

**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)

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 tells us that we have no right to expect to win the prize if we are not running the race with a total commitment to winning. *“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.*

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. (Matthew 22:37-38). The key word here is “all.”

A Sad Note

Officer Daniel Ellis, a Christian who attended with our brethren at East End, passed away early Friday morning as a result of injuries sustained from a gunshot wound to the head. He was a husband and father. His family needs our prayers at this time.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Paul Atkisson, Janice Parsons (Surgery went very well. Now awaiting the biopsy results), 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, Evelyn and Austin Skinner (both recovering from cancer surgery), Shirley Harrod's family, Andrew Westphal

University Heights Messenger

Volume 7--Number 44

November 8, 2015

A Few Thoughts On Fellowship

Adam Litmer

Where many have concluded that fellowship is the thing Christians do over fried chicken, a cup of coffee, and conversation; the New Testament use of the word shows it to be spiritual in nature. We have fellowship with those who stand for the truth, worship God in the ways He said He wants to be worshipped, and live their lives making every effort to walk worthy of their calling. New Testament Christians take tremendous delight in laughing with one another over a meal and recognize such intimacy to be a product of the blessing of being in fellowship with God. They recognize this foundational truth: *it always comes back to God!*

How is the fellowship God desires established? The answer is found in 1 John 1:5-7. *This is the message we have heard and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.* To claim fellowship with God is to walk in the way He walked. Look at Jesus Christ and *do what he did.* Love truth as he loved it, walk according to the Father's will as he did, and love souls the way he loved them. Those who are willing to do this will not hesitate to put him on in baptism and will, as a result, join with those who share the same faithful commitment. They will work and worship together, fellowshiping one another *because they are in fellowship with God.* Anyone can claim to love Christ, sit down over a hearty meal with other such claimers, have a grand old time, and call the whole thing fellowship. But if one wants to be part of the *spiritual* fellowship in which God delights 1 John 1:5-7 tells them how.

Not long ago a brother declared, “We cannot have fellowship with someone God does not fellowship.” If by “cannot” he means it *should* never happen then he is absolutely right. If by “cannot” he means it *couldn't* actually happen...Well, that's a different story. Let's consider Scripture.

We read the following from 3 John 9-10. *I have written something to the church, but Diotrophes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.* Diotrophes refused to fellowship a group of traveling preachers (5-8). What's more, he raised his fist against his brothers and sisters in the congregation who *did* welcome them, casting these faithful Christians out of the church. Further, he refused to recognize the authority of the apostle John. Thus, Diotrophes refused fellowship to faithful traveling preachers, faithful brothers and sisters within the congregation of which he was part, and an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. Note this well, beloved: God fellowshiped while Diotrophes didn't. Severing fellowship with a brother or sister in Christ is never something to be done without prayerful study and meditation. Neither should it ever be the result of an emotional reaction. Man's emotions lead him wrong. A lot. When fellowship is severed it must only ever be for a single reason: a Christian or group of Christians has chosen to no longer walk in the light. That conclusion should only ever be reached after calm and prayerful consideration of God's Word. Otherwise, one may disfellowship where God has not. What a frightening proposition!

Turning to 1 Corinthians 5:1-2 we find a different, though equally disturbing, situation. *It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.*" These brethren had among them one walking in darkness. He was living in sin without remorse or repentance. They were aware of it and yet took no action to remove him from their midst. His wicked influence (leaven, v. 6) was left unchecked and could easily have ravaged that church had not Paul stepped in to get it sorted. Note this well, beloved: God did not fellowship while the Corinthian brethren did. When calm and prayerful study reveals that fellowship must be severed faithful saints had better have the courage and conviction to follow through. It is no better to extend fellowship where God does not than to sever fellowship where God extends it.

What determines biblical fellowship? What are its boundaries? What is to occur when those boundaries are reached? Man has had much to say about this throughout the centuries and has left folks more confused than ever. So stop listening to man. Let us resolve to simply hear God. We know with certainty that He will never lead us wrong.

Fully Committed and Working for the Lord

John Thompson

Ants and bees share a couple of important characteristics, and we would be wise to consider their ways. They appear to be constantly active, so active, in fact, that one must wonder when they rest. Bees are always moving industriously from place to place. Even when they alight on a flower it is not to rest but to extract the nectar. Ants, likewise, are continuously scurrying, often dragging along a morsel twice their size. So instructive are ants, that the writer of Proverbs says, *Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest.* (6:6-8)

Does anyone doubt the commitment of ants and bees to their purpose in life? Would anyone accuse them of being sluggards, slothful, lazy? Why do we not notice lazy ants or bees, if there even are any? Could it be that slothful ants and bees do not last long? They simply do not survive. The writer of Proverbs furnishes us with highly graphic and instructive descriptions of the consequences of slothfulness. Consider the following:

The sluggard says, "There is a lion in the road! There is a lion in the streets!" As a door turns on its hinges, so does a sluggard on his bed. The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; it wears him out to bring it back to his mouth. The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can answer sensibly. (26:13-16)

I passed by the field of a sluggard, by the vineyard of a man lacking sense, and behold, it was all over-grown with thorns; the ground was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. Then I saw and considered it; I looked and received instruction. A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man. (24:30-34)

Since Proverbs is inspired scripture, the writer is not just expressing his own view of laziness, but, most importantly, God's view. Furthermore, God's view of laziness takes in one's zeal and activity in both the secular and the spiritual. Colossians 3:23 says, *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.* First, make sure that your activity is in accordance with God's will, and then do it heartily; do it heartily all of the time, not intermittently. 2 Timothy 2:15 says, *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.* When has God ever approved of anything less than our best?