

The University Heights Messenger

January 16, 2010

What Can I Do?

As Jesus spoke of false prophets in Matthew 7:15-20, he stated something in verse 20 that is true of every person, not just false teachers. **“Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.”**

Scripture consistently reminds us that our actions will tell people more about our character than our words will. 1 John 3:18 says, **“Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”** James 2:15-16 says, **“If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?”** In Matthew 25:40, Jesus said, **“Truly, I say to you, as you *did* it to one of the least of these my brothers, you *did* it to me.”** The point is clear: professions of faith and love are meaningless without accompanying actions to *prove* them.

The best Christians are the one's who are constantly asking themselves what more they can do for Christ and their brethren. They're the one's who have grown to love their brethren to such an extent that they've developed hearts attuned to their needs. Yet sometimes they have some difficulty identifying opportunities. For just a moment let's consider the opportunities provided within this congregation that will allow us as Christians to *act* upon our professions of faith and love and thus prove them.

The Spiritually Needy

I have yet to come across the congregation that did not have at least a member or two struggling in their spiritual life. How can we tell who they are? Generally they will show their struggles through their actions. Refusal to assemble (Hebrews 10:25) with the

saints is a sign of a deeper problem. Failure to really engage in the worship when one is present is a sign. Whenever a Christian suddenly refuses to take part in the singing (Ephesians 5:19) or refuses to open his Bible during the Scripture readings or sermons (Acts 17:11), he is likely showing signs of spiritual weakness and struggle. Comments that are made can also show signs.

When we identify them let's carefully consider what we may be able to do to help. Some may need simple encouragement. Others may be *hoping* that one of their brethren approaches them so that they can talk over an issue in their life. Others may need a firm admonition, even a rebuke. Regardless of the method, let us remember that our goal is to restore the erring (Galatians 6:1).

Have we *all* demonstrated our love for those struggling spiritually in this congregation by reaching out to them? Have we *proven* our profession of faith and love through our actions?

The Physically Needy

Jaclyn and I have commented to one another several times how active this congregation is when it comes to helping a brother or sister in physical need. There are Christians here who remind me of Paul's commendation of the Christians in Macedonia who quite literally begged to be allowed to aid their fellow saints materially (2 Corinthians 8:1-5). Such opportunities exist in this congregation.

A meal list is posted for our brother Jeff Howerton (filled at this time) in the back. That it filled up so quickly is a testament to the love of this congregation for a needy brother. But did *you* seek to sign your name? Of course, taking a meal to Jeff is not the only way to encourage him. But have you sought to do so?

What of the others who are sick and in need of encouragement? Personally I can do much better in this area than I have done and I know others feel the same about themselves for many of you have told me. We must grow to the point where we truly understand that helping and encouraging our physically struggling brethren is equivalent to helping the Lord (Matthew 25:40). Because this congregation is filled with genuinely loving hearts I have no doubt but that we'll all get there. Let us prove our professions of love for our brethren by helping and encouraging those in physical need.

Telling Others About The Learning Opportunities Made Available By This Congregation

All of us know people who are lost. The majority of this congregation's membership is surrounded by the lost on a daily basis, either at work or school. Very few people who have been converted to the Lord happened to come across a faithful congregation and decided to just walk in off the street and request a Bible study. Very few decided to take the time to examine the Scriptures carefully and arrived at a knowledge of the truth all by themselves. Both of these things have happened, yet they are both exceedingly rare. Much more often a faithful Christian acquaintance of theirs spoke to them and convinced them over time to study God's Word with them.

At this congregation we make bulletin articles and audio sermons available on the website. Soon, a complete on-line correspondance course will be available from the site. Each Tuesday night we engage in a live, streaming Bible study that is also archived and viewable at any time. All of this besides our public worship service which takes place *11* times this month alone. What tremendous opportunities! Are we proving our profession of loving souls by telling our lost contacts these things?

AL

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Jeff Howerton is at home receiving treatments.

Waylon Marples (family of Gina Seabolt) remains in grave condition due to H1N1. His lungs continue to remain in poor condition.

Tabetha Lynn (niece of Gina Seabolt's sister-in-law) is in critical condition after a very serious car accident. Thus far both of her legs have had to be amputated.

Our members: **Jim Edwards, Glenn Davis, Glenn Kimberlin.**

Others: **Vina Krassow, Glyon Hill, Tom Curtis, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Wes Kidd, Gail Stein, Shannon Gilbert**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Streaming Bible study every Tuesday at 7.

The congregational meeting will be next Sunday at 5.

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Sun: Hos 2-5, Ps 136, 1 Pet 1-2

Mon: Hos 6-9, Ps 137, 1 Per 3-5

Tue: Hos 10-14, Ps 138, 2 Pet 1-3

Wed: Joel 1-3, Ps 139, 1 Jn 1-2

Thu: Amos 1-5, Ps 140, 1 Jn 3-5

Fri: Amos 6-9, Ps 141, 2 Jn, 3 Jn, Jude

Sat: Obad, Jonah, Ps 142, Rev 1

SERMON TOPICS:

Sunday AM. Philippians: A Message of Joy
Jesus Christ: The Definition Of Humility
(Philippians 2:1-11)

Sunday PM. "Unless You Repent..."
(Luke 13:1-5)