

# THE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS MESSENGER

January 3, 2010

## Listening To Frank

Before moving here we had the bathroom in Cincinnati updated. Several companies offered quotes. Frank was one of them and he owned his small company. When he found out what I did his face lit up. He's a very religious man but he doesn't get to talk much about his faith during his job. In his exuberance, he began to talk a mile a minute, explaining to me his philosophy on religion. I wasn't able to get a word in edge wise but that was fine. It's a joy to see someone so enthusiastic about their spiritual life and Frank's enthusiasm was apparent. Besides, you learn much more about a person and their beliefs by listening rather than talking.

Frank is a very good and decent man. However, his way of thinking has obviously been greatly influenced by the current climate of the religious world. He asked me what I and my brethren were. I explained to him that we are members of the Church of Christ, those who strive to be the church of the first century. He asked, "So then are you Baptist or Catholic?" I responded that we are neither, we are simply Christians. He said, "I'm a Christian also. I'm a Catholic Christian. So what are you, Baptist or Catholic or what?" I did not really get an opportunity to explain further due to his phone ringing. When he came back, he went to another topic.

In Matthew 16:15-19, we read: **"He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'"**

How sad it is that so many religious people never stop to consider the implications of Jesus' words. His statement that He would build His church was singular, not plural. As Frank spoke, I was also reminded of Paul's words in Ephesians 1:22-23. **"And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all."** It's easy to understand that Jesus had only one body. The difficulty sometimes is getting folks to make that connection to the church.

It must have been simpler (though not easier) to be a Christian in the first century. If a person decides to give themselves to Christ and become a Christian now, they are faced with an incredibly diverse "Christian" landscape. They study their Bibles, see what the first century church did, determine to do only that, and then search (for a long time on occasion) to find a group worshipping after that pattern. Sometimes they can find one, sometimes they must start one themselves, and sometimes they are lured away by the enticements and modern conveniences of the denominations. The **"one body"** of Ephesians 4:4 is not a popular teaching in our modern religious world. Consequently, many good and decent people never hear it and never *really* consider its meaning when they read it on their own.

When Frank came back from his phone call he informed me that he was a Catholic, his wife was Pentecostal (I think), and his children were being raised Baptist. It was obvious that he felt proud of the

religious diversity within his family. He encouraged it. He told me that he liked to do work for churches because he would do almost everything at cost. He felt he was serving God and helping fellow Christians. He told me that he considers all people in all churches his brothers and sisters in Christ.

Frank was not just saying all of this to look good, either. It was obvious that he sincerely meant every word that he said. He truly does consider all people in all churches his brethren and he truly does feel as though he is serving God and Christians by doing work in church buildings at cost. Frank is truly a good man. That fact is what caused me to reflect on Romans 10:1-3 as he spoke. Paul says: **“Brothers, my hearts desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.”**

It is a proper and noble desire to want to fellowship everyone who claims to worship and love Christ. Yet in our Jesus’ day there were many people who called Him their Master, but were really not His disciples. In Luke 6:46, He said, **“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?”** “Actions speak louder than words” is not just a tired cliché, it’s very biblical teaching as Matthew 7:15-27 demonstrates. The truth is that there are many people calling themselves Christians whose conduct, practice, and teaching betrays them. The truth is that there are too many “Churches” to count that have no right to exist because they are not founded upon the practices and truth found within God’s Word. While I would like to share spiritual fellowship with as many people as possible, I simply cannot fellowship those whom the Lord will not.

Frank had to leave the house before we could discuss these things. I called his office to see if he’d like to set up a study but sadly never heard from him. Armed with the truth and an understanding of it, Frank would make a very strong soldier of Christ. He is a good man. It is the truth of God’s Word and submission to it that turns good men into saved men.

Adam

In Need of Prayers	Information
<p>Jim Edwards is struggling with dizziness. All tests have come up clean thus far. He has started a new medication that <i>may</i> be helping a bit as he stated that he felt a little better Friday. It’s still too early to know for sure, however.</p> <p>Taylor Osterling is home and currently stable.</p> <p>Michelle Oxendine (friend of Jim Edwards) is dealing with some health problems.</p> <p>David Day and his wife have been deployed to Iraq.</p> <p>Rachel and Carter Knollman are doing well.</p> <p>Remember Ron Catchen, Chuck McDavitt, and David Blakeman.</p>	<p>Rachel Crawford’s aunt, Gail Stein, has been diagnosed with breast cancer. They are not sure how far along it is but she is going to do chemo and radiation before surgery.</p> <p>Please continue to reach out and pray for Esmeralda Agustin. She has ceased attending completely and has expressed satisfaction with the way things stand in her life. A soul is at stake.</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>