

GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION

- Hear the gospel (Romans 10:17)
- Believe Jesus is the Christ (John 3:16)
- Repent from sins (Luke 13:3)
- Confess faith in Jesus (Romans 10:9-10)
- Be baptized for remission of sins (Acts 2:38)
- Live worthy of the calling (Ephesians 4:1)

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

**List:**  
**New: DJ Matthews** (uncle of Julie Patton) passed away last week. Let’s keep Julie and her family in our prayers.  
**Our members:** Jeff Howerton, Paul Atkisson

**Others:** Mamie Dart, Casey Sparrow, Hope Vinogradov, Barabara Matheny, David Morrow, Debbie Parker, Vina Krassow, John Bennett, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Gail Stein, Sandy Childress, Susie Burton, Jacob Profit, Valarie and Barry Boyd, Leroy Weatherholt, Tony Tyree, Wilma Lawson, Janett Brundige’s mother and stepfather, Diane Whitehead, Tony Tyree, Sandy Driver, Autumn Fox, Beth Erickson

WEEKLY READING		LEADERSHIP		SERVICES
Mon	Judges 7-8, Luke 22	ELDERS	DEACONS	Sunday
Tue	Judges 9-11, Luke 23, Psalm 17	Garry Banks	Troy Antle	Bible Study: 9:45 AM
Wed	Judges 12-16, Luke 24, Psalm 146	David Collins	Richard Brundige	Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM
Thu	Judges 17-18, Acts 1, Psalm 21	John Thompson	Matt Thompson	Wednesday
Fri	Judges 19-21, Acts 2	Adam Litmer	Adam Litmer	Bible Study: 7:30 PM
		EVANGELIST	Bill Morelan	1st Fri. of Month
		Adam Litmer	Jim Parsons	Singing: 7:30 PM
			Pat Seabolt	3rd Fri. of Month
			Adam Daniels	Bible Study: 7:00 PM
			Jamie Powell	(Finished for the time being)

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

445 Columbia Ave., Lexington, KY 40508  
(859) 255-6257 – www.uheightschurch.com

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What If God Were Like Me?

There are many who refuse to believe in God because they say if there really were a God things on this earth would be different. They would do things a certain way and they will not believe in a God who does things differently. In essence, they refuse to believe in a God who is not a mirror image of them. We could discuss how and why God is different by examining many of His own statements in Scripture and do so to great benefit. However, for the purposes of this article we’re going to consider the question stated in the title. What if God really were like me? What if He thought like me, behaved like me, and spoke like me? 1 Peter 1:14-16 says, “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy’.” We are called upon to conduct ourselves in a holy manner just as the One who called us is holy. But what if the Holy One, if only for a month, chose to conduct Himself after the pattern that He sees in us? How much do you suppose would change?

“Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish.”  
Philippians 2:14-15a

Psalms 34:15 says, “The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cries.” Hebrews 4:16 says, “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” It is wonderfully comforting knowing that God’s eyes and ears are always inclined toward the saint. But would that still be the case for the month He patterned His conduct after ours? Would there be times when He was not very inclined at all to see, listen to, and help His saints through their daily struggles? Would He be too tired, preoccupied, or self-absorbed to care?

Ezekiel 18:21-23 says, “But if a wicked person turns from all his sins that he has committed and keeps all my statutes and does what is just and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions that he has committed shall be remembered against him; for the righteousness that he has done he shall live. Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?” More than anything else our God wants to be able to forgive a person of their sins and enjoy a saving relationship with them. The entirety of Scripture is about the deployment and fruition of a plan to accomplish His will in this matter. But would

that still be the case for the month He patterned His conduct after ours? Would a desire and willingness to forgive characterize Him for that month? Or is it possible that He would become a grudge-holder for the month, refusing to forgive those who slighted Him even as they repent and ask forgiveness?

