

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

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Bill Osborne, Shirley Harrod and family,
Rachel Thompson, Larry Billator, Julie
Patton, Karen Spivey, Sandra Russell,
Jeff Howerton, Janet Brundige, Rhonda
Boyd (and her sister, Dorothy), Paul
Atkisson, Julia-Ann Dixon, Ed Allison,
Dwight Antle, The Bays and Robbins
family, Keia Burton, Robert Brundige,
Valerie and Barry Boyd, Janett's
mother, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young,
Larry Sells, Evelyn Damron, Jean
Gartland, John Blessing, William
Roberts, Paul Lyda, Pete Soro, Harleigh
Spartman, Mattie Johnson, Elijah
Epling, Leland Wells, Linda Moore,
Sheila Johnson, Virginia Gordon

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Making A Burden Of The Beautiful

Adam Litmer

Having been at it so long, Satan has developed extraordinary skill in tricking Christians. Though Paul reminds us that we are not ignorant of his designs (2 Corinthians 2:11), it requires constant vigilance on our part because we never know when his next attack is going to come.

Sometimes Satan, using subtlety and a soft touch, worms his way into the minds of saints and wreaks havoc there. He can be stopped, but only if the saint is paying attention. One area in which the adversary shows his mastery at "making crooked the straight paths of the Lord" is in the area of grace. Grace is much misunderstood in the "Christian" world today. However, it is among brethren we will stay in this article.

On occasion I speak to brethren who are falling victim to one of Satan's most devilish doctrines concerning grace: it *must* be earned. Most of the time these brethren are not aware they are falling victim to

this devastating error. Often, they deny believing it, yet their frustrated comments give them away.

Let me give you an example. A brother or sister has progressed in their Bible knowledge, learning, and ability to overcome temptation. They pray daily, assemble faithfully, and engage in worship. Yet self-reflection reminds them that they continue to sin sometimes. They resolve to do better, as every Christian should, yet find their life is characterized more by frustration and discouragement than joy and peace. Every time they sin they are reminded they do not deserve God's grace. They repent of their sin, yet experience far less joy at the thought of forgiveness than frustration at the knowledge that repentance was needed in the first place. They *say* grace cannot be earned yet *live* as if it must. If these brethren are not able to come to a correct understanding of grace they will go through life in a constant state of discouragement and will likely give up eventually.

In Romans 11:5-6 Paul speaks of the remnant. *So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.* Grace stands not opposite obedience, but meritorious works. Because grace is everything God does for us that we cannot do for ourselves, by definition it cannot be earned or merited.

Unless one genuinely comes to understand and accept this they will find themselves in the same position as the Jews of Romans 9:30-32. *What shall we say then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works...*

A distraught brother said, "I just don't feel like I'll ever be good enough." He won't be. None of us ever will. We've sinned, thus "good enough" went out the window long ago. But *where sin increased, grace abounded all the more...and...but he gives more grace.* (Romans 5:20b...James 4:6a)

It is right to be filled with godly sorrow upon sinning. (2 Corinthians 7:10-11) We *should* be angry at ourselves when we choose sin over God. However, we don't have to earn God's grace. Indeed, we cannot. We faithfully do our best not to sin, repent if we do, praise our God for His forgiveness, resolve to be more like Christ, and go on our way rejoicing at the mercy and love of God. Let us never allow Satan to make a burden of the beautiful.

