

# Backyard Religion

By John Gipson

Is it just imagination, or is history repeating itself? (cf. Ecclesiastes 1:9; Ecclesiastes 3:15). There was a time in Israel when there was no government or central authority to see that everything was done right, so “every man did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6; Judges 18:1; Judges 19:1; cf. Deuteronomy 12:8) — including even building a church in one’s own backyard just to suit himself (Judges 17-18).

Micah’s church in the backyard seemed like a good idea. It was convenient and suited his whims to a “T.” Only later did he discover some disconcerting and frustrating consequences. He paid a silversmith to make a graven image (something not allowed by the law of Moses) and set it up in his own house (Judges 17:1-5). Judges 17:5 tells us that he ordained his own son to be his priest (something only Levites were to do according to the Law – 1 Chronicles 23:21-32). Micah even made special garments for his son to wear (like the priests of old). Even Micah realized that not everything was quite right, for when a real Levite came by, Micah offered him a salary to be his priest, and that satisfied the Levite quite well (Judges 17:7-13).

Micah built his own faith by borrowing ideas from others. From Judaism, he would take some ideas, and from the nations roundabout, he would take their seraphim, “household gods” as a tribute to ancestor worship. The ideas taken from here and there resulted in a pitiful, terrible mixture of things as is often the case in a self-pleasing religion. If you read the whole story, things didn’t end well. Micah wails as his gods are captured, “You take my gods which I made, and the priest, and go away, and what have I left?” (Judges 18:22-24 ESV). It all fizzled out in the end.

I fear for those today who establish religions and build their own churches according to their desires with ideas taken from a dozen religions and philosophies. What will their end be?

It would be well to remember the apostle Paul’s warning: *“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed”* (Gal. 1:8 ESV).

Whatever kind of church you might establish yourself, you will never be able to compete with the one promised by Christ when He said, “I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18).



# STERLINGTON

Church of Christ



P.O. Box 82  
1095 Highway 2  
Sterlington, Louisiana 71280  
[www.sterlingtoncoc.com](http://www.sterlingtoncoc.com)

Sunday Morning Bible Classes - 9:30 AM  
Sunday Morning Worship - 10:30 AM  
Sunday Evening Worship - 5:00 PM  
Wednesday Evening Classes - 6:00 PM.

5/14/23

## Welcome Visitors

If you are seeking a church home, we hope that you will consider joining with us. We are a growing congregation, dedicated to worshiping in truth and spirit. Please fill out the Visitor's Card and place it in the collection plate!

### Elders:

Todd Chapman  
Paul Simpson

### Deacons:

Wayne Fowler David Garris  
Billy Granger Buddy Hollis

### Preacher:

Don Delukie

## Those to Serve

### Today

**Announcements-** Wayne Fowler **Opening Prayer-** Ronnie Hayes

**Communion-** Charles Fricke **Closing Prayer-** Damien Miller

### May 21st

**Announcements-** Lyle Russell **Opening prayer-** Jerry McDonald

**Communion-** Travis Rogers **Closing Prayer-** Rick Cook

## Announcements

—**Potluck & Wedding Shower:** There will be a Wedding Shower for Brandon Rogers & Sydney Leija on Sunday, **May 28th** following the potluck. They are registered at Dillards, The Muffin Tin and Southern Creations (in Rayville) and on [theknot.com](http://theknot.com). They will be getting married in June 2023. There will be no pm services this evening.

—**Fish Fry:** There will be a Fish Fry on Saturday, **June 3rd** at 5 PM. Everyone is invited!

—**Question & Answer Series: June 4th** will be our next Question and Answer Series. Give your questions to Don or bring them with you.

—**Children's Home Collection:** Our congregation is collecting items for the Children's Home in Paragould, AR. Collection boxes are by the nursery. A list of needed items is in the foyer.

## Please Pray For:

Dwain Flowers, Kara Freeman, Buster Guice, Charles Reeves, Keith Bailey, Walker Chapman, Ronnie White, Dave Garris, Georgia Fox, Emma Morgan, Elaine Field, Gena Granger, Ken White, June Chapman, Chris Reppond.

**Bereaved:** Families of Betty Jo Franklin, Rita Walthall, Hershel Bearden, Sheila Crowe's mother, Mike Watkins.

## Continue to Pray For:

Linda Garris, Sharon White-Ross, James & Lorene Johnson, Shirley Goodwin, Bobby Barker, Gail Sewell, Malea Zuber, Bobby Simmons, Max Aubel, Tricia Muse, Elizabeth Hollis, Terrance Dawson, Jamie Ross, and Charlie McDaniel Jr.

May my teaching drop as the rain, my  
speech distill as the dew, like a gentle rain  
upon the tender grass, and like showers  
upon the herb.  
Deu 32:2

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

### May birthdays

5 - Larry Randolph  
10 - Bettye Flowers  
12 - Cheryl Brister  
15 - Jerry McDonald  
19 - Virginia Cook  
19 - Buddy Hollis  
24 - Linda Garris  
30 - Walker Chapman  
31 - Danielle Scharf

### May anniversaries

21 - David and Elaine Reppond  
26 - John and Jodie Chisley  
26 - Victor and Donna Binford  
29 - Dave and Linda Garris

