

# THE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS MESSENGER

**October 25, 2009**

## **I Have Been The One**

My parents have a large King James Bible sitting on a coffee table shelf that I suppose will stay in the family forever. It contains a number of pictures from scenes depicted in certain verses. One picture is of a shepherd carrying a small sheep across his shoulders as he securely grasps it's front and hind legs. The sheep is pressing its face against the cheek of the shepherd in absolute trust and you can see how content and how safe it feels. That picture has stuck with me throughout my life and the verses that it depicts have as well. **“What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish”** (Matthew 18:12-14).

I have been that one. My Lord has done some traveling to find me in many different circumstances. More than once He has found me in the valley of sorrow and despair, having forgotten about Him and focused solely upon myself and whatever it is that is causing me grief. With empathy and compassion in His eyes He has lifted me upon His shoulders and carried me back home. Other times He has found me on the plains of accusation, frustrated with my circumstances and demanding that He answer for why He is permitting something to happen to me or my family that I would prefer not happen. With a steady gaze He reminds me of those who have suffered much more than I or my family and leads me back up the mountain. At other times He has found me at the cliffs of sin, preparing to make the leap. With a small shake of His head He has led me away from the cliff and my temptation. Yet there have been times when I ignored Him there and made the leap only to be spiritually dashed upon the rocks below. Even down there my Lord has found me. While there is disappointment in His eyes, there is also mercy and kindness as He extends a firm hand to help me up off the rocks and back up the mountain. Yes, I have been that one more times than I care to admit.

How wonderful it is that our Lord will never abandon us, though we have abandoned Him on occasion. **“I will never leave you nor forsake you”** (Hebrews 13:5). How fortunate is the one who is in the family of God! He is never content to say, “Well, we've still got most of them, at least.” Instead, He leaves the faithful safely on top of the mountain and makes the journey to find the one who has, for whatever reason, strayed from the remainder of the flock. When dealing with the family, the one's who are present *do not* make up for the one's who are missing.

I have always been impressed by Christians that I see sitting in waiting rooms of hospitals patiently reading their Bibles while a loved one is undergoing a very serious procedure, one they may not survive or could lead to some very bad news. A man was in the waiting room after receiving some of that bad news about his wife whose body was rapidly failing. He sat down and

opened his Bible while his family was frantic. His daughter asked him how he could just sit there and read after what the doctor had told them. Through streaming tears and quivering lips, he answered simply, "I need to hear His voice." It made me think of John 10:2-4. **"But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice."** The man was down in the valley of despair. *He* was the one being carried back up the mountain on the shoulders of his Master.

Whether it is sorrow or sin how fortunate we are to have a Savior who will follow us out into the wild and bring us back if we are willing to come. How fortunate we are to have a Savior who tells us that He died for us personally as He extends His hand of healing, mercy, and grace. How foolish we are if we refuse to grasp it.

I have seen the righteous suffer and I have seen them sorrow. I have seen the righteous leave the Lord and cease being righteous. Yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken (Psalm 37:25) and I know that I never will. How fortunate we are to have a Lord who willingly leaves the ninety-nine to find the one. How many times have *you* been the one?

Adam

In Need of Prayers	Information
<p>Sharon Tirey continues her cancer treatments.</p> <p>Keep Kristen Osterling and her baby boy in mind as he has some problems.</p> <p>Lilly Fitzwater (Bill Morelan's mother) is in a care facility in Ohio. Bill does not believe that shall will be able to leave.</p> <p>Rachel Knollman was tested for gestational diabetes and the tests were negative. She is beginning to feel markedly better.</p> <p>Chuck McDavitt</p> <p>Ron Catchen</p> <p>David Blakeman</p>	<p>Our Gospel Meeting with Brother David Lanius (Overland) is November 8-13 (Sunday-Friday). Invitations with the dates, times, and topics are in the back. Please remember to take some to give to friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Also, make your plans to attend each night!</p> <p>I will be speaking for the brethren at the Northern Kentucky congregation November 1-5. Thank you very much to the men who will be filling in for me that Sunday as well as the week of Jacob's arrival, which my wife is certain will never come!</p> <p>If you know someone who should be added to the prayer list, please let me know in <b>writing</b>. Thanks!</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>University Height Church of Christ</b>  <b>445 Columbia Avenue</b>  <b>Lexington, Ky 40508</b>  <b>859-255-6257</b>  <b>www.uheightschurch.com</b></p>