

MARKET STREET

"And this is the message we have received of Him, and declare unto you..." (1 John 1:5)



MESSENGER

Market Street church of Christ

514 West Market Street
P.O. Box 388
Athens, Alabama 35612
Phone (256) 232-1525

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Classes..... 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship..... 10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 p.m.

Elders

Jerry McGlocklin.....(256) 232-7620
Kenneth Smith.....(256) 233-2050
Bonnie Sutton.....(256) 232-2081

Deacons

Marty R. Adams.....(256) 233-5147
Rusty Brand.....(256) 233-7343
Joel Hamm.....(256) 230-6223
Stuart Wilson.....(256) 233-6291

Evangelists

David A. Cox.....(256) 233-8910
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Warren Glass.....(256) 497-3138

Visit Us On The Web
MarketStreet-church.com

MARKET STREET MESSENGER

is published in the interest of New Testament Christianity and to enhance the work of the Market Street church.

David A. Cox, Editor

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No. 6

What Affiliation Between Churches?

Steve Dewhirst

What affiliation exists, *scripturally*, between local autonomous churches? On the one hand, we are quick to condemn the congregational alliances of denominational churches under a recognized central board. On the other hand, we have extreme difficulty in honoring one another's independence, especially if a local church's exercise of expediciencies seem "out of step" with what brethren have done traditionally.

Wrestling with this knotty question is nothing new. Some have concluded that since *The Church* in its universal sense is the collectivity of all local churches of Christ everywhere, each congregation must bear some *implied* relationship to one another. From this profoundly false premise men have argued for everything from cooperative-church programs in the name of *The Church of Christ*, to the doctrine that salvation lies in local church membership. But the problems here are at least threefold: 1) The church in its universal sense is the collectivity of *redeemed men and women*, not a collectivity of churches which may sometimes accept unsaved people into fellowship unwittingly; 2) The church universal *has no collective work* outlined in scripture; and 3) The Bible says nothing of inter-church alliances for the promotion of human schemes.

We know—*intellectually*—that no formal organization, hierarchy or accountability exist between local churches; each one is a family of Christians (as far as we are able to judge), having joined themselves together to work and worship under a common oversight. Each church is accountable for its own actions before God, and is judged by virtue of its own work, irrespective of any other group (see Revelation 2 & 3). Likewise, erring churches are called upon to repent, but scripture says nothing of one church being called in to rescue another from apostasy.

Scripture's only example of one local church writing to another over doctrinal matters (Acts 15), resulted from the Jerusalem church being *specifically asked* by the church in Antioch regarding circumcision; and that, because of troubling men from Jerusalem who presumed to inject themselves where they had not been asked. Local churches do not *fel-*

lowship one another in any practical sense, save in the case of relieving needy brethren (see Acts 11:26-30); churches have no joint-projects outlined in the Bible. The same principle of autonomy that prevents one local eldership from overseeing the work of many churches, also prevents one church from overseeing the doctrinal positions of another. If a local church is bent on apostasy, into apostasy it must go.

And yet we also know — *emotionally* — that local churches do enjoy the tie of mutual affection. Perhaps our regard for other local churches lies not in the fact that they exist organizationally as churches, but because we acknowledge them as *brethren in the Lord individually*. After all, the only interaction we generally have with other churches is in attending gospel meetings. Even then, one church isn't attending the meeting of another. Rather, *individual disciples* attend gospel meetings. As individuals, we “have a share” (enjoy fellowship) only in that assembly. In no way does such a visit constitute having fellowship in *every work* of that local church.

Consider Antioch's desire to relieve needy saints in Judea (Acts 11). They were not obligated by a formal action; neither did they receive orders from a Central Board. Rather, they felt an obligation as brethren toward brethren. Their motivation wasn't *organizational*, but *relational*. Their common bond with Jerusalem brethren lay not in being “fellow members of the church”, but in being fellow members of Christ. And despite our insistence that those two concepts are synonymous, keep in mind that we're speaking here of *local churches*, which with all our bumps and blemishes should *never* be confused with that great spiritual kingdom of Hebrews 12:22-24.

Later, of course, Paul would give directives to the churches of Macedonia, Galatia, and Achaia regarding a “collection for the saints”. But Paul acted by the authority of Jesus Christ, as a chosen apostle, and was perfectly in order in charging local churches regarding any matter of divine revelation. Men today may exhort and admonish from the authority of God's word, but no one has apostolic authority to *demand* and *expect* specific action from any church. We can only plead with brethren to accept truth.

