

**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)

*heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love
that you have for all the saints, because of the hope
laid up for you in heaven. (Colossians 1:3-5)*

What is the character of the church where you
worship? What do people in the community say about
if? Is there consistency between what is taught and
what is practiced? Will visitors from the local
community recognize members as godly people or
will they be surprised to find an acquaintance in
attendance? *Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and
exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which
wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct
among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they
speak against you as evildoers, they may see your
good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.*
(1 Peter 2:11-12)

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

David Seabolt, Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Louis
Harrod, Paul Atkisson, Barbara Matheny, David Morrow,
Debbie Parker, John Bennett, Robert Brundige, Donald
Dawson, Gail Stein, Susie Burton, Jacob Profit, Valerie
and Barry Boyd, Janett'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, Betty Clevinger, Glenda Brock, John Blessing

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Reproach Upon The Things Of The World Or The Things Of God?

John Thompson

In about 606 or 607 BC Babylon began its conquest of Judah. About 20
years later, in 586 BC, Jerusalem fell and the Babylonian captivity of God's
people was well underway. Most of the Jews, no doubt, experienced intense
fear and sadness over their own personal plight. Some, however, must have felt
grief and anguish over the loss of the city itself. One of this group, probably
Jeremiah, was inspired to write about the distress and heartache he felt
regarding the downfall of Jerusalem and what it communicated to the world
about the damaged relationship between God and His people. As he lamented
over the fall of that great city he wrote of the reproach God's people brought
upon themselves because of their prolonged disobedience to Him.

*Jerusalem sinned grievously, therefore she became filthy; all who
honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; she herself groans
and turns her face away. (Lam 1:8) All who pass along the way clap their
hands at you [Jerusalem]; they hiss and wag their heads at the daughter of
Jerusalem: is this the city that was called the perfection of beauty; the joy of all
the earth? (Lam 2:15) Jerusalem has become a filthy thing among them. (Lam
1:17) All your enemies rail against you; they hiss, the gnash their teeth, they
cry, 'We have swallowed her! Ah, this is the day we longed for; now we have it;
we see it!' (Lam 2:16)*

Reproach means to speak ill of; to find fault with; to upbraid; to discredit;
to mock; to ridicule; to be ecstatic when the object of one's hatred has been
brought down. In the above passages it is obvious that God's people had caused
the very reproach they were experiencing from those around them. *Jerusalem
sinned grievously, therefore she became filthy; all who honored her despise her.*
How those from whom God had wanted His people to remain separated must
have gloated when they saw the Israelites being just as filthy as they were. They

were looking for, longing for such a day, and when that day came, they, with a great shout of satisfaction, proclaimed, *We have swallowed her! Now we have it.*

The lesson here is that Christians can so live as to bring reproach upon the church and the cause of Christ. Jesus clearly says that the world is not our friend. *If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.* (John 15:18-19) Romans 12:2 says, *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.* James 1:27 echoes the same caution: *Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*

What it comes down to is this: If the world loves us, if we live in such a way that the world considers us as its own, then we are bringing reproach upon ourselves, the church, and even Jesus Himself. If we conform ourselves to the world, i.e. if we dress like the world, talk like the world, give priority to the things of the world, think like the world, then we are bringing reproach upon the things of God. If we fail to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, then we cause those of the world to hiss at us and gnash their teeth as they say to themselves, *We have swallowed her! Ah, this is the day we have longed for.*

Character and Reputation

John Thompson

The following statement is attributed to John Wooden, the great UCLA basketball coach: “Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.” If Mr. Wooden was still alive and he and I were able to spend some time together I believe I would have to argue against his conclusions regarding character and reputation.

I would argue that character and reputation are two aspects of the very same process by which an individual communicates with others. Should he attempt to present a false character in order to mold a favorable reputation, his deception would ultimately be discovered and he would be perceived to be a dishonest hypocrite. There is consistency between character and reputation. Mr. Wooden

makes it seem that one’s reputation is of less concern than one’s character. I would argue they are of equal importance and if one will develop a godly character a godly reputation will necessarily eventually follow.

Let’s test the above statement against the scriptures. Not long after the church began on the day of Pentecost, some Grecian widows were feeling neglected. The Apostles told the church to *pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.* (Acts 6:3) How could the church be sure they were choosing men of good character? They were to pick out men of good repute, men who had a good reputation. When elders are to be selected, both reputation and character matter; indeed, they are critical. *Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.* (1 Timothy 3:7) One would be well served to review the qualifications of elders and deacons and realize how many of them tie together character and reputation.

There is a direct correlation between reputation and character. The following statement has, for a long time, been attributed to Abraham Lincoln: “You can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.” Now, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency says this was not part of Lincoln’s 1858 speech as originally thought. Still, the statement contains much truth. Once the cat is out of the bag, reputation eventually catches up with one’s true character.

Character and reputation are not simply individual matters. Churches have reputations also. Consider the church at Sardis. The Apostle John was instructed to write to that church, *I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead.* That church desperately wanted others to see it in a good light, but Jesus was not fooled in the least, and probably not many others either. I believe this passage reveals more about that church’s deception than it does about those it was attempting to deceive.

But there also were churches with outstanding reputations. Paul had great expectations of the church at Philippi. He wrote, *Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.* (Philippians 1:27) The reputation of the church at Colossae prompted Paul’s joy and thankfulness. *We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since we*

