

MARKET STREET

"And this 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 I

February 8, 2009

No. 6

The Pursuit of Happiness

Norm Webb, Jr.

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

Albert Bowers (256) 233-4847
Jerry McGlocklin (256) 232-7620
Kenneth Smith (256) 233-2050
Bonnie Sutton (256) 232-2081

Deacons

Marty Adams (256) 233-5147
Rusty Brand (256) 233-7343
Tim Craig (256) 233-4597
Joel Hamm (256) 230-6223
Bobby McGuire (256) 232-7887
Frank Noblitt (256) 777-0725
Stuart Wilson (256) 233-6291

Evangelists

David A. Cox (256) 233-8910
E-mail: david.a.cox@att.net
Warren Glass (256) 233-6086

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MarketStreet-church.org

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

I once read that happiness is like your shadow. Run after it and you will never catch it, but keep your face to the sun and it will follow you. The latter part of that statement is open to interpretation, but the first part is dead on. The state of happiness will always be eluding and out of reach when we decide it is the goal to be achieved. The king and wise man, Solomon, came to that conclusion after a long period of experimentation. He writes in his journal, Ecclesiastes, about his own failed pursuit of happiness. He lists his experiments with knowledge, comedy, possessions, power, pleasure and accomplishment and concludes by saying, "I hated life" (2:17). That doesn't sound like a man who had found happiness. Solomon, by divine inspiration, wrote that journal, and God published it, so people could know that a life limited to "under the sun" pursuits yields disappointment.

That leaves us wondering, is happiness a state in which one may truly abide and if so, how? God gives the answer through His word, the Bible, and what we discover is that true happiness is dictated and wrapped up in the peace that only God can provide. Only when one possesses divinely administered peace, no matter his circumstances, is he able to be happy.

Peace with your Creator. When I was a boy, my father coached a junior high basketball team. I would often accompany him to the gym and some days, to pacify my time, I would attempt to out run my shadow. I was always successful and while at the time I was certain my victory lay in my lightning speed, I realize now it was simply because my position in relationship to the gym lights changed as I moved across the court. My achievement did not lie in my own ability, but in my relationship to the light. The same applies to our lives. True peace and happiness will never be achieved by our accomplishments or works, but only when we are at peace with the true Light, the Father of us all. There is something about wanting to be pleasing to our maker that burns within us (Acts

17:27). That peace can only be reached through Jesus Christ who suffered the punishment of sin for us by His death, so we might be justified before God and reconciled to Him. “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1 ff). Happiness is knowing that you are at peace with your Creator.

Peace with your purpose. Helen Keller is quoted as saying, “Many people have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.” The question that haunts every person at some time is, “Why am I here?” and our peace is dictated by the answer to that question. If we find the right purpose, we will find peace. God gives us purpose. He tells us where we came from and why we are here, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind... Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37-39). Only when we get out of ourselves and our selfish agendas can we experience the true joy of serving and bringing happiness to others.

Peace with your past. Too often, our failures haunt us. We mentally and emotionally struggle with the mistakes of the past. The reason for their haunting lies in the fact that most often we cannot fix them. We cannot change what we did or what we said and the damage is sometimes irreparable and the moment unforgettable. The wonderful thing about being in Christ is knowing what God does with our past. The Bible is filled with analogies describing the fate of forgiven failures: “Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow” (Isaiah 1:18). “As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us (Psalms 103:12). He will tread our iniquities under foot, yes, you will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (Micah 7:19). It was this knowledge that allowed Paul the apostle to say, “Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on...” (Philippians 3:13-14). God doesn’t want you to be chained to your past. You can’t fulfill your purpose to serve Him and others if you are constantly absorbed with past mistakes. This is why He ties His forgiveness of us to our forgiveness of others (Matthew 6:14-15). The penitent and contrite heart that is in Christ and among God’s people will find peace with his past and happiness in his life.

Peace with your present. My observation is that

a lot of us struggle to appreciate the present. We sit and regret what could have been if we had chosen a different path, or dream of the future we might like to experience, failing to see the value in the moment and what can be accomplished if we would just use it. The Bible chastises those who make big plans for the future, but don’t do what they should do in the present (James 4:13-17). God encourages you to make “the most of your time because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16). Sure, maybe our current status isn’t exactly what we had dreamed, but then again, maybe God has brought you to this station in life “for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14). By learning to be content with whatsoever state we may be in, we are then most capable of being used by God (Philippians 4:11). Today is God’s gift to you, that is why it is called the present.