Simply put, local churches have no ties to one another, except in the general sense of recognizing each other as brethren. Not only does this God-ordained arrangement preclude a sectarian *Church-Of-Christ-*

Denomination concept, it also leaves local churches free to function, unhampered by *the brotherhood*.

Each local body must seek God's will in its work and worship; but in areas of judgment and expediency brethren are free to act, independent of the *consensus* of brethren elsewhere. It is this very liberty that makes us nervous. Although we pay lip-service to autonomy and oversight by local elders, we immediately question the soundness of any group which differs from us in incidental judgments, as though they had no liberty to think for themselves. For all our *non-sectarianism*, that's just plain *sectarian*. God forbid any brethren abandon truth, but God forbid we subvert truth by ignoring the liberty of each local church in matters of judgment.

-via *With All Boldness*, Vol. 5 No. 10; October 1995.

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The Moment of Truth

Robert F. Turner

From the Spanish bull-ring, where the cool nerve, grace, and skill of the Matador have long been regarded with national pride, comes the expression, “the moment of truth.”

El Torro and the man! The massive beast, nostrils a flare goaded to hot fury, perhaps symbolic of all man's foe, is ready to drive a cruel horn into his vitals. In previous charges the man has the bull closer and closer with the cape--but always to pass. Now the beast must be brought to ground. Skillfully the sword must be placed so the maddened rush of the bull drives the blade to its destiny. With this savage lunge, the beast dies, or sweeps the Matador aside in a crushing mangle of blood and dust.

The flashing cape, the splendid uniform, the wild cheers of the packed stadium – all glorious, but none kill the bull. Boasts of bill-boards, expectations of the sports writers – all meaningless now. It is the awful “moment of truth.” The man is truly El Matador – “the killer” – or is swept to ignominious defeat.

As I contemplate this spectacle I realize how surely we all face our “moment of truth.” This generation has scarcely known hardship. The Depression is meaningful

only to grandparents; and the horrors of war are seen as foreign products, by citizens of a powerful winning nation. How would we face a real disastrous national crisis?

We have posed as Christians. Baptized into Christ, "Attend" church, sing, pray, and partake. We say we love God, and acknowledge that God must come first; but rarely is our dedication to the principle fully tested. What knowledge, what moral fiber have we developed by which to meet our spiritual "moment of truth?"

When our practice is questioned do we become angry? Is our defense the flimsy garment of tradition? El Torro cuts swiftly though such. Are we artful winners of our own "straw" arguments? One day we must face a genuine foe. Do we judge ourselves by ourselves? One day God will judge us in righteousness, for eternity; and we will face an awesome, irrevocable and final "moment of truth."

-via *The Stanley Avenue Bulletin*; Andalusia, Alabama.



"You must Be Born Again"

Cecil F. Cox

Open your New Testament to John 3:1-7. Notice here Jesus said to a man named Nicodemus, "You must be born again." (vs. 7). Who was this man? In verse 1 we learn he was a ruler of the Jews. What did Nicodemus think of Jesus? "*Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.*" I assume that you too believe that Jesus is "*a teacher come from God.*" In fact even more than that, I assume you believe Him to be the son of God. The point we make here is that what Jesus says makes a difference. I'm sure you also believe that one must be "*born again*" if he will enter the kingdom of God. This is what Jesus said in John 3:5. "*Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*"

In an effort to get around, side-step or avoid, water baptism in verse 5, some contend that verse 5 speaks of two births... "born of water" physical birth; "born

of the Spirit" the new birth. But look at the text. The Lord did not say "born of water and born of the Spirit." He said, "...born of water and Spirit..." The birth (not births) Jesus speaks of is; when one in obedience to the instructions of the Holy Spirit in the written word, he is baptized in water. Look in your Bibles at Acts. 2:38, Ephesians 5:26, 1 Peter 3:21.

Neither does being "born of water and the Spirit" mean that one should receive both water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism as some believe. This cannot be because that would be two baptisms. In Ephesians 4:5 we read there is "one baptism". Paul wrote this letter to the church at Ephesus about 63 A.D. and he said, "There is one baptism." It was also about this time that Peter wrote the book of First Peter. In writing about water baptism Peter wrote, "There is also an antitype which now saves us baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The baptism of the Great Commission is "water baptism" because it is administered by man. (Matthew 28:19). Since "water baptism" is the baptism of the Great Commission, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a part of the teaching of John 3:5.

