

Pick a Card, Any Card

By: David Sproule

You know the trick. A magician fans a deck of cards out in your direction and bids you to, “Pick a card, any card.” There are so many choices. They basically all look the same, until you take one and look at the other side of it. While that card bears some similarities to others in the deck (maybe the same suit, or maybe the same number), it is still a unique card among many. But, in the game of “Pick a Card, Any Card,” all cards are basically equal, and you have the power to choose what you want.

Of course, this just a game, but perhaps this bears some similarities to another “trick” that is being played by the devil on humanity.

The devil is fanning a deck of churches out in front of people today. And he simply bids, “Pick a church, any church.” There are so many choices. Depending on what study you look at, the number of denominations out there will range anywhere from 300 to 45,000. Whatever the number, that’s a lot of “cards” from which to choose. Which one should you choose? Does it really matter?

Many of them basically look the same from the outside, until you look “at the other side,” to see what they teach and what they practice. That’s when you find some distinguishing marks that set each one apart from the others. But, in this

game of “Pick a Church, Any Church,” what the devil wants you to believe is that they are all basically the same, and you have the power to choose what you want. Of course, this time, it’s not a game.

You see, the devil is not in charge of the church. And, actually, neither am I and neither are you. The Bible says that Jesus is “the head of the body, the church” (**Col. 1:18**). Did you notice how many “heads” there are? Just one! Jesus! Did you notice how many bodies/churches this one head has? Just one! “There is one body” (**Eph. 4:4**). So, the devil deceives from the very beginning of the game by fanning a deck of churches out in front of people, as Christ doesn’t have a deck of churches. He has one church.

His one church teaches the “one faith” (**Eph. 4:5; Jude 3**), holds exclusively to the words revealed by the “one Spirit” in the Bible (**Eph. 4:4; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; 1 Cor. 2:10-13**), submits to the authoritative judgment of the “one Lord” (**Eph. 4:5; John 12:48**), practices the “one baptism” for the forgiveness of sins (**Eph. 4:5; Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16**), worships the “one God” in spirit and according to His truth (**Eph. 4:6; John 4:23-24**), and holds to the “one hope” reserved in heaven for His church (**Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 15:24; Heb. 12:23**).

God doesn’t say, “Pick a church, any church.” God says, “I have one church. Come and let Me add you to it.”

His Glory in His Temple

By: Selected

When David asked the prophet Nathan if he should build the temple, Nathan immediately told him to go ahead and do this. However, that night the Lord came to Nathan and told the prophet what he had said was wrong. He returned to David and gave the king the message from God. Sometimes we, like Nathan, give our own opinions about the Bible.

David had become a wealthy king as God had rewarded his righteousness. He wanted to build a permanent house where God could be worshiped. The tabernacle built at Mt. Sinai was ornate, but it had not survived the almost five hundred years from that time until the time of David. There had been many replacements built, and the furnishings of the tabernacle had gone from one tabernacle (tent) to another (**1 Chron. 17:5**).

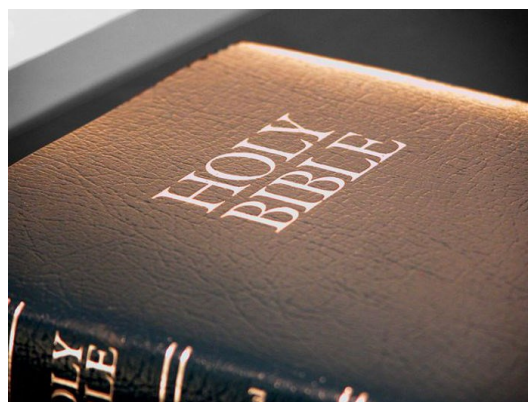
Human wisdom would seem to justify the king's desire. He said, "See, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord is under tent curtains" (**1 Chron. 17:1**). When Nathan delivered God's new message to David, God said, "Have I ever spoken a word to any of the judges, of Israel, whom I command to shepherd My people, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'" (**1 Chron. 17:6**). Sometimes we, like David, do not see the world as God sees it. While the tabernacle built at Mt. Sinai was glorious, we fail to see that the glory of that tabernacle did not come from the riches used to build it, but from the glory given by God's presence in that holy place and that most holy place.

God then told David the reason the king was not to build the temple was because he had

been a man of war. God wanted a man of peace and told David to name his son Solomon (Solomon means "peace"). This son was to be the one to build the temple. David was given the plans for that temple in great detail which he gave to Solomon (**1 Chron. 28:11-12**). David told Solomon, "The Lord has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong, and do it" (**1 Chron. 28:10**).

Before his death, David worked diligently to gather the material for Solomon to use. He told his young son, "I have taken much trouble to prepare for the house of the Lord, one hundred thousand talents of gold and one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond measure for it is abundant. I have prepared timber and stone also, and you may add to them" (**1 Chron. 22:14**). He then charged his son, "Arise and begin working, and the Lord be with you" (**1 Chron. 22:16**).

There is more to this story which will be discussed next week. Here is a challenge to you until then. Use Google to discover the worth of the temple Solomon built!



Upcoming Events

Jan. 26: Keno Shrum from House to House Heart to Heart will be speaking. Flyers are in the foyer.

February 2: Monthly potluck after morning service and we will be welcoming our new preacher Cody McCoy and his family to Midtown. Please bring a dish to share. We will also have a 12:45pm service to follow.

Feb. 7-9: Midtown will host our Youth Winter retreat for grades 6-12th. Please visit our website to register.

There will not be a February Youth Devotional.

Area events:

Area events/details are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. Please check them out.

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Jerri Rosales will have pet scan results on Jan. 23.

Joyce Faires who is recovering at home from knee surgery.

Members

Jeff Cannady, Les Daltry, Jerry FitzSimmons, James Hicks, and Veronica Serenil.

Cody McCoy will be preaching today!

Please sign up to open/close the building, prepare communion, and host youth devos for 2025. The sign up sheets are on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Service Roster

Week of January 19, 2025

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading.....Caleb Lehtinen
Song Leader.....Kevin Sheeran

Opening Prayer.....Ron White
Closing Prayer.....Will Burleson

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread.....Bryant Siegel
Cup.....Ken Dorries
Offering.....Lupe Escojido
Assist.....Steve Randle
Assist.....Mike Atkinson
Assist.....Willie Fossati

Sunday Evening

Song Leader.....Jack Jobes

Opening Prayer.....Lupe Escojido
Closing Prayer.....Desmon Flonnory

Lord's Supper & Offering.....Bryant Siegel/
Lupe Escojido

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class.....Mark FitzSimmons
Song Leader.....Caleb Lehtinen
Devotional.....Ken Dorries

Other

Prepare Communion.....Ferman Rosales

Congregational News For This Week

Birthdays

Nina Siegel.....Jan. 21
Nancy Fortenberry.....Jan. 25

Anniversaries

Richard & Marva Hill.....Jan. 25

If you have any prayer requests, upcoming events to be announced, or updates/corrections please contact our secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030 or email office.midtownchurch@gmail.com

Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons
Ron White

Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism
Lupe Escojido— Benevolence
Doug Jobes—Safety, Men’s Encouragement &
Winter Youth Retreat
Kevin Sheeran—Worship Organization
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

Weekly Reading

For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right
hand, Saying to you, “Fear not, I will help you.”
Isaiah 41:13 NKJV

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 January 12, 2025

A.M. Bible Class.....71
A.M. Worship.....96
P.M. Worship.....56
Wednesday Worship.....53

*Financial information is located on the bulletin
board in the hallway.*

Supported Works

John & Carla Moore *Bible Land Passages*

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