

# Midtown Messenger

Volume 3

October 18, 2020

Issue 42

## ATTITUDES THAT BRING UNITY

By: Todd Clippard

Ephesians 4 is the great unity chapter. This marvelous text opens with what has been called the *Dispositions of Unity*: lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering, forbearance, and love (v 2).

In verses 4-6 we find what are sometimes referred to as the *Positions of Unity*, that is, the basic doctrines which unify all genuine believers. These are one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one Father.

Among our people, there has been considerable interest in the positions of unity with sometimes blatant disregard for the dispositions. There can be no progress on the former without diligence on the latter. It's little wonder why Paul started with our hearts before speaking to our heads. Who seeks instruction from one for whom he has no personal regard? No one seeks honey in a hornets nest.

Paul begins his appeal with a reminder that we live according to a higher personal standard, a worthy walk and the "upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:14). The characteristics of this worthy walk include:

*Lowliness* – "the having a humble opinion of oneself; a deep sense of one's littleness; modesty, humility, lowliness of mind" (Thayer). See Matthew 5:3.

*Meekness* – "gentleness with a view to oneself" (cf. Gal 6:1; James 1:21; 1 Pt 3:15).

*Longsuffering* – "patience, forbearance, slowness in avenging wrongs, self-restraint" (Thayer').

*Forbearance* – "to hold oneself up against." We would say "put up with" or "tolerate" another (I love this one!). The strength to undertake such a difficult position is seen in the qualifier at the end, "in love." Love empowers me to deal with difficult brethren, wishing and working for their ultimate good, even at considerable personal cost or effort.

"And above all things have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:8-10).

When we learn to master the dispositions, then we will be fit to teach the rest.

*Todd Clippard preaches for the Bureson Church of Christ in Hamilton, AL*

**BAD WORDS**  
*Chuck Webster*

Some communities become toxic—you've probably been part of one before.

Workplaces can digress into name-calling and back-biting. This group against that group. So-and-so's mad at so-and-so.

Sound familiar?

It happens in schools across the world. Rumors—usually bad ones—spread like wildfire among teenagers. She's mad at him, he's mad at her, her clothes are out of style, he's weird.

And on it goes.

People talk, and because we live in a fallen world, people talk badly, and they hurt each other with their words.

But there's no place for it in the church.

James says this:

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (James 4:11-12)

I sense some frustration in James here, don't you? It seems like he wants to say something like, Don't you guys know better than to slander one another? Aren't you out of middle school? Most importantly, aren't you followers of Jesus?

The problem with slander, James says, is that we set ourselves up as judges. We decide that we're qualified to pass judgment on someone else's behavior.

There's a major problem with that, though—we're not the judge. There's only one Judge, and he didn't ask for our help.

Maybe you're seldom guilty of this, but most of us struggle with it. Regardless,

we should commit never to talk badly about another believer.

In your devotional time this week, ask God to forgive you for the bad stuff you've said about other Christians and ask him to put a gate over your mouth. It's really simple—there's no good reason for us Christians to talk badly about one another.

We're on the same side, and we've got more than enough to do to keep us busy without wasting with such destructive habits.

James is venting a bit, isn't he? Notice how he closes with this word of chastisement: "Who are you to judge your neighbor?"

Amen to that.

*Church Webster preaches for the Hoover Church of Christ in Hoover, AL*

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**Fruitful Hearts**

Many of us feel like we need to read our Bibles more. But maybe our goal should be to improve the quality of our Bible reading, not just the quantity.

The parable of the sower in Mark 4 makes clear that simply reading the Bible is not enough. Jesus says the key to fruitful hearing is a receptive heart: "But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." (Mark 4:20)

How is your heart?

-Selected-

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## PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of October 18, 2020

\*\*subject to change\*\*

### **Sunday Morning:**

Announcements: Jeff Harris  
Scripture Reading: Kirk FitzSimmons

### **Lord's Supper & Offering**

Bread: James Cammock  
Fruit of the Vine: James Cammock  
Offering: Clifton Rutherford

### **Prayer**

A.M. Opening: Bryce Dolan  
A.M. Closing: Jeff Harris

### **Song Leaders:**

Sun. A.M.: Larry Nuckels  
Wed. P.M.: Doug Jobs

**Ushers:** Allen Clifton

**Wednesday Devo:** Dale Hill

**Open/Close Building:** Will Burleson

**Sound System:** Mark FitzSimmons

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**To Our Visitors:** We welcome you to our service. Perhaps this is the first time you have visited us. It is our desire to have you return often and give us a chance to become better acquainted with you. You will find visitor cards on the back of the pew in front of you. Please fill one out.

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**Sermons are available on our website  
[www.midtowncoc.org](http://www.midtowncoc.org) under Resources.**

**MidTown's Bible Classes and Worship services can be viewed livestream on YouTube. Search MidTown church of Christ Victoria.**

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*\*\*FRIENDLY REMINDER TO CONTINUE  
PRACTICING SOCIAL DISTANCING\*\**

## IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Please continue to pray for those affected by the Corona Virus. Athena Scherffius, who was back in the hospital last week.

Happy Birthday: Mickey DeDear, Debra Sanchez (19); Corinne Flonnory (20); Pam Stryker (22); Desmon Flonnory (24)

Happy Anniversary: Ronnie & Athena Scherffius (21)

### Upcoming Events:

*Dec. 4-6: Challenging the Church hosted by MidTown.*

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**Sunday Evening worship services will resume November 1st, 2020 at 5pm.**

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## KEEP IN PRAYER

### MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady  
Les Daltry  
Janice FitzSimmons  
Ken and Sandra Marie  
Wayne Martin  
Ann Pantel  
Veronica Serenil  
Clark Withers

### SHUT-INS:

Dee Gilpatrick  
Faye Henderson  
Charlie Mabe  
Sandy Malone

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

# MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Minister:** Ronnie Scherffius  
**Secretary:** Nina Siegel

## TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Morning Bible Class: 9:00 AM  
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM  
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00 PM

## RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of October 11, 2020

A.M. Bible Class.....72  
A.M. Worship.....93  
Online views during worship.....47  
Wednesday Bible Class.....53

Offering week of October 11, 2020.....\$3,360

## Reading for this week:

And he said to them, "He who has ears to hear, let  
him hear."  
Mark 4:9

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## SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli  
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore  
Southwest School of Bible Studies - Anthony  
Scherffius

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## GO PAPERLESS!

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