. 1:26), then it logically stands that the Creator has communicated his will to his offspring. Well, God has spoken (Heb. 1:1). He has communicated abstractly through the marvelous creation that testifies of his wisdom and power (Psa. 19:1ff). More than that, however, Deity has communicated concretely to humanity by means of words (Mt. 4:4; 1 Cor. 2:10-13). And those words are found in this book called the Bible. When we consider our belief about the Bible, there are two areas that should especially engage our attention. First, is the Bible really from God? If it is not, there is little need for further discussion. Second, if the Bible is from God, is it authoritative? If so, to what extent? To each of these matters, we will give brief attention. **Are the Scriptures Inspired of God?** The Bible engages our attention by its repetitive claim of being the Word of God. More than 3,800 times, the Old Testament asserts its divine source. And the New Testament is no less explicit. Paul clearly affirms that the Scriptures are “inspired of God” (2 Tim. 3:16). But is the biblical claim of inspiration accurate? A mere claim, void of proof, is worthless. The fact is, proofs for the divine origin of the venerable Book are manifold and impressive. Consider the following lines of evidence: **The Bible Is a Unified Book.** We believe the Bible because the unity of the Scriptures argues for a divine source. The sixty-six books of the Bible were penned over a

span of some sixteen hundred years by approximately forty writers. They came from a variety of cultural backgrounds. And yet these documents fit together like pieces in a puzzle. They are harmonious in terms of theme—the desired salvation of fallen humanity through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. They present a historical development from Genesis to Revelation. They advocate doctrinal propositions (e.g., the nature of God, the identity of Christ.) and a variety of factual data without contradiction. They clearly demonstrate divine orchestration. **The Bible Contains Verified Predictive Prophecy.** Christians believe the Bible is the word of God because of the amazing evidence of predictive prophecy that dominates its thrilling pages. No mere human being can predict the future—the claims of modern psychics to the contrary notwithstanding. If it is the case that the Bible contains genuine examples of predictive prophecy, it must have originated with God. The remarkable fact is there are hundreds of phenomenal prophecies in the biblical narratives. Scholars have estimated that there are over one thousand prophecies in the Bible. Virtually all of these except those relating to end-time matters have precise fulfillment. Consider, for example, the more than three hundred Old Testament prophecies focusing on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. **The Bible Is Amazingly Accurate.** We believe the Bible is inspired by God because of the uncanny accuracy of the Scriptures. This feature of Scripture demonstrates supernatural guidance in its composition. As the biblical writers unfold the divine plan of redemption through their progressive revelation, they touch upon many areas of academic interest (e.g., history, geography, and science). It is astounding that the inspired writers never err in historical or factual details. Incidental mistakes are common even among the most skilled authors, and yet the biblical narratives remain aloof from

such blunders. Such flawless accuracy argues for inspiration. **The Bible Stands Alone as an Enduring Piece of Human Literature.** Those who compose the church of Christ believe in the sacred character of the Scriptures because God's Word has survived the test of time. The Bible has been ignored, criticized, destroyed, and outlawed. But it continues to survive and thrive. (See The Holy Scriptures—Indestructible). Surely the Bible's durability in the face of such hostilities at least shows that it is worthy of careful investigation. Volumes have been composed containing manifold and convincing evidence which undergirds the scriptural claims of inspiration. We are a Bible-believing people because of the powerful evidence that argues for the heavenly source of the Holy Scriptures. **But Is the Bible Authoritative?** When we say that the Bible is inspired, what does that imply? The Scripture's testimony is that proof of inspiration indicates that these sacred writings are an authoritative document. It was designed to reveal the sacred scheme of salvation to humanity and regulate the course of human conduct. Here is the testimony of Paul: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16, 17, KJV). In view of the many passages of this nature, Christians accept the fact that the Bible is a conduct-regulating collection of writings. It is unique and exclusive in this regard. Let us reflect upon a few points relating to this matter. **The Bible Reveals Our Origin, Purpose, and Destiny.** We believe the Bible because it is the only reasonable explanation of our origin (Gen. 2:7), our purpose on this planet (Eccl. 12:13), and our ultimate destiny (Mt. 25:46). It thus explains man's responsibility to his Creator. **The Bible Regulates the Moral Nature of Man.** We believe the Bible because of its responsible approach to human conduct. When men attempt to formulate a moral code, independent of divine revelation, utter chaos results. The unique approach of the Scriptures, however, has been a boon to civilization for centuries. The Golden Rule towers like a majestic mountain peak above all ethical maxims, before or since, designed to elevate human ethical conduct. After an ex-

