

Midtown Messenger

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Issue 38

If Diotrephes Were Here Today

By: Cody Westbrook

Though he is only mentioned in two passages of scripture, much can be learned from the bad example of Diotrephes. John describes him as one “who loves to have the preeminence” (3 John 9). He spoke wickedly and maliciously, he would not receive faithful brethren, nor would he allow others to do so (3 John 10). He was, by all accounts and purposes, a church tyrant. He was arrogant, abusive, and wicked. His example should cause us to think twice about our own motives and actions. Though he died long ago, his disposition can still live in the church today. If Diotrephes were here today how could he be identified?

If he were a preacher he would talk about himself often. He would emphasize his favorite works and accomplishments exclusively. He would seek out his favorite elders and members and try to get them on his side. He would never be wrong. His image would be the most important thing to him and he would do anything to protect it. He would lobby to get his way, and he would not hesitate to gossip and slander anyone whom he perceived as a threat.

If he were an elder he would view himself as the “chief shepherd” instead of Christ. He would never listen to the members of the congregation or even his fellow elders. If something needed to be done, then it would have to be done his way. His opinion would always be right, and if you crossed him, he would be quick to tell you about it. He would have no desire to actually fulfill the office of

an elder. His only desire would be the recognition that comes with the title.

If he were a deacon he would have his sights set on being an elder. He would never do the work assigned to him without making a show of it. He would want everyone to know just how “hard” he works, and without him the congregation could not possibly function.

If he were any member of the Lord’s church he would not really care about the church at all. He would only care about himself and what he wants. He would divide the congregation and create a clique of only his biggest fans. He would brag about how much money he puts in the plate and how much he has done for the congregation. As far as he is concerned, nobody is more important than him.

Sadly, scripture does not provide us with information about Diotrephes’ repentance. But, perhaps his spiritual offspring can write a better ending to their own story. “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up” (James 4:10).

Cody Westbrook serves as the minister for the Southwest Church of Christ and will be one of our speakers for Challenging The Church (Dec. 4-6)

Inconsistent Love

How consistent is your love for God? Is it like a deep river that flows faithfully every day, or is it a shallow creek that quickly dries up when there is a shortage of rain? Do you find your love to come and go in spurts? Is it sometimes powerful and full of emotion, and then at other times weak and lifeless?

In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus predicted that some of us would love inconsistently (Lk 8:4-15). Sometimes our heart is just hard and we don't want to listen to God (v 5, 12). Sometimes our faith is shallow and we fall away in time of testing (v 6, 13). Sometimes we're distracted by cares and pleasures (v 7, 14). But whatever the reason, we are not producing fruit in these times.

Why are you not loving consistently right now? There are several possible reasons, but only you can honestly answer that question. Look deep into your heart. Why has your love for God grown cold? Is it an idol you are cherishing? Why are you resisting God? Is it pride? Why is your faithfulness so inconsistent? Have you been deepening your faith through the daily disciplines of prayer and Bible study?

-Selected-

Shout with Songs of Joy!

Why should we shout to God with loud songs of joy?

The LORD, the Most High, is to be feared!

Does that sound at all strange to you? Why should a fearful God evoke joyous praise?

First of all, it should be said that the "fear" of God is not what you might think. Fear is

not synonymous with being in terror or dread (see Exodus 20:20). The idea is more to be in awe of God and amazed by him (and that carries with it an element of dread, but that's not the main idea).

The reason why we joyously praise our God, who is fearful, is that he is OUR God. Would you want your God to be a small God? Would you want your God to be one who doesn't provoke feelings of awe and wonder?

The reason why we sing loud songs of joy is because we sing to the Most High God, a great king over all the earth!

-Selected-

I Will Bless the Lord at All Times

Is it possible to be in a constant state of praise?

Not only is it possible, this is what the Lord wants for us! Consider a few ways to make continual praise a reality:

1. Make it a goal each day. Challenge yourself to see God's glory in everything around you.

2. Surround yourself with reminders of God's glory. Stick post it notes with Scriptures in strategic places at home, work, school, or in your vehicle.

3. Acknowledge God's glory when you see it. As you're driving down the road and you see something beautiful our Creator has made, tell God about how amazed you are! And don't just notice the big things but the little things as well (as when Jesus noticed the woman giving her two mites at the Temple).

-Selected-

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of September 20, 2020

subject to change

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Bryant Siegel
Scripture Reading: Fred Scherffius

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Ron White
Fruit of the Vine: Ron White
Offering: Christian Sneeringer

Prayer

A.M. Opening: Don Lynn
A.M. Closing: Isaac Jobes

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Kevin Sheeran
Wed. P.M.: Fred Scherffius

Ushers: Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devo: Dale Hill

Open/Close Building:

Sound System: Mark FitzSimmons

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.

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

MidTown's Bible Classes and Worship services can be viewed livestream on YouTube. Search MidTown church of Christ Victoria.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

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

Happy Birthday: Dan Fielder (20); Jack Jobes (25), Bill Young (27)

BAPTISM

We rejoice in the Lord for the obedience to the gospel of Athena Lee Scherffius. May her walk with Christ bear much fruit.

We ask at the close of service if everyone will remain seated a few moments and allow any of our older members who would like to exit immediately following service to do so and we will afford them that opportunity. Thank you.

*****FRIENDLY REMINDER TO CONTINUE PRACTICING SOCIAL DISTANCING*****

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Janice FitzSimmons
Ken Marie
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

Sunday Morning Bible Class: 9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00 PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of September 13, 2020

A.M. Bible Class.....69
A.M. Worship.....98
Online views during worship.....20
Wednesday Bible Class.....63

Offering week of September 13, 2020.....\$4,644

Reading for this week:

What shall I do with you, O Ephraim?
What shall I do with you, O Judah?
Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.

Hosea 6:4

SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli

Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore

Southwest School of Bible Studies - Anthony
Scherffius

GO PAPERLESS!

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