

midtown

M E S S E N G E R

Volume 5, Issue 11

March 13, 2022

FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE

By: Andy Baker

What a mistake in that spring day of so long ago! What began as one man staying home alone ended with adultery, an illegitimate child's death, the death of an innocent man, and the heartbreak and ruin of a family! How sin so easily ensnares us and our righteous judgment can be skewed and distorted by being alone in the wrong place!

David could have gone with Joab. All the kings were going out to battle, why not David (2 Sam. 11:1)? Remaining in Jerusalem by himself would prove to be a costly mistake that could have been avoided (cf. 2 Sam. 11:1-12:23)!

Solomon, a son of David and Bathsheba, writes that "a man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment" (Prov. 18:1). What did David's isolation accomplish, other than ultimate heartache?

Despite the lesson of David, many Christians try to isolate themselves from what they know is right under the guise that they are completely in control. Satan waits for just such an opportunity. Peter tells us, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world" (1 Pet. 5:8-9). In this warning, Peter gives several commands for the Christian who wants to stay off the devil's menu:

There is wisdom in sobriety: the word "sober" carries the idea of being "collected in

spirit" and "aware of self and surroundings." Satan recognizes that our passions can first blind us and then destroy us...we should recognize it, too! Being aware when we are in a potentially sinful situation will help keep our thoughts grounded in who we are as God's people (2 Cor. 10:5-6). How many now broken homes could have been saved by men and women who "lost themselves" in the "heat of the moment"?

There is power in resistance: The writer James said, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7). The inference is that one can just as purposefully put himself in the devil's grasp as he can oppose the devil's advance. God is more powerful (1 Cor. 10:13)!

There is safety in numbers: The fellowship enjoyed by God's people is, in part, for the purpose of being thoughtful and considerate of one another and warning each other of impending dangers which threaten our spiritual lives (cf. Heb. 10:24-25; Gal. 6:1-2).

There are ample opportunities for Christians to be isolated in our own "fortress of solitude." Television and the Internet have made sinful desires easily accessible in isolation. Do not forget what happened when David stayed home when he should have gone!

Andy Baker serves as the preacher for the Graeber Road Church of Christ, Rosenberg, TX.

Where's the Instrument?

Article Selected

One of the first questions that often runs through the mind of a first-time visitor to the church of Christ is, "Where's the instrument?" Asking such a question is understandable, as it is very common to find mechanical instruments in many church assemblies today. Is there a simple explanation for this? There certainly is. The mechanical instrument of music is in the same place as other things that have not been authorized by God. Consider these examples.

The instrument is in the same place as Noah being permitted to use cedar wood in building the ark. God specified gopherwood as the wood for constructing the ark (**Gen. 6:14**). By specifying gopherwood, God automatically excluded all other woods, without needing to say another word about it.

The instrument is in the same place as a Jew being permitted to observe the Sabbath on Tuesday rather than Saturday. God specified the seventh day as the Jewish day of rest called the Sabbath (**Ex. 16:26; 20:10**). By specifying the seventh day, God automatically excluded all other days, without needing to say another word about it.

The instrument is in the same place as someone from the tribe of Judah being permitted to serve as a priest under the Levitical system. God specified the Levites as the tribe from which priests would come (**Num. 8:14-19**). By specifying Levi, God automatically excluded all other tribes from the priesthood, without needing to say another word about it.

The instrument is in the same place as Oreos and milk being permitted to be used in the Lord's Supper. God specified unleavened bread and fruit of the vine in the remembrance of the Lord's body and blood (**Matt. 26:17, 26-29**). By specifying unleavened bread and fruit of the vine, God automatically excluded all other foods from the communion, without needing to say another word about it.

Apply this same Biblical principle to music in New Testament worship. In reading the New Testament, the only music that God ever specifies (and, therefore, authorizes) for worshipping Him today is singing (**Acts**

16:25; Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; 13:15). The music that is specifically authorized is "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (**Eph. 5:19**). Man has no authority to add to or take away from what God authorizes (**Rev. 22:18-19**). Therefore, by specifying singing in New Testament worship, God automatically excluded all other music from worship, without needing to say another word about it.

After authorizing singing, God specified that "all" we "do" must be done "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (**Col. 3:16-17**). Singing is authorized. Mechanical instruments are not.



Upcoming Events

Tonight!—Youth Devo after evening worship.
Hosted by the White's. Boys bring drinks, girls
bring desserts.

Friday, Mar. 25—Family Fellowship night @
6:30pm. Please bring games and finger foods.

April 1—3: Challenging the Church hosted by
Midtown. Please make plans to attend and bring
a friend.

Area Events (More info on the bulletin board in
the hallway):

April 1-3: University church of Christ Spring Re-
treat

April 23: University church of Christ Spring For-
mal

Prayer List

Prayer Requests

Kin and Sandra Marie request prayers for their
health. Kin had one surgery last week and another
will be done in the near future and Sandra is
struggling with health challenges.

Shawn and Haley Singleterry. Shawn is the nephew
of Pam Stryker. Shawn and Haley's 11 month
old son passed away in his crib. If you would like
to send cards their address is: P.O. Box 205,
Daisetta, TX 77533.

The family of Andy Fleming. Andy is a Canadian
missionary who has been serving in Ukraine for
many years. He and his family have fled to Hun-
gary, however, his son in law who is a native
Ukrainian, has been forced to stay.

Members

Jeff Cannady, Les Daltry, Kin and Sandra Marie,
Ann Pantel, Veronica Serenil, Clark Withers, Dee
Gilpatrick, Faye Henderson, Sandy Malone.

Service Roster

Week of March 13, 2022

Sunday Morning

Announcements..... Kevin Sheeran
Scripture Reading..... Kirk FitzSimmons
Song Leader Jesse Moser

Opening Prayer..... James Cammock
Closing Prayer..... Isaac Jobes

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread..... Jesse Moser
Cup..... Mike Atkinson
Offering..... Doug Jobes
Assist..... Dan Fielder
Assist..... Fred Scherffius
Assist..... Steve Randle

Sunday Evening

Announcements..... Kevin Sheeran
Song Leader Rick Bass

Opening Prayer..... Ron White
Closing Prayer..... Bryant Siegel

Lord's Supper & Offering..... Jesse Moser &
Doug Jobes

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class..... Ron White
Song Leader Kirk FitzSimmons
Devotional Mark FitzSimmons

Other

Usher..... Allen Clifton
Prepare Communion Bass Family

Congregational News

Birthdays

Manny Flonnory..... Mar. 22
Imelda Sheeran..... Mar. 26

Food Helpers for the month of March - Team A.

If you have any prayer requests or upcoming
events to be announced, please contact our
secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030.

Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons
Ronnie Scherffius
Ron White

Our Deacons

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

Our Preacher

Ronnie Scherffius

Weekly Reading

*"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."
Psalm 23:5*

Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....9:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship.....5:00 P.M.
Wednesday Bible Class.....7:00 P.M.

Attendance Records

Week of March 6, 2022

A.M. Bible Class.....66
A.M. Worship.....77
P.M. Worship.....55
Wednesday Bible Class.....54
Offering week of March 6, 2022.....\$3,531

Supported Works

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

midtown
CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

midtowncoc.org

Weekly Communication! To receive the *Midtown Messenger* and other congregational news to your inbox each week, please email events.midtowncoc@gmail.com.