

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**
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No. 2

Does Your Faith Do Anything?

Thailer Jimerson

“God dwells among the lowliest of men. He sits on the dust-heap among the prison convicts. With the juvenile delinquents He stands at the door, begging bread, He throngs with the beggars at the place of alms. He is among the sick... Therefore let him who would meet God visit the prison cell before going to the temple. Before he goes to church let him visit the hospital. Before he reads his Bible let him help the beggar standing at his door. If he visits the prison after going to the temple, does he not by so much delay his meeting with God?... If he fails to help the beggar at his door and indulges himself in Bible-reading, there is a danger lest God, who lives among the mean, will go elsewhere.” – Toyohiko Kagawa

The quote above comes from a personal hero of mine. His life seems largely forgotten but at one time, during the early 20th century, he was considered Japan’s Ghandi and one of its most influential Christians. What made Kagawa stand out among his peers was nothing purely theological, but it was the sheer active force that he brought to his faith. Kagawa really tried to live like Jesus and he took the Lord’s teaching and manner of life with the utmost seriousness.

As we come to the back seat of Paul’s letter to the Galatians (the focus of our Sunday morning sermons), I’ve been constantly challenged by what Paul calls the heart of the Christian life: “faith working through love,” modeled upon the life of our messiah himself. That’s what really matters in the end: love – specifically, embracing the spirit-given impulse to love others no matter their ethnicity, their gender, their politics, their doctrine, and even if they’re our enemy.

If this is really the heart of what it means to be a Christian (that is, to be “like Christ”) then why is my faith often so inactive – or, at least, not as active as I wish it to be? This reminds me, again, of something else Kagawa was famous for saying: “I read in a book that a man called Christ went about doing good. It is very disconcerting to me that I am so easily satisfied with just going about.” Me? I’m a doctrine guy. My faith leans heavy towards and is defined mostly by Bible study. Different churches and their dogmas, the 1st century world and its context, all that

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Classes..... 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship..... 10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship..... 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday

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

Elders

Marty R. Adams..... (256) 503-8843
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
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Market Street church.*

David A. Cox, Editor

fascinates me and drives me to read more and more as I grow in understanding the Bible through the lens of its authors. But do I allow myself to get so bogged down with scriptural minutia that I forget to look up and help those without a shepherd? Admittedly, I do.

Yes, Christ knew the Scriptures. But Christ also served and loved – *actively*. Listen to what he says one day, at the front of his ministry, when he stands up in the synagogue to read the scriptures. He could have chosen any passage to define his ministry, but hear what he says: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” After finishing this passage from Isaiah, he sits down and to mouth-dropped faces, he says that he is the very fulfillment of this prophecy. And sure enough, the rest of Luke depicts a Jesus active in doing everything Isaiah foretold.

One might be tempted at this point to state the obvious, “Yes; but Thailer, Jesus had all these amazing powers and he could help anyone he wished. And I’m not him!” But did Jesus expect any less from those who call themselves his people? Consider the teaching of Matthew:

34 Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ 40 And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ (Matthew 25.34-40)

So, does your faith do anything? What does it accomplish? If not, maybe you should drop this article, put down your Bible for a moment, and look for someone to love in Christ’s name.

~via *New Living*; Brownsburg, Indiana.

Remember Our Service This Evening at 4:00.

Who Do You Love?

Tim Jennings

Loving people is hard. As one author put it, “I don’t hate people, I just feel better when they aren’t around” (Charles Bukowski). After all, people are often needy, hurtful, unreliable, complicated and selfish.

How startling then, is the thought, “God so loved the world” (John 3:16)! If you have a tough time loving someone, consider the experience of God. Every person He created has broken His heart. Most people totally ignore Him. Many people outright reject Him.

Yet, God chooses to love people. In Jesus, He chose to live among people, to save people, and be compassionate toward people. Jesus knew nothing of the selfish cynicism which says, “I’m not antisocial, I just don’t like people.”

An Appalling Love

However, genuine love is rarely the cuddly creature we wish it to be. Love pushes us out of our places of comfort and knocks us off our pedestals of superiority. That is why genuine love is often scorned.

