



Midtown Messenger

Volume 3

December 6, 2020

Issue 49

At The Beginning

By: Ronnie Scherffius

“And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning” (Acts 11:15).

An important characteristic of the New Testament church that is often underemphasized can be found in the account of Cornelius’ conversion in the simple phrase “*at the beginning.*” Have you ever wondered what it was like at the beginning of “the last days” (Acts 2:16, 17); at the beginning of “repentance and remission of sins” (Lk. 24:47); at the beginning of “the church” (Acts 2:47)? At the beginning there were no divisions among brethren over marriage, divorce, and remarriage. At the beginning there were no debates in the church about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. At the beginning there were not multiple congregations meeting in one city that could not fellowship one another because of petty squabbles, personality conflicts, or even disagreement over doctrine! At the beginning Christians “continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine” (Acts 2:47). At the beginning “all that believed were together” (Acts 2:44). At the beginning Christians were kindhearted and benevolent toward one another (Acts 2:45), spiritually focused (Acts 2:46a), enjoyed spiritual and personal fellowship (Acts 2:46b), and by their conduct and example gained “favor with all the people” (Acts 2:47). Let’s consider some other thoughts about the church “at the beginning.”

At the beginning, Christians worked together providing benevolent help for the needy and taking advantage of teaching opportunities even at the risk of personal peril (Acts 3:1-4:22; 5:12-40). In the early church, the Holy Spirit gave power to the apostles and wondrous works were done by their hands (Acts 5:12). Today, even in the absence of miracles the church can still do great benevolent works!

Though we cannot heal physical ailments we can provide for other’s the physical needs. Such benevolent help is not only pleasing to God but also opens doors for the gospel and for greater opportunities to do good work among men (Acts 5:16).

At the beginning, Christians rejoiced together for the blessings of God: “And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord” (Acts 4:24). By creating opportunities to teach and to do good, hearts were opened, souls were saved, and the church greatly increased (Acts 5:14). Such occasions were reasons to rejoice. Even when they suffered persecution for the cause of Christ, at the beginning Christians rejoiced together! (Acts 5:41)

At the beginning, Christians who were blessed with wealth and possessions provided for the lack of others and for the furtherance of the gospel. Local works (Acts 4:34-37) as well as missions (Acts 13:3) were financially supported by the church at the beginning. Budget committees were not set up to decide which good works would be supported, and which good works would be turned away. No “spending limits” were placed on the works of the church. If the need was there the money was there. Christians used God’s blessings for God’s work, at the beginning.

At the beginning, when differences and difficulties rose up in the church, good men stood up to lead (Acts 6:1-7). Even at the beginning, the church was populated by men and women whose hearts were filled with prejudices and whose character was often less than Christ-like. But the church was also blessed with men who were “full of faith” and possessed of spiritual wisdom. Such men were called upon to take the lead in matters of local dispute, disagreement and division (Acts 6:3; 15:1-6; cf. 1

Cor. 6:5). These men did not take sides, play favorites, or keep strife stirred up for their personal benefit, but rather led the church in the ways of God advancing peace, love, and unity among brethren. Such leadership caused “the word of God” to increase and “the number of the disciples” to multiply (Acts 6:7).

As a final observation let us ask ourselves “Are we like the church at the beginning?” No doubt some will reply with a resounding YES emphasizing that we teach the same doctrine, imitate the pattern of worship, and place great emphasis on evangelism throughout the world. But are we laboring together to provide benevolent help for the needy and taking advantage of teaching opportunities *locally* - as they did “at the beginning?” Are we rejoicing together for the daily blessings God bestows upon us - as they did “at the beginning?” Are we giving to the church liberally from the abundance of blessings given to us by God - as they did “at the beginning?” Are good men, full of faith and wisdom stepping up to lead the church through difficult times - as they did “at the beginning?” Brethren, if we cannot answer these questions with a “yes” there remains yet one question more: Who are we?

