

## Authority of Christ: Final or Flexible

By: Ronnie Scherffius

The fact that the church is a kingdom clearly indicates that a democratic form of government (a government which people in this nation are familiar with and by which many denominations are patterned) in the church is against the Bible. As King over His kingdom (1 Tim. 6:13-15), Christ has absolute rule and authority (Matt. 28:18). In a kingdom there is an absolute monarchy. A monarchy is “a system of government according to which the supreme power is vested in a single person” (Webster’s Dictionary). Notice that in a monarchy the rule of authority is absolute. The difference between “absolute” and “limited” is that absolute authority means complete or unlimited authority whereas “limited” refers to “restricted authority” or “authority that is bound within fixed limits.”

When one considers the government of manmade religious bodies, to which we refer as denominations, we see that they are constructed, not on the monarchical government of the kingdom of Christ but on a democratic government as styled by man. In a monarchy there is no voting. All powers, executive, legislative, and judicial are vested in one man. In a democracy, the people are represented and their voices heard through their representative(s) as to what they feel

“church policy” should be. In a democracy, if a decision made is not according to popular opinion it may be changed in due time through the democratic system of voting and appealing, whereas in a monarchy if one accepts the absolute rule and final laws of the king he may enjoy citizenship in the kingdom, but if he rejects his rule and decrees he stands condemned before the king.

The councils and conventions of sectarianism, which change the rules and positions of “the church,” are manmade and stand in direct opposition to the government of the kingdom of Christ. Every departure from God’s pattern is derived by some man and is for the purpose of drawing disciples from God to themselves (Acts 20:30-31). All who desire fellowship with God must stand as citizens in the kingdom for which Christ died and over which He now rules (Eph. 2:10-22). What unity would prevail if people would depart from manmade bodies established through the centuries according to their own ideas and hold to the absolute rule of King Jesus! If this were to take place there would be left standing not one denomination but all men would, as Paul desired, “be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10).

As in a monarchical rule among men, Christ as the absolute authority has delegated “limited authority” to the apostles. To Peter, Jesus declared, “And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:19). To the apostles as a whole Jesus said, “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 18:18). The above statements in no way indicate that the apostles had authority over heaven either to bind on earth what they chose, or to loose what they desired to loose. This misunderstanding has led to some claim to be successors of the apostles with the ability to change at will whatever laws of God they so choose.

That no apostle was ever given license to change God’s law according to their own ideology is clearly seen from a proper understanding of the original text of Matthew 18:18 which carries the sense: “Whatsoever is being bound on earth is already being bound in heaven: and whatsoever is being loosed on earth is already being loosed in heaven.” The apostles were given authority to bind and loose only that which God had already bound and loosed. Understanding this, consider

the words of Christ to His apostles when He said, “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained” (John 20:23). Again, the apostles did not have the authority to remit or retain the sins of a man based on their own authority, but on the authority they had been given by Christ. By what authority then did the apostles bind and loose, remit and forgive? Jesus commanded His apostles “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Note that the apostles were given authority to bind and loose commands upon men; the apostles were given authority to remit and to retain sins of men; the apostles were given authority to preach the gospel; therefore, the apostles, through the preaching of the gospel bound and loosed commands, and remitted and retained sins. That which had “already been bound and loosed in heaven” was revealed to man by the preaching of the gospel, and men’s sins are remitted or retained according either to their obedience or rejection of the same gospel. Christ’s authority is final, no man, apostle or otherwise, has ever had the right to change, alter or amend it. If we would be pleasing to God we must submit to the authority of Jesus Christ.

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## They Turned To God For What?

Article Selected

**F**or what reason do people turn to God? Perhaps some turn to God because they are scared of going to hell. Others probably turn to God so that they can go to heaven. Some turn because they hear about God’s love for them and what He did, and they in turn love the Lord and want to be His child. Some turn perhaps out of sense of obligation, or perhaps a sense of guilt. Many (maybe a majority) turn to God because of what they can receive.

When Paul wrote his first letter to the Christians in Thessalonica, he praised them for a number

of things, including “how [they] turned to God from idols to SERVE the living and true God” (**1 Thess. 1:9**). They turned to God for the stated purpose that they might SERVE God! It was NOT just what they could “get out of it”! They turned to God so that they could GIVE back to Him! What a concept! Do we have that heart?

Why did you turn to God? Why do you now belong to God? Is it to SERVE Him? Ponder that for a moment.

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## Upcoming Events

TODAY!: Youth Devo hosted by the FitzSimmons will be here at the building after evening worship. Girls bring desserts, boys bring chips.

Friday, June 24: Family Fellowship night at 6:30pm at the building. Please bring games and finger foods.

Sunday, June 26: Brandon Starling of Tyler, TX will be guest preaching for us. He is a possible preacher candidate and we encourage everyone to be here. We will also be having a potluck luncheon after the morning worship with an afternoon service. Please bring a potluck dish and dessert to share. (There will be no July Potluck.)

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

July 17-22: Peach Valley Youth Camp. Applications can be found online at [peachvalleyaim.com](http://peachvalleyaim.com)

Aug. 5-7: Discipleship University

## Prayer List

Prayer Requests:  
Please keep Georgeann Savoie in your prayers as she will be moving to Denver. Today will be her last day with us at Midtown.

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

William Fossati has expressed his desire to work under the oversight of the Elders of the Midtown congregation. His contact info is on a sticker in the foyer to add to your pocket directory.

## Service Roster

Week of June 19, 2022

Sunday Morning  
Scripture Reading..... Kirk FitzSimmons  
Song Leader..... Fred Scherffius

Opening Prayer..... Steve Randle  
Closing Prayer..... Ron White

Lord's Supper & Offering  
Bread..... Ken Dorries  
Cup..... Clifton Rutherford  
Offering..... Dan Fielder  
Assist..... Jeff Cannady  
Assist..... Rick Bass  
Assist..... Steve Randle

Sunday Evening  
Song Leader..... Kevin Sheeran

Opening Prayer..... Mark FitzSimmons  
Closing Prayer..... James Cammock

Lord's Supper & Offering..... Ken Dorries, Clifton Rutherford

Wednesday Evening  
Adult Class..... Wade Webster  
Song Leader..... Rick Bass  
Devotional..... Wade Webster

Other  
Usher..... Allen Clifton  
Prepare Communion..... Bass

## Congregational News

Birthdays  
Emily Cammock..... June 20

Anniversaries  
Allen & Pam Clifton..... June 24

Food Helpers for the month of June - Team B.

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

Who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”  
Acts 1:11

## 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 June 12, 2022

A.M. Bible Class.....58  
A.M. Worship.....66  
P.M. Worship.....38  
Wednesday Bible Class.....51  
Offering week of June 12, 2022.....\$3,405

## Supported Works

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

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