

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

Virginia McKinney fell again and cracked a rib.  
David Williams, son-in-law of Floyd and Judy Coley, suffered an apparent stroke last week. After a brief stay at the hospital, he is now back home and doing well. He will seek additional medical help to try and determine the cause of the event.  
Ray Sturgill's brother-in-law, Teddy Adams, has brain issues but is back home after being in the hospital in Lexington, KY  
Karen Sprole's son-in-law has serious heart issues and internal bleeding.  
Iris Hash is dealing with hip issues.  
Iris Hash's son, Bobby Eppards, is in the hospital cardiac care unit with heart issues. He had surgery to allow for use of a mechanical heart.  
Deloris Hendrickson continues to need our prayers for sustained health.  
Charlie Henard's niece, Brittany Henard, is battling terminal cancer. Her condition has worsened and she is now back home living with her mother. We rejoice in that Brittany was recently baptized into Christ.

**Pray For Our Shut-Ins:**

Karen Sproles, Iris Hash, Terry Richardson, and Kathy Malowitz

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

John Grubb and his wife (Mission work in Asia), Daniel Goshorn and family (Mission work in Peru). See reports on bulletin board. We look forward to brother John Grubb visiting with us during Bible study today to provide us an update on their work and to deliver the morning sermon.

**Benevolent Opportunities:**

We are now collecting macaroni and cheese. These items will be donated to the MSD food pantry.

**Gospel Meeting:**

The Shelbyville Rd. congregation at 4915 Shelbyville Rd. in Indianapolis will be hosting a gospel meeting September 28 – October 2 with brother Hiram Kemp doing the speaking. Services Monday through Thursday will be at 7:00 PM.

**Monthly Pitch-in Dinner:**

Our next pitch-in dinner will be Sunday, October 5th following the AM services. Following the meal we will have a service in song at 1 PM then dismiss for the day.

**Fish Fry:**

Our annual fish fry will be held on September 27 at 5:00 PM at the Martinsville City Park shelter house No. 5.

**Radio Program:**

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

**God's Plan For Our Salvation**

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

September 21, 2025

***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

## WHERE IS THE BAR?

Denver Thomas

*How might we fare if the Lord were to rate us as  
He did the seven churches of Asia?*

In my high school days, there was a very competitive sport referred to as the Pole Vault. The object of the sport was to see how high one could leap with the assistance of a pole to cross a horizontal bar without knocking the bar down. The bar could be adjusted upward or downward as needed to correspond to the skills of the various participants. The participants were always striving to attain a higher level of skill since the one who could vault the highest would be declared the winner. A competitive spirit was evident in those who were in the game.

I have come to see a close parallel of that sport to today's religious community and especially within the Lord's church. Whereas, we, as God's elect, should ever be striving for higher standing and going on to maturity (Heb. 6:1-2), we have been "letting the bar down" to accommodate practices that we simply do not want to face up to. We boast of being a "first-century-like" church, but are we? I wonder if we are even like the church of fifty to a hundred years ago. We seem to forget that even though society may change, God's will (word) for His followers remains unchangeable! We *will* be judged thereby (John 12:48)! We have evolved into what I have chosen to call "A Happy Family Syndrome." The thought of offending someone has become the governing factor in so many of our practices and decisions. We have become careful to avoid any number of topics. Space only allows for a few.

*Same-sex marriage* has been declared legal and binding by the high court of the land. So, what do elders and preachers do? Generally speaking, they act as if it really is of no concern. Oh, they may speak of the evil of it before the congregation, but to what avail? Telling a Christian that sodomy is an abomination to God is similar to telling a Christian that baptism is required for salvation. A Christian already knows as much. Instead of taking a stand against such enactments, they simply lower the bar.

*Church discipline* is something we simply no longer attempt to carry out in our congregations. Fear of reprisal may be a factor. Instead, being a "big happy family" has taken precedence over following the standard—God's Holy Word, the Bible. Quantity has become of much greater concern than quality. Church oversight has lost sight of Reprove, Rebuke and Exhort (2 Tim. 4:2). Unhappy folks are simply invited to go where they will be happy, no matter the reason for their state of mind! Down goes the bar!

The *oversight of the church* (Acts 20:28) has been passed from elders to

"located preachers" and "pulpit ministers" in many congregations. "Problems" are placed in the preacher's hands for resolution which most generally never happens. Paul said "*a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*" (Gal. 5:9). In any event, it is difficult to find scripture to support this type of organization. Again, we see the bar being lowered.

What does First Timothy 2:9-10 say about *modesty*? "*In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*" We have lowered the bar to accommodate "anything goes" and in some cases "less than anything goes" so that the dress code is pass,!

*Earnestly contending for the faith* (Jude 3) is yet another area where the bar has been lowered (maybe removed altogether). Over and over again we see those who sit in secure surroundings discussing the sectarian community and how they are abusing or misusing the scriptures, but they never go and face those they criticize.

When and how do we relate to *marriage, divorce and remarriage* among the elect? We just do not go there! Civil laws have eased the process and church leaders are simply unwilling to stand up and be counted. We just lower the bar.

Then there is the neglect in *attendance, service, study* and doing what is expected of one claiming to be a Christian. Apathy and complacency are taking their toll in our congregations. Sermons are often innocuous making the hearers feel good and comfortable rather than being encouraged to do better and be active in the work of the Lord! Zeal for the Lord's work is lacking. We just lower the bar.

Then, there is that area having to do with *seeking the lost*. We like to preach baptism, but fail to go and teach candidates worthy of baptism. We are more inclined to preach baptism as it conflicts with sectarian use, but we never face them. Debates went away in previous generations. We like to quote Mark 16:16 skipping over verse 15. We avoid Matthew 18:18-20 as it puts us where we just do not want to be! Why do we choose to ignore Paul's many examples (cf. Acts 20:18-21 for example)? We just lower the bar.

So, where does the bar hang in the Lord's church of today? Does it reflect the high standard the Lord requires? How might we fare if He were to rate us as He did the seven churches of Asia in Revelation 1-3? Might He say, "I have somewhat against thee?" Most likely, we need to examine our practices and correct as appropriate. But will we?