

**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)

A Suggestion

This being the third Sunday I will not be preaching tonight. Lord willing, we will return to our series on Ecclesiastes next Lord's Day evening. Between now and then it would be a good idea to familiarize yourself with Ecclesiastes 4:3-16 as that will be our text going forward.

Note

We learned Wednesday that Stephen Saunders passed away. He was Sharon's brother-in-law. Let's make sure that we remember the Saunder's family, as well as Ron and Sharon, during this time of grieving.

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

University Heights Messenger

Volume 7--Number 33

August 16, 2015

A Better Citizenship

John Thompson

Once a month they came, regular as clockwork, but not nearly fast enough for me. I am referring to the juvenile book club to which I belonged. Once a month I received a biography of some famous person, usually an American, or an account of some historical event. So, I grew up with the likes of Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys, Paul Revere, Stephen Decatur, John Paul Jones, Francis Marion the Swamp Fox, and so many others. As I read I was right there at the Battles of Bunker Hill and Gettysburg; I stormed San Juan Hill with Teddy Roosevelt, and waded onto Normandy Beach on D-Day. I probably spent more time pretending to be Davy Crockett than any other heroic American personality.

I have long considered being an American citizen, able to enjoy freedoms not experienced by most of the world's population throughout history, a privilege to be cherished. It is no wonder that people from other countries have flocked to America and prepared themselves to pass strict citizenship requirements. However, now American values of freedom and individualism; the opportunity for personal success based upon hard work and self-reliance; America's position among the world's nations; and our focus upon correcting past wrongs done to certain of our citizens are all in serious jeopardy. America as I know and love, is rapidly disappearing. If I am honest with myself, I realize that I can become very angry at times. But, I am a Christian and I must be very careful

about my anger. Does the Bible offer me any assistance? Absolutely!

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Philippians 3:20) When I became a Christian I became a citizen of a spiritual kingdom. I did not give up my American citizenship, but rather took on a dual citizenship. The Apostle Paul was a dual citizen. He even used his Roman citizenship to escape the Jews who were out to kill him and to fulfill the mission assigned to him by King Jesus to further the gospel in Rome. It is quite comforting and helpful to remind myself that, at least for the immediate future, I can be a loyal American citizen able to use my national freedoms to carry out the will of my King and my God. In fact, obeying my government is God's will. (See Romans 13:1-7)

However, sometimes my loyalties will be in conflict, just like Peter and John and the other Apostles who were told not to preach in the name of Jesus. (See Acts 5:29) When I became a Christian I agreed to give priority to my spiritual citizenship. I accepted the challenge laid out so long ago by Joshua, i.e. *And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*" (Joshua 24:15) It is vital that I remember that Jesus expects me to *seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.* (Matthew 6:33) And it is equally vital that I stand ready to state with conviction that I must *obey God rather than men.* (Acts 5:29)

When I became a Christian I entered a spiritual kingdom. I voluntarily agreed to give top billing, no longer to a representative democracy, but to a king who has all authority to command. When I find it difficult to recognize the country of my youth because the

promised change is too great, too fast, and all in a direction away from America's past; when I sense that such change holds little if any hope for a stable future, may this song come readily to my mind and voice:

*I am a stranger here, within a foreign land;
My home is far away, upon a golden strand;
Ambassador to be of realms beyond the sea,
I'm here on business for my King.*

*This is the King's command: that all men, everywhere,
Repent and turn away from sin's seductive snare;
That all who will obey, with Him shall reign for aye,
And that's my business for my King.*

*My home is brighter far than Sharon's rosy plain,
Eternal life and joy throughout its vast domain;
My Sovereign bids me tell how mortals there may dwell,
And that's my business for my King.*

May each one of us have the courage of Joshua, the faith of Abraham, the genuineness of Nathaniel, the zeal of Paul, the steadfastness of Daniel, the integrity of Job, and the qualities of so many other great men and women of the Bible so that our dual citizenship never gets in the way of heaven.