

April 12, 2020  
ORDER OF WORSHIP  
Announcements

**SERVICES  
CANCELLED  
UNTIL  
FURTHER  
NOTICE**



CHAPMAN CHURCH OF CHRIST  
250 COUNTY ROAD 550  
RIPLEY, MS 38663

# THE CHAPMAN CHALLENGER

Published Weekly by  
**Chapman Church of Christ**  
Ripley, Mississippi  
(662) 837-7012  
chapmanchurch.com

**ELDERS:** Terry Chapman, Jarvene Shackelford,  
Tommy Wade

**DEACONS:** Bryan Davis, Rickey Loveless,  
Brad McAlister, Wayne Vandygriff, Larry Wood

**PREACHER:** Mark Lindley

## Dismissing Worship Services Because of the Coronavirus Richard Stevens, III

Does Acts 5:29, that “we ought to obey God rather than men,” mean Christians must defy the government’s order of sheltering-in and not assembling?

Local congregations of the Lord are autonomous, meaning self-governing. However, God’s authoritative word transcends all congregations and is the sole authority by which all should be led. In all matters of doctrine, God’s word directs (2 Tim. 3:16-17). In matters of opinion, there is discretion within the bounds of God’s will, never beyond God’s will (Rom. 14:1-4). Elders and faithful leading brothers without elders can make decisions in behalf of the congregation (Heb.13:17; 1 Tim. 5:17; Col. 1:2).

There is much confusion as to whether church leaders have the authority to cancel worship services because governing authorities have mandated it so due to the Coronavirus.

1. Many say we cannot cancel services because of Acts 5:29, that “we ought to obey God rather than men.” The context of Acts 5:29 was the Jewish council persecuting Christians to stop Christianity altogether (5:17-20,22-23,25,27-29,40). But that is not what is happening now with the shelter-in bans and restrictions because of the Coronavirus. The reason for them is not persecution, but protection. They are enjoined up all citizens and businesses, not just Christians and churches. Christians are not being singled out. We are all part a world-wide health emergency.

2. Not assembling for worship is only sin if we “forsake the assembly” (Heb.10:25). Meaning, if we blow it off for frivolous reasons or even for persecution (12:4), which the virus is neither. The Coronavirus is not frivolous or a means of persecution. Most of us have encouraged someone who is sick to stay home on Sunday to protect them from getting worse and infecting others. The same was true regarding the contagious disease of leprosy (Lev. 13:43-45). If “one” can stay home away from worship without sinning because of sickness, then all can.

3. Unlike the flu, one can be asymptomatic with the Coronavirus, meaning sick without symptoms. Therefore, every member should be viewed as though they have the virus, not as though they don’t. Hence, we have social distancing of 6 ft away. It is contradictory to ignore the health order and come together as though the pandemic is not serious and then practice social distancing which physically acknowledges there is a serious health risk.

## OUR RECORD

April 5, 2020

Sunday Bible Study: NO SERVICE  
Sunday Morning Worship: NO SERVICE  
Sunday Evening Worship: NO SERVICE  
Wednesday Night Bible Study: NO SERVICE  
Budget: \$3,500  
Contribution this week: NO SERVICE

## BULLETIN BY E-MAIL:

Receive bulletin by e-mail notify us:  
[chapmansecretary@ripleycable.net](mailto:chapmansecretary@ripleycable.net)  
Also can view on our website:  
[chapmanchurch.com](http://chapmanchurch.com)

## WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

1. **Hear** the Gospel (Romans 10:13-17).
2. **Believe** the Gospel (Acts 15:7; Mark 16:15, 16).
3. **Repent** of Sins (Acts 3:19).
4. **Confess** Faith in Christ (Acts 8:37).
5. **Be Baptized** for Remission of Sins (Acts 2:38).
6. **Be Faithful** (Revelation 2:10).

Because that would not only be an indication of defeating the purpose for which isolation is intended, which is to minimize contaminating others, but would also acknowledge that one is knowingly putting others in unnecessary danger.

4. God gave governing authorities for the protection of its citizens (Rom. 13:1-5). The laws and bans being instituted because of the Coronavirus are intended to protect lives which is consistent with God's will. If these laws aren't contrary to God's will, we should all adhere (Tit. 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-17). Many brethren have rightly cancelled worship services because inclement weather to also protect members. Meeting for worship is not at all costs. If it was, no one could miss for any reason. It is faithful Christianity that is at all costs (Rev. 2:10; Heb. 10:39).

5. Jesus as well as the old law taught mercy over sacrifice (Mt. 12:7-13). Read Micah 6:6-8. Notice that without mercy sacrifice means nothing. Mercy compassionately helps (Lam. 3:22; Tit. 3:4-5). Disregarding the well-being of others lacks mercy and compassion (Lk. 10:30-37, [33,37]). Christianity and worship are not at the expense of others to needlessly put them in harm's way. Who tells the aged widow she must drive on ice to not miss worship? That isn't even Christian (Mt. 10:16; Acts 16:27-28). Yet, some equally have members treacherously venturing out in the midst of this crisis.

