

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)

affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:3-8)

Let's note four things about the passage from 2 Peter. First, Peter is in complete agreement with Paul's message from Galatians. Several of the individual qualities mentioned in Galatians are repeated in 2 Peter. Second, Peter says to add those qualities. Nowhere does he say to stop adding them. Third, the goal is to become "partakers of the divine nature." There is an absolute equivalency between fruit of the Spirit as expressed in Galatians, and the divine nature as expressed in 2 Peter. And, fourth, we ought not to miss the connection with the "precious and very great promises" granted to Christians by God.

Truly, against such things there is no law. We are free, unrestricted, without limit to be as loving, as full of joy, as peace promoting, as patient and kind, as full of goodness, as faithful and gentle, as self-controlled as it is humanely possible for us to be. Each Christian is as free to become as much a partaker of the divine nature as he or she possibly can.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

John Thompson, David Seabolt, Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Louis Harrod, Paul Atkisson, Robert Brundige, Susie Burton, Valerie and Barry Boyd, Janett's mother and stepfather, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young, Burnice Richardson, Ruth Poynter, Larry Sells, Christian Shadburne, Evelyn Damron, Tony Tyree, Andrew Westphal, Jennifer Dunbar, Jean Gartland, John Blessing, Alleen Terrell

University Heights Messenger

Volume 8--Number 21

May 22, 2016

How I Study Scripture (2)

Adam Litmer

There are two types of Bible study. I refer to them as general or specific. General study is when I examine an entire book of God's Word. There isn't anything in particular I'm seeking besides understanding the general message of the book under consideration. My goal in general study is to transform the basic working knowledge gained by simply reading the Scriptures into something much more comprehensive. We will discuss specific study later.

Where to begin?

Bear in mind that what we're discussing here is in *addition* to the basic daily reading or listening described in the previous article. Your daily reading or listening should begin at the beginning (Genesis) for obvious reasons. Your general study does not need to follow the same pattern. Simply pick a book and go from there. I would suggest that you *not* begin your study in Revelation or the minor prophets. Ground yourself before you get to that point. As it relates to Revelation, and I cannot emphasize this enough, gain a solid understanding of apocalyptic language by studying the Old Testament prophets first. Yet all of that will come in time. For now, choose a book and get started. I suggest one of the four gospels or a short epistle.

How I do general study

1. **I pray.** Whether my aim is general or specific study I start with a prayer. James tells us, *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.* (James 1:5) I need wisdom in studying God's Word and so I ask for His aid. I encourage you to do the same.
2. **I take out my note pad and pencil and begin reading.** I am currently studying through Proverbs with the goal of preaching a series of sermons on practical wisdom for godly living. To facilitate that I am writing topic headings in my notepad and listing verses that fall under each. Though I am only through the 11th chapter this exercise has already helped develop my working knowledge of Proverbs. Whether you are outlining the points of each

chapter, writing down your thoughts as you read the chapter, or noting questions you have about the chapter, I encourage you to keep your notepad and pencil with you during your study.

3. **I think about it and read it again.** After I've read a chapter and recorded a few thoughts, I put down my pencil and think carefully about what I've just read. Sometimes I'll write down another note or two but usually this is simply a time to think. I'm thinking about what the author was saying, why he was saying it, what it means today, and how I would explain the truths contained within to someone else. Having done this, I read the chapter two more times, pausing after each reading to carefully consider whether my conclusions are appropriate to the Holy Spirit's purpose. Once comfortable with the chapter I move on to the next and repeat the process. If I'm not comfortable I move on to point four.
4. **Seeking aid.** Sometimes I believe I'm missing something from a passage. When those times occur I seek aid. My first step is considering the same passage in different translations of Scripture. If I find the ESV wording confusing, perhaps the NKJ, NAS, latest NIV, HCSB, or some other reputable translation will be helpful. I cannot count the number of times a simple reading from other translations has cleared confusion. Always start there. If I'm still struggling, I'll turn to a commentary. A commentary simply contains the comments of an uninspired person about a particular text. Sometimes they do a good job of explaining a passage and sometimes they miss entirely. Our brethren have written many commentaries. I would be glad to lend you one upon request. If confusion still exists speak to someone you have faith in about your questions.
5. **This is a process.** Both the process of study and gaining greater knowledge takes time. The method described in this article is my own and to put it into practice takes hours depending on the book you're studying. None of this has to be accomplished in one sitting. If it takes you a month or more to study through a book do not grow discouraged at the pace, but rather use the time you have, even if it's only a few minutes at a time, and make it count. Every saint will be engaged in this process for the remainder of their lives.

One size does not fit all when it comes to Bible study. Perhaps my method would work perfectly for you. Perhaps you find only a part of it helpful. That's fine; just make sure you're doing it. It is exciting and encouraging to see growth in yourself. It creates greater appetite. So find whatever method(s) works best for you and dig in!

Without Limit

John Thompson

I recently came across a website called radicallychristian.com. Although I have not thoroughly explored the site, and probably will not, I thought the following posting is worth commenting on. It is entitled, There is No Such Thing as a Christian..., and it is based on Galatians 5:22-23 which says, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

The author of the posting says, "What a beautiful thought! There's not a man-made law or a God-made law against these qualities. There are lots of things which God has prohibited or on which He has put limits. But on these things, there is no limit. There is no restriction. There are no boundaries! What a beautiful, beautiful concept!"

Think about the above realization. I'm not sure I agree that there are no man-made laws that limit the fruit of the Spirit. There very well may be, and, given our current climate of political correctness, such laws may be just around the corner. But it doesn't matter, because God has not restricted such fruit, and never will. After all, they are fruit of the Spirit which means they are the very things which Deity wants to see produced in the lives of Christians. If Deity was to place limits on the very qualities that so accurately defines Deity, then it would be restricting itself.

No, the reason a Christian does not love without limit, or fails to experience joy unrestricted is because someone other than God has imposed limits. More often than not, those limits are self-imposed. There may be great pressure to go along with one's peers, to not stand out, to remain silent, to not be talked about, to not risk the loss of friends or family, etc., but the bottom line is that limiting the fruit of the Spirit is a personal choice.

Sometimes those limitations are cleverly disguised by redefining things. Love is redefined as acceptance. Consequently, rather than talk to someone about their sin, they are simply accepted as they are and that is how they are loved. Peace is redefined as tolerance. Faithfulness becomes "you go your way and I will go mine. I will be faithful to what I believe in, and I will acknowledge your sincerity regarding what you believe in." Self-control becomes more evident in the mutual decision not to broach certain subjects rather than having a reasonable discussion without tempers flaring. We must remember that these are the fruit of the Spirit, that is, they are as without limits as is the very nature of Deity.

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly

