

Is life about “I” or “you”?

By: David Sproule

What is life about? What should be my focus in life? When I look at life, do I need to use any other pronouns other than first person singular? Consider Paul’s outlook. With the possibility of having his life taken from him while imprisoned in Rome, Paul reflected on the purpose of his life.

“In nothing I shall be ashamed” (Phil. 1:20). That’s a worthy endeavor for life, which literally suggests (in the passive voice) that I will not allow others to do anything that would put me to shame as a Christian.

“With all boldness...Christ will be magnified in my body” (1:20). Christ will not only be seen in my life when others look at me (cf. Gal. 2:20), but He will be magnified, glorified and exalted in all that I do, and it will be with boldness.

“For to me, to live is Christ” (1:21). There is no higher aim in life than to crucify self (Rom. 6:6) and to be made alive in Christ (Rom. 6:11) and with Christ (Eph. 2:5). After all, as Paul said in Colossians 3:4, Christ “is our life.”

“For to me...to die is gain” (1:21). As wonderful as living for Christ is (in this mortal life), our eternal souls earnestly desire to be swallowed up by eternal life (2 Cor. 5:1-4) and to receive the eternal reward (Matt. 25:34) that has been prepared for us by none other than our Savior (John 14:1-3).

“If I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor” (1:22). The diligent labor of the Christian life brings forth fruit in this life (by

God’s increase, 1 Cor. 3:6), and, in the next life, “his own reward according to his own labor” (3:8). Faithful Christians will be blessed to “rest from their labors,” and equally true, “their works follow with them” (Rev. 14:13).

“I am hard pressed...My desire is...” (1:23). Life has choices. Choices have consequences. Some consequences are good and would be acceptable under any circumstances. But, other consequences are sensational and far exceed even the best of “the good.” A Christian’s heart simply yields to God and says, “Your will, not mine, be done!”

Up to this point, as Paul reflected on the purpose of his life, he repeatedly used the first person singular pronouns—“I, me, my.” But, then came this resolution—“Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you...for your progress and joy in the faith” (1:24-25). Paul recognized that truly living for Christ is not all about “I, me, my”! While those existed, he understood that there were needs outside of “I, me, my” that were more needful! That’s why, eight verses later, he would challenge: “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself” (2:3).

Is there room in “I, me, my” for “you” and “your”?

Christians Stink!

By: Selected

When Jesus asked for the removal of the stone covering Lazarus' tomb, the response was, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead for four days" (John 11:39). The stench of death—few have ever experienced it. Perhaps there was the odor from the death of an animal, but never the stench of death from a human body. Over the years, I have had two acquaintances whose work involved the removal of bodies from the homes of those who have been dead for several days. The stench of death—both of these friends described its retched, almost unbearable smell.

We are all aware that Christians are the light of the world and the salt, but few are aware that the Lord speaks of the "smell" which comes from Christians. Paul, in his second letter to Corinth, speaks of the fragrance of Christianity. "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place" (2:14). Being led by the Lord, there is an aroma we spread as we give others knowledge of Him and His will.

Paul then adds, "For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing." The "smell" of Christians is more than a beautiful aroma to those we are leading to Christ, but we also are to God the fragrance of Christ.

Then, what does the title of this article, "Christians Stink," have to do with all of this? If we are the fragrance of Christ to God and to those who are being saved, then how is it that

Christians stink? Look at the next words Paul expresses.

"To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life." Jesus said, "The light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). As we spread the fragrance of the knowledge of the Lord, it is beautiful to some, but to many the same words are the stench of death! As we live among men and the light of heaven shines through us, that beautiful aroma from heaven is to the wicked as horrendous as the stench of death. In the next verse, Jesus describes the man who practices evil and hates the light. He refuses the light "lest his deeds should be exposed."

The bottom line is this. If your life is ruled by political correctness and your desire is to be loved by all those around you, you will "smell" good to most people. The reality is that as our lives and speech uphold righteousness we must expect the ungodly to react to us as most react to the stench of decaying bodies. Our Lord told us that to some, "Christians stink."



Upcoming Events

Today: Trey Jenkins will teach the Bible class and Sunday AM sermon. Trey is a student we support at SWSBS.

Area events:

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

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Please keep our Midtown youth in prayer as they begin their school year. Pray that God continue to watch over them and give them the courage to shine their light to others.

Tuesday Ladies Bible Class

The Tuesday Ladies Bible Class begins the first Tuesday in September at 10am here in the fellowship hall. They will be studying "Women of the Bible"

Connie Kasper has new contact information. Please pick up a label in the foyer to add to your pocket directory.

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

Service Roster

Week of August 16, 2026

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading.....Barry Lehtinen
Song Leader Doug Jobes

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

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread..... Randy D'Herde
Cup..... Cody McCoy
Offering..... Ron White
Assist.....Caleb Lehtinen
Assist..... Blake Jacobs
Assist..... Clifton Rutherford

Sunday Evening

Song Leader Jeff Cannady

Opening Prayer.....Lupe Escojido
Closing Prayer..... Billy York

Lord's Supper & Offering.....James Cammock/
Willie Fossati

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class.....Randy D'Herde
Song Leader Genesis Williams
Devotional..... Randy D'Herde

Other

Prepare Communion.....Sneeringer

Congregational News This Week

Birthdays

Raider Stryker.....Aug. 19
Pam Archer.....Aug. 20
Rita Rosenbrock.....Aug. 21
LC Islas.....Aug. 22
Tom Cullen.....Aug. 22

Anniversaries

Doug & Kasi Jobes.....Aug. 22

Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons
Ron White

Our Deacons

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

Our Minister

Cody McCoy

Weekly Reading

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we
have fellowship with one another, and the blood
of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
1 John 1:7 NKJV

midtown
CHURCH OF CHRIST

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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 August 9, 2026

A.M. Bible Class.....54
A.M. Worship.....84
P.M. Worship.....56
Wednesday Worship.....54

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

Supported Works

Southwest School of Bible Studies

midtowncoc.org

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