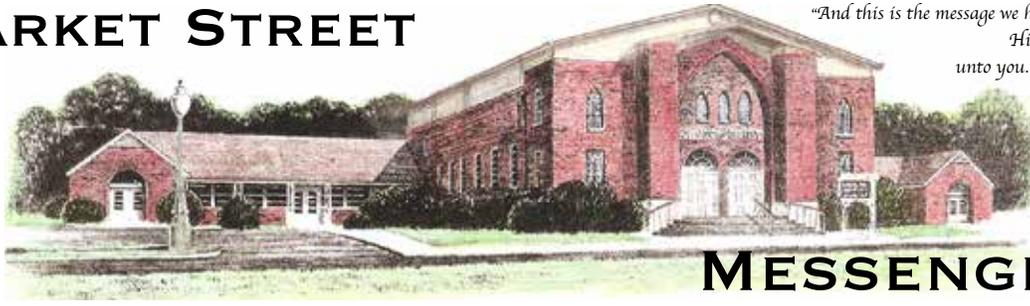


MARKET STREET



"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

Marty R. Adams..... (256) 503-8843
Tommy Coblentz..... (256) 232-3312
Jerry McGlocklin..... (256) 232-7620
Kenneth Smith..... (256) 777-6737

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

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

Volume XII

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No. 38

Lord, Increase Our Faith

David A. Cox

"And the apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith.'" (Luke 17:5)

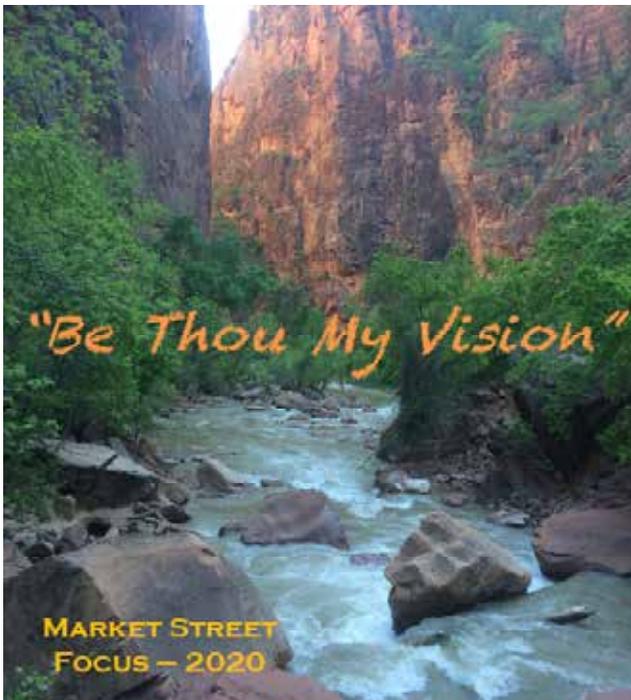
Throughout the life of Christ, we find several occasions where Jesus rebukes His disciples for their weak faith or unbelief. Jesus was always showing to them the power that resided in Him and that they simply needed to trust in His power and do what He was telling them to do. On the surface, that seems like it would be easy to do. So, why then did Jesus have to go over this time and again. The same reason is that we find ourselves not acting with faith in God's power in our lives. We, like the apostles, need to increase our faith. How can we increase our faith?

- **Nourish Your Faith.** Many things in life are challenging times in our lives. Among these challenging times are the dark valleys that seem to be hopeless. In such times that we need to be aware of Satan and his advances to destroy our faith in God. However, it is true that in the dark valleys of life that our faith can grow. To grow in our faith, we must live by faith. Our faith must be fed. We must take time to feed upon the word of God. It is from the scriptures that we get faith. "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). In John's gospel, he wrote, "these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31). Feeding upon the word will help to increase our faith.
- **Live With An Active Faith.** Too often, people tend to want to keep their faith closely guarded. They do not really talk about their faith and actively live out their faith before others. In James 2, he is writing about faith. He says that faith without action is dead (James 2:14-26). Faith should prompt a change in our lives. When Paul came to Mars Hill, he found some very religious people who worshipped idols of all kinds. He declared to them about God in heaven who created all things and in whom they even had their own existence. Not all accepted what Paul had taught them, but "some men joined him and believed" (Acts 17:34). We see the changed and the active faith of

those who believed. A few examples are: The Thesalonians who believed were described as “these who have turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). The idolators who believed in Ephesus confessed their sins. Those who practiced magic brought their books and burned them (Acts 19:1-20). Living with an active faith will allow us to increase in faith even more than we could imagine.

