

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

Adam's Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday (8:30-4:00)

On A Sad Note

Rick Spivey passed away last Wednesday. Let us keep Jim and his family in our prayers during this difficult time.

God Is Not Man And Man Is Not God (continued)

Christians have an obligation and opportunity to show the world that man does an extreme disservice to his fellow humans and seriously diminishes the status that belongs to God alone when he strives to be god. Remember what Jesus did!

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:1-8)

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, Bernard Larch, Burnice Richardson, Ruth Poynter, Janice Parsons, Jim Spivey's father, the Dillard family

University Heights Messenger

Volume 7--Number 13

March 22, 2015

A Sobering Warning

Adam Litmer

Matthew 7:21-23 is a passage that many Christians can quote verbatim. In it Jesus says, *Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophecy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. Great familiarity with Bible verses has an unfortunate tendency to cause us to hustle through them in our reading. If we're not careful we can read familiar passages with our brains set to cruise control. Thus, it's a good idea to take the time to seriously consider the teaching of well-known verses such as these.*

There is a tendency among religious folks to look at these verses and automatically assume that Jesus is speaking of drunkards, adulterers, cheaters, thieves, murderers, and just generally the moral dregs a particular society has to offer. A closer look at the text shows such a position to be incorrect. The people in this scene claimed to have prophesied in the name of Jesus, cast out demons in the name of Jesus, and did many mighty works in his name. These are spiritually minded people. Their neighbors would have called them good and kind. There would have been very little doubt in the minds of those who knew them that these people were pleasing God in their lives. They were wrong.

The problem, according to our Lord, is that these good and kind people were workers of lawlessness. 1 John 3:4 defines lawlessness in this way: *Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.* Lawlessness is sin. I sincerely doubt that the people described in this verse were engaged in some of the sins mentioned above (drunkenness, thieves, murders, etc). Perhaps these people made a habit of telling little white lies (Revelation 21:8). Maybe they refused to make the best use of their time, preferring to immerse themselves in worldly entertainment rather than that which would help them spiritually (Ephesians 5:15-17). Perhaps they accepted and promoted false teaching (2 John 9-11). None of these things (and we could list many more) are thought of as "serious" sins. Indeed,

the vast majority of “Christian” people in our country see little wrong with them. Perhaps they are worthy of a gentle rebuke, maybe even a slap on the wrist, but certainly not eternal damnation! That terrible judgment is reserved for murderers and devil worshippers; certainly not those who claim to love Christ! Not so, says the Lord. That condemnation is for those who work (indicating a consistent practice, a manner of life) lawlessness (sin). It matters not how good or kind their neighbors believe them to be.

I fear there is a tendency among some members of the Lord’s body to read Matthew 7:21-23 and apply it immediately (perhaps exclusively?) to our denominational friends. Do not make that mistake! Carefully consider that the people of this passage actually *were* casting out demons, prophesying, and doing mighty works. There is no reason to conclude they were lying to Jesus. This indicates that they really possessed the miraculous power necessary to do these things. What are we to conclude from this? We conclude that these really *were* children of God, at least at one time. These people stopped doing the will of the Father in heaven (7:21b). Let this remind us that sins of omission are still sins!

Beloved, we put tremendous importance on possessing a “thus saith the Lord” for the things that we believe and teach. That is as it should be for saving faith can only come from the words of Christ, whether spoken directly or through an inspired writer (Romans 10:17; 1 Corinthians 14:37-38). But let us be sure that our “thus saith the Lord” encompasses *everything the Lord said*. He who said, *Whoever believes and is baptized shall be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned*, also said (through an inspired writer), *Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourself. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*” If I choose to live selfishly throughout my life understanding baptism’s place in salvation does not change the fact that I am violating the Father’s will on a daily basis. I may teach many classes, preach many sermons, and drop off a lot of meals. None of that, however, permits me to live in sin in another area of my life. It doesn’t for you, either.

Our Lord delivers a very sobering warning in Matthew 7:21-23. Let it not go unheeded.

God Is Not Man and Man Is Not God **John Thompson**

Mankind, it seems, has never quite grasped the two vital truths contained in the title, but it wasn’t that way in the beginning. In the beginning there was no need for God to tell Adam and Eve what He instructed Balaam to say to Balak hundreds of years later, i.e. “God is not man.” (Numbers 23:19) God did not have to make a special point to inform them that His name is Jealous (Exodus 34:14), that they were not to place

anything, including themselves, above their Creator. Nor did God have to inform them of his eternal essence like He did Moses in Exodus 3:14 when He said “I Am that I Am.” They knew who God is and they knew who they were, and they knew the proper relationship between the two. Furthermore, they were quite satisfied with the arrangement and did not attempt to elevate themselves to the position that only God can occupy, until Satan came along.

Satan said to Eve, “Eat the fruit that God has said is off limits to you, and your eyes will be opened and you will be like God.”(Paraphrased) Now Satan did say that she would be like God knowing good and evil, but one wonders if she even heard the good and evil part. It may be that the thought of being like God connected so closely with her latent pride of life that she failed to contemplate how a knowledge of evil might work against her. Ever since, God has had to periodically instruct mankind that He is categorically different from man; He is not man. Nor is man God.

There is a corollary that naturally follows the truth that God is not man. That corollary is: man is not God. The problem, however, is that even though man may sometimes acknowledge that God is not man, he strives to place himself in position to be a god to others. The temptation to grasp the handle of being a god has overwhelmed far too many heads of state throughout history. Egyptians, Chinese, Japanese, Incans, Romans, and so many others have demanded to be worshipped as a god. Nebuchadnezzar and his golden statue; Xerxes, who killed any who entered his presence unbidden; Ahab, who believed it was his right to murder Naboth to obtain his vineyard; and David, who stooped to having a man killed so he could have his wife, are all Biblical examples proving that the temptation to be god extends to everyone. No one is immune from it. I suppose there is not a single relationship in which one person having authority over another has not abused that position at one time.

God is not man, and never will be. Neither is man God and he never, ever will be regardless of how much he wants to be or to what degree he strives to be. A certain man might conquer the whole world; Satan might give him all the kingdoms of the world, as he promised Jesus in Matthew 4:8-9. He might insist that he has a divine right to rule, that he is a god, that everyone must worship him. He might stretch forth his ring finger to be kissed as the vicar of Christ, but he will never, ever, ever be God. A Christian might usurp the authority of her husband, or a husband might treat his wife as he would a slave; an elder might lord it over the flock; a Christian with a strong personality might manipulate and use a weaker brother or sister, but no Christian will ever be God.

(Continued on back page)