

**Prayer List of the Sick and Afflicted:**

Darryl Grimes, (Ken and Sherrie Roosa's son-in-law) suffers from cancer.  
Gloria Hale has been moved from the rehab center to stay with her son Tim.  
Charlie Henard's mother in Tennessee suffers from Alzheimer's.  
Liz Burdsall tested positive for COVID and is recovering. Tim is feeling better as well.  
Karen Sproles is still confined at home and is receiving home health services.  
Iris Hash is back at home and recently had a colonoscopy and gastric scope. She is also awaiting an appointment with a kidney specialist.  
John Richardson is in a rehab facility in Greenfield.  
Terry Richardson is in rehab at The Waters in Martinsville.  
Steve Anderson is suffering from periods of dizziness.  
Haven Duncan, Dave and Tina's granddaughter, recently graduated from Army basic training and has moved on to airborne training at Ft. Benning in Georgia.  
The people of Ukraine.

**Pray For Our Shut-ins:**

Gloria Hale, Karen Sproles, Iris Hash

**Pray For The Mission Works We Are Supporting:**

John Grubb (Mission work in Asia)  
Daniel Goshorn and family (Mission work in Peru)

**Men's Business Meeting:**

The next men's monthly business meeting will be Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:00 PM. All men are encouraged to attend.

**August Monthly Pitch-in:**

Our next monthly pitch-in dinner will be following the morning services on Sunday, August 7<sup>th</sup>. Following the pitch-in we have a song service at 1:00 PM then dismiss for the day.

**Radio Program:**

Please remember to tune in every Sunday morning at 8:00 AM to WCBK 102.3 to hear our radio program which is entitled: "Preparing For Eternity".

**God's Plan For Our Salvation:**

1. **Hearing** the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. **Believing** what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. **Repentance** (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. **Confession** (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. **Baptism** (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. **Faithful Christian Living**, after the above five steps (I Peter 2:11, 12; Rev. 2:10).

July 24, 2022

***MORGAN STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST***

**540 E. Morgan Street  
Martinsville, IN 46151  
(765) 342-6027**



**Schedule of Services:**

**Sunday**

Bible Study – 9:30 AM  
Worship – 10:30 AM  
Evening Service - 6:00

**Wednesday**

Bible Study – 6:00 PM

**Thursday**

Ladies Bible Study – 11:00 AM

**Radio Program:**

“Preparing For Eternity”  
Sunday Mornings 8:00 AM, WCBK 102.3 FM

**Website:**

[www.morganstreetchurchofchrist.org](http://www.morganstreetchurchofchrist.org)

Gospel Preacher – Bob Hawkins

## CRITICISMS OF THE CHURCH

Rusty Stark

*People need to be convicted as sinners, to know they are separated from God, to be aware they are bound for a devil's hell for all eternity. How will they escape if they are not warned?*

A young member of the congregation called. People had been criticizing the church to him in various ways. What were their criticisms?

### WITHOUT EMOTION

They accused the church of Christ of being without emotion. This criticism is in direct contrast to groups whose emphasis is all on emotion. These are people who think they are saved because they are happy, rather than being happy because they are saved. Their faith is based on how they feel, when it should be the other way around. Instead of having faith in God because we feel good, we should feel good based on our faith in God — our assurance that he is and that he will reward us if we diligently seek him (Heb. 11:6).

It is a false and backwards idea that truth arises out of our emotions. And yet, this false and backwards idea can even be found in at least one of the hymns we commonly sing — *He Lives* by Alfred Ackley. The chorus ends by saying: “*You ask me how I know he lives: He lives within my heart.*” No, No, a thousand times no! We do not believe that Jesus lives because we can somehow detect or feel him in our heart. The only way we can know he lives in our heart is by faith — the Bible telling us so (Eph. 3:17).

Churches of Christ are not emotionless. If we sing in the manner the New Testament teaches, we make music with our mouths, and we make melody in our hearts (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). It is a great thrill to sing about God’s “Amazing Grace.” It is in humble awe that we declare, “How Great Thou Art.”

