

# The Case Of The Empty Case

By Mike Riley

Many years ago, while rushing about getting things ready to record a favorite television movie, I reached for a cassette tape to record the movie. As I opened the tape case, I discovered the case was empty — that what I had thought was a cassette tape, was in fact an empty case.

The above unfortunate experience immediately brought to my mind the story of Jesus and the fig tree (Mk 11:11-14; Mk 11:20-24; cf. Matt 21:18-22). On one occasion when Jesus was traveling with His disciples, they came upon a fig tree that was in full leaf. It was not fig season, so it was unusual that the tree should appear to be in production mode at that time of year. As Jesus and the apostles approached, it became clear that although the tree had fully leafed as though it were in season, there was no fruit to be found anywhere on it. Jesus cursed and condemned the tree because it appeared to be something that it wasn't. The tree was just like the empty cassette case which held out the promise of a tape, but had nothing inside.

Sometimes we convince ourselves that Christianity is something we can put on like a winter coat, and remove it when we no longer feel the chill. We become like the hypocritical Pharisees who sounded trumpets when they gave offerings, prayed aloud on street corners, and wore fancy prayer shawls and phylacteries to convince others how religious they were (Matt 6:1-2; Matt 6:5; Matt 23:5). Let us understand that others may be fooled — we may even fool ourselves — but God is not fooled (Gal 6:7)

There's a reason why the New Testament describes those who truly come to Christ as being converted (Matt 18:3; Acts 3:19). They have demonstrated a change in heart, in mindset, and in lifestyle. The genuine disciple is not putting on some show of faith, but rather possesses a faith that demands to be shown (Jam 2:18; Jam 2:22). It is the difference between the sacrifice-free gifts of the wealthy proud folks, and the all-sacrificing offering of the poor widow who held back nothing (Mk 12:41-44). It's the difference between an empty cassette case, and one with a tape inside.



# 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.

7/17/22

## 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    **Lord's Table-** Rick Cook  
**Opening prayer-** Don Delukie    **Closing Prayer-** Ronnie Hayes

### July 24th

**Announcements-** Travis Rodgers    **Lord's Table-** Todd Chapman  
**Opening prayer-** Wayne Fowler    **Closing Prayer-** Wes Chapman

## Announcements

—**Gospel Meetings:** There are several Gospel Meetings in our area this week. See the flyers in the lobby for details.

—**Bible Boot Camp VBS: July 30th** Haile Church of Christ is hosting a 1 day VBS for children ages 1-12. For more info and registration email: biblebootcamppreregistration@yahoo.com

—**Question & Answer Series: August 7th** will be our next Question and Answer Series. Please submit your questions via the church email address SCOC2006@att.net or to Don.



art copyright blue chair blessing

DO NOT FEAR, FOR I AM WITH YOU.  
Isaiah 41:10

## Please Pray For:

Larry Field, Luke Chapman, Kathrine Hebert, Terry Hebert, Arlene Sumner, Ed Haltom, Eloise Smith, David Singley, Gail Poole, Pam Denton, Ronnie Aaron, Joanne Randolph, Kaitlin Simpson, Roosevelt Rogers, Barbara Wheeler.

**Bereaved:** Families of Connie Grenfell, Jerry Madden, Jeremy Harris, Barge Elmore, Johnny Coleman.

## Continue to Pray For:

Shirley Goodwin, Bobby Barker, Tricia Muse, Max Aubel, Donna Head, Debra Mike, Trey Jennings, Debbie Walker, Virginia Royal, Renita Thomas, Elizabeth Hollis, Cyndi Powell, Heath Ray, Terrance Dawson, Ann Bolden, Jamie Ross, Charlie McDaniel Jr, Lewis Bedele, Adam White.



### July Birthdays

|                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 3 - Carol Granger  | 16 - Angelec Brannon |
| 4 - Jansen Chisley | 19 - Debbie Cook     |
| 5 - Lilly Delaney  | 20 - Ronnie Hayes    |
| 6 - Paul Simpson   | 22 - Ethel Ross      |
| 6 - Mary Wyatt     | 23 - Randy Manning   |
| 9 - David Reppond  | 31 - Whitney Chapman |
| 12 - Oddie Cameron |                      |

### July Anniversaries

21 - Billy and Carol Granger  
28 - Wayne and Dana Fowler  
30 - Don and Jean Delukie

