



Midtown Messenger

Volume 4

July 25, 2021

Issue 30

The Suffering Savior

By: Cody Westbrook

In Acts chapter eight, we learn of the evangelist Philip's interaction with an Ethiopian man whose curiosity was sparked by Isaiah's writings about the silent sufferer in Isaiah 53. Beginning from this Scripture, Philip "preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35).

First, Isaiah revealed that the word that best describes the man of Isaiah 53 is "insignificant." Humanity was unimpressed as they beheld this "tender plant," "a root out of a dry ground," one who had "no form or comeliness" and "no beauty." The promised Messiah was viewed only as a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and He was summarily rejected by men (Jn. 1:11).

Secondly, Isaiah identifies the vicarious nature of this man's great suffering by using the word "our" multiple times. This man, who was judged to be insignificant and unimportant, bore our griefs, carried our sorrows, was wounded for our iniquities and chastised for our peace. Isaiah demands that we acknowledge the vicarious nature of this man's silent suffering. He was guilty of nothing and could not be convicted of sin, yet He was pierced, chastened, scourged and experienced the most violent execution known to man (Jn. 8:46).

Thirdly, Isaiah depicts this sufferer as the

atoning Lamb, brought to the slaughter, on whom the Lord has laid "the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6-7). Sin demands a price, and our just and righteous God cannot withhold the wages earned by every sinner (Rom. 6:23; 1 Pet. 1:18-19). The unjust trial, the false imprisonment and criminal's death suffered by this Lamb pleased the Father only because it enabled Him to accept His Son as an offering for our sin (Isa. 53:10-12).

A reading of Isaiah 53 leaves us humbled and ashamed to have rejected the one who left glory to "bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). When we are faced with the horrible reality of our own sinfulness and the terrible penalty owed, Isaiah 53 presents us with the spotless Lamb of God who suffered and died in our place.

If you believe all that Isaiah reveals about Jesus, be like the Ethiopian eunuch, accept the sacrifice of the suffering Savior by obeying His gospel and you will be set free (Jn. 8:36).

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.

The Art of Self-denial

One of the most difficult things for Christian people to practice is self denial. Yet that is exactly what God expects of His people. If we allow ourselves every pleasure of our heart’s desire, we’ll become spoiled to the point where we will believe that we “deserve” all these things in order to be happy and content. But the truth is, when we obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine (Rom. 6:17), we made a commitment to God to deny ourselves many of the pleasures in life in order to serve Him, the church, and other people. Jesus told His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” (Luke 9:23). In the parallel passage in Matthew, Jesus asked, “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. 16:26). To put it in our own terms, Jesus is asking, “What good will it do you if you have the grandest house, the best recreational vehicles, go on the best vacations, send your kids to the finest schools, attend the best parties, go to weekend sporting events, or get the big promotion at work, if it means you’ll wind up on the wrong side of judgement. Will you exchange these temporary pleasures and then spend eternity in hell?

Wow! That’s pretty heavy stuff there. But it’s exactly what He means. To make it even more difficult, our friends and neighbors are going to think we’re crazy because we don’t take part in every social event that’s happening (1 Peter 4:4). When we are totally committed to Christ, we’ll make these sacrifices in order to serve our heavenly Father and in the end, it will be worth it all. Jesus also said, “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.” (Matt. 16:25)

-Selected-

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of July 25, 2021

subject to change

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Kevin Sheeran
Scripture Reading: Fred Scherffius

Lord's Supper & Offering:

Communion: James Cammock
Offering: Clifton Rutherford

Prayer:

A.M. Opening: Bill York
A.M. Closing: Fred Scherffius
P. M. Opening: Ron White
P. M. Closing: Isaac Jobes

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Rick Bass
Sun. P.M.: Fred Scherffius
Wed. P.M.: Doug Jobes

Ushers Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devo: Steven Lloyd

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION:

Please welcome Joyce Faires who requested to be identified with the MidTown congregation last week. There are sticker labels to add to your pocket directory in the foyer.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: Beginning Sunday, August 1, the Lord's Supper will be prepared/distributed in the manner it was prior to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Any who would like to prepare the Lord's Supper please sign the list on the bulletin board. For members who still may not feel comfortable taking from the tray as it is passed, prefilled cups will still be provided and can be picked up as you enter the building.

The Compassion Card program is now officially up and running! The goal of the program is to provide encouragement to non-Christians, thereby creating opportunities to study the Gospel with them. If you have a non-Christian friend, family member, coworker, etc. who is in need of encouragement, please be sure to let James Cammock know. Also, if you would like to be part of this exciting program, please let James know so that he can add you to a team. We pray that many lost souls are saved through this method and that God is glorified!

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Mike McVey who is in the hospital in Austin. Mark Bonner, a member of the church in Bendera, is in the hospital with COVID. Rick Bass' mother, Clara Bass, who is recovering from shoulder surgery and will be staying at Detar room 426 for 10 days.

Happy Birthday: Mike Atkinson (26); Izzy Scherffius, Kaylee Scherffius, Athena Scherffius (27); Ashton Barton (30)

Happy Anniversary: Tam & Pam Archer (28)

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, Aug. 1st—Monthly Potluck luncheon after morning worship with a 1pm afternoon service in lieu of 5pm.

Sunday, Aug. 8th—Youth Devo at the home of Mark and Nia FitzSimmons after evening worship.

Wed, Aug. 25th—Special Prayer and Song service to close out our Adult Summer Series.

Area Events:

August 7-8—Discipleship University. See flyer in hallway for details.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

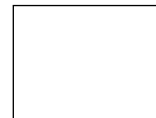
Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Scott DeDear
Ken and Sandra Marie
Ann Pantel
Veronica Serenil
Clark Withers

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.

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MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders:

Mark FitzSimmons
Ronnie Scherffius
Ron White

Deacons:

James Cammock—Evangelism
Lupe Escojido—Benevolence
Bryant Siegel—Education & Finance

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 July 18, 2021

A.M. Bible Class.....	80
A.M. Worship.....	102
Sunday Evening Worship.....	40
Wednesday Bible Class.....	60
Offering :	\$3,017

Reading for this week:

“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be
able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”
Ephesians 6:11

SUPPORTED WORKS

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

GO PAPERLESS!

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