

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. 31

Where Is Love?

Adam Litmer

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

Marty R. Adams..... (256) 233-5147
Tommy Coblentz..... (256) 232-3312
Jerry McGlocklin..... (256) 232-7620
Kenneth Smith..... (256) 777-6737
Bonnie Sutton (256) 232-2081

Deacons

Joel Hamm (256) 278-1977
Danny Holt (256) 206-2746
Larry Mitchell (256) 230-0185
Marcus Morris..... (256) 232-8871
Russ Wulfekuhl (256) 683-9396

Evangelist

David A. Cox..... (256) 233-8910
Cell: (256) 614-3757

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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

Our brethren in Ephesus were hard working, long enduring, claim testing, error detecting machines (Revelation 2:2-3). They did not grow weary and one had to wake up awfully early to sneak any false teaching past them. These brethren were the quintessential “book, chapter, and verse” sort. Jesus commended them for it. He recognized that these brethren were willing to suffer persecution for His name’s sake and were unwilling to put up with those who made false claims concerning their own positions or revealed truth. Paul had warned these brethren that men speaking twisted and perverted things would seek to infiltrate their number, some rising from among the elders themselves (Acts 20:28-31), and it is evident that at this point they were still very alert and carefully monitoring for even the slightest hint that Paul’s warning was becoming reality. It bears repeating that they were commended for these things showing Jesus approved of their vigilance. There’s a lesson there for us.

Alas, the uncomfortable, “but I have this against you”, immediately followed the commendation. Their great problem was that they had abandoned the love they had at first (Revelation 2:4). Earlier in this article I called these brethren “machines”, which was precisely their problem. Once programmed, a finely tuned machine will perform its operation at a very high level. That’s what these brethren were doing as it related to doctrine and patience through persecution. However, a machine, no matter how finely tuned, will perform its task without passion, enthusiasm, or love because, at the end of the day, it is just a machine. Unfortunately, that’s what our brethren in Ephesus had become. They could detect and refute error as well as anyone in the brotherhood (they may have been the best), yet they were doing it mechanically, with all the enthusiasm and passion of automatons. It was a significant problem that needed immediate correction (Revelation 2:5).

The Ephesian problem is not an uncommon one. Take a moment to read Psalm 50:7-15 to find God rebuking His people of old for the same thing. Theirs was not a failure to perform the correct worship actions; indeed, they excelled at it (v. 8). Theirs was not a failure to sacrifice of their own goods in worship to God; indeed, God says that they were doing just

that (v. 9). Their problem was that genuine thanksgiving had vanished from their worship (not outward actions that seem to indicate the presence of thanksgiving but the inward reality that gave meaning to the actions) and they were not performing their vows to the Most High (v. 14). The greatest vow they could give was that they would love the Lord their God with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their mind (Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:36-38). This vow requires that one worship God with affection, enthusiasm, and intelligence. It takes a tender heart, not a mechanical one, to perform this vow.

We, too, have vows we must perform to our Lord. We promised Him the throne of our hearts when we accepted His gracious invitation to be cleansed from our sins (Romans 5-6). Part of this is the willingness to learn His truth well enough to know what He requires doctrinally and to be willing to uphold and defend it (Jude 3; 2 John 9-11). This our Ephesian brethren did exceptionally well. Yet the foundation upon which our willingness to do these things must be built is love for our Savior. We certainly have a responsibility to do precisely what our Ephesian brethren were commended for in Revelation 2:2-3, yet it's a responsibility that must be fed from a spring running much deeper than just sense of duty.

I very much appreciate the way the NIV renders 1 Thessalonians 1:3. "We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. Labor prompted by love." Love for God, His truth, His children, and the souls of all people. This is what our Ephesian brethren had lost somewhere along the way. This is not at all to say they had grown hostile to God and His truth. Far from it! They had simply forgotten why they were doing it all in the first place. They would find that love again if they returned their focus to the marvelous grace shown to them and remembered their helpless condition without God and the blood of Jesus Christ. I hope they remembered (Revelation 2:5).

Allow me to borrow some of the language of Paul from 1 Corinthians 13 to try and drive this point home. If I speak the truth on baptism and refute every argument with doctrinal soundness, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I can host a Bible study, answering every question with an appropriate passage, but have not love, I am nothing. If I attend every worship assembly and work day, even when I am not feeling well at the time, but have not love, I gain nothing. Do you get the point?

Beloved, may we strive for doctrinal soundness, for

the ability to recognize and refute error in all its forms, for the willingness to patiently endure though trial and tribulation, and for the love that must inspire it all. So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

~via *University Heights Messenger*; Lexington, Kentucky.