Peace with your future. When polls are taken concerning what people are anxious about, the overwhelming response is always the future. We worry about what is going to happen and that eats into our happiness. God in Christ, provides us with the peace of knowing the following three things about our future: God is in control, He will do what is best for His purpose, and His people will receive a great eternal inheritance. With that understanding, Jesus says, “But seek first the kingdom of God and all these things (life’s necessities) will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matthew 6:33-34). For one who is in Christ, he knows his future is secure (1 Peter 1:4, 5) and is able to live with peace and joy.

You see happiness is not something we finally lay claim to or conquer, it is an attitude determined by having the right answers to life’s most important question: “Where did I come from?” “Why am I here?” “Where am I going?” When we realize that we came from God, we are here to live for God and we are going back to God, and that God is guiding us all the way, then we can live happily.

-via *Friendly Visitor*; Athens, Alabama.

Remember Our Study Periods

Sunday Mornings at 9:45 a.m.

Wednesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m.

Come and Join Us As We Study Together

Not Worth The Worry

Bubba Garner

Though his tastes are constantly changing, our David's favorite movie right now is *The Lion King*. That's the one featuring the song "Hakuna Matata," which the lyrics translate "means no worries for the rest of your days." No worries. Wouldn't that be nice? But we live in what is commonly called the Age of Anxiety, where "no worries" seem like an impossibility. Apparently, the problem of worry is not unique to our generation or Jesus would never have devoted such a large section to this subject in His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:25-34). And in the Parable of the Sower, He identified "the worries of the world" (Mark 4:19) as thorns that grow up along the side the seed and eventually choke out its life. But before we are too quick to sympathize with Jesus' audience, notice what things they were worried about. Their concerns were, "What will we eat?" and "What will we drink?" and "What will we wear for clothing?" (Matthew 6:31). They were anxious about where their next meal would come from and whether or not they would have clothes to put on the backs of their children. If Jesus had to get on them for worrying about the necessities of life, what do you think He would say to us about the things that occupy and distract our minds? I offer these suggestions as to why worry is, in fact, not worth the worry.

Worry sets your mind on the world. Jesus introduced this topic after saying that you "cannot serve God and mammon" (6:24). That makes for an easy transition to worry, because the devil doesn't care if your mind is carried away by riches or by anxiety, just so long as it is carried away from God. We are quick to see that we can lose our soul because of greed. But the same sermon warns about the dangers of anxious care. Either way, you're setting your mind on things below and not on things above.

"Do not be anxious...but seek first the kingdom of God" (6:25, 34). If you want assurance of provision, you don't seek things, you seek God. When you secure your relationship with Him, making spiritual sustenance your priority, He will provide the daily bread. It's amazing what happens to the worries of the world when you focus first on the kingdom of God.

Worry won't let you live by faith. Worrying about food, drink, and clothing are things that the "Gentiles

eagerly seek" (6:32). Jesus called them "men of little faith" (6:30), because they acted like the Lord didn't know or didn't care about their needs. They were in covenant relationship with God but were demonstrating less faith than the Gentiles who didn't know Him at all.

Consider the sparrows, five of which were sold for two cents. "And yet not one of them is forgotten before God" (Luke 12:6). If the smallest and humblest of God's creatures are given such rich provision, what will He do for the pinnacle of His creation, for those who have been made in His image? And what about the lilies of the field, generally used for kindling? If the God of heaven has tended to the flowers whose life is but a breath and a sign, will He not clothe with righteousness those whose destiny is eternal life? Surely a God who has given Jesus to satisfy our spiritual needs has the strength to handle the everyday problems that come our way. You cannot serve God and mammon. Neither can you live by faith and worry.

