

**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

Prayer for safety

Many of us will be traveling
quite a bit over the holidays.
Let's make special effort to
remember our traveling
brethren in our prayers over
the following days.

Continued...

*a hope that enters into the inner place behind the
curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our
behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order
of Melchizedek.*

Hope is the steadying influence in our lives. Without
it, despair soon takes over. But hope will keep us steadfast,
immoveable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord.
Hope will enable us to resist the devil and flee from him.
Praying without ceasing becomes our normal practice when
we are full of hope. Making every effort to present
ourselves acceptable unto God, workers that have no need to
be ashamed as we correctly handle the word of truth is our
daily business when hope rules our lives. Hope will make
meditating day and night on the law of the Lord a delight.
Hope makes not conforming to the world, but being
transformed by the renewing of our minds something to be
desired not dreaded. We need to remind ourselves regularly
and often that the hope we have through Christ Jesus our
Lord will see us through any tragic thing we might
experience in the world. Hope always defeats despair.

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, Burnice
Richardson

University Heights Messenger

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“Jesus Came...Proclaiming The Gospel Of God”

Mark 1:14-15

Adam Litmer

Mark tells us that Jesus came preaching the gospel of God after John was arrested.
For Mark, John has served his purpose and is removed from the account until his death in
the sixth chapter. From this point forward Mark focuses exclusively upon Jesus himself.
Having overcome Satan during an intense period of temptation in the wilderness (verses
12-13), Jesus came into Galilee to proclaim the gospel of God (Mark does not speak of
our Lord's visit to Jerusalem or his journey through Samaria to reach Galilee. See John
2:13-4:42 for the events that occurred during those days). It was clearly easier for Jesus to
begin his ministry in earnest in Galilee than it would have been in and around Jerusalem.
Because of this it is sometimes thought that Galilee was a quiet backwater without much
going on. The following statement from Stuart Blanch may help us better understand the
climate of Galilee at the time.

*Galilee was the center of a humming political and commercial life. It stood at the
crossroads of the nations of the ancient world, through which the armies and the traders
and the diplomats passed. There some of the greatest battles of the world had been
fought...Galilee was the home of a thoroughly cosmopolitan population: Greek, Hebrew,
and Aramaic would all be heard in the markets; Syrian, Jew, Roman, and Parthian mixed
freely. It was a land of passing excitements and dangerous fashions, of a barbarous
dialect and offensive manners.*

Our Lord's proclamation of the gospel contained two declarations and two
commands. The declarations were, *The time is fulfilled* and *the kingdom of God is at
hand*. The commands were, *Repent* and *believe in the gospel*. Let's consider each of these
for the remainder of this article.

The time is fulfilled. Not all moments in time are created equal, nor is their
importance determined by mere chronology. The day I began my first job pales in
comparison to the day I said my marriage vows. The moment I purchased my first car
does not even rate in comparison to the moments of the birth of my children. Even the
days of my marriage and the birth of my children are not as important as the day I
committed myself to Jesus Christ. Some days and times are simply more important than
others. Since creation itself, no period of time had been more important than that which

began the moment our Lord opened his mouth to start his ministry. That was because of the message contained within our Lord’s proclamation.

The kingdom of God is at hand. The experts in ancient language tell us that the Aramaic term behind the Greek word for “kingdom” means “*kingly rule, sovereignty, or reign.*” They tell us that it deals with the *fact* of reign rather than the *location* of it. It was always God’s plan to set His king upon Zion, His holy hill (Psalm 2:6-12). In chapter 4 Mark will more clearly define this reign for us in a series of parables. There we will see the rule of heaven portrayed as God’s reign in the hearts of men by the gospel.

While there is no doubt that the rule of God is the primary emphasis in our Lord’s teaching, I cannot help but think that we see a reference to the church here as well. After all, those who willingly submit to the rule of God are called “the church” in Acts and the epistles. Sometimes (though not always) the terms *kingdom* and *church* are used interchangeably (Colossians 1:13; Revelation 5:9-10).

With the coming of Jesus the kingdom of God was very much at hand. It began its approaching with the work of John (Matthew 3:1-2), and accelerated with the ministry of Jesus. So much contained within the Old Testament pointed specifically to this period in history. How extraordinary it must have been to live in those days, to have gazed upon the face of Jesus Christ and heard the words coming from his lips! There could only be one proper response to such an incredible message.

Repent and believe in the gospel. No definition of repentance is satisfactory unless it contains within it reformation of a sinful life. It is for this reason that John’s message, which was all about repentance, required very specific changes in the conduct of the people (Luke 3:7-14). Repentance (changed mind and life) was essential for the people to receive the rule of heaven. Of course, repentance is caused by genuine belief, or faith, in the gospel.

Our Lord’s rule continues today. Repentance and belief in the gospel are just as important now as they were then. The message that began in Galilee so long ago is the message that continues to sound forth today. How will you respond?

Hope Defeats Despair

John Thompson

World events have become almost unbearable to witness these days. Not a day goes by free from instances of man’s inhumanity to his fellow human beings. Usually there are multiple violent attacks; many purposely meant to kill as many innocent people as possible. Radical ideologies rule their adherents and the most despicable acts of violence the mind of man can conceive are rewarded, not condemned. The beauty of God’s creation; the fact that man was created in the image of the One who created him; the kindnesses that occur between individuals; the comfort received by the simple act of worshipping the one true and living God; the fact that the local church of which we are part is the body of Christ, all begin to be obscured, clouded over, hidden by witnessing the world’s tragedies. It is like looking upward and seeing nothing more than black storm clouds coming ever closer. The sun is no longer

visible; the wind has become frightening, and we are frozen in place, despair having robbed us of our ability to reach a safe place. How easy it is to lose hope, to foresee no way for conditions to get better, to feel helpless to make a difference, to despair.

If anyone had reason to despair it was the Apostle Paul. It is hard to imagine anyone suffering more than that godly man. Of all of the achievements Paul could have boasted about, he chose to boast about his sufferings for the cause of Christ. He wrote in 2 Corinthians 11:21-30, *But whatever anyone else dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant? If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.*

What inner strength Paul had! However, he also had his moments when despair knocked at his door. He began his letter to the Christians in Corinth with these words, *For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death.* (2 Corinthians 1:8-9). On another occasion, as Paul arrived in Athens he saw rampant idolatry. Perhaps he did not despair over what he saw, but he was greatly distressed. (Acts 17:16) Returning now to Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians, he wrote that he realized there was a purpose to his suffering, a purpose that gave him hope rather than solidifying his despair. *Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.* (2 Corinthians 1:9-10)

Hope is such a grand blessing, isn’t it? Hebrews 6:17-20 gives us a wonderful illustration of what hope means to us. *So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul,* (See next page...)