

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

Volume III

February 27, 2011

No. 9

Strength and Obedience

Kyle Pope

In Deuteronomy 11:8 the Lord instructed Israel "...you shall keep every commandment which I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and possess the land which you cross over to possess" (NKJV). As the Lord was bringing the Israelites into Canaan, instructions such as this would (quite literally) determine whether Israel was successful or whether they would face defeat. They would see at Jericho that God's strength (and not their own) would allow them to defeat a more powerful and well protected enemy when they were faithful (Joshua 6). Then they would see at Ai how helpless they would be by their own strength (without God's) when they were disobedient (Joshua 7).

As Christians, God has not promised to give us physical strength when we are obedient. Success in business, in warfare, material prosperity, relationships or competition is not guaranteed to the faithful Christian. However, there are a number of principles about *strength* and *obedience* which are paralleled and illustrated by the Lord's instructions to Israel.

1. Our Strength Must Come from the Lord. While the number of men capable of fighting when the Israelites came out of their wanderings was significant (601,730 - Numbers 26:51), compared to the strength of walled cities and established nations of Canaan, they were helpless (if left to their own strength). This was much of the reason that their parents had been so frightened when the spies reported back to them. They recognized that they were not strong enough (by themselves). What they failed to realize was that their strength came from the Lord.

In our lives we face strong and powerful adversaries. Temptations toward materialism, sensuality, substance abuse, peer pressure to act, talk and dress like the world can be powerful forces that we often feel powerless to resist. While we must always be the one who chooses to obey, we must recognize (like Israel) that there our strength comes from God and His word. When we choose to obey we must see ourselves as surrendering our will to God and trusting that what He says is best. I

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
E-mail: david.a.cox@att.net
Warren Glass.....(256) 497-3138

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MARKET STREET MESSENGER

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Market Street church.*

David A. Cox, Editor

once heard it put, “we must obey God and leave the consequences of our obedience to Him.”

We often ask, “what if other people laugh at me?” Or, “what if I don’t fit in?” Or even, “how can I be happy without _____?” The real questions we should ask are, “how will I answer to God if I disobey?” Or, “how can I ever resist sin if I keep giving in to it?” Paul offers us such a wonderful example of how important it is to see God as the source of our strength. He told the Philippians that he had learned contentment in all situations, having come to recognize, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

2. Disobedience Leads to Defeat. Many people wonder why they never grow stronger in their service to the Lord, in spite of the fact that they continually surrender to disobedience. Some think to themselves, “I’ll get my life straight and then I’ll be faithful.” The Lord told Israel that obedience was the first step. Imagine that a person didn’t know how to read. Recognizing this problem they said to themselves, “I’ll read more books and then I’ll learn how to read.” They will never accomplish the first task (reading more books), if they don’t first accomplish the second task (learning to read). The same is true spiritually. Giving in to sin and disobedience weakens us for the spiritual battles we face. We will never grow stronger to be able to face these battles if we don’t first obey. Obedience is the foundation of spiritual strength and the key to spiritual success.

3. Obedience Grants Us Strength for the Task at Hand. We are not asked to understand why God asks certain things of us. We are not asked to like these instructions or reasonably recognize the wisdom of obedience, but we are asked to obey. When we are obedient we gain a measure of strength to face the next battle. Every small victory strengthens us to face the next. This is the way it is intended to work. The only reason it doesn’t work is because we stop obeying and then act as if we don’t have the strength.

Sometimes we may grow arrogant. We think our strength gained the victory (cf. Deuteronomy 8:17). Or we simply forget the Lord and turn to disobedience (cf. Deuteronomy 8:11). Our love of the world may cause us to disobey (cf. Deuteronomy 29-31). What ever the reason, the problem remains simple, we must obey. The faithful soldier of the Lord who has labored obediently in the Lord’s kingdom for years didn’t just

wake up one morning as strong as they have become in Christ. They took the simple steps of obedience and their strength increased along the way.

~via *Faithful Sayings*; Amarillo, Texas.

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Growing Callused To Evil

Greg Gwin

It is easy to tell if someone is experienced with hard physical labor. A simple look at their hands will show it. Those who work at such task develop thick calluses from the repeated exposure to their work environment. The things that once irritated them and produced sore blisters now no longer hurt them. They have grown accustomed to these abrasives, their bodies have adjusted to them, and there is no more adverse reaction.

Sadly, too many Christians have developed a kind of spiritual callousness to the wicked world we live in. We are constantly bombarded by evil of every kind. We see it in person, we read about it, we view it on television, we hear it on the radio. We have unlimited access to it via the Internet and other media. Our neighbors are involved in it. Officials in high office are engaged in it.

Initially all of this evil irritates us. We are upset and disturbed by it. But gradually, by long exposure to these things, we become hardened. We’ve grown accustomed to the evil, and it no longer bothers us. We have adjusted to it all and there is no more adverse reaction. We can view the immorality and not be shocked by it. We can hear of the perverted deeds and not be repulsed. We are “street-wise.” We know about illicit sex, drug abuse, and every sort of wickedness. We talk about them with ease. We have become callused.

The Lord does not want us to be this way. He desires us to live “in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom” (2 Corinthians 1:12). He urges us to “be wise in what is good, and innocent in what is evil” (Romans 16:19). He commands us to think on things

that are “pure, lovely, and of good report” (Philippians 4:8). Christian, are you keeping yourself “unspotted from the world?” (James 1:27).

