

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)

to say. They turn their backs on love when, time after time, upon hearing the Gospel, they fail to repent of their sins and confess Jesus before others, and refuse to be baptized for the remission of sins. Why do they not turn to the love of God rather than away from it? Of all the self-destructive behaviors common to mankind, turning one's back on the love of God is the most disastrous. May we learn from the example of Judas and embrace every spiritual benefit contained within the love of God.

*Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the
skies of parchment made,*

*Were every stalk on earth a quill, And every man a scribe
by trade;*

*To write the love of God above Would drain the ocean
dry;*

*Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Though stretched
from sky to sky.*

NOTE

The congregation is in the process of preparing an updated directory. Please check that your information is correct by viewing the notebook in the vestibule. Please make corrections as needed.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Declan Weatherholt, David Seabolt, Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Louis Harrod, Paul Atkisson, Keia Burton, Robert Brundige, Susie Burton, Valerie and Barry Boyd, Janett's mother and stepfather, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young, Burnice Richardson, Ruth Poynter, Larry Sells, Evelyn Damron, Tony Tyree, Andrew Westphal, Jennifer Dunbar, Jean Gartland, John Blessing, Alleen Terrell, the McDonald family, William Roberts, Kip Pearce, Paul Lyda

University Heights Messenger

Volume 8--Number 47

October 30, 2016

No One Says It Better Than God

Adam Litmer

In 1 Corinthians 1:17 the apostle Paul says, *For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.* The “eloquent wisdom” of this verse speaks not of the wisdom learned from God, but the wisdom of uninspired man. Should one choose to employ such language in trying to reach someone with the gospel they are actually emptying the cross of Christ of its power. This is so because whatever “faith” the listener achieves will be based upon the speaker's eloquence rather than God's power. Hear Paul state it in another way in 1 Corinthians 2:4-5. *And my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith may not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*

The words one chooses to use in presenting the gospel message has been on my mind quite a bit lately. Should one choose to peruse the shelves at stores such as Lifeway, Berean, and Family Christian they will find books filled with words entirely foreign to Scripture. They will also find extraordinarily talented authors possessing an abundance of eloquence. Yet the gospel message has never been about eloquence or stating things in “unique” and “fresh” ways. Man is lost in sin and in need of a Savior. Jesus is that Savior by virtue of a sinless life, selfless sacrifice, and resurrection from the dead. Man needs to be cleansed of his sins by contacting the blood of Jesus. After becoming a Christian he must walk worthy of his calling and glorify God in all things. God not only created the gospel, *He provided the very words to perfectly explain and present it.*

Do not overlook this fact, beloved: the gospel message will only be presented in all its power and fullness when God's own words are used in the presentation. In 1 Corinthians 2:12-13, Paul says, *Now we have received not the*

spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. I believe the NIV does a wonderful job of capturing Paul's meaning in its translation: *Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit taught words.*

As the moment of his death loomed imminent, Paul sent a final letter to Timothy, his friend and son in the faith. In that letter Paul urged Timothy to *follow the pattern of sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.* (1:13) This is an appeal to Timothy to follow the example of Paul even in the very words he used to preach the gospel. How could Timothy possibly do any better? After all, Paul clearly stated, *For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.* (Galatians 1:11-12)

We have the same commission today. Peter declared, *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God...* (1 Peter 4:10-11a). Take a moment to consider Acts 7:38, Romans 3:2, and Hebrews 5:12 to be impressed with this truth: to speak as the oracles of God is to use the actual words of God.

Sinners do not need to hear a more "palatable" gospel saturated with eloquent, sweet sounding words of human wisdom. Sinners need to be *changed*. Only God's gospel stated in God's way has the power to do that (Romans 1:16). After all, no one says it better than God!

Another Thought Provoking Statement

John Thompson

Earlier this month Paul Fox wrote a bulletin article about love appropriately titled *Love Each Other*. Hopefully you read the article. You will remember that it began by setting the scene of the Passover which Jesus ate with his disciples, including Judas. The second paragraph of Paul's article is reproduced here: "When the meal is completed, Jesus offers bread and wine...to Judas. It is communion with the betrayer. For the first time Jesus speaks with Judas about his double life, "What you are about to do, do quickly." (John 13:27b) Judas, then, departs, and preparation for the execution of the Son of God begins. Judas turns his back on love."

I can think of no better way to express the enormity of what Judas did than the way Paul stated it in his article. "Judas turns his back on love." You see, Judas had already betrayed Jesus, and now he knows that Jesus knows of his part in the conspiracy that is quickly coming together. The thirty pieces of silver had been clinking merrily in Judas' money bag for perhaps as long as a day or two. It is hard to determine exactly when Judas decided to betray his Lord, but when he accepted the money it was a done deal.

Hardly any human action communicates rejection, disgust, devaluing, abandonment, and a host of other negative attitudes better than turning one's back on another person. It is a universally recognized gesture of demeaning and showing contempt to another. But, as Brother Fox wrote, Judas did not just turn his back on Jesus, the person; he turned his back on Jesus, the sacrificial lamb. He devalued the three years he had spent being taught by the Master Teacher and abandoned the mission to *go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.* (Mark 16:15) He showed contempt for the love of the Heavenly Father who *so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.* (John 3:16) He turned his back on the only perfect example of patience and kindness that has ever come into the world and he embraced envy and boasting; arrogance and rudeness; resentment and insistence on his own way. (See 1 Corinthians 13:4-6)

Someone might say that Judas was just carrying out God's plan. Jesus had to die and someone had to betray him and Judas was that someone. He returned to the temple with the thirty pieces of silver and acknowledged that he had *sinned by betraying innocent blood.* (Matthew 27:4) I'm not quite sure what he expected the chief priests and elders to do, but I doubt he was prepared for their arrogant indifference to his terrible distress. Throwing the thirty pieces of silver into the temple, Judas turned his back on love one final and irrevocable time and hanged himself. Why did he not reach out and seek forgiveness? He knew he had sinned; he had witnessed time and again the compassion of Jesus; he had seen Jesus heal all sorts of sicknesses and even raise the dead. Why did he not turn toward that divine love rather than away from it?

Before we condemn Judas and then dismiss him from our minds, we need to realize that Judas is no different from all of those who continually turn their own backs on the Savior. They turn their backs when they say there is no God. They repudiate God when they alter the Bible to make it say what they want it