No emotion? We can easily be brought to tears when we commemorate the death of our Lord by keeping his memorial supper every first day of the week (Acts 20:7). In his memory (1 Cor. 11:24-26) we focus our minds on his suffering and the shedding of his blood. When we do this we feel sorrow because we know he was paying the debt for our sins, and we also feel inexpressible joy and gratitude because we know he was paying the debt for our sins.

No emotion? There is the humility of prayer, the sorrowful conviction of sin, the blessed assurance of knowing we have passed from death to life, the burden and urgency of our mission to save lost souls, and the joyful anticipation of heaven.

There is a distinction between true, appropriate emotions and hype. We can jump around and shout and even cut ourselves in wild, uncontrolled excitement, or we can be the still small voice that truly accesses the power of God (cf. 1 Kings 18:25-38; 19:12).

True New Testament worship demands that we are not wild, but controlled, doing all things “*decently and in order*” (1 Cor. 14:40).

### TOO NEGATIVE

The people troubling this young member leveled another criticism against the church. In their eyes, the church is too negative. They said, “The last thing I need when I go to church is to have someone tell me how horrible a person I am.”

Someone should have told Peter on the day of Pentecost, “The last thing those people need to hear is that they were guilty of crucifying the Messiah” (Acts 2:36). Someone should have told Stephen. “Don’t call those Jews stiff-necked or uncircumcised in heart and ears. The last thing they need is to be made to feel like horrible people” (Acts 7:51). Wrong!

This kind of preaching is exactly what people need. They need to be convicted as sinners, to know they are separated from God, to be aware they are bound for a devil’s hell for all eternity. How will they escape if they are not warned?

Many in modern religion avoid the very mention of sin. They tell people to follow their

own hearts, believe in themselves, and do what seems right to them. Meanwhile, God, though his word, is shouting, “Repent!” (Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38; 17:30).

If we are not convicted of sin, how will we ever turn away from it? If the preacher doesn’t preach it, and if Bible class teachers don’t discuss it, how will we know about hell and how to avoid its fiery torment?

Of course, not every sermon need be negative. There is great uplifting, empowering truth, to be taught and learned. But “positive” or “negative” is often just a matter of perspective. When the preacher preaches about some sin that exists in our lives, we don’t have to hear in a negative way. When we are condemned by the word of God, it is not God pushing us away, it is God calling us near.

We cannot come near to God unless we are willing to put away our sins. First Peter 1:15-16 says: “*But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*” First Corinthians 6:9-11: “*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*”

Are these verses positive or negative? They contain a warning against living in sin, but they also rejoice in the victory over sin — being washed, sanctified, justified. Is it negative to tell the drunkard he can and must change his life? Is it negative to tell the homosexual that he can and must come out of that sin and such like perversions and live a righteous life? If they will hear it in the right way, it will be the most positive message those people could ever hear.

Note this: Even in our sin God is calling us through the Gospel (2 Thess. 2:14). God loves us even in our sins (Rom. 5:6-8). But he is not calling us to come to him “in” our sins. He is calling us to come “out” of our sins and walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). He is calling us to be holy — set apart from sin — just as he is holy.

### CHRISTIANITY — BURDEN OR BLESSING

Another criticism that needs to be dealt with is the idea that churches of Christ only see Christianity as a burden. Again Wrong!

The truth is that Christianity is a great burden, a struggle, a difficult, restrictive, narrow path (Matt. 7:13-14). It is not peace, but a sword (Matt. 10:34). It involves a daily cross, denying self and living for the one who died for us (Luke 9:23; 2 Cor. 5:14-15). It means that we will suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12). But it is also the greatest blessing any man can ever receive. To deny either of these — the burden or the blessing — is to be mistaken and unbalanced.

Christ offers sinful man the opportunity to forsake his sins and become a child of God. Galatians 3:26-27: “*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*” Here is the bottom line. We cannot have a relationship with God and his Son Jesus if we are unwilling to bear the burden involved in being a Christian. Luke 14:27: “*And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*” We cannot have the relationship if we will not bear the burden.

God wants us to be happy, but happiness is the by-product. True happiness comes to those who strive to be holy — set apart from sin, and thereby live in a daily relationship with Jesus and the Father. God demands that we be holy, because he is holy. “*Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy*” (1 Peter 1:13-16).

We do not find Jesus in our earthly joy. We find our joy in Jesus. “*Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice*” (Phil. 4:4).