Jesus’ love was so authentic and pervasive it sickened people. He had the audacity to forgive a prostitute, touch the sick, teach the outcast, take time for handicapped, and it was offensive to some.

They hurled the accusation, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them” (Luke 15:2). Yes, that is what love does. Now, Jesus never participated in people’s sin. He didn’t frequent the bars and brothels. But, neither did He run from physical needs, or recoil in disgust from sinners. He helped them and called them to repentance.

Jesus answered their accusation three times. Each answer provides deeper insight into the difficult work of loving people.

A Shepherd’s Love

Most preachers love the crowds. Numbers are the sign of success, right? Jesus evaluated things differently. Jesus saw through the shallow faith of the trend seekers and spoke hard truths about discipleship in order to thin out the herd (Luke 14:25-25; John 6:66-69). Then, Jesus devoted His life to the few who willingly stayed (contrast Luke 14:25 with Luke 15:1).

The religious elite looked at this behavior with disgust. “This man receives sinners and eats with them” (Luke 15:2), they cackled. They can’t believe Jesus chose

awkward sinners over the admiration of the crowds!

So, Jesus told a story about an anxious shepherd who crossed the wilderness in search of one lost sheep. When the sheep was found, the joyful shepherd celebrated with his friends (Luke 15:3-7; Ezekiel 34). Jesus asks us, "If a shepherd loves a sheep so much he is willing to risk life and limb to find it, how much more should I love people with eternal souls who are made in the image of God!?"

Jesus invites us to take a practical lesson about evangelism from our domestication of animals (Gen. 1:26-27). We put a lot of time and affection into caring for the pets and creatures who depend upon us. Jesus asks, "Do we love people's souls that much?" That sounds like a silly question, but like the Pharisees many of us care more for our "sheep" than for sinners. What if our hearts broke for lost sinners as much as they do for starving, dying animals? What if we enjoyed the saved as much the family pet? There is a lesson about love in the way we treat those creatures.

A Doctor's Love

The Pharisees also complained about Jesus' love at a dinner party. They grumbled, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" He replied, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick" (Luke 5:30-31). For those in the country Jesus illustrated love with a shepherd. But, this illustration is for city folks. Jesus compassionately loved them like a doctor.

Yes, some doctors ignore or exploit the sick for their own selfish purposes. Such reports anger us. Doctors are supposed to care for people at their most vulnerable moment. Doctors, at their best, are motivated by something more than money or power. They are motivated by the pains and mortality of their patients.

Likewise, Jesus is grieved by the pains and death we experience because of sin (Luke 5:12-26). Jesus came as a doctor, not just of the body, but of the soul, because He loves us.

What an extraordinary way of seeing people...as patients in need of compassion and care, lest they die, eternally. For, beneath the shiny exterior of wealth, strength, charm and beauty lies the cancerous mass of sin that anchors the soul in hell. Physicians are needed!

A Worshipper's Love

Matthew also records the Pharisees' accusation, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (Matt. 9:11). Jesus says He loves them like a

doctor (Matthew 9:12), but then he gives them a little homework, "Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.'" (Matthew 9:13).

Jesus quotes from Hosea, God's love letter to His rebellious people. It seems like the people respond with all the right words. They say, "Come, and let us return to the Lord" (Hosea 6:1). However, God knows their words will float away with the morning mist. What God wants more than confessionals and rituals, are obedient lives. So, He says,

"I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6)

God is not setting aside the sacrificial system but identifying its intent. When the knowledge of God fills the mind, it is expressed in merciful actions toward others. Jesus wanted the Pharisees, and us, to learn that loving sinners is the way we worship God.

Yes, life is hard. Many choose to wear bitterness and pessimism like an armor and hide in a bunker of isolation. But, it is dark in there. Don't go in. The path out of your cynical seclusion is to love. After all, you are that lost sheep, that sick sinner, that inconsistent worshipper who God loves like a Shepherd, a Doctor and as a long-suffering Lord. So, go love others as God loved you (1 John 4:19-21).