In order to "see the kingdom of God"...in order to "enter the kingdom of God," you must be "born again." To be "born again" you must hear and learn God's will. See 1 Peter 1:22-25. The word will teach you to believe in Jesus Christ, repent of your sins, confess that Jesus is the Christ and be baptized for the remission of your sins. In doing this you are born of water and the Spirit.

-via *Gospel Power*; Anderson, Alabama

News & Notes

THE SICK:

In The Hospital:

Earl Davis; Huntsville Hospital

Janet Berryhill; Hartselle Hospital

At Home:

Nancy Abernathy

James Adams

Hazel Toone

Rachel Grubbs

Rachel Clem

Jane Meredith

Mary Ruth Gardner

Yvonne Sherbert

Bertha Johnson

Martha Rice

Phil Pressnell	Phillip Harwell
Jeff Waddell	Jeff Mitchell
Jesse Carter	Randy Graviett
Jim Carrier	Una King Carrier

Athens Convalescent Center:

Betty Bates, rm. 17

Limestone Health Facility:

Bernice Thomas, rm. 52	Rosella Pugh, rm. 74
Joe Leopard, rm. 108	Gladys Sandlin, rm. 107
J.D. Clanton, rm. 11E	Mary Smith, rm. 85

Limestone Manor:

Albert & Mary Norton, rm. 96

Shut-In:

Reba Adams, at home
 Lola Colwell, at home
 Polly Davis, River City Care, Decatur, rm. 74

MILITARY SERVICE: Remember all those that are serving on foreign soil in the military for our country. Those who are among us or have connections to the Market Street church are:

Joel Smith; Iraq
 Andrew Deen; Japan
 Whitney Deen; Japan
 Matthew Cox; Iraq

SYMPATHY: We want to express our deepest sympathy to *Jane Meredith* in the passing of her son, *Danny Davis*, this past Friday. The funeral arrangements are incomplete at this time.

OUT OF TOWN: *Marilyn Bradley* has been in Texas for the last several weeks...*Ida Nell Griffin* is in Ohio visiting her brother...*Will Chumbley* is in Hueytown this morning.

NURSERIES AVAILABLE: There are two nurseries available for those who will need them. One is in the west wing and the other is in the east wing.

WORK GROUPS: Tonight will be the night for work group one to meet. If you are in group one, remember to meet with your group this evening

NURSING HOME SINGING: Remember the singing at the Athens Convalescent on Tuesday at 5:30 p.m.

THE RECORD: *For the Week of January 30th*

Sunday: Bible Classes..... 126
 Morning Worship 180
 Evening Worship 113

Wednesday: Bible Classes..... 95

Men Privileged To Serve:

Sunday, February 6th:

Morning Worship

Announcements	Dwaine Allfrey
Song Leader	Tommy Burns
Prayer	Marty Adams
Preaching	David Cox
Lord's Supper	
Presiding	Kenneth Smith
Assisting	Tyler Cox
Serving	Nathaniel Adams..... Harold Davis
.....	Chris Sides..... Paul Hasting
Closing Prayer	Rusty Brand

Evening Worship

Announcements	Dwaine Allfrey
Song Leader	Tommy Burns
Prayer	Ronnie Locke
Preaching	Warren Glass
Lord's Supper	Kenneth Smith
Closing Prayer	Hunter Cox

Other Assignments for Sunday, February 6th:

Usher	Keenon Currier
Work Sound System	Stuart Wilson

Wednesday, February 9th:

Song Leader	Joel Hamm
Bible Reading.....	(Isaiah 13:11-22)
.....	Tyler Cox
Prayer	Marion Mitchell
Invitation	Warren Glass
Closing Prayer	Ronnie Locke

Sunday, February 13th:

Morning Worship

Announcements	Jerry McGlocklin
Song Leader	Joel Hamm
Prayer	Bonnie Sutton
Preaching	David Cox
Lord's Supper	
Presiding	Kenneth Smith
Assisting	Tyler Cox
Serving	Nathaniel Adams..... Harold Davis
.....	Chris Sides..... Paul Hasting
Closing Prayer	Landon Adams

Evening Worship

Announcements	Jerry McGlocklin
Song Leader	Joel Hamm
Prayer	Rusty Brand
Preaching	Warren Glass
Lord's Supper	Tyler Cox
Closing Prayer	Jonathan Keenon

Other Assignments for Sunday, February 13th:

Usher	Rusty Brand
Work Sound System	Marty Adams