



Midtown Messenger

Volume 4

April 4, 2021

Issue 14

Concealing Truth

By: Ronnie Scherffius

Of the Old Testament patriarchs, Isaac is the most obscure. Outside the writings of Moses, Isaac's name is found only 21 times in Scripture. Ten of these reference family lineage, five God's covenant with Abraham and his sons, and two are figurative uses of his name for the nation. Apart from Abraham offering Isaac as a sacrifice, few know anything about his life. From a rarely read chapter about an obscure event in the life of the least discussed patriarch, we learn invaluable lessons about truth.

In Genesis 26:1-16, we find the account of Isaac's dwelling among the Philistines. Famine forced Isaac to move his family (1). God directed him to dwell in Gerar of the Philistines (2-6). Fearful for his life, Isaac followed the example of his father and lied about his wife Rebekah: "And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon" (Gen. 26:7; cf. Gen. 12:10-13; 20:1, 2, 9-11). In time, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, discovered the truth and rebuked the patriarch. From this brief account, we note three lessons from concealing the truth.

First, truth concealed is a friend of fear. For fear of his life, Isaac concealed the truth. Because of fear, knowledge of Jesus Christ is often concealed. The parents of a blind man whose sight was miraculously given refused to speak of Jesus publicly "because they feared the Jews" (Jn. 9:22). Joseph of Arimathea, in whose tomb Christ's body was laid, was a disciple of Jesus, "secretly for fear of

the Jews" (Jn. 19:38). Only through a deep faith in Christ will one find the courage to boldly speak the truth concerning Jesus Christ (Acts 4:29; 9:29; 14:3; 19:9; 20:18-21, 24).

Second, truth concealed robs men of their freedom. Because of fear, Isaac and Rebekah could not freely and openly be husband and wife. When the truth of the gospel is concealed man cannot obtain freedom from sin. Only by the preaching of the gospel will a saving faith be stirred (Rom. 10:17). Jesus declared, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32). The bold proclamation of the truth of the gospel will convict men of their sins and produce a saving, obedient faith in the Christ that frees man from sin (Rom. 6:16-18).

Third, truth concealed puts men in jeopardy. Concealing the truth of his marriage, Isaac jeopardized the souls of the Philistines: "And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us" (Gen. 26:10). When one is ignorant of the truth of the gospel, he is guilty before God and his soul is in jeopardy. John wrote about Jesus that man "might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing" one might "have life through his name" (John 20:30, 31). John further noted, "these things write I unto you that ye sin not" (1 Jn. 2:1). When the truth is concealed man can know nothing of the Christ. When the truth is concealed, man ignorantly walks in the darkness of sin. When the truth is hidden, the souls of

men are in jeopardy of eternal punishment.

Do the choices we make in life help to reveal the truth or conceal the truth? Jesus came to make known fully the grace and truth of God (John 1:17). May we ever strive both to walk in and acknowledge the truth of Jesus Christ.

If Only I Had...

We all know the old saying, "Hindsight is 20/20". There's not a one of us who hasn't looked over our shoulder and questioned a decision or action committed in the past. Mistakes, misjudgments, tragedy and missed opportunity filled our memories and worry our minds. "If only I had...", begins a sentence of regret, wishing we had chosen a different path and perhaps the end results would have been different. Regret is certainly one of the ironies of life because we learn and grow from those mistakes and missteps yet they are the things which make us sorry for the past! The first time we read of regret in the bible is in Genesis 6:6. Because of mankind's evil ways God was sorry that he had created such an unruly being. Throughout the book of Ecclesiastes the writer expresses much regret as to spending his life working, building and saving only to pass it on to someone else after he dies. Judas regretted the decision to betray Jesus and even though he repented the pain was such that he took his own life.

Why would God give us such a worrisome emotion? Because regret causes us to realize our need for change and the need for God's forgiveness and His salvation. (2 Cor. 7:10) If I never felt remorse for my wrong doing I would never see the need to be obedient to God. Those who are accused of

crimes have lawyers to be their advocates when facing judgment. You and I have an Advocate in Jesus Christ who goes to God on our behalf at the point of regret and confession.

"If only I had done things differently." Holding on to regret can weigh heavy on the heart but we must remember that Philippians 3:13 encourages us to let go of the past and move toward the future. A future filled with God's love, forgiveness and eternal reward.

-Selected-

Blessings in Christ

Are you glad to be a Christian? Are you really? Have you ever thought about all of the blessings that are found in Christ? Using a bible app or concordance and search for the phrase "in Christ". I think you'll be amazed. Here's just a small sampling of what you'll find:

- Redemption is found in Christ Jesus – Romans 3:24
- Alive to God in Christ – Romans 6:11
- No condemnation in Christ – Romans 8:1
- We are one body in Christ – Romans 12:5
- We are wise in Christ – 1 Corinthians 4:10
- We have hope in Christ – 1 Corinthians 15:19
- New creations in Christ- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- God's riches & grace toward us in Christ – Ephesians 2:7
- Faith & love are found in Christ – 1 Timothy 1:14
- Salvation through faith is in Christ – 2 Timothy 3:15

This list is not complete by any means; there are so many more things we could list here. Today as we worship and study together, let me remind you to count your blessings that are found in Christ.

-Selected-

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of April 4, 2021

****subject to change****

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Bryant Siegel
Scripture Reading: Kirk FitzSimmons

Lord's Supper & Offering:

Communion: Lupe Escojido
Offering: Doug Jobs

Prayer:

A.M. Opening: Bryant Siegel
A.M. Closing: Steve Randle
P. M. Opening: Lupe Escojido
P. M. Closing: Clifton Rutherford

Song Leaders:

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

Ushers: Allen Clifton

Greeters: Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devo: Ron White

Open/Close Building:

Special Note: Soundcloud will no longer have lessons available after April 6th. Lessons will be available on our website www.midtowncoc.org

Sermons are available on our website

www.midtowncoc.org

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

If you would like to receive a "Golden Text" from Ronnie every weekday morning with a Bible scripture, please let him know. This is a great way to start the day off!

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Letty Randle requests prayers for personal strength.

Happy Birthday: Sandy Malone, Parker DeDear, Josiah Rodriguez (2); Jeff Cannady (3)

Upcoming Events:

April 11: Youth devo at the church building after evening worship. Please bring \$2.00 for pizza. If you can donate individual size snack cakes, drinks and chips, please put them in the kitchen.

April 24: Wedding Reception for Anthony and Hailey at 12 noon at the building. A meal will be provided.

April 25-28: Spring Gospel meeting with speaker Justin Guess hosted by Midtown. There are flyers in the hallway.

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

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Ken and Sandra Marie
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Veronica Serenil
Clark Withers

SHUT-INS:

Dee Gilpatrick
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

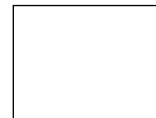
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MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders:

Mark FitzSimmons

Ronnie Scherffius

Ron White

Minister: Ronnie Scherffius

Secretary: Nina Siegel

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Morning Bible Class:	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship:	10:00 AM
Sunday Evening Worship:	5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Class:	7:00 PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of March 28, 2021

A.M. Bible Class.....	46
A.M. Worship.....	70
Sunday Evening Worship.....	47
Wednesday Bible Class.....	56
Offering :	\$3,986

Reading for this week:

“But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.” Psalm 5:11-12

SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli

Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore

Southwest School of Bible Studies - Anthony Scherffius

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