

**University Heights Church
of Christ**
445 Columbia Ave.,
Lexington, KY 40508
(859) 255-6257
www.uheightschurch.com

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday

Bible Study: 9:45 AM
Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7:30 PM (This is
immediately followed by a
short worship period)

First Friday of Each Month

Singing: 7:30 PM

LEADERSHIP

Elders

Garry Banks, David Collins,
John Thompson

Evangelist

Adam Litmer

Deacons

Troy Antle, Richard Brundige,
Matt Thompson, Adam
Litmer, Bill Morelan, Jim
Parsons, Pat Seabolt, Adam
Daniels, Jamie Powell

Some Housekeeping

Next Sunday I will be preaching a sermon in answer of a question I received from a member a while back. I don't always get to these as quickly as I would like (or should), as I tend to plan my sermons fairly far ahead. However, many of the bulletin articles are written in response to questions asked, even if I don't necessarily make mention of having received the question in the article. Remember to use the suggestion box in the back for sermon or bulletin topics you'd like to hear. If you prefer it in a sermon let me know. I intend to deal with them much sooner than I have been so please don't hesitate to offer your requests or questions.

Speaking of the bulletin, take a few minutes to read the articles themselves if you haven't been in the habit of doing so. The back page is important as it tells us who needs prayers and reminds us of any upcoming events. However, the "meat" of the bulletin is found in the first three pages and is designed to teach and encourage through careful consideration of God's Word. My article marks the beginning of a study through Mark's gospel. Brother John's articles are always very thought provoking and encouraging. His article today, based upon a very meaningful song, is certainly no exception. Be sure to take advantage of this avenue of study.

Speaking of the bulletin again, we have mentioned that men can submit articles of their own writing in the past but haven't really encouraged it much. Consider this the encouragement. Do you have a topic in mind? Study up and put it down in writing.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Paul Atkisson, Barbara Matheny, David Morrow, Debbie Parker, Vina Krissow, John Bennett, Robert Brundige, Donald Dawson, Gail Stein, Sandy Childress, Susie Burton, Jacob Profit, Valerie and Barry Boyd, Wilma Lawson, Jannett's mother and stepfather, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young, Doris Baker, Lyn Kincaid, Bernard Larch

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The Beginning...

Adam Litmer

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Mark 1:1

The above statement comprises the entirety of Mark's introductory comments concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this way Mark is very different from the three other gospel writers. Matthew and Luke take the time to consider the events leading up to our Lord's public ministry by focusing upon his family and genealogy. John's famous introduction to his gospel considers the great theological foundations upon which it rests. In typical fashion, Mark forgoes any such preamble to jump directly into the mix. We should expect no less from the man who wrote the gospel of "action", rapidly leading us from one event to the next throughout the life of Jesus Christ.

Even so, Mark's stunningly brief introduction is full of meaning. The gospel is of Jesus Christ. It is all about him; what he taught and what he did. Romans 1:16 tells us this about the gospel: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* The gospel is God's power for salvation and Jesus Christ stands directly at the heart of the gospel.

These days a distinction is often drawn between "gospel" and "doctrine". We are told the gospel contains just the facts about Jesus and has only to be believed (mental assent) to secure one's salvation. Doctrine, we are told, is that which is obeyed. It is much less important for salvation does not hinge upon obeying doctrine, but believing the gospel. God Himself draws no such distinction as evidenced from Romans 10:16 and similar passages. *But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, Lord who has believed our report?* One may rightly ask how facts (which we are told is what the gospel is) are to be obeyed. Paul shows us that obedience and belief are part and parcel of saving faith. In the same verse he shows us that there is more to the gospel than simple facts. Thus, uninspired men largely manufacture the distinction between gospel and doctrine.

Having said all of this, I want to mention a statement made by a young Christian woman from several years ago that emphasizes a problem that is likely a bit more common than we may think. She had become a Christian and went through a “new Christian” class at the congregation she attended. In the two years required to complete that class she listened to numerous sermons from the local preachers as well as visiting preachers during meetings. At the conclusion of those two years she said the following (this is paraphrased): “I feel like I know all about the church, its organization, and the pattern for worship. I feel like I can talk about instrumental music, institutionalism, church discipline, the head covering, MDR, and many other issues. Now I’d really like to learn more about Jesus Christ.”

The young woman’s statement caused a tremendous amount of soul searching from the preachers and elders of that congregation and rightly so. While all of the topics that young sister mentioned *connect* to Jesus Christ, she was simply not hearing much *about* him. The church that becomes issue driven rather than Christ driven has missed the point entirely. Do not misunderstand, the church that is centered on Christ will seek the truth on any issue that comes before it and will prepare itself for potential errors and battles that could eventually manifest themselves. However, the thing they cling to is *the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*. It is his gospel, it is about him, and it is because of him. Jesus Christ must stand at the very center of all of our preaching and teaching.

As we begin to consider Mark’s amazing gospel, let’s ensure that we keep Jesus where Mark keeps him and where he always belongs—right in the center of everything.

Wonderful Words of Life

John Thompson

There is a song entitled Wonderful Words of Life. It is a song that captures the uniqueness of the Bible; a book like none other; a book that far outshines any literary endeavor by mere humans. The song begins:

Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life;

Let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life.

Words of life and beauty, teach me faith and duty:

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life;

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Peter and the other apostles recognized that the message Jesus was bringing to the world was a special message, a message that had everything to do with eternal life.

The day after Jesus fed the five thousand and walked on water, the crowds found him again. Jesus’ subsequent teaching at this time contained several concepts that were difficult to hear and even more difficult to understand. It was at this point that many of those who had been following him turned away. What they were hearing required more from them than they were willing to give. Jesus then asked His twelve apostles, “*Do you want to go away as well?*” Simon Peter, always ready and eager to make a statement, got it absolutely right this time. He said, “*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.*” (John 6:68-69)

Christ, the blessed One gives to all, wonderful words of life;

Sinner, list to the loving call, wonderful words of life.

All so freely given, wooing us to heaven:

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life;

Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

The words pertaining to eternal life have been freely given to us. We did not have to ask for them, or beg God to give them to us. We did not bargain for them or demand them from God. God has provided His word to us as an act of His free will. Wonderful words of life are not a work of fiction but are directive, instructive, and so very needful. God, in His mercy, extends His hands toward us holding forth words of life, and saying to us, “Here, take them; study them; live by them because you need them. They will help you; they will save you.”

Not only are these words of life freely given, they also woo us to heaven. What a beautiful way of expressing the power of the Bible to get us to focus on our eternal souls. Paul wrote in Romans 1:16, “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith.*.” God’s word woos us, attracts us, courts us, wants us to desire and embrace it. The Bible says of itself: *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.* (2 Timothy 3:16-17) *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.* (Hebrews 4:12)

“*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*”