Malachi 3:10 says, “*Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.*” Our God has always been eager to pour blessings upon His people, physically and spiritually. But would that still be the case for the month He patterned His conduct after ours? Would He eagerly rain spiritual blessings upon those faithful to His cause? Or is it possible that He’d be too preoccupied with Himself to even appreciate those working for and trusting in Him?

Of course, God is *not* going to pattern His conduct after ours. He is *always* faithful and true even when we’re not. Indeed, we’re commanded to imitate Him, not the other way around (Ephesians 5:1). However, answering these questions tells us a great deal about ourselves, doesn’t it? Did you like the answers? Adam Litmer

**Wronged No One, Corrupted No One, Taken Advantage Of No One.**

Have you ever been taken advantage of? Have you ever been around a corrupting influence? Have you ever been wronged? We all have and thus we all know just how difficult it is to make room in our hearts for an individual who perpetrates any of these things upon us.

The apostle Paul knew the damaging effects of such behavior and wrote a reminder to the Corinthians on the topic. “*Make room in your hearts for us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one*” (2 Corinthians 7:2). Let’s spend a few minutes considering this verse.

Paul longed for the Corinthians to make room in their hearts for him. In 6:11-13 he spoke in very touching terms about his feelings for them. “*We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.*” Though his opponents claimed that Paul possessed no genuine affection for them, his heart felt words show otherwise. His heart was open to them, he kept them in his thoughts and prayers always, he remembered them with the most tender affection. He pleads with them to do the same for him. However, note that he based this plea upon three things: we did not wrong anyone, we did not corrupt anyone, and we did not take advantage of anyone. Let’s pursue these thoughts a bit further.

It is possible that Paul’s enemies were charging him with some specific case of wronging someone, perhaps the incestuous man that he had handed over to Satan in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5. Whether that event was under consideration or not, the charge is that Paul was treating people unjustly, or injuriously (the meaning of the word for “wronged”). All we

need do is consider Paul’s life and we can confidently say he did not make wounding others a practice. However, because he *did* deal with sin the way it had to be dealt with it is easy to see how those who were more interested in worldly things than spiritual would have claimed Paul wronged them in his handling and condemnation of their sins.

Second, regardless of his opponent’s accusation, Paul had not corrupted any of the Corinthians. The word for “corrupted” in this place refers to moral corruption, the very thing Paul warned against in 1 Corinthians 15:33. In truth it was the Corinthians themselves, or at least Paul’s enemies among them, who were guilty of a corrupting influence. False teachers were hurting the morals of the Corinthian Christians. Paul was frightened at the prospect and spoke of his fear in 11:3. “*But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*”

Paul’s opponents took things a step further. Portraying him as a man of pride, they accused him of taking advantage of the Corinthians. The phrase refers to defrauding others by using them for selfish gain. Take a moment to read 12:17-18 to see Paul defend himself in more detail from this charge. In fact, his opponents had to ignore the facts to even consider making this heinous accusation. Paul had earlier told them “*love does not insist on its own way*” (1 Corinthians 13:5). Paul was not one to behave oppositely of his instruction. Indeed, his conduct was always absolutely becoming of a Christian. He treated all people, particularly his brethren, with the upmost dignity and honor. Did he correct sin and error? Strongly. Did he defend himself against false accusations? Vehemently. Did he live in accordance with his claim to Christ? Always. So too must you and I (Philippians 1:27).

Because the true Christian imbibes the **love** of Jesus Christ, he will never be found guilty of treating someone unjustly. Because the true Christian imbibes the **morals** of Jesus Christ, he will never be found guilty of corrupting the morals of anyone. Because the true Christian imbibes the **humility** of Jesus Christ, he will never be found guilty of taking advantage of anyone. This is a fitting description of Paul. What about us? Adam Litmer

**Sermons:** John Thompson will be preaching  
Garry Banks will be preaching

**Reading:** (AM) Psalm 34:1-10  
(PM) Psalm 34:11-22

**The Blog:** The blog will be updated tomorrow morning.