Worry is worthless. Having worried and fretted about something, what good does it accomplish? What has it changed? Anxiety is a useless endeavor. "Who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?" (Matthew 6:27) Worry doesn't lengthen life; it tends to shorten it. You can "worry yourself sick" for sure. But what about the tragedy of stressing over things that may never happen while missing what is happening right in front of you? Our time here is short enough as it is, a "vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away" (James 4:14). That vapor is often abbreviated even more when what little time we do have is wasted away with worthless worry. If you can do something about it, then do it. If it is out of your hands, turn it over to God. Life is still under His control. He can add length to your days, and promises a place where there is no more night. That will be worth it. "No worries for the rest of your days." Maybe that's not just for fantasies and fairy tales after all.

-via *The WORD at Lakeview*; Lake City, Florida.

News & Notes

THE SICK:

In The Hospital:

Yvonne Sherbert; HeathSouth Rehab

Jerry Tucker; Athens-Limestone Hospital – ICU

Dwight Lovell; Huntsville Hospital

At Home:

Wendell Sherbert Annie Mae Bragg
Jerry Gilbert Mary Norton
Carl Hargrave Gladys Johnson
Mot Beasley Destiny Scruggs
Peggy Taylor Jeff Waddell
Mike Sherbert Kennedy Pepper
Angela Green Uyles Reed
Lucy Clanton

Limestone Health Facility:

Essie Belle Bates, rm. 108 Mary Smith, rm 85
Rosella Pugh, rm. 33 J.D. Clanton, 11E

Athens Convalescent Center:

Betty Bates, rm. 17
Mae Alesi, rm. 35

Limestone Manor:

Ruth Owens , rm. 80

Limestone Lodge:

Lifford Abernathy , rm. 28-E

Shut-In:

Sarah Halbrook, Glade Retirement, Memphis, Tenn.
Jimmy Killen, at home
Clara Lewis, at home
Reba Adams, at home
Mauvis Phillips, at home
Majorie Lambert, at home
Fred Varnell, at home
Ellis Dunnavant, at home

MILITARY SERVICE: Remember all those that are away serving in the military for our country. Those among us that are serving away from home:

Cody Brown; Iraq

SYMPATHY: We want to extend our deepest sympathy to **Margaret Carter** in the passing of her uncle, *Marvin Adcock*. His funeral was Friday...Also extend our deepest sympathy to **Marjorie Lambert** in th passing of her great-niece, *Carrie Ann Cook*. She passed away in an accident on Tuesday.

THE RECORD: Attendance – Week of February 1st

Sunday:

Bible Classes..... 124
Morning Worship 152
Evening Worship..... 117

Wednesday:

Bible Classes..... 93

Men Privileged To Serve:

Sunday, February 8th:

Morning Worship

AnnoucementsJerry McGlocklin
Song Leader Stuart Wilson
Prayer Kenneth Smith
Preaching. Warren Glass
Lord’s Supper
Presiding Rusty Brand
Assisting Dwaine Allfrey
Serving David Terry Tyler Cox
..... Nathaniel Adams..... Ronnie Locke
Closing Prayer Jimmy Usery

Evening Worship

AnnoucementsJerry McGlocklin
Song Leader Stuart Wilson
Prayer Wayne Vaughn
PreachingDavid Cox
Lord’s Supper Rusty Brand
Closing Prayer Tommy Burns

Other Assignments for Sunday February 8th:

Usher Raymond Brown
Work Sound System Cory Nelson

Wednesday, February 11th:

Song LeaderJoel Hamm
Bible Reading..... (Proverbs 6:20--35)
..... Danny Johnson
Prayer Landon Adams
Invitation Warren Glass
Closing Prayer Tim Craig

Sunday, February 15th:

Morning Worship

Annoucements Frank Noblitt
Song LeaderJack Cannon
Prayer Marty Adams
Preaching. David Cox
Lord’s Supper
Presiding Rusty Brand
Assisting Dwaine Allfrey
Serving David Terry Tyler Cox
..... Nathaniel Adams..... Ronnie Locke
Closing Prayer Marion Mitchell

Evening Worship

Annoucements Frank Noblitt
Song LeaderJack Cannon
Prayer Jimmy Usery
PreachingJoel Hamm
Lord’s Supper Dwaine Allfrey
Closing Prayer Lifford Smith

Other Assingments for Sunday February 15th:

Usher Russ Wulfekuhl
Work Sound System Frank Noblitt