- **Give Your Faith Time To Grow.** Often discouragement may come when our faith does not just flourish immediately. It must be understood that faith will grow as we are patient and persistent in increasing our faith. In Matthew 17, Jesus’ disciples could not heal the boy who was brought to them. Jesus rebuked His disciples, telling them that they could not heal the boy because of their unbelief. Jesus goes on to say, “if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you” (Matthew 17:20). Jesus tells them that faith will accomplish what it needs to do. Faith in God as small as a mustard seed will be able to accomplish the thing needed in your life. But it takes time. We do not need to try to put God on our time table but to be active in developing and growing our faith.

“Lord, increase our faith” to see you on your throne watching over us. Let us know that God does not fail, and neither will we as long as we live our lives with God.



Rejoice Always

Chuck Durham

“How can Paul expect me to rejoice – that my wife discovered she has cancer? Can the young couple at church who lost their only child rejoice? ‘Rejoice always’ is pie-in-the-sky optimism. It doesn’t work.”

Sound familiar? Maybe we reverence God too much to put in so many words. Maybe we have. One thing’s for sure “Rejoice always” sounds ridiculous. We are happy when good things happen to us, not during adversity. But Paul didn’t say, “Be happy always.” He said “Rejoice always.” Happiness depends on one’s circumstances. Happiness is impossible during bad times – but not joy. Joy is not tied to circumstances. Joy is tied to the Lord. It springs from a growing relationship with Jesus. It can lift its head above the despondency that drains us of any will to go on. It is not a feeling, but a choice. It is not based on one’s environment, but upon an attitude. Pain in life is inevitable. Misery is optional, And God will let us be as joyful or miserable as we choose.

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Unbelievers do not have this quality. There are happy non-Christians, but at best their happiness is momentary. Even if they have this positive outlook until their dying day – in death they have no hope. There is no lasting quality in happiness. Joy is a spiritual phenomenon requiring a relationship with Jesus Christ. Joy is superior to happiness. It remains constant even in adversity that breaks one’s soul. Joy can sing in its cell, locked fast in stocks and hurting from untended wounds (Acts 16:25). Joy can bear the most intense suffering from pain because God’s grace is sufficient for all our needs (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Joy can praise God in death – for no one truly dies who dies in the Lord (Revelation 14:13). The first word the resurrected Jesus spoke to His defeated and sorrowful disciples was, “Rejoice!” And their response is for all Christians in all times: “And they came and held Him by the feet and worshipped Him” (Matthew 28:9). Hold fast to the Lord, Paul twice tells the Philippians: “Rejoice in the Lord (3:1; 4:4). The Psalmist exults: “In Your presence is fullness of joy” (16:11). These are appeals for a vibrant, living faith. We rejoice not because our circumstances are constant, but because He never changes (Hebrews 13:8). All things in Christ are the

Christians' "servants" (1 Corinthians 3:22-23). Even death ushers the believer from this cursed and dying earth into the blessing of Abraham's bosom. What can rob the Christian of Joy? Jesus is alive forevermore! Paul's affliction was "light" because he focused not on the here-and-now, but on the to-come, "the exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17). Paul who was hard pressed on every side, perplexed, persecuted, and struck down was not crushed, despairing, forsaken or destroyed (2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

What kind of Christian are we? Two men were in the hospital room. The one nearest the window could look out and describe to the other man (flat on his back and unable to see) the beautiful scenes of a park: a boy playing with his puppy, lovers walking hand-in-hand, parades and craft shows, baseball games, and little children laughing. Day after day the man who could not see anticipated with joy the descriptions of the other man... until resentment and envy built up within him. He thought, "Why should he have the pleasure of seeing those things and not me?" And the resentment and envy became bitterness and hate. One night the man by the window began to cough from his disease. He tried to reach his pager and summon the nurse, but couldn't. The other man just lay there and stared at the ceiling... until the coughing stopped and the breathing stopped and the man at the window was no more. As soon as the flat man on his back thought it fitting, he asked to be moved over by the window. With great effort and pain, he struggled up on one elbow and looked out the window. He faced a blank wall.

Paul faced blank walls in a prison cell, but he rejoiced in the Lord! How he causes us to thank the Lord for His unfailing mercies. Only at the end did the other man realize that joy is not something obtained by switching places with the other fellow. Joy is something within, of the Spirit and totally unrelated to one's circumstances.

Rejoice in the Lord... always!

~via *The Expounder*; Louisville, Kentucky.



Remember Our Study Period

Wednesday Evening at 7:00 p.m.

Come Join Us As We Study Together



Beacon of Truth Radio Program

Sunday Mornings
on WNN 770AM - 92.5 FM
8:30a.m. - 9:00a.m.

**MARKET STREET
CHURCH OF CHRIST**
514 WEST MARKET STREET
ATHENS, ALABAMA

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Kennedy Pepper

Heather Cox
David Barnett
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