haustive consideration of this matter, William Barclay noted that the Golden Rule "is something which had never been said before. It is new teaching, and a new view of life and of life's obligations". The parable of the good Samaritan in Luke 10 challenges human bigotry at its very foundation. The lofty ethical demands of the New Testament is one of the reasons it is so viciously and persistently assaulted. **The Bible Reveals Reconciliation to God.** Christians accept the Bible because it is the only authoritative record of how sinful man can be reconciled to God from whom we have become estranged (Isa. 59:1, 2). We are miserable in our sins and cry out for some explanation as to how we can obtain peace of mind. The journey home is only by means of Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6). God has spoken to humanity through his Son (Heb. 1:1-2). It is only by believing the gospel message and submitting to its requirements that one can receive pardon and enjoy the "newness of life" that is found within the spiritual body of Christ (Rom. 1:16; 6:3, 4). **The Bible Reveals the Plan of God in His Church.** New Testament Christians believe the Bible because it is the only record of the divine establishment and providential growth of the church for which the Lord Jesus shed his cleansing blood. We do not view the church as a trivial after-thought in the heavenly scheme of things. Rather, it is a blood-bought institution (Acts 20:28). It is an eternal element in the heavenly arrangement for human salvation (Eph. 3:10). **The Scriptures Teach Us How to Worship Our Creator.** Members of Christ's church believe in the Scriptures because they are the only source of instruction as to how we can satisfy our craving for worship and know that such activity is pleasing to our Maker. We worship only Deity, with our whole heart and spirit, according to the dictates of divine truth (Jn. 4:24). Thus acknowledging the Bible as an authoritative revelation, we respect the voice of the Holy Scriptures (1 Pet. 4:11). We yield to the silence of the sacred record as well (cf. 1 Cor. 4:6, ASV; 2 Jn. 9). Yes, we are a Bible-believing people, and we invite our contemporaries to examine the venerable volume.

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of June 7, 2020

subject to change

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Jeff Harris
Scripture Reading: Fred Scherffius

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: James Cammock
Fruit of the Vine: James Cammock
Offering: Bryce Dolan

Prayer

A.M. Opening: Kevin Sheeran
A.M. Closing: Kevin Sheeran

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Larry Nuckels
Ushers: Allen Clifton

Open/Close Building:

Sound System: Will Burleson

****Per the Men's meeting held Sunday, May 24th, 2020, it was decided to start having Bible class at 9am in the big auditorium only and 10am for worship service as of May 31, 2020. Please note there will be no Sunday morning children's classes or Sunday evening worship at this time.**

Also, we will resume meeting for Wednesday night Bible class starting Wednesday, May 27th at 7pm. Mark FitzSimmons will be teaching a class for teens in the old auditorium and Ronnie Scherffius will be teaching a class for all other ages in the main auditorium.

The men voted to discontinue the use of assigned seating, therefore no RSVPs are required. According to Governor Abbott's updated recommendations for congregations, we are still encouraged to "keep at least two empty seats (or six feet separation) between parties in any row..."

Our worship services will continue to be streamed live on Sunday mornings through YouTube if you are an older member who feels uncomfortable attending at this stage. The men understand and support your decision.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Please pray for the country during this time of the Corona Virus Pandemic.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Draven Garcia (8), Helen Cannady (10)

Happy Anniversary: Wayne & Janie Martin (10), Michael & Shirley Page (14)

Announcement: Peach Valley Camp has been cancelled for this year.

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

Sermons are available on our website www.midtowncoc.org under Resources.

MidTown's Sunday Morning Worship service at 10am can be viewed livestream on YouTube. Search Mid-Town church of Christ Victoria.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Janice FitzSimmons
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Veronica Serenil
Clark Withers

SHUT-INS:

Faye Henderson
Charlie Mabe
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 (TEMPORARILY)

Sunday Morning Bible Class— 9:00 AM
(Auditorium only)
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM
Wednesday Bible Class— 7:00 PM
(Jr. High/High School & Auditorium only)

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of May 31, 2020

A.M. Bible Class.....42
A.M. Worship.....61
Online views during worship.....34
Wednesday Bible Class.....51

Offering week of May 31, 2020.....\$4,049

Reading for this week:

Oh, that I knew where I might find him,
that I might come even to his seat!"

Job 23:3

SUPPORTED WORKS

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

GO PAPERLESS!

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