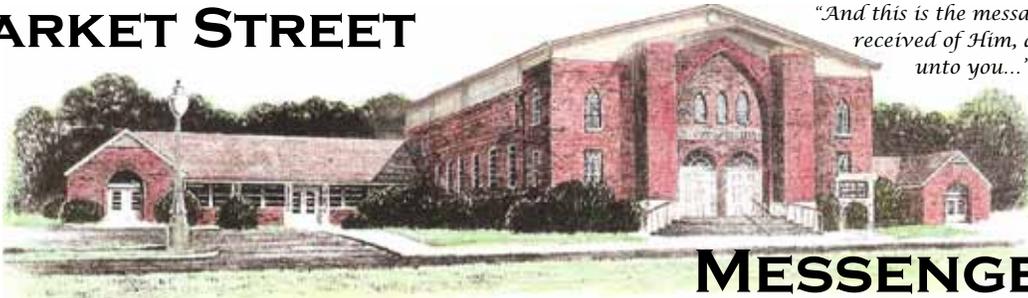


# MARKET STREET

*"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 IX

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No. 10

## *"Their Heart Was Hardened"*

**Hal Hammons**

Throughout Scripture, the word "heart" is used in reference to that part of a man that either accepts or rejects God. The Jews at Pentecost were "pierced to the heart" (Acts 2:37); Jesus exhorted His listeners to be "pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8); Paul said of the Gentiles at large that "their foolish heart was darkened" (Romans 1:21). Most famous of all, of course, is the heart of Pharaoh, which the text says was hardened by God (Exodus 4:21) and also by Pharaoh himself (Exodus 8:14). Is this a contradiction in the Scriptures? No, it simply illustrates the working of God's message in the hearts of men. Identical ovens heated to identical temperatures in identical circumstances will harden clay and melt beeswax. We wouldn't send such ovens back to be repaired; we would accept the results as a consequence of the nature of the two elements being heated. The gospel working in the hearts of man should be viewed in the same way. It softens some while hardening others. There is no question that God "hardens" the hearts of many, but blaming Him for that makes as much sense as blaming the oven for baking the clay instead of melting it.

The real issue at hand is not the nature of the gospel, but rather the nature of the heart. The material available for spiritual construction is described in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. The builder (i.e., preacher) works as diligently as he knows how with the material at hand. Sometimes outstanding temples to the Lord are built; that is because of the high quality of the souls in that proximity. As Paul said, the preacher deserves little credit for this -- "God was causing the growth" (verse 7). Other preachers might preach in territory with few if any souls interested in the gospel; the churches that result from such work are compared to "wood, hay, straw" in verse 12. The fires of trial will reveal the church for what it is in due course of time.

The same principle works in the lives of individuals. We either are or are not receptive to the gospel. That tendency can change, but it tends to remain the same and in fact becomes increasingly the same way. Many in the world are sent "a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false" (2 Thessalonians 2:11), not because God wants them to be lost but because they themselves have set their hearts to be lost, and every

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### 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.

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#### Elders

Jerry McGlocklin..... (256) 232-7620  
Kenneth Smith..... (256) 777-6737  
Bonnie Sutton..... (256) 232-2081

#### Deacons

Marty R. Adams..... (256) 233-5147  
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#### MARKET STREET MESSENGER

*is published in the interest of New Testament  
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Market Street church.*

*David A. Cox, Editor*

stimulus put in their path is going to tend to push them further in that direction.

Generally we think of hardening in the way described above – bad people becoming worse. However, in our text we find Jesus' closest disciples being hardened (verse 52). Had they ceased believing in the Lord? Of course not. This just tells us that their hearts had not become as softened to the truth as they should have. We are reminded of the words of the father of the demon-possessed boy in Mark 9:24 – "I believe; help my unbelief." No matter how long we have followed the Lord, we can still lose our faith at critical times in our life. This happened more than once to the disciples; usually it was because they got the Lord's plans confused with their own. Many aspects of Jesus' ministry (including His total command of the elements, as was demonstrated when He walked on the water) were still foreign to the apostles. We should be warned: If it can happen to the closest of Jesus' confederates, it certainly can happen to us.

The story of the walking on the water is prefaced by the feeding of the 5,000, which we will not detail here. We remember the basics of the story; certainly you would think it must have made a tremendous impact on the disciples. But we see in the storm on the lake that they had not been softened to Jesus' teaching as completely as should have been the case.

They should have learned, for instance, that Jesus cares about His followers. He cared enough about total strangers to provide food for them that very day. Does it make sense that He would abandon His closest friends to a watery grave? If not, we should be comforted that He will not forget about us in our hour of trial, either. He has a vital interest in our welfare, and we can count on Him acting on that interest.