We Are Brethren

Mark McCrary

"So Abram said to Lot, 'Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren.'" (Genesis 13:8)

A problem arose in Genesis 13 between Abram and his nephew Lot. As the two prosperous men travelled with one another, their large herds began having trouble sharing resources. The herdsmen, charged with taking care of their respective flocks, began to argue with one another.

The solution to the problem, for Abram, was simple. He appealed to their most fundamental connection: family. The fact they were brethren meant they should have fond feelings for one another, be agreeable with one another, desire the very best for one another and be willing to work with one another, giving the other the benefit of the doubt.

The lessons of family love are the very first ones we learn in life, and they are crucial to unity in the Lord's church. In the New Testament, the love between brethren in Christ finds its basis in love learned from family (the fact we call one another "brother" and "sister" should have given that away). It is a warm, accepting, tender and sacrificial love. John wrote in 1 John 3:14, "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer..." Paul wrote in Romans 12:10, "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another..." He also wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be

perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” Why are these verses understandable and relatable? Because “we are brethren.”

In the midst of our disagreements and even conflicts with brethren, we would do well to remember we are more than mere acquaintances. Because God is the Father of all those in Christ, we are universally brothers and sisters with one another. Conflicts among Christians come when brethren put aside this family love and embrace carnal thoughts and motivation. That’s the reason why of all sins listed New Testament, division and strife are the consistently and resoundingly condemned (Romans 16:17-18; 14:19; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Ephesians 4:2-3; Colossians 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:13; 2 Timothy 2:14-16; etc.).

Love for one another, Jesus Himself taught in John 13:35, is to be the defining trait among His people. In a masterful stroke of genius, Satan has used our greatest tool of unity—a love for God’s truth—as the greatest weapon against us! But, all the grandstanding for truth we are capable of mustering does no good if we do not treat one another as brethren. When we gossip, judge and plot against one another, we may call ourselves Christians, but our actions reveal our hearts, and our hearts say otherwise. Sadly, brethren who say they love truth often fall for this timeless ploy, and the church is not the better off.

This is not to say that Christians do not disagree with one another, and sometimes strongly so. It is to say that even in those disagreements, brotherly love is to reign. The divine DNA code of 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 has rewritten our being. We don’t view our brethren in conflict as enemies to be vanquished, but brothers to be pitied and helped. We don’t view our brethren in strife as those from which to walk away, but those to embrace and help. Too many brethren and churches forget this—and will one day have to answer for it. We are brethren, and God expects us to act accordingly.

Let’s apply this to our lives.

~via *Applying God’s Word*; Louisville, Kentucky.

Gospel Meeting

October 15-18, 2017

Dee Bowman, Speaking

**MARKET STREET
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

News & Notes

THE SICK:

Freddie Mae Elmore

Doris Lovell

Cindy Glass

Ashley Sims

Wayne Gooch

Patsy Thomas

Linda Jones

Sara Ogles

Ann Bush

Those Undergoing Treatments or Chronic Illness:

Joe Leopard

Irene Inman

Jeanette Weir

Jenny Pickens

Daniel Ogles

Linda Ordonez

Cindy Walker

Gene Carpenter

Betty Christopher

Al Pollard

Elizabeth Howard

Phillip Harwell

Eli Williams

Gayle Ball

Janice Cagle

Priscilla Tucker

Ella Melvin

Diane Kilpatrick

Wayne Wooldridge

Brittany Bates Carter

Charles Burns

Bobby McLemore

Ava Brooke Campbell

Matt Poff

Una King Currier

Everette “Bud” Dollar

In The Hospital/Rehabilitation:

Wayne Gooch; Athens-Limestone Hospital; rm. 212
Norman Hamm; Millenium Rehab - Huntsville

Athens Rehabilitation & Senior Care:

Nelva Reed, rm. 61

Dorothy Draper, rm. 73

Joyce Martin, rm. 73

Matty Murray, rm. 2

Valeria Dalton, rm. 7

Helen Trousdale, rm. 43

Oneal Martin, rm. 81

Mable Crafts, rm. 39

Christine Hudson, rm. 77

Evelyn Hogan, rm. 36

Limestone Health Facility:

Opal Conn, rm. 117

Gilbert Hardy, rm. 115

Essie Hardison, rm. 116

Shut-In or Away From Home:

