

**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)

man and bed up on the roof, made a hole, and lowered the invalid down into the presence of Jesus. *When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the man, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."* (Luke 5:20)

Two lessons stand out from these incidents in the life of Jesus. The first is that one's faith will compel the true believer to overcome great obstacles in order to come to know the Only Begotten Son of God. The faithless, and those of little faith, can neither understand nor appreciate such great faith. The second lesson is that such great faith will always be rewarded. It will always produce marvelous and wonderful blessings for the faithful, if not in this life, then surely in the life to come.

Thanks, Jared, for your talk Wednesday night.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Paul Atkisson, Janice Parsons, 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), Evelyn Damron, Cassie Neel, Tony Tirey, Rose Curtis

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An Appeal To Take Off The Mask

Adam Litmer

We modern Christians have become very adept at wearing masks around our brethren. These masks are designed to portray the exact opposite of what we're actually experiencing. This is what I mean: If I'm sick I often want people to think I'm feeling just fine; if I'm sorrowful I want people to think I'm a million miles from tears; if I'm sad I want people to think I'm happy; if stress and anxiety are overwhelming me because of circumstances at work or home I want people to think I'm completely composed and at ease. We have a number of masks that we can wear to pull off these deceptions. Indeed, we often become so skilled in the use of these masks that we can fool all but the most perceptive brethren.

For many of us it may be that we just don't see how the circumstances of our life are anyone else's business, regardless of the emotional, physical, or spiritual strain those circumstances are putting on us. However, that doesn't at all sound like the attitude of the first brethren in Acts 2:42-47, does it? Others, perhaps, are of the mindset that everyone has problems to deal with in their own lives and they don't need to be burdened with mine. Yet Jesus showed that the relationship of the spiritual family should be at *least* as intimate as the physical in Matthew 12:46-50, didn't he?

As a result of these attitudes I fear that many Christians necessarily keep brethren at arms length. This is how brethren can be part of the same congregation for years and not really even know each other. Do you notice how many of our prayers on behalf of one another are confined to surgeries, illnesses, pregnancies, or moves? It is right and good to pray for those facing these obvious things. Yet what about the one fighting depression? What about the one facing a volatile work environment? What about the one who's dealing with great difficulties at home? What about the one whose spiritual strength is

at a low point as storms of life beat him down? Each of these cases require prayer just as the “normal” ones. However, you cannot pray for what you do not know.

And so the appeal to take off the mask! James tells us that *the prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working* (James 5:16). Requesting prayers is never a sign of weakness or embarrassment. In Romans 12:10a, 15 Paul says, *Love one another with brotherly affection...rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep*. Beloved, I urge you not to leave the awesome blessing of righteous brethren petitioning God on your behalf on the table. When circumstances become difficult, when your heart is growing heavy, when tears begin to threaten, when the storms of life are raging; I plead with you to leave your “brave face” mask in the closet, grasp this wonderful blessing with both hands, and let your brethren know you *need* them. Even if it’s not all the brethren *please* make it some.

It is easy to forget, though we often do to our own hurt: we are not self-sufficient nor are we alone in this walk. Sometimes we behave as though Paul taught Christ is our peace and has made us separate *islands* in God. He didn’t. *For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility...and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross...so then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God* (Ephesians 2:14, 16a, 19). What a magnificent family, Founder, and Father! Please do not make privacy a sacred cow that causes you to miss out on one of the great blessings of this family. Please do not let embarrassment become so big a hurdle that you refuse to make use of the prayers of this family. When either occurs, Satan scores a devastating spiritual injury.

So please, for our own spiritual well being, let us retire the masks once and for all. We are here to support one another, to provide shoulders to lean upon, and to wipe tears. When a brother or sister asks if we’re doing okay, and the honest answer is that we’re not, let us not “be brave” and say that we are. When a brother or sister asks if things are going well at work, and the honest answer is that they’re not, let us not “be brave” and say they are. When a brother or sister observes with concern that we seem a bit down, and we really are, let us not “be brave” and claim all is well. We don’t have to “be brave” with our brethren. If no one else in the world cares how we’re doing, fellow Christians do. After all, we’re family. Praise God for that!

Not To Be Denied

John Thompson

Prior to last night if you had asked me who was Bartimaeus, I probably would have had to look him up in a Bible dictionary or some other reference book to answer your question. Now, having had the depth of this blind beggar’s faith brought to my attention by Brother Sells’ invitation talk last night, I believe I will henceforth remember Bartimaeus as the man who shouted for Jesus to have mercy upon him; who refused to be silenced by the crowd; and who threw off his cloak and sprang up to go to Jesus. Here was a man who knew, through the eyes of faith, that he could only benefit from contact with Jesus. He knew, by faith, that he had nothing to fear from Jesus, and his faith compelled him to not be denied the opportunity to act. Read about him in Mark 10:46-52.

No doubt, Bartimaeus would have quickly become good friends with Zacchaeus, simply because they were of kindred spirits. They might even have known of each other since they were of the same city, Jericho. Zacchaeus was a tax collector and, while it is unlikely that Bartimaeus owed taxes, he would have been hard to miss going in and out of Jericho. But their faith in Jesus made them more alike than they ever realized. Zacchaeus was quite short, and when he could not see Jesus due to the taller crowd in front of him he ran ahead, climbed a tree, and had his desire fulfilled beyond his imagination when Jesus told him to come down out of the tree for he would be staying at his house that very day. *Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, ‘Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.’* (Luke 19:8). Zacchaeus was not to be denied the opportunity to see Jesus. Verse 6 of Luke 19 says, *So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him.*

Some months earlier, not too long after Jesus began His ministry, he was speaking somewhere in Galilee. People from every town in the surrounding area, and even from Judea and Jerusalem had come to be healed. Among them was a paralyzed man, brought on a bed by some others. You can imagine the thickness of the crowd and how difficult it must have been to maneuver a bed with a paralyzed man on it through such a dense throng of people. But this man, and the men who carried him, were not to be denied. They somehow got the