They should have learned that Jesus can do much with little. All it took was a handful of food to feed thousands of people. Should it not have been enough for them, in their hour of weakness, to see the Lord walking on the water, completely unphased by the adverse conditions? Verse 48 says "He intended to pass by them"; evidently Jesus thought He had given them all the encouragement they needed simply by being seen. Unfortunately, as is often the case when faith fails, the occasion was used by the disciples to make their mental state worse -- they thought He was a ghost (verse 49). And are we better? Do we demand that the Lord minister to us in the way we choose, rather than accepting what encouragement He offers through the agency of His word and our brethren?

Also we see the lesson that nature's laws mean

nothing to Jesus. We can twist the laws of physics and common sense alike to our hearts' content and never come up with a rational explanation for the miraculous meal the disciples served that day. They should have known that the way Jesus flaunted nature's basic rules of order was a reflection of His Divine nature, and that He could do similarly inexplicable things at His discretion. We should not think that Jesus will break the rules for us in the way that He did then, but we should be able to put our full confidence in the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, with the full knowledge that He is fully capable of carrying our soul safely through this life and on into the next.

And yet we see the disciples astonished at Jesus' power. Why? Because "their heart was hardened". They had chosen, consciously or unconsciously, to ignore the lessons Jesus had taught them. But if we make the decision to soften our hearts to receive Jesus' message, nothing will astonish us. We will see Him forgive the unforgivable, give spiritual life to the spiritually dead, bring joy to the cynic, turn pessimists into optimists, and grant hope to the hopeless – and all the time simply smile and say, "That's our Savior!"

~via *The Good News*; Tulsa, Oklahoma



## *The Mirror For The Heart*

**Terry W. Benton**

We need a mirror to examine our physical health and appearance. If there is something wrong in our appearance we can adjust the hair or brush the teeth, or we can deal with blemishes or see how to shave or apply makeup. Mirrors serve us well on a daily basis, but only if we **do** something about what we see in the mirror.

There is a more important mirror that is neglected to our own peril. It tells us both how we look on the inside, at the heart and soul level, and how we **should** look. You were made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). We are born in perfect innocence and then as we become more and more exposed to the world of sin, we get tainted. We fail to think of our Creator, and our heart becomes corrupted and distant to God. We fail to look like God on the inside and in our words and behavior. God gave

us the Bible to tell us the truth about ourselves so that we can adjust our hearts and return to bearing His image. If we fail to adjust, and we come to the moment of our death, dying in a lost condition before God, we will be separated from God and all good for eternity.

“And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”(Matthew 25:30, NKJV).

We do not want this to happen to us, but it will happen to many because many are living life with no relationship to the Creator now, and there will be no relationship in eternity. This is why it is so important to look into the mirror of God’s word, see the truth, and face the truth about our condition before God and do something about it.

“For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does” (James 1:22-25, NKJV).

Are you looking daily into God’s mirror for the soul? Are you **doing** what God calls upon you to do? Can we encourage you to make sure that your soul is right before God and that you are prepared to face God in judgment? There is nothing in this world more important than studying the Bible, adjusting our hearts to it, and prioritizing the principles of God’s word in our own way of thinking and living. Have you looked into His mirror today?

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

## *Gospel Meeting*

April 23-27, 2017

(Sunday through Thursday)

### Schedule of Services

Sunday 9:30 a.m; 10:45 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

Monday through Thursday- 7:00 p.m.

Gerry Sandusky, Speaking

**MARKET STREET  
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

## *News & Notes*

### **THE SICK:**

James Adams	Mary Will Johnston
JoAnn Gilbert	Nikki Ogles
Kenia Adams	Lucille Craig
Patsy Thomas	Doris Lovell
Cindy Glass	Wayne Bolton
Ashley Sims	Linda Jones
Shelly Scruggs	Sara Ogles
Wayne Gooch	Shaun Carruth
Everette “Bud” Dollar	Ann Bush

### *Updates:*

**Kenia Adams** had surgery on Monday to remove a growth on her thyroid...**Mary Will Johnston** has been dignosed with Acute Lukemia ...**Dakota Kyle** is recoving from his recent surgery...**Jackie Cox** is to have a heart cath-erization done this Friday...**Bud Dollar, Bonita Dollar’s brother-in-law**, has been diagnosed with cancer.

