

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)

embrace mockery as well as all forms of persecution. Now the use of the word “embrace” requires explanation. The Christian should not arise every morning with the goal of provoking as much mockery throughout the day as he or she can. Having as one’s guiding principle in life the idea that the more one is mocked or persecuted the better chance one has of going to heaven is just as wrong as avoiding mockery. Instead, the Christian should have godly living as his goal, and if he is mocked or persecuted as he pleases God from day to day he should welcome the opportunities and benefits associated with suffering as a Christian. Those opportunities and benefits will be address in a fourth and final article on the subject of mockery.

#### **IN NEED OF PRAYERS**

Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Louis Harrod, Paul Atkisson, Barbara Matheny, David Morrow, Debbie Parker, John Bennett, Robert Brundige, Donald Dawson, Gail Stein, Sandy Childress, Susie Burton, Jacob Profit, Valerie and Barry Boyd, Jannett’s mother and stepfather, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young (had another fall and broke her wrist), Doris Baker, Burnice Richardson, Ruth Poynter, Larry Sells, Christian Shadburne, Mattie Johnson (hip replacement), Evelyn Damron, Tony Tirey, Rose Curtis, Andrew Westphal, Jennifer Dunbar, Jean Gartland, Joe Cable, James Ratliff, Betty Clevinger

# University Heights Messenger

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## **Responding to a Baptist Pastor 1**

Adam Litmer

*Several years ago I was introduced to an Internet tract written by Pastor David Martin of the Solid Rock Baptist Church in Bartlett, Tennessee. The title of Mr. Martin’s tract is “Common Sense Questions A ‘Church of Christ’ Preacher Cannot Clearly Answer.” Over the next several bulletins I will post his questions and my answers. These answers, along with an invitation to discuss things publicly, were sent to Mr. Martin years ago. He never responded. Perhaps you will find the answers to these questions helpful in your own study and conversation. His questions have been listed exactly as they were originally written, bold font and underlines included.*

**Question 1-** “According to the history of the ‘Church of Christ,’ God used certain men to ‘restore’ the New Testament Church in the early 1800’s. ***Where was the true New Testament Church before then?*** Jesus said that the gates of hell would not prevail against his church (Matthew 16:18). ***What happened to the church and where was the truth it was responsible for preaching before God restored it?***”

The New Testament church has existed since that Day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2 when Peter exercised his right to be the first to use the keys of the kingdom (Matthew 16:19). The church has been in existence since then and was found wherever a group of Christians agreed to gather together to worship and serve the Lord in the way that He instructed in the pages of Scripture.

It is important to remember that the Lord never promised that the church would continue to flourish numerically as it did at the very beginning, nor did he promise that it would never have to face dark and difficult days. In fact, some things jump out at you as you read the words of the Holy Spirit to Christians. For instance, *In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted*

*to the point of shedding your blood”* (Hebrews 12:4). Consider Jesus’ words to the church in Pergamum. *I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells* (Revelation 2:13). Jesus was quite clear that it was not always going to be easy for the church, and a simple consideration of the church throughout history demonstrates the truthfulness of our Lord’s words. Jesus *did*, however, promise that His Word would never pass away (Matthew 24:35). The church has and always will exist within the Word of God.

Mr. Martin writes from a very sectarian perspective when he speaks of the “history of the Church of Christ.” When he mentions the early 1800’s he is speaking of what is commonly referred to as the “Restoration Movement”. In a nutshell, a desire to accept the Bible alone as the sole authority for spiritual things swept across the country. Many churches abandoned their creeds and rules of faith to return to sacred Scripture alone. This led many to go *back* to the church of the first century. However, this movement certainly did not *create* “the churches of Christ” (Romans 16:16). Yes, many churches were restored to New Testament Christianity in the 1800’s, but the church was obviously not established in the 1800’s.

I will continue to list Mr. Martin’s questions and answer them over the next several weeks. If you have any questions about the answers, or have an answer yourself that I did not consider, please do not hesitate to bring it to my attention. Because it is the Christians responsibility to always be prepared to give an answer, it is vital that we know what our religious neighbors believe and how to answer any questions or arguments that they might bring our way. My prayer is that the next several bulletins will help to put us in a better position to be able to do that.

### **Mockery: Avoid or Embrace It?**

John Thompson

Christians must expect to be mocked and ridiculed. Paul, imprisoned in Rome and awaiting execution, wrote a second letter to Timothy. In chapter 3, after briefly referencing his own persecutions he wrote, in verse 12: *Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted*. The contrast between the Christian and the World must be sharp and obvious. There can be no overlap

between a godly life and an ungodly life. A godly life is not achieved by mixing with and becoming soiled by those in the world.

But righteous living is a problem to worldly living. Those living unrighteous lives do not appreciate being constantly made aware they are not measuring up to the high standard presented in God’s word. Such awareness makes the worldly person uncomfortable and so he resorts to mocking the Christian. Consider 1 Peter 4:3-4: *For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they **malign** you*. The behaviors listed above are so commonly practiced that those who no longer do them are considered strange and best dealt with through mockery and ridicule meant to hurt. Any friendship you might have previously had with them was based upon shared ungodly practices. But now they resent the fact that you have changed and, if the friendship is to continue, they must bring you back into their fold.

How is the Christian to deal with such mockery? Why not simply avoid it? That is probably the most reasonable solution, isn’t it? It makes no sense to purposely place oneself into a position to be ridiculed, does it? Who wants to be laughed at and made fun of? No one I know of. So, we can just avoid those situations that might require us to make known where we worship and what we stand for. If abortion or homosexuality is being discussed, we can refrain from participating. Why add fuel to those fires? Why challenge someone who adamantly opposes water baptism for the remission of sins when the chance of changing his mind appears virtually nonexistent? So, I will just keep my religious beliefs to myself and save myself the hurt of being mocked. Sometimes, however, I will get backed into a corner and will be unable to avoid the situation all together. What then? Well, I will reveal only as much about myself as I can so that those confronting me do not think me too strange. Won’t a bit of compromise go a long way in preventing mockery aimed in my direction?

If it is true that *all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted*, then avoidance of that persecution by being a secret Christian or by readily compromising only proves that one does not really desire to live a godly life. So, avoidance is not really an option. Rather ought the godly one to