

midtown M E S S E N G E R

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Why Do Relational Sins Seem So Easy to Justify?

By: David Sproule

It seems that there are some sins which are quickly and universally condemned, such as murder, stealing, rape, child molestation, etc. The very thought of these (and others) can be so repulsive to some that they immediately condemn any practice of it.

Yet, there are some other sins that even Christians seem to have a hard time standing against. These often involve a relationship of some kind, and when it involves someone that a Christian loves, it pulls at the heartstrings to the point that even a Christian sometimes will soften and “not see it as a big deal.” Let me see if I can give some illustrations.

Some Christian parents, who are strong in their faith, have been faced with one of their own children becoming a homosexual. Not wanting to “lose” connection with their kid, some parents have weakened and grown to accept (at some level) the choice of their child.

Other Christian parents have struggled to know how to handle a child who moves in with a lover, has children, builds a life, and lives with all the privileges (and appearances) of a married couple with children, without actually being married. Some parents have just gone along to “keep the peace.”

Many Christians have been challenged by God’s teaching on marriage, divorce and remarriage. They have friends who are in a marriage that is adulterous in the eyes of God. And when there are children involved, it is so common for a Christian to say, “How can God

expect them to separate! There’s no way He would! What will that do to the children?”

Often Christians put themselves into relationships that are adulterous in the eyes of God, but they are so “in love” and believe so much they “have a right to be happy” that they say, “God will understand” or “God can’t expect me to live alone the rest of my life.”

Many other examples could be given, but hopefully these suffice to illustrate how painful, personal and heart-rending these kinds of situations can be. Some sins can be immediately condemned, but then others challenge us to the point of acceptance.

Consider ten things: (1) God’s law is always right (Psa. 19:7-9; Hos. 14:9). (2) God’s law is unchanging (Psa. 119:89; 1 Pet. 1:25). (3) God shows no partiality (Rom. 2:11; 1 Pet. 1:17). (4) Sin is always wrong (Rom. 6:23; Gal. 5:19-21). (5) No sin can ever be right or acceptable to God (Prov. 6:16-19; Gal. 1:4). (6) Right in one’s own eyes is foolishness to God (Prov. 12:15; Isa. 5:21). (7) Showing approval of sin is a sin itself (Rom. 1:32; 2 John 9-11). (8) One can resist sin with God’s help (1 Cor. 6:11, 18-20; Jas. 4:7-8). (9) One can live single for life for God’s sake and with His help (Matt. 19:11-12; 1 Cor. 7:10-11, 32). (10) We must not conform and must help others to not conform (Rom. 12:1-2; Matt. 5:13-16).

As the End Approaches

By: Selected

Perhaps it is because I am getting older, but it is hard to believe that another year is about to come to an end. To a four year old child, it takes “forever” for him or her to turn five. If you are 54, that time to 55 seems like a few months. If you are 74, it seems more like a few weeks!

Just days before His death, Jesus spoke of the approaching end of Judaism and temple worship, and He gave eight signs that would be manifested before that time came. The eighth sign was that when the gospel would be preached to the world, then there would be an end (Matt. 24:14). In His trial, He told Caiaphas that starting that day of His trial the high priest would see the one he was killing coming and ruling in power (Matt. 26:64). When Paul wrote Colossians, he said that the eighth sign happened (Col. 1:23).

It should not surprise us that both Peter and James talked about this end. James said that the end was at hand and that the Judge was standing at the door about to bring judgment (Jas. 5:8-9). Peter affirmed that the end was at hand (1 Pet. 4:7). Had you lived in that first century, you would have seen the signs being fulfilled as God destroyed the temple and brought about the end of Judaism. Thankfully, Peter then gave encouragement as to what to do when the end was at hand.

The application of Peter’s encouragement can impact us every time we see an “end” coming. As you age, you can see the end of your life approaching so rapidly. You attend the funerals of others (some even younger than you), and Peter’s words seem so appropriate. In a similar way, the end of 2025 would be a good time to see what Peter emphasized.

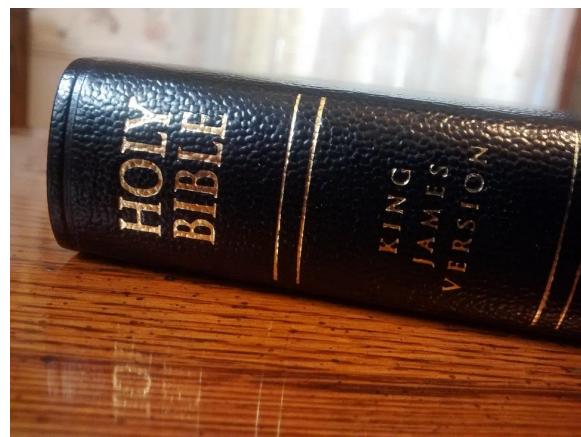
First, Peter says to be sober, to be serious (1 Pet. 4:7). As a new year approaches, it would be wise to give serious thought as to how

much you have grown spiritually. Are you closer to the Lord as this year ends than what you were when it began? Give serious thought to the direction of your life.

Peter then says to be watchful in prayers. As the end approaches, spend time praying about dealing with temptations that surround you. Seriously pray about your life.

Then Peter says that as the end approached there should be fervent love for each other. This love covers many of those awkward times of dealing with others. He specifically mentions hospitality. How much have you gone out of your way sharing times with others? As the end approaches, should you change how much time you spend with your brothers?

Take time to read verses ten and eleven. You will be amazed seeing two other applications of what to do as the end approaches. There is an end approaching—be serious!



Upcoming Events

Tonight: Youth devo here at the building after evening worship. Boys bring drinks, girls bring desserts.

Sun. Dec. 21: White Elephant fellowship after evening worship here at the building. Please bring a wrapped gift and finger foods.

Wed. Dec. 31: New Year's Eve Fellowship. More details to come.

Sat. Jan. 17, 2026: Midtown will host Ladies Day with speaker Erin Tanner. Registration begins at 8:30am.

February 20-22, 2026: Midtown's Youth Winter Retreat. More details to come.

Area events:

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

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Dave Rogers and family on the passing of LuAnn last week.

Audrey Diaz, client of Nicolette Garcia, who had brain surgery last week and is recovering at home.

Members

Jeff Cannady and Veronica Serenil.

Volunteers Needed

The Sign up sheets for ways to serve for 2026 are on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Please sign up.

Service Roster

Week of December 14, 2025

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading Luke FitzSimmons
Song Leader Doug Jobes

Opening Prayer Ron White
Closing Prayer Mark FitzSimmons

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread Benny Horton
Cup Clifton Rutherford
Offering Bryce Dolan
Assist Steve Randle
Assist Ferman Rosales
Assist Willie Fossati

Sunday Evening

Song Leader Jack Jobes

Opening Prayer Caleb Lehtinen
Closing Prayer Desmon Flonny

Lord's Supper & Offering Benny Horton/
Willie Fossati

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class Cody McCoy
Song Leader Luke FitzSimmons
Devotional James Cammock

Other

Prepare Communion for Dec.....

Congregational News This Week

Birthdays

Lori Westphall Dec. 17
Kirk FitzSimmons Dec. 20
Phyllis Jacobs Dec. 20

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

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign:
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,
and shall call His name Immanuel.
Isaiah 7:14

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 December 7, 2025

A.M. Bible Class.....	78
A.M. Worship.....	103
P.M. Worship.....	64
Wednesday Worship.....	54

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

Supported Works

John & Carla Moore *Bible Land Passages*



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midtowncoc.org

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