### *Those Undergoing Treatments or Chronic Illness:*

Joe Leopard	Ella Melvin
Reba Byram	Irene Inman
Gayle Ball	Janice Cagle
Jeanette Weir	Daniel Ogles
Diane Kilpatrick	Linda Ordonez
Wayne Wooldridge	Cindy Walker
Jenny Pickens	Gene Carpenter
Charles Burns	Betty Christopher
Al Pollard	Ava Brooke Campbell
Elizabeth Howard	Matt Poff
Phillip Harwell	Una King Currier
Shayna Tollison	Eli Williams
Brittany Bates Carter	

### *In The Hospital/Rehabilitation:*

**Matt Poff**; Vanderbilt Hospital – Nashville, Tenn.

**Norman Hamm**; Millenium Rehab - Huntsville

### *Athens Rehabilitation & Senior Care:*

Nelva Reed, rm. 61	Betty Brackeen, rm. 118
Judith Groce, rm. 10-B	Dorothy Draper, rm. 104
Mattye Murray, rm. 2	Helen Trousdale, rm. 43
Valeria Dalton, rm. 7	Joyce Martin, rm. 73
Terry Camp, rm. 82	Mildred Frantz, rm. 31
Gayle Mills, rm. 15	Evelyn Hogan, rm. 36
Mable Crafts, rm. 39	Christine Hudson, rm. 77

### *Limstone Health Facility:*

Bobbie Adcock, rm. 113

### *Shut-In or Away From Home:*

Robert & Mot Beasley, at Morningside, Decatur

Gwen Bullock, at granddaughter's in Huntsville  
 Wynnell Casteel, at home  
 Marjorie Dunnivant, at Brookdale Farms, Huntsville  
 Mary Ruth Gardner, at Merrill Gardens, Madison  
 Carl Hargrave, at granddaughter's home in Hartselle  
 Essie Hardison, at home  
 Ruby Jean Tinnon, at home  
 William Thomas, at home

**SERVICETIME:** Remember our evening service time is moving back to 5:00 p.m. It will be at 5:00 this evening.

**OUT OF TOWN:** *The Stiles:* Chuck & Benita left Monday with Chuck's work in South Dakota... *The McLemores:* Alois & Ann are back home after being in the mountains early in the week.

**GOSPEL MEETINGS:** The *Oneal church* is beginning a gospel meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday. The speaker in the meeting will be *Steve Klein*... The *Jackson Drive church* is beginning a gospel meeting today and it will continue through Friday. The speaker in the meeting will be *Steven McCrary*... The *Carriger church* is beginning a gospel meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday. The speaker in the meeting will be *Scott Sandusky*... The *Eastside church* in Scottsboro is beginning a gospel meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday. The speaker in the meeting will be *Jacob Holman*.

**ANNUAL SINGING CD:** If you would like a CD of the Sixth Annual Singing, please note that on the member's card you fill out this morning.

**WORK GROUPS:** Work Group one will be meeting this evening after our evening service. If you are in group one, member to meet with your group tonight.

**THE RECORD:** Attendance for the week of Feb. 26th

Sunday:	Bible Classes .....	140
	Morning Worship .....	171
	Evening Worship .....	125
Wednesday:	Bible Classes .....	85

# Bible Study



## Remember Our Study Periods

Sunday Mornings at 9:45 a.m.

Wednesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m.

*Come Join Us As We Study Together*

## Men Privileged To Serve:

### Sunday, March 5th:

#### Morning Worship

Announcements.....	Dwaine Allfrey
Song Leader .....	Ashton Gatlin
Prayer.....	Larry Mitchell
Preaching.....	David Cox
Lord's Supper	
Presiding.....	Terry Andrews
Assisting.....	Mike Ogles
Serving .....	Heath Dollar .....
.....	Tommy Burns
.....	Matthew Vaughn.....
Closing Prayer .....	Danny Holt
	Tommy Coblentz

#### Evening Worship

Announcements.....	Dwaine Allfrey
Song Leader .....	Hunter Cox
Prayer.....	Steve Userly
Preaching.....	David Cox
Lord's Supper .....	Terry Andrews
Closing Prayer .....	Keith Hinkle

#### Other Assignments for Sunday, March 5th:

Ushers.....	Marvin Putman/Russ Wulfekuhl
Work Sound System.....	Nathaniel Adams

### Wednesday, March 8th:

Song Leader .....	Hunter Cox
Bible Reading.....	Philippians 2:1-16
.....	Daniel Reed
Prayer.....	Ashton Gatlin
Invitation.....	A. J. Price
Closing Prayer .....	Nathaniel Adams

### Sunday, March 12th:

#### Morning Worship

Announcements.....	Joel Hamm
Song Leader .....	Tommy Burns
Prayer.....	Harvey Nixon
Preaching.....	David Cox
Lord's Supper	
Presiding.....	Marty Adams
Assisting.....	Marcus Morris
Serving .....	Marvin Putman .....
.....	Landon Adams
.....	A.J. Price.....
Closing Prayer .....	Russ Wulfekuhl
	Keenon Carrier

#### Evening Worship

Announcements.....	Joel Hamm
Song Leader .....	Tony Thomas
Prayer.....	Hunter Cox
Preaching.....	David Cox
Lord's Supper .....	Marcus Morris
Closing Prayer .....	Harvey Nixon

#### Other Assignments for Sunday, March 12th:

Ushers.....	Heath Dollar/Dwaine Allfrey
Work Sound System.....	Terry Andrews