

The Good—Not the Bad, and Not the Ugly in One Church

By: Dan Jenkins

Last week we began a brief series of articles based on the character of three main characters. The movie was entitled “The Good, the Bad, the Ugly.” We have taken this phrase to use to describe the condition, both the good and the bad, of the churches we study. We use the last part of the phrase, the ugly, to describe the future for most of these churches.

The church at Smyrna and its beginning. We know very little about the beginning of this church. It is highly likely that it began during the three years Paul was at Ephesus, the largest city in Asia and not far from Smyrna. This being true Paul could have been part of this church near its beginning.

The city of Smyrna, one of the most beautiful in that area. It was blessed by having a safe harbor which could provide protection from hostile ships by placing a chain across its entrance. There were many temples with Greek/Roman gods, but in 196 B.C., it erected a temple to the goddess Roma, when Rome was far removed from being a powerful nation. There were many Jews there with their synagogue and they were very hostile toward the early church.

The city of Smyrna, home of Polycarp, a very well-known martyr. There are many details of the death of this man who was faithful to the very end. There was an uproar in the city, and they demanded that Polycarp be publicly executed. Given the choice of

cursing the name of the Christ and making a sacrifice to Caesar, He replied, “Eighty and six years have I served Him and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?” Then he added, “You threaten me with the fire that burns for a time, and is quickly quenched, for you do not know the fire which awaits the wicked in the judgment to come and in everlasting punishment. Why are you waiting? Come, do what you will.”

The church and the good about it. There is no “bad or ugly” about this church. John, in his letter to the seven churches, mentions tribulations, poverty and blasphemy from the Jewish synagogue. He mentioned another coming that was about to try their faith. They were faithful and Jesus said, “Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). Jesus realized there were two distinct groups who claimed to serve God. One was a “synagogue of Satan” and the other was the church.

As you read about these churches in Asia, keep in mind that only two of them have nothing bad said about them. The difference? They were serving God amidst great trials, but only two were truly faithful. We need to be faithful to death!

Keep Your Thoughts to Yourself

By: Selected

Sometimes a preacher's mind will work in mysterious ways. This is one of those times.

In November 1986, the Georgia Satellites band released a single called "Keep Your Hands to Yourself." The lyrics were about a girl who firmly refused to get physically intimate with her boyfriend until they were married. In the song, she kept saying to him, "Don't give me no lines and keep your hands to yourself."

First of all, what a great set of lines for a girl to say to any boy to whom she is not married. Lay down the law and stand your ground! But that's not the point of this article (although a good point).

As a preacher, I've also thought of the application of these words as they could be spoken by a child of God to the devil. Can you imagine, as we strive to "resist the devil" (Jas. 4:7), if we said to the evil one every time he tempted us to sin, "Don't give me no lines and keep your hands to yourself"? Again, a great point, but not this article.

For whatever reason, these lyrics sometimes go through my mind when I am having a Bible study with someone. Yes, you read that right. But not those exact lyrics.

Whenever I have a one-on-one Bible study with someone, I always strive in our first study to establish the foundation of the Word of God as the absolute, supreme and universal authority for everything that we say and do—including everything that is taught in the study. I will invariably tell the person—as we underscore the Divine origin, all-sufficiency and complete-authority of Scripture—"I don't want you to believe

anything that I tell you! I want you to believe what the Bible says! My thoughts and my opinions don't matter one bit, and they shouldn't be a part of this study!"

That's when the words to this song will sometimes come to mind. I don't ever say it out loud, but sometimes I think that the person I'm studying with should be saying to me, "Don't give me no lines and keep your thoughts to yourself."

And isn't that the truth? God tells us to "preach the gospel" (Mark 16:15), to "preach the Word" (2 Tim. 4:2), to "preach Jesus" (Acts 8:35). Christ alone has "all authority" (Matt. 28:18), and His "words" will "judge" us in the end (John 12:48), not the words of any person or preacher. There are no other thoughts (Acts 26:9), words (1 Pet. 4:11) or gospels (Gal. 1:8-9) for anyone to add into a Bible study (Rev. 22:18-19). It is Christ and His word that will save (Acts 4:12; 11:14) and not the thoughts or ideas of any man!

So, demand the Bible and the Bible alone! "Don't give me no lines and keep your thoughts to yourself."



Upcoming Events

Tonight: Monthly youth devo after evening services here at the building. Boys bring drinks, girls bring desserts.

Area events:

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

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Don't forget to download our new member directory app – Lightpost. Setup instructions are on the table in the foyer. If your email is not in the directory, get with Cody and he can add you.



VISITORS:

Thank you for visiting today. Please take a moment to scan this QR Code to fill out a visitor card. We would love to have a record of your attendance.



Summer Series Wednesday Night Classes

Every Wednesday night during the Summer session, the Adults will be learning about “Questions Jesus Asked” and the Children will be learning about “Biomimicry: God invented it First”. Please join us at 7pm.

Service Roster

Week of July 12, 2026

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading..... Will Burleson
Song Leader Kirk FitzSimmons

Opening Prayer..... Mark FitzSimmons
Closing Prayer..... Caleb Lehtinen

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread..... James Cammock
Cup..... Jake Jacobs
Offering..... Barry Lehtinen
Assist..... Lupe Escojido
Assist..... Willie Fossati
Assist..... Kanin Jacobs

Sunday Evening

Song Leader Randy D'Herde

Opening Prayer..... Benny Horton
Closing Prayer..... Bryant Siegel

Lord's Supper & Offering..... Clifton Rutherford/
Bryce Dolan

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class Donny D'Herde
Song Leader Genesis Williams
Devotional Donny D'Herde

Other

Prepare Communion Katy & Maya McCoy

Congregational News This Week

Birthdays

Braxton Flonnory..... July 13
Clifton Rutherford..... July 17

Anniversaries

Bryant & Nina Siegel..... July 13
James & Emily Cammock..... July 17

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 and
Communication
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

Our Minister

Cody McCoy

Weekly Reading

Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified
it, because in it He rested from all His work
which God had created and made.
Genesis 2:3 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 July 5, 2026

A.M. Bible Class.....67
A.M. Worship.....103
P.M. Worship.....54
Wednesday Worship.....54

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

Supported Works

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midtown
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5901 N. Main
Victoria, TX 77904
361-573-0030

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