~via *Focus Magazine Online*

News & Notes

THE SICK:

Jane Meredith

Joe Hinkle

Loretta Warner

Doris Lovell

Paul Adcock

Sherry Davis

Bobbie Adcock

Ann Bush

Those Undergoing Treatments or Chronic Illness:

Lona Jackson

Janice Cagle

Patsy Thomas

Marvin Putman

Al Pollard

Cindy Glass

Susan Cox

Cindy Walker

Wayne Wooldridge

Paul Hasting

Jeanette Weir

Ella Melvin

Cornelia Pepper

Charles Burns

Una King Currier

Gene Carpenter

Phillip Harwell

Kenneth Fisher

In The Hospital/Rehabilitation:

Dean Holt; Huntsville Hospital, rm 470
Norman Hamm; Millenium Rehab - Huntsville

Athens Health & Rehabilitation:

Mattie Murray, rm. 2 Christine Hudson, 77
Evelyn Hogan, 36 Dorothy Draper, 73
Joyce Martin, 63 Valeria Dalton, 7

Shut-In or Away From Home:

Robert & Mot Beasley, at City Center, Decatur
Frances Bowers, Limestone Manor
Gwen Bullock, at granddaughter's in Huntsville
Mary Ruth Gardner, at Merrill Gardens, Madison
Carl Hargrave, at granddaughter's home in Hartselle
Bettye Harrison, Traditions Assisted Living
Irene Inman, at home
Virginia Meyer, Traditions Assisted Living
Stan Stanford, at home
William Thomas, Madison Manor, Madison
Kathleen Wales, Limestone Manor

Updates:

Dean Holt was delayed in her move to the *North Alabama Specialty Hospital* due to having to have stint done for her leakage on Friday ... ***Sherry Davis*** has been sick and unable to be out ... ***JoAnn Gilbert*** is at home and had an infusion done this past Tuesday.

CONFESSION: We rejoiced on Wednesday evening as ***Mark Rogers*** came forward asking for prayers for forgiveness and wanting to be a better influence and to be faithful in the Lord's service. Let us all encourage Mark as he has and will encourage us in being the kind of people God wants us to be.

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

OUT OF TOWN: ***Steve & Marilyn Bradley*** have been in Texas for the holidays...***Danny & Debra Holt*** are out of town on vacation...***Marty Adams*** has been out of town this past week with his work.

THE RECORD: *Attendance for the week of Jan. 6th*

Sunday: Bible Classes 134
Morning Worship 176
Evening Worship 123
Wednesday: Bible Classes 101

Eighth Annual Singing

February 22, 2019 — 7:00 p.m.

**MARKET STREET
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Men Privileged To Serve:

Sunday, January 13th:

Morning Worship

Announcements.....Keith Hinkle
Song LeaderTommy Burns
Prayer..... Bonnie Sutton
Preaching..... David Cox
Lord's Supper
Presiding..... Harvey Nixon
AssistingMike Ogles
ServingWill Chumbley.....Landon Adams
.....Sam Gregory Harold Davis
Closing PrayerKeenon Currier

Evening Worship

Announcements.....Keith Hinkle
Song Leader Bob Broadus
Prayer..... Larry Holt
Preaching..... David Cox
Lord's Supper Harvey Nixon
Closing Prayer Danny Holt

Other Assignments for the week of January 13th:

Ushers..... Larry Mitchell/Marvin Putman
Work Sound System.....Nathaniel Adams

Wednesday, January 16th:

Song Leader Hunter Cox
Bible Reading Kenneth Adams
..... Mark 12:13-18
Prayer..... Landon Adams
Invitation Joel Hamm
Closing Prayer Tommy Burns

Sunday, January 20th:

Morning Worship

Announcements..... Dwaine Allfrey
Song Leader Joel Hamm
Prayer..... Harold Ash
Preaching..... David Cox
Lord's Supper
Presiding..... Terry Andrews
AssistingTommy Coblentz
ServingTommy Burns.....Matthew Userly
.....Clayton Hamm Keenon Currier
Closing PrayerMarion Mitchell

Evening Worship

Announcements..... Dwaine Allfrey
Song Leader Albert Haraway
Prayer..... Kenneth Smith
Preaching..... David Cox
Lord's Supper Terry Andrews
Closing Prayer Christian Userly

Other Assignments for the week of January 20th:

Ushers.....Heath Dollar/Hunter Cox
Work Sound System..... Marty Adams