~via *Harvest Church Bulletin*; Harvest, Alabama.



Is Your Conscience Alive or Dead?

Mark W. White

Hardly anyone speaks of the conscience anymore. As a society, our conscience hardly even bothers us any longer. We have become so accustomed to all kinds of wrong and all types of filthiness that we don't even know how to blush. A Christian, however, is one who lives by a properly ordered, well-trained conscience. In fact, violation of one's conscience is sinful (Romans 14:23) even if there is no inherent wrong involved. Meat-eating was not sinful per se, but if a person had scruples against it, Paul said he should not eat meat. The lesson: Don't violate your conscience. If careful study of God's word and earnest prayer causes you to change your scruples and allows you to begin eating meat, then that is perfectly fine. But if your conscience cries out in anguish at the very sight of hamburger – then leave it alone. It would be sinful for you to go contrary to this inner sense of right and wrong.

Why is Scripture so insistent that the conscience not be violated: Paul, in fact, always worked “to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.” (Acts 24:16) He paid attention to his conscience, made certain that he did not abuse it, and determined not to violate it. In order to secure a clean conscience, the blood of Jesus redeemed us (Hebrews 9:23-14). Baptism is an “answer of a good conscience toward God” (1 Peter 3:21). Concerning deacons, 1 Timothy 3:9 says they must “hold the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.” The conscience, therefore, is a vessel -- a container in which the mystery of our faith is held.

This being so, we can understand the necessity of an unbroken, clean conscience. Deliberate violations of conscience rupture the container in which our faith

is held! If we persist in violating our conscience, our faith will leak away like water from a cracked drinking glass. When you do what you know is wrong, you cannot have a pure conscience. Without an intact conscience, sensitive to the will of God (cf. 1 Timothy 4:2) we are destroying the very thing that will keep us in the faith. 1 John 3:21,22 states “If our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things pleasing in His sight.” A clean, intact, inviolate conscience is a valuable asset to every Christian.

~via *College View Columns*; Florence, Alabama.

News & Notes

THE SICK:

In The Hospital:

At Home:

David Gardner
Janet Berryhill
Rachel Grubbs
Yvonne Sherbert
Martha Rice
George Harris
Jeff Waddell
Jesse Carter
Jim Currier

Bobbie Adcock
Rachel Clem
Mary Ruth Gardner
Bertha Johnson
Jeff Mitchell
Phillip Harwell
Randy Graviett
Una King Currier

Athens Convalescent Center:

Betty Bates, rm. 17

Limestone Health Facility:

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

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

GOSPEL MEETINGS: The *Hughes Road at Gooch Lane church* is beginning a gospel meeting today and it will continue through Friday evening. The speaker in this meeting will be *Scott Owen*.

BACK ISSUES OF MESSENGER: Remember the back issues of the *Market Street Messenger* are in the library. They are on the shelf to the left as you walk in the door of the library. Some copies of nearly all of the bulletins published in 2009 and 2010 are there. Please feel free to take as many copies of these bulletins as you would like.

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.

SONG SERVICE THIS EVENING: Remember this evening at 5:00 will be the time for our regular scheduled song service. I am looking forward to it and I hope that everyone will be able to be present as we lift up our voices and praise our God with the fruit of our lips.

WORK GROUPS: Tonight will be the night for work group four to meet. If you are in group four, 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 February 20th*

- Sunday:** Bible Classes..... 139
- Morning Worship 163
- Evening Worship..... 111

Wednesday: Bible Classes..... 108

Gospel Meeting

May 15-19, 2011

(Sunday through Thursday)

Jeff May, Speaking

Market Street church of Christ

514 West Market Street
Athens, Alabama

Men Privileged To Serve:

Sunday, February 27th:

Morning Worship

- Announcements Rusty Brand
- Song Leader Tyler Cox
- Prayer Larry Mitchell
- Preaching Warren Glass
- Lord's Supper
- Presiding Jerry McGlocklin
- Assisting Wayne Vaughn
- Serving Russ Wulfekuhl Delmer Carter
- Dwaine Allfrey David Terry
- Closing Prayer Benton Ball

Evening Worship

- Announcements Rusty Brand
- Song Leader Tyler Cox
- Prayer Nathaniel Adams
- Preaching Song Service
- Lord's Supper Jerry McGlocklin
- Closing Prayer Tommy Burns

Other Assignments for Sunday, February 27th:

- Usher Keenon Currier
- Work Sound System Stuart Wilson

Wednesday, March 2nd:

- Song Leader Marion Mitchell
- Bible Reading..... (Isaiah 14:22-32)
- Danny Johnson
- Prayer Jonathan Keenon
- Invitation David Cox
- Closing Prayer Kenneth Smith

Sunday, March 6th:

Morning Worship

- Announcements Joel Hamm
- Song Leader Hunter Cox
- Prayer Dwaine Allfrey
- Preaching David Cox
- Lord's Supper
- Presiding Marion Mitchell
- Assisting Bonnie Sutton
- Serving Marvin Putman Paul Hasting
- Will Chumbley Harold Davis
- Closing Prayer Larry Mitchell

Evening Worship

- Announcements Joel Hamm
- Song Leader Hunter Cox
- Prayer Stuart Wilson
- Preaching David Cox
- Lord's Supper Marion Mitchell
- Closing Prayer Benton Ball

Other Assignments for Sunday, March 6th:

- Usher Danny Johnson
- Work Sound System Marty Adams