

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, 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, Sandra
Queen, Linda Moore, Sheila Johnson,
Virginia Gordon, Glenn Lake

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What Kind of Preaching Do You Want?

John Thompson

The people to whom Isaiah prophesied didn't much care for his preaching. They made it plain that they wanted no part of Isaiah or of the message he brought. Neither did the fact that Isaiah's message originated from God give them pause. They were in full and open rebellion against the very One who loved them enough to repeatedly warn them through Isaiah to repent. Isaiah 30:8-11 summarizes their attitude, their speech, and their personal animosity towards Isaiah. ⁸Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever, ⁹That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: ¹⁰Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: ¹¹Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

Paul warned Timothy that he would encounter, as a preacher of the gospel, the very same attitudes that result in a preference for fables rather than the truth. ³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ⁴And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Timothy 4:3-4) The language here is strong language meant to communicate how onerous sound doctrine will become at times. Sound doctrine,

i.e. the truth, will become oppressively burdensome, something they are no longer willing to endure, and so they will only allow teachers whose message is consistent with their own strong desires, here characterized as lust. To insulate themselves from a chance encounter with the truth, they will “heap to themselves” those who teach what they want to hear.

Both of the passages quoted above show that there are times when people simply have no interest in hearing the truth. If the truth just happens to be pleasant to hear, then objections are not raised. As long as they are not made to feel uncomfortable; as long as they do not begin squirming and shifting in their seats, or begin to scratch their necks, or take to looking around pretending to not pay attention to what is being spoken; as long as they are not forced to look inwardly, deep within themselves, then the speaker is a good and fine fellow. Compliments are heaped upon him for giving such a wonderful lesson. But when the truth begins to sting a little; when the truth becomes personal and the message of the preacher hits home then the preacher is no longer the listener’s friend. Reality gets set aside for smooth things and truth gets buried under a mass of fables. ³⁰ *An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land: ³¹ the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction; my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes? (Jeremiah 5:30-31)*

So, what kind of preaching do you come to hear when you attend the services of the church? The passage from 2 Timothy quoted above follows Paul’s admonition to Timothy on the very nature of godly preaching: ² *preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.* (2 Timothy 4:2) Notice first what is to be preached: “preach the word,” not a bunch of stories or anecdotes. Jesus, praying in John 17 on behalf of his disciples said, Sanctify them by your truth. Your word is truth.” So Paul tells Timothy to preach the word, i.e. preach the truth. The purpose of such preaching was to reprove and rebuke, to point out to people

when they were in error and to exhort them to do right. Timothy was to do this with patience knowing that getting people to acknowledge their error and then to do the right thing might not happen immediately. So, are you desirous of hearing the word preached, even when you are being reprovved and rebuked and exhorted to do right? Is this the kind of preaching you want to hear?

Gospel preachers have, on occasion, been told not to preach on certain hot topics. Is this the kind of preacher you want? Do you desire a preacher who will refrain from speaking on certain controversial subjects simply because he was told not to if he wanted to be hired? If each member of a congregation had a list of taboo subjects, and the preacher complied, he might spend more time in the pulpit saying nothing, just staring at the audience, than actually speaking. The Apostle Paul set the record straight as to what to preach and what not to preach when he delivered his parting message to the elders of the church at Ephesus as recorded in Acts 20:18-21 and 26-27: *“You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, ¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; ²⁰ how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, ²¹ testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ....²⁶ Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, ²⁷ for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.”*

There is no reason to sit in a pew listening to a man preach or proclaim if we are not eager to hear the gospel preached, i.e. the whole gospel and nothing but the gospel. We are so blessed at University Heights to have such a man.