6. Being isolated at home should not prevent us from giving God worship, no more than it did with John being isolated on the isle of Patmos, who was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:9-10). My family will come together at home on Sunday and give God worship until we are able to assemble again with our brethren.

## " A CUP OF COLD WATER "

by Dalton Key

A few years back, a small-town reporter gave an unusual excuse for his abbreviated, barely-there story. He explained, "First, nothing happened. And second, what did happen happened to people who don't happen to want everybody to know what happened."

There are always those who are quick to point an accusing finger at the lifelessness of the church, where, as they may say, "Nothing is happening!" Yet, beneath the congregational crust, in the day-to-day lives of sincere, consecrated members, a great deal is happening! The church's hardest workers are often those least inclined to publicize their own good works. Because of their Christ-like humility, they don't "happen to want everybody to know what happened."

Those murmurers who criticize the local body for being dead and lifeless are too often failing to see the true picture. They fail to see the godly couple, who for years have taken food to an elderly sister. They don't know about the good members who regularly visit the nursing homes and hospitals. The critics haven't heard of the white-haired couple who spend long evenings, often into the wee hours of the morning, teaching an eager neighbor the Gospel of Christ.

No, these and scores of other good works go on right under our very noses. But we want something more sensational, more expensive, more publicized. Matthew 10:42: *"And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."* Christian brother or sister, before you sit in the critic's chair, before you pronounce the local church dead, look a bit deeper. You may be diagnosing no one but yourself!

## LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE

James Pilgrim

The Hebrew writer penned these words, "Let brotherly love continue." (Hebrews 13:1). For something to continue it must first exist. Paul spoke of showing the proof of one's love. (Corinthians 8:8). John admonished Christians, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18). Peter called upon children of God to "Love the brotherhood." (1 Peter 2:17). The love that exists in the family of God at Chapman has been evident through the years. That love has become more apparent and amplified in recent weeks as we faced the pandemic.

First, the love of brethren who have died in the Lord has been seen in their faithfulness to the Lord. These good children of God showed their love for Jesus by their faithfulness to Him as His Bride. Their love was shown in so many ways, including their worship, giving, attendance, works, manner of life, and so much more. They proved the sincerity of their love.

Second, the love of the families of the deceased was seen in their care for their dying loved ones. This love was shown in so many different ways. For some the death of their loved ones came suddenly and unexpectedly. For others, days and weeks were involved. Whatever, love led the families to do what they could.

Third, the love of the Chapman Church for the sick and their families was manifest. Some might not have gone to the homes or hospitals, but you prayed for the sick. You inquired about them and their needs. Some provided food and other things, according to your opportunities. (Galatians 6:10). Hospitals are not equipped to receive every member of the church who might have attended. You realized this, and you prayed and visited in other ways.

Fourth, the recent pandemic has brought out the love that exists at Chapman. Mark Lindley, Chris Moore, and Winston Smith, have spent time in providing us with opportunities to worship via modern technology during these difficult times. They have served well in leading us in songs, sermons, and the observance of the Lord's Supper. We will have an opportunity to give according to our prosperity when we are able to assemble again. Others would have done the same had there been a need. Those checking on fellow citizens in the kingdom have shown the love we have at Chapman. The elders have shown their love for the church in correctly making hard decisions to protect us, while enabling us to worship during these hard times.

Fifth, our beloved preacher has shown his care and concern for us by supporting our brother Starrett Chapman in the death of his beloved wife Linda. Mark's remarks at the grave were uplifting, and showed a heart filled with love and emotions.

Sixth, although our contacts have been few and limited, those we have heard from have been complimentary, encouraging and uplifting, suggesting love, care and concern.

We miss the fellowship of one another, and those bright smiles, and we look forward to being able to assemble again, to enjoy that holy handshake, or even a kiss. (Romans 16:16). Perhaps we will never again take our comradeship casually.

## REMEMBER IN PRAYER

**IN LOVE AND SYMPATHY:** Our hearts go out in deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Cutah Newby.

*Remember count your blessings,  
pray for our lost ones, the sick,  
the world and the broken-hearted.*

•**MILITARY:** James B Chapman  
CJTF-OIRCJ2X  
APO AE 09306

•**EXTENDED ILLNESS:** Mildred Shackelford, Amy May, Johnny Cissom, Buffie Moore, George Doss, Joanie Kate Reese, Louise Pannell, Thad Berryman

•**CANCER:** Marie Brumley, Jimmy Hopper, Keith Hall, Hermie Henry (Bonnie Hurt's Mother), Kay Thompson, Cohen Hurt, Frank Elliott, Jimmy Smith, Lanny Yancey (Treatments), Sandra Jones, Betty Faye Ledbury, Peggy Boggs, Marsha Jones, Nita Trotter, Carolyn Medlin, Niani Colom-Omotesa

•**SHUT-INS:** Resthaven: **Oleta Phillips, Johnnie Carpenter** (Mailing: Resthaven Care Center, 103 Cunningham Drive, Ripley, MS 38663), Tippah County Hospital Nursing Home: **Christine Chapman, Earnestine Murphy** (Mailing: Tippah County Nursing Home, 1005 City Avenue North, Ripley, MS 38663).