

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

Troy Antle

**Evangelist**

Adam Litmer

**Deacons**

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)

**From The Mouth Of Jesus**

*Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to My voice." John 18:37*

**IN NEED OF PRAYERS**

John Thompson, Jared Potter and the Ray family, Declan Weatherholt, David Seabolt, Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Louis Harrod, Paul Atkisson, Greg and Vicky Litmer, Sheila Lawson, Keia Burton, Robert Brundige, Susie Burton, Valerie and Barry Boyd, Janett's mother and stepfather, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young, Larry Sells, Evelyn Damron, Jennifer Dunbar, Jean Gartland, John Blessing, William Roberts, Paul Lyda, Pete Soro, The Smith family, our brethren in southern Philippines, our brethren in Zimbabwe, Jamie Powell's father, Bruce Feltner

# University Heights Messenger

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**They Look Just Like Us**

Adam Litmer

The book of Acts gives us the history of the early church by following the actions of a few people as they interacted with different cities and cultures. There is great benefit in studying it. In Acts 5 we find the apostles before a very angry Sanhedrin itching to put them to death. Verses 27-29 say, *And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us." But Peter answered, "We must obey God rather than men."*

It required great courage for Peter and the others to stand before the council and say the things they did. The Sanhedrin charged the apostles with disobeying their specific command to teach no more in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:18). The apostles said that it was right for them to disobey. The Sanhedrin accused the apostles of trying to bring the blood of Jesus Christ upon their heads. The apostles responded by correctly accusing them of killing Jesus (Acts 5:30). The Sanhedrin denied that Jesus possessed divine authority. The apostles boldly declared that *God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins* (Acts 5:31). By then most of the Sanhedrin were prepared to kill the apostles (Acts 5:33). Had they not heeded the advice of Gamaliel (Acts 5:34-39) they likely would have descended in a murderous rage upon them as they would with Stephen in the near future.

Saints throughout the ages have marveled at the courageous faith of those persecuted men. It is not difficult to begin imagining that they were a different breed of human, a group of first century “supermen” exempt from the discouragements and fears that often plague “the rest of us.” After all, what else could explain their ability to stand with straight backs and determined brows before an enraged Sanhedrin?

Well, they were not supermen. In fact, they had not always been as bold as they should have been. Even after this event Peter, the spokesman for the group, would briefly turn hypocrite and lead others astray by his example (Galatians 2:11-13). God shows us their failings so that we will recognize that they were just like us, fraught with all the frailties and fears indigenous to humanity. Like us, they occasionally succumbed to temptation. Like us, they experienced illnesses and death. Like us, they sometimes needed a brotherly or sisterly shoulder to cry on. Like us, they needed to be encouraged. Like us, *they needed to be saved!*

This begs a question: if they really were just like us, how did they manage to bravely stand before a hostile council and make their case so completely that their opponents could not even begin to deal with the points those men had set before them? We find the answer in Acts 4:13, the first time two apostles were brought before the council. *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.* They had been with Jesus. They had traveled with Him, listened to Him, received their training from Him, and been saved by Him. *They had been with Jesus.*

When ordinary people are filled with extraordinary faith that they have been with Jesus becomes apparent to all paying attention. Our ordinary lives should show us the truth of this. Why do faithful Christian spouses patiently work at their marriage when folks all around them with similar troubles and fears give up and divorce? They have been with Jesus. Why do faithful Christians sacrifice financially by contributing to the church

when folks all around them are saving like mad to purchase more things and to visit more places? They have been with Jesus. Why does the faithful Christian see the glory of God in the brilliant morning sunlight while other folks are grumbling about going to work in the morning? They have been with Jesus. Why doesn't the faithful Christian curse and throw out vulgar gestures when someone cuts them off while driving or shoves in front of them in the grocery line? They have been with Jesus.

Living hand in hand with Jesus does not reveal itself only when one's life is on the line. It is something that shines through in the Christian's ordinary daily routine. Of course, it *does* require a mature and committed faith to hold resolve in the face of personal danger. It is the type of faith all saints should work for. Today's Christian, myself included, sometimes state that we do not know what we would do if faced with the same challenges of some of our earliest brethren, such as those faced by the apostles in Acts 4 and 5. I don't believe that is the correct attitude. It seems that all committed Christians should be prepared to not just have their faith tested, but to cling to it to the very end, even if that end is death (Matthew 10:22). Such would certainly not be *easy*, but it would be *expected* by the One prepared to welcome them on the other side.

Yes, we are ordinary people. None of us are masquerading as regular humans until we find the nearest phone booth. Yet we are all capable of extraordinary things through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Living the faithful Christian life on a daily is as extraordinary as surviving the most trying moments with faith intact. Both are made possible because the saint has been with Jesus.