Robert & Mot Beasley, at Riverside Sr. Living, Decatur

Gwen Bullock, at granddaughter’s in Huntsville

Wynell Casteel, at home

Marjorie Dunnivant, at Brookdale Farms, Huntsville

Mary Ruth Gardner, at Merrill Gardens, Madison

Carl Hargrave, at granddaughter’s home in Hartselle

Ruby Jean Tinnon, at home

Updates:

Paul Adcock is scheduled for a test at Clearview in Huntsville on Wednesday... *Donna Wright* is scheduled for open heart surgery on August 15th at Huntsville Hospital... *Opal Conn* is finishing up her rehabilitation at Limestone Health Facility. She plans to go home at

the end of the week...*Essie Hardison* is in the Limestone Health Rehab and is planning to go home at the end of this week...*Bettye Harrison* was able to be with us last Sunday...*Drew Ogles* received a good report on the test last week...*Arvid McGuire* fell this past Thursday afternoon. He did not break any bones, but its very sore ...*Kaleigh Conn* is scheduled for surgery in August in Birmingham to repair the hole in her heart...*Priscilla Tucker* continues her treatments for her cancer.

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

REBA EZELL BYRAM (1916 – 2017): It is with sadness that we note the passing of sister Reba Byram. Sister Byram was a longtime member of the Market Street church. She was so faithful in her service and has desperately missed being able to attend services in the last few years. We will miss the kindness, sweetness, encouragement and love that she was always gave to those around her. We want to express our deepest sympathy to all of her family. The visitation will be this afternoon at 1:30 followed by the funeral at 3:00 at Limestone Chapel Funeral Home. She will be laid to rest in the Athens City Cemetery.

OUT OF TOWN: *Jim Whitt* has been out of town with his work this week in Oklahoma.....*Harvey Nixon* is out of town this week...*Allison Usery* has been in Savannah, Georgia this week...*The Mitchells: Larry & Peggy* have been in the mountians this past week.

FIRST MOVING TRIP: This coming weekend the Chumbleys will be loading their first truck to move their belongings to Athens. They will load the truck in Hueytown on Saturday afternoon. On Sunday afternoon they will drive to Athens and after our evening service the truck will be unloaded. We are looking for able volunteers to help unload this initial load. If you can, please make plans to help with this endeavor.

GOSPEL MEETINGS: The *Piney Grove church* south of Tuscombua beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Wednesday. The speaker in this meeting will be *Don Miller*.

SINGING AT NURSING HOME: Remember the singing at *Athens Rehab & Senior Care* on Tuesday evening at 5:30.

THE RECORD: *Attendance for the week of July 23rd*
 Sunday: Bible Classes 133
 Morning Worship 167
 Evening Worship 131
 Wednesday: Bible Classes 110

Men Privileged To Serve:

Sunday, July 30th:

Morning Worship

Announcements..... Marcus Morris
 Song Leader Joel Hamm
 Prayer..... Dwaine Allfrey
 Preaching..... David Cox
 Lord's Supper
 Presiding..... Larry Holt
 Assisting Keith Hinkle
 Serving Landon Adams..... Griffin Holt
Heath Dollar Keenon Currier
 Closing Prayer Mike Ogles

Evening Worship

Announcements..... Marcus Morris
 Song Leader Hunter Cox
 Prayer..... Harvey Nixon
 Preaching..... Dan Reed
 Lord's Supper Larry Holt
 Closing Prayer Bonnie Sutton

Other Assignments for Sunday, July 30th:

Ushers..... Danny Holt/Steve Usery
 Work Sound System..... Nathaniel Adams

Wednesday, August 2nd:

Song Leader Tony Thomas
 Bible Reading 1 Thessalonians 2:1-9
 Kenneth Adams
 Prayer..... Keith Hinkle
 Invitation Matry R. Adams
 Closing Prayer Dan Reed

Sunday, August 6th:

Morning Worship

Announcements..... Terry Andrews
 Song Leader Ashton Gatlin
 Prayer..... Hunter Cox
 Preaching..... David Cox
 Lord's Supper
 Presiding..... Kenneth Smith
 Assisting Mike Ogles
 Serving Nathaniel Adams... Marvin Putman
 Tommy Burns..... James Johnson
 Closing Prayer Keenon Currier

Evening Worship

Announcements..... Terry Andrews
 Song Leader Griffin Holt
 Prayer..... Keith Hinkle
 Preaching..... David Cox
 Lord's Supper Kenneth Smith
 Closing Prayer Arvid McGuire

Other Assignments for Sunday, August 6th:

Ushers..... Larry Mitchell/Heath Dollar
 Work Sound System..... Landon Adams