

**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)

**Please note that I will be out
of town this week on
vacation.**

NOTE

The congregational meeting to
discuss the work of UHeights
is today at 5. All members are
encouraged to attend.

the tomb upon hearing that it was empty, and a few weeks later he would preach the first gospel sermon.

Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth was almost entirely corrective. In his second letter he commended them for making the required corrections. No scripture captures the benefit of guilt better than 2 Corinthians 7:10-13. *For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter. So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God. Therefore we are comforted.*

We will always benefit when the guilt of our sins drives us to repent and seek forgiveness, just as God intended. *Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.* (Matthew 5:4)

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, Burnice Richardson, Ruth Poynter, Larry Sells, Christian Shadburne, Lynette Thomas, Mattie Johnson (hip replacement), the McDavid family, Evelyn Damron, Andy Kincaid

University Heights Messenger

Volume 7--Number 28

July 12, 2015

Become Such As I Am

Adam Litmer

Acts 26 describes a striking scene. A king, queen, governor, military tribunes, and many of the great men of the city of Caesarea stood before a man in chains. That man's name was Paul. He did not have anyone to speak on his behalf and was preparing to give his own defense before some very powerful people. When the king gave him permission to speak I doubt anyone present expected to hear what they heard. If he was ashamed of his predicament he did not show it. If he was awed by the fame and influence of the people before him it was certainly not evident. In fact, if these people were expecting a bit of groveling and desperate pleas for mercy they were disappointed. What they heard was gospel preaching, plain and simple.

Due to Paul's words, his manner, or perhaps both, governor Festus eventually burst right into the middle of Paul's discourse with a loud accusation. *Paul, you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving you out of your mind.* Paul was certainly not acting the way a prisoner was supposed to act. He was addressing these lofty officials with uncanny boldness, no embarrassment, and no hesitation. His manner was respectful and polite yet there was none of the wheedling flattery or quaking fear such people were accustomed to, particularly from prisoners seeking to defend themselves. What's more, Paul was unflinchingly speaking of things carnal people simply cannot understand (1 Corinthians 2:13-16). To Festus his words sounded insane. Perhaps he thought that his outburst would rattle the chained apostle and cause him to duck his head in shame. Rather than shaking in his chains at the governor's unflattering outburst, which undoubtedly was met with several nods and murmurs of agreement from other officials in the room, Paul turned to address him respectfully, yet with all of his boldness intact. *I am not of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking true and rational words.*

After having testified to the integrity of his words in response to governor Festus one might imagine at that Paul would have dropped his hand (Acts 26:1b) and stood in dignified silence. On the contrary, he turned his attention to the most powerful man in the room and began addressing him directly. *For the king knows about these things, and to him I speak boldly. For I am persuaded that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe. Make no mistake: this was an invitation for Agrippa to become a Christian. That's what this entire scene was about. Agrippa simply wanted to hear Paul's*

case out of curiosity (Acts 25:21-22). Remember that Paul had appealed to Caesar and to Caesar he had the right to go (Acts 25:12). Agrippa did not have the authority to prevent Paul traveling to Rome so he simply wanted to hear a case he found interesting. The result was that several of the highest dignitaries in the land heard the gospel preached.

Agrippa himself was taken aback by this and exclaimed, *In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?* It is difficult to determine whether Agrippa was sincere or mocking. Was he claiming that Paul nearly convinced him to become a Christian? Was he mocking Paul for the effort? Could the truth be somewhere in between? Regardless, there was nothing ambiguous in Paul's response to him. *Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains.* Paul wanted every person in that room to become what he was, only unchained.

Yet what *was* Paul? He was a Christian, a saint washed and cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:7). What's more, Paul understood the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ (Philippians 3:8) and thus could gaze upon all the pomp and pageantry in that room, all the expensive clothes and signs of great wealth, all the fancy titles and honorifics, and count them as rubbish (Philippians 3:8) for, in the final analysis, that's all they were. Paul only had eyes for the souls of the people in that room because he knew that at the foot of the cross all men stand on level ground. Whether king or servant, they all needed Christ equally.

To ask how Paul could have spoken as he did before such people is to ask the wrong question from the wrong perspective. The right question is how could he have spoken differently believing as he did (2 Corinthians 4:13)? Recall Peter's words and heed them. *If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you...If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name* (1 Peter 4:14, 16).

In the days to come Christians will be called before officials to answer for their faith more than has previously occurred in this country. As our nation moves further into its self-proclaimed "post-Christian" era, Christians will be put on "trial" before friends, family, classmates, and coworkers like never before to explain their actions and beliefs. Let us use those times as Paul used them. His primary concern was not to appease the crowd so all the attention would turn from him, but to move all that attention to Jesus Christ by explaining the reason for the hope that was in him (1 Peter 3:14-15).

Be prepared for what's coming, brethren. Yet see in it the extraordinary opportunities to spread Christ's gospel among those who have never heard it. Let them see a Christian who is not rattled by false accusation or made to crumble at mocking. Let them see what a room full of powerful officials saw in Paul all those years ago.

Guilt: Is It Beneficial or Detrimental?

John Thompson

Life would be quite bland without emotions, wouldn't it? In fact, we would be little more than mechanical robots if we did not have feelings accompanying our thoughts and actions. Feelings add color and variety to our lives, and, when utilized appropriately, benefit us tremendously. On the other hand, feelings often seem to work against us, especially when we categorize them as either positive or negative. For example, the negative aspect of love is seldom acknowledged and hate is almost always seen in a negative light. The Bible instructs us that the object of love is what makes it positive or negative, not the emotion itself. 1 John 2:15 says: *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* Proverbs 6:16, likewise, shows the same to be true for hate. *There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him.*

What about the emotion of guilt? People today are likely to view guilt as a negative emotion to be eliminated so they can continue the behavior without having to feel they have to do anything about it. The result of this way of thinking is to lie, cheat, riot, steal, fornicate, gossip, slander, and even kill, etc. without feeling any remorse or guilt afterwards. Once guilt has been eliminated, people can brazenly flaunt their bad behavior. After all, the end justifies the means, doesn't it? Such people have seared consciences, rendered totally ineffective. (See 2 Timothy 4:2)

God gave us guilt to be an emotion to motivate us to remove sin from our lives. Once the sin has been removed we will have eliminated the guilt. Let's consider some Bible examples.

In 2 Samuel 12, Nathan, the prophet, came to David, the king, and told him a story of a rich man who stole a poor man's pet lamb rather than serve one of his own lambs to a guest. David was incensed at the callousness of the rich man, and considered him worthy of death. David's anger turned to guilt when Nathan told him he was the rich man because of sins regarding Bathsheba. His guilt drove him to repent and ask for forgiveness. Read Psalm 51. You cannot help but be saddened at David's deep remorse expressed in the early part of the Psalm and happy for him at his relief in the latter part of the psalm. His guilt worked to his benefit, just as God intended.

Peter was absolutely convinced that he would remain loyal to Jesus as he faced his accusers. The thought of betraying his beloved master was abhorrent to him. Yet he did, not once, not twice, but three times. A rooster brought him to his senses; guilt must have come swooping down upon Peter like the worst storm cloud ever. *Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately the rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.* (Matthew 26:74-75) Once again, guilt worked as God intended. The following Sunday morning, Peter ran to