

**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)

equipped for every good work. God excludes anything that man might add to His word and he excludes the end product when man takes away from what is written.

People desire to be included. Being excluded brings about all sorts of bad feelings and resentments. Therefore, man bends and breaks God's rules so that he can include anyone based on his criteria, criteria that is vastly different from God's. The saddest day of a person's life will be when he is excluded from the joys of heaven, having believed he was included all along.

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'³ And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.' (Matthew 7:21-23)

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, Mattie Johnson (hip replacement), the McDavid family, Evelyn Damron, Andy Kincaid, Evelyn Damron, Cassie Neel, Tony Tirey

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Is This It?

Adam Litmer

We arrived home from Chicago late Thursday afternoon. It's always interesting to visit a new city. Each day we took the subway from O'Hare into downtown to do some exploring and site seeing. For those who have never been there downtown Chicago is huge, dauntingly so. On our first voyage downtown we got completely turned around and couldn't find our way back to the subway terminal. My phone's GPS said we walked over six miles and didn't actually move all that far from where we started.

Two things quickly became apparent: first, if you don't take the bus you'll never really get anywhere. Second, Chicagoans are quite proud of their city. I could not count the number of signs, billboards, bumper stickers, and statements that amounted to, "This is Chicago. Everything you could possibly want is here. If you're not satisfied with *this* city, you'll not be satisfied anywhere." I can see where they're coming from. Four and five star restaurants seemed to be on every corner. The downtown hotels look like palaces. World-class entertainment was everywhere we looked. There's Willis Tower (formerly Sears tower), a bit further up the road sits Trump Tower, a few streets east rests Millennium Park, and a little further east sits Navy Pier along with water taxi's prepared to take you up and down Lake Michigan with its renowned aquarium, museums, parks, lighthouses, Soldier Field (where the Bears play), and countless little coves and piers providing wonderful photo opportunities. So I suppose they were right: if one *could* find satisfaction in a city, they'd almost certainly find it in Chicago.

By Wednesday afternoon we were heading back to our hotel having seen only a fraction of the downtown area. Perhaps it's my current focus on Ecclesiastes but I could not help but ask, "Is this it?" It was big, shiny, opulent, and photographic. There were good shows, exciting attractions, famous locations, and interesting landmarks. Yet there is an emptiness there that I found undeniable. I tried to view the city from the perspective of those so enamored with it and found the emptiness became quite oppressive. The city glitters and shines but that's *all* it does. What true fulfillment, the kind that fills the soul with peace and contentment, did it offer? What real satisfaction, the kind that fills one's heart with a joy that *things* cannot begin to approach, did it provide? The answer to both is resounding and it is "none." It sparkles like tinsel, and, ultimately, is of no more value.

In tonight's sermon we're going to be considering Ecclesiastes 2:1-11. I could not help but think of the Preacher's words as we walked the wealthy streets of Chicago, with pleasures and entertainment beckoning from every corner.

I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself." But behold, this also was vanity. I said of laughter, "It is mad," and of pleasure, "What use is it?" I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine—my heart still guiding me with wisdom—and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of men to do under heaven during the few days of their life. I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. I bought male and females slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the children of man. So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for my toil. Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after the wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

Chicago, that great city, provides no security for the soul, fulfills not the deepest longings of the heart, nor provides the satisfaction that exists only when one has discovered their true purpose for being on this earth (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). No city under the sun, no matter how grand, will ever be able to provide those things. Indeed, God Himself saw to that for He is the One who placed eternity within the hearts of men (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Yes, many of the cities of this earth are lovely to look at. Yet theirs is a fading beauty, here today and gone tomorrow. So take a look at them, appreciate man's imagination and architectural prowess, snap a picture or two, but keep your heart aimed directly toward Heaven. Its beauty is surpassing and eternal. What's more, God is there. How's that for *real* satisfaction and fulfillment?

Fully Inclusive, Yet Fully Exclusive Too

John Thompson

On the way to and from the church building, my wife and I pass a Lutheran Church building. Proudly displayed in front of that building are short messages for people to read as they are passing by. Currently, one of the messages reads, "Fully Inclusive." I am quite certain that that church is fully inclusive in that it accepts people with all sorts of backgrounds, beliefs, lifestyles, traditions, cultures, and everything else. Such differences would not just be tolerated, but celebrated. There would be little if any pressure to conform to any kind of Biblical standard.

Is God fully inclusive? Yes, in many ways, but never in the sense that the Lutheran Church advertises. But God is also fully exclusive, and that is a fact the denominational world has not fully embraced. Here are some ways in which God has indicated in His word that He is fully inclusive and fully exclusive.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16) God did not exclude anyone, past, present, or future, from His love in the giving of His Son. Jesus did not die for a select few. God did not think to Himself, "I'll favor this group of people or that nation with the opportunity for eternal life, but I will withhold my love from those others." No, God says He so loved the world, the whole world. His love includes everyone in the world and excludes no one. However, we ought not to make the mistake so many make and fail to understand the idea of exclusion contained in this passage of scripture. The verse does not say, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that all should not perish but have eternal life." On the contrary, we are informed that eternal life is for those who believe. Excluded from eternal life are those who do not believe. The non-believers are included in those for whom God gave His Son Jesus, but excluded from those who have eternal life. Is that a full exclusion? Absolutely! Not a single non-believer will enter heaven to be with God eternally.

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (2 Peter 3:9) God's patience is fully inclusive. He does not select some people with whom He is super patient and others with whom He is less patient. He does not determine that some should not have ample opportunity to repent of their sins while others should have more opportunity than everyone else. God's desire that no one perish is fully inclusive. He has never desired that anyone perish. He does not exclude anyone from the benefits that accompany repentance. However, while this scripture says that God's patience is fully inclusive, and His promises are fully inclusive, it does not say that all will reach repentance. Repentance is a free will act that differentiates who will receive that which God has promised from those who will not. The un-repentant will be fully excluded from God's promise of eternal life.

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) God's word is fully inclusive of all that is needed for anyone to stand approved before Him. *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved: a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.* (2 Timothy 2:15). Approval comes from handling rightly the word of truth. Handling God's word rightly means that we go to what is written and learn what it is communicating to us. We do not presume to change it. Thus, God's word is also fully exclusive. It is a complete revelation of God's will and by it we may be complete,