

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

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)

discouragement and exhaustion. Then it is the time to take our concerns to God, and when we do He will lift us up and we will become hopeful once again. Resolve to be a hope-filled Christian. Think optimistically about your life: your profession, your family, your present, and especially your future. Take time to celebrate God's glorious creation. And then, when you have filled your heart with hope and gladness, share your optimism with others. They will be better for it, and so will you.

NOTE

Troy Antle has expressed his desire to serve this congregation as one of our shepherds. Troy is a godly man who has been part of University Heights for a long time. Both he and Amy have been examples of love and service. The plan is for Troy to take up these new duties the first Sunday in October.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Declan Weatherholt, The Banks' family, 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, Evelyn Damron, Tony Tyree, Andrew Westphal, Jennifer Dunbar, Jean Gartland, John Blessing, Alleen Terrell, the McDonald family, William Roberts, Kip Pearce

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Christians: People of a Generous Heart

John Thompson

Generosity: what a lovely word. But is it a routine part of our lives? Does it pervade our thinking and drive our actions? Do we only look for generosity to flow our way, expect it as our due? And when we are on the receiving end of another's generosity, do we properly appreciate it?

A dictionary definition of generous is quite informative. Merriam-Webster describes generous as 1) freely giving or sharing money and other valuable things; 2) providing more than the amount that is needed or normal, abundant or ample; 3) showing kindness and concern for others. If we combine all three definitions, we will have a good handle on the biblical meaning of generosity. Generosity arises out of a genuine concern for others and a desire to show them kindness. Then something of value is given. It could be money, time, companionship, information, physical labor, transportation, or a host of other things. The key is that whatever is given be given freely. Biblical generosity cannot occur grudgingly or resentfully. If I go visit a sick person in the hospital all the while thinking how much I am being inconvenienced, I am merely reluctantly visiting a sick person. I can, in no way, claim to be generous. Finally, generosity involves providing more than the minimum. Not wanting to give beyond the minimum is what it means to be stingy. Interestingly enough, a simple dictionary definition of stingy is not generous.

The Bible commends generosity throughout its pages. Abraham was generous in his hospitality when the Lord visited him as recorded in Genesis 18. Lot was equally generous when he was visited by angels in Genesis 19. Generosity was built into the Law of Moses through regulations controlling, for example, the treatment of foreigners living among them and the return of property to the original owners during the year of Jubilee.

Generosity was active in the church from its very beginning. In the days following Pentecost, Jews from every nation who had become Christians remained in Jerusalem resulting in much need. Local Christians seized the opportunity and

were extraordinarily generous. *And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.* (Acts 2:2) The comfort and well-being of their brethren was more valuable than the value of their possessions.

Within 10 years of the establishment of the church, Judea experienced a famine causing additional need. As Paul traveled around establishing churches in the Gentile world, he was also gathering funds to assist in meeting those needs. The church at Corinth apparently had intended to assist but was slow to complete the task, and so, Paul, in his second letter to them, wherein he cites the performance of the Macedonian brethren, encourages them to complete the task. *We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.* (2 Corinthians 8:1-5)

We are all familiar with the devastation cause by the recent floods in Louisiana. Among those who lost homes and possessions were members of the Lord's church in Gonzales, LA. The elders of that congregation estimated that \$500,000 was needed above what was available through their own resources and instructions were provided for sending contributions. Within a matter of days, the elders posted on Facebook to stop sending contributions because the need, and even beyond the need, had been met. The posting likened the situation to Exodus 35 and 36 when God's people were of such a generous heart that their contributions of materials needed for construction of the tabernacle came in so quickly and so abundantly that the workmen were hindered from working and Moses bid the people to stop bringing more. If we look, we will find numerous opportunities, both large and small, to be generous, not only with our possessions, but generous with ourselves as well. Generosity will come easy to those who are ever mindful of the generosity of God who gave His Son because of our spiritual needs.

The Hope of the Gospel

Paul Fox

If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister. (Colossians 1:23)

After reminding the Colossians of their reconciliation to the Father through Christ, Paul admonishes them to never lose confidence in the love of God, but to maintain an unconquerable hope. The hope of sinful man must never be peculiarly identified with the gospel of Christ. To the Ephesians Paul wrote, *"You were called in one hope of your calling."* (4:4) He prayed that they might be enlightened in knowing what is the hope of this calling. (1:18) Such enlightenment should be sought by all who have ambitions concerning such hope, especially in view of popular unscriptural notions concerning this subject.

The hope of the gospel is not an earthly millennial reign of Christ. It is not world peace or social reform. In fact, such hope is not oriented to this world, although those in the world who have such hope will be more cheerful people. Paul says that we would be most pitiable if our hope in the Lord was confined to this life (1 Corinthians 15:19). The hope of the gospel is the hope of immortality! As Paul pointed out to King Agrippa, it is the hope of Israel and involves the raising of the dead (Acts 26:6-8). It is the hope held by Paul and others of the Way, "there is to be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15). In Romans 8 it is called the "redemption of the body." The hope of the gospel is the hope of eternal life (Titus 1:2), and is further identified in Colossians 1:5 as "the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens." Peter connects our "living hope" with the "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Peter 1:4) All of the above expressions are facets of the one hope; the Bible speaks of no other hope. Consequently, Bible believers strive towards no other hope.

The hope of the gospel is just that; it is of the gospel because no other source reveals such hope. Paul said that life and immortality have been brought to light through the gospel (2 Timothy 1:10). It is a gospel-connected hope because nothing else has the power and promise of God behind it. Only He who raised Christ can give life to our mortal bodies, which He has promised to do: "...in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot tell a lie, promised before times eternal (Titus 1:2). Such hope is of the gospel because it is only there that we learn how to attain it. Only the pure gospel can lead people to their most important objective: the salvation of their souls (James 1:21) Paul wrote, in Colossians 1, of the blessings to be had if we are not moved away from the hope of the gospel. Hebrews 6:19 refers to that hope as an anchor for the soul, both sure and steadfast.

Are you an optimistic, hopeful, enthusiastic Christian? You should be. Sometimes we may find ourselves pulled down by the inevitable demands and worries of our physical lives and in danger of being overwhelmed by

