

**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)

moral integrity, let us remember that the truth has always provoked the ire of carnal people. *Then the disciples came and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit."* (Matthew 15:12-14)

My prayer to the Father is that the day will come when all Christians will divorce their thinking once and for all from that of the world, that every saint will open their mouth and proclaim the truth without a single thought for the offense it may cause, but with the persuasive, powerful, unapologetic determination and love seen in our Lord and his apostles. If offense is taken may it never be due to mean spiritedness on the part of the saint, but the natural reaction of spiritual darkness to spiritual light. The open, unapologetic declaration of God's truth is a powerful force indeed. Most will be outraged by it; some few will be won to Christ. Either way, our duty remains the same. Remember brethren; there are worse things than offending someone with the truth and being spoken of unflatteringly because of it. If you believe, speak in a manner befitting a saint (2 Corinthians 4:13).

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Paul Atkisson, Barbara Matheny, David Morrow, Debbie Parker, John Bennett, Robert Brundige, Donald Dawson, Gail Stein, Sandy Childress, Susie Burton, Jacob Profit, Valerie and Barry Boyd, Jannett's mother and stepfather, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young, Doris Baker, Bernard Larch, Burnice Richardson, Ruth Poynter, Janice Parsons, The Spivey family, the Dillard family, Cassie Neel, Larry Sells, The Knollman family, Christian Shadburne, Lynette Thomas, Mattie Johnson (hip replacement)

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“Do not take to heart all the things that people say”

Adam Litmer

I can look back over my life as a Christian and recall several instances where my duty as a Christian demanded that I speak up on something within the context of a group discussion or, at the very least, pull someone aside for a private conversation. On several of those occasions I did neither; just put my head down and walked away or offered a smile and a chuckle so as not to be thought different. In some of those instances I knew for a fact that my speaking out to defend truth or correct error would have made me the topic of many discussions, mostly unflattering, and change the way people (be they coworkers, classmates, family members, and occasionally those who consider themselves Christians) viewed me. On a few occasions when I did speak up I recall trying to subtly eavesdrop on some conversations to see if they were about me, or having someone mention that I was being discussed in an unfavorable light. Knowing that I was the subject of unflattering discussions used to eat me up inside. Now, however, I truly do not care.

Before I explain exactly what I mean by no longer caring about such things we need to consider Scripture, beginning with a passage in Ecclesiastes, part of which serves as the title for this article. *Do not take to heart all the things that people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you. (7:21)* Let's face it, brethren; we live in a hyper sensitive culture. Somewhere along the line hurting feelings became the most heinous offense. Somewhere along the line the truthfulness of a thing became secondary to concern over how that truth made people feel. The moral, mental, and spiritual weakness of this culture sometimes worms its way into the heads of Christians and skews their thinking badly.

When the world manages to skew the thinking of a saint in this way the saint tends to start heeding the moral and spiritual evaluation of people who

themselves are not spiritual. Paul shows us that there is no sense in that. *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.* (1 Corinthians 2:14-16) This passage clearly states that the natural person (one with his or her mind focused on worldly, carnal things) does not have the *ability* to understand the things of God. Thus, they will never be in a position to judge them. What's more, they will never be in a position to judge a Christian whereas a Christian (spiritual person) is in position to judge the goodness or wickedness of *all* things. This is because the spiritual person has the mind of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. Let us not apologize for the clear teaching of Scripture on this but rather embrace it. Why fear the judgments of those without any right to judge either Christians or spiritual matters (Romans 8:33-34)? Why take to heart the negative things they say about us because of our stand for God's truth?

Another problem that occurs when this hyper sensitive culture worms its way into the Christians heart is that it forces us to begin trying to live up to expectations of spiritually dead people. If there is no sense in heeding the moral and spiritual evaluation of such people there isn't any more sense in seeking to live up to their expectations for what a Christian ought to be. Besides the absence of any sort of sense, it demonstrates a deadly mindset best expressed by Paul in Galatians 1:10. *For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or I am trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.* Imagine someone with no training, no experience, and a hostile attitude toward the company you work for walking into your workplace and arrogantly declaring that they know better than you (despite all your training and experience) how your job (which they've never engaged in for a single second) ought to be done. Would you throw out all the training and experience you've acquired to measure up to their uninformed and inappropriate expectations? Would you not find yourself thinking the very words of God Himself: *Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?* (Job 38:2) Why, then, would any Christian be willing to conform to the spiritual expectations of unspiritual people who know nothing of the things of God?

Christians who find their thinking stuck in the midst of this "reconforming" process will find the opinions of their worldly acquaintances absolutely shattering. Unless one denies God and Scripture altogether, or locks their lips while throwing away the key, they *will* offend their acquaintances with even the little truth they are willing to declare. This is so because of what we're told in John 3:19-20. *And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light lest his works should be exposed.* The unspiritual person only requires a modicum of truth to be offended by it. When one is offended by someone and speaks of that individual to other people they are almost certainly not going to focus upon what they consider that person's noble traits or noteworthy accomplishments. On the contrary, offended worldly people will respond as offended worldly people do: cast dispersions upon the source of their offense. The Christian who has begun heeding the moral and spiritual evaluations of worldly people, and who seeks to live up (perhaps "down" would be the more appropriate word) to the spiritual expectations of people who cannot understand spiritual matters, will find his or her self shattered by the unflattering opinions of their worldly acquaintances. I *know* this to be true for I was once there.

Earlier in the article I stated that I no longer care when worldly people speak unflatteringly of me. It took longer than I care to admit but 1 Peter 4:14-16 eventually sunk in to a skull that can be a bit thick at times. *If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.* If I am spoken of negatively because of sinfulness on my part than I should feel shame. However, if I am insulted or mocked because I have committed myself to Christ and the truth, so be it. I will rejoice, not that people were insulted and I am being vilified, but that I have, in some small way, been able to share in the very sufferings the Lord himself experienced (1 Peter 4:13).

Beloved, it is sometimes difficult for Christians in this society to maintain the proper perspective. In a nation where the ability to take offense is considered a great virtue, and living in a state of constant outrage a sign of