Christians, let us come together in truth, unity, peace, love and strive to be just as they were “at the beginning!” In so doing God and His Christ will be glorified among men!

How Jesus Redefined Patience

For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me."

Romans 15:3

When we think of the word "patience" we normally think in terms of having to wait for something. But the word can also be used to describe a burden to carry.

Patience can be a challenge when working with someone who is immature and selfish. This person may be a spouse, a sibling, an employee, a child, or even a child in the faith. They take advantage of your kindness and generosity. They can be un-

grateful. They can even become hostile when you attempt to lovingly correct them. Patiently working with someone like this can be a heavy burden; and the longer you have to carry it, the heavier it becomes.

Whenever you become weary of your burden look at the cross. Know that Jesus has already carried on his back every sin you've ever committed. In fact, he's already had to put on his back every sin you'll ever commit.

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CHALLENGING THE CHURCH

TO GET BACK TO THE BASICS

DECEMBER 4-6, 2020

midtown
CHURCH OF CHRIST

5901 N. Main Street
Victoria, Texas
www.midtowncoc.org
Office: (361) 573-0030
Cell: (361) 484-0284

BACK TO THE BASICS OF...

FRIDAY

7 PM Spiritual Growth (Personal), **Cody Westbrook**
8 PM Spiritual Growth (Congregational), **Mike Bonner**

SATURDAY

8 AM Breakfast at the Building
8:30 AM Registration
9 AM Worship, **Daniel Garza**
10 AM Teaching Our Children, **Wayne Jones**
11 AM Evangelism, **Mike Bonner**
12 PM Lunch at the Building
1:30 PM Prayer, **Cody Westbrook**
2:30 PM Open Forum
3:30 PM Dismiss

SUNDAY

9 AM Forgiveness, **Daniel Garza**
10 AM Being the Church of Christ, **Mike Bonner**
11 AM Lunch at the Building
12:40 PM Congregational Singing, **Cody Westbrook**
1 PM Religious Unity, **Wayne Jones**
2 PM Dismiss

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of December 6, 2020

subject to change

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Jeff Harris
Scripture Reading: Fred Scherffius

Lord's Supper & Offering

Communion: James Cammock
Offering: Clifton Rutherford

Prayer

A.M. Opening: Isaac Jobs
A.M. Closing: Bryce Dolan
P. M. Opening: Steve Randle
P. M. Closing: Ron White

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Cody Westbrook
Sun. P.M.: Cody Westbrook
Wed. P.M.: Doug Jobs

Ushers: Allen Clifton

Greeters: Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devo: Ron White

Open/Close Building: Dolans/Burleson

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.**

New Bible Class Quarter starts today!

Please check the 2021 working copy of the Pocket Directory in the foyer. Make any corrections and if everything is correct, put a check mark by your family name. Thank you!

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Please continue to pray for those affected by the Corona Virus.

Happy Birthday: Jerri Jeffres (7); Therisa Gant, Ron White (8); Naomi Flonnory (9); Jeff Laws (11)

Happy Anniversary: Jeff & Kathy Laws (7); George & Terisa Gant (11); James & Leta Reeves (12)

Upcoming Events:

Dec. 4-6: Challenging the Church hosted by MidTown.

Dec. 13: Men's Meeting at 3pm

Feb. 13, 2021: Ladies' Day hosted by MidTown.

Please stay for our potluck lunch after morning worship and we will have our afternoon service at 1pm in lieu of our 5pm service today.

****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

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 November 29, 2020

A.M. Bible Class.....51
A.M. Worship.....72
Sunday Evening Worship.....54
Wednesday Bible Class.....50

Offering : November 29, 2020.....\$3,531

Reading for this week:

I give thanks to my God always for you because
of the grace of God that was given you in Christ
Jesus...
1 Corinthians 1:4

SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore
Southwest School of Bible Studies - Anthony
Scherffius

GO PAPERLESS!

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MidTown Church of Christ

5901 N. Main
Victoria, TX 77904
(361) 573-0030
midtowncoc2017@gmail.com

