

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)

GOSPEL MEETING

Brother Wayde Miller will be with us this week for our gospel meeting. This is a wonderful opportunity to hear God's Word proclaimed each night. I encourage you to attend each evening and consider the family member, friend, or acquaintance who would benefit from hearing God's Word preached. Have you thought of some names? Now extend an invitation for them to join you a night or two. Perhaps your invitation will be the first step in leading another soul to Christ (Daniel 12:3).

A SPECIAL NOTE

Anarielle Banks asked that a note be read Wednesday evening stating that she had sinned, repented, and requested the prayers of the congregation. How heartening to see Drew Thompson recently put on Christ and Anarielle demonstrate her faith and love for her Lord last Wednesday. In a time when so many are bemoaning the loss of our young, Drew and Anarielle show us two young hearts on fire for the Lord. Praise God for their faith and example!

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Larry Billitor, Julie and Elijah Patton, Declan Weatherholt, David Seabolt, Jeff Howerton, Rhonda Boyd, Nicholas Thompson, Louis Harrod, Paul Atkisson, Vicky Litmer, Sheila Lawson, Keia Burton, Robert Brundige, Susie Burton, Valerie and Barry Boyd, Janett's mother and stepfather, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young, Burnice Richardson, Larry Sells, Evelyn Damron, Tony Tyree, Jennifer Dunbar, Jean Gartland, John Blessing, William Roberts, Kip Pearce, Paul Lyda, Pete Soro, The Baker family

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Whose Christianity Is It Anyway?

Adam Litmer

Two weeks ago, I helped Alexander with a project on Frederick Douglass. As I was considering the words of that talented writer and orator, I came across a statement that struck a chord. Mr. Douglass was writing about Christianity within the context of the slave state. He commented, and I paraphrase, "The Christianity of America and the Christianity of Christ are not the same." Uninspired man has never uttered truer words.

Many things have changed in this country since the days of Frederick Douglass. As an abolitionist, he would rejoice to know that slavery is illegal in America. He would marvel at how far transportation, architecture, medicine, and technology have come. I'm not sure what he would make of the changes in fashion from his day to ours. Yet this one thing remains unchanged: the Christianity of America and the Christianity of Christ are *still* not the same.

America's Christianity has, by and large, become one of sin tolerance and sin acceptance. In some places, it has devolved into sin celebration. Embracing homosexuality and the slaughter of unborn babies has become fashionable among some of the more mainstream "churches." A few days ago, I was speaking to a young lady about the church. She stated that she was having trouble finding a "church group" that "fit" her. She explained that the problem is she is too broadminded. Further discussion demonstrated that her issue is not one of broadmindedness, but advocacy of open rebellion against the revealed will of God. I suppose we can sum up this brand of "Christianity" this way: "Anything is acceptable as long as I wish it to be so and attach the name of Christ to it."

The Christianity of Christ says, *If you love me, you will keep my commandments* (John 14:15). *You are my friends if you do what I command you* (John 15:14). *The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day* (John 12:48). *But for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury* (Romans 2:8). A rather stark difference indeed.

Another brand of America's Christianity is not willing to cast God's Word aside entirely but *does* maintain that the changing culture necessitates certain changes within the commands of Scripture. For instance, women are permitted to serve as elders or evangelists because the "times have changed" and "the church must change with them." Athletic facilities, coffee shops in the foyer, full scale worship bands, and any number of other amenities designed to appeal to the senses and appetites of the masses exist in large part because of the changing culture. It is said that a different culture requires a different church. The "whole man" (senses, appetites, felt needs) must be accommodated just as much as the spirit.

The Christianity of Jesus Christ, while not denying that man has needs beyond the spirit, does not authorize the church to care for them. Indeed, a search of the New Testament provides no authorization for the Lord's church to involve itself in the fleshly amenities described above. But doesn't the culture demand these changes? No. The inspired testimony asserts that Christ does not change with the culture. *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.* (Hebrews 13:8) Adding to this His own assertion that His words will judge us on the last day, as well as the understanding that the inspired writers were speaking the very words of Christ (1 Corinthians 14:37), requires that one seeking to change God's revelation to accommodate a changing culture cease doing so and endeavor to lead the culture back to God. After all, the argument that "the culture has changed and the church must change its adherence to Scripture to accommodate it" is not a statement one hears from the mouth of Jesus or one of His inspired writers. This means that such statements cannot proceed from faith (Romans 10:17). Again, America's Christianity and Christ's Christianity stand opposed.

America's Christianity is infatuated with its authors. Joel Osteen, Rick Warren, Billy Graham, and Max Lucado hold sway in many hearts. Prefer something a *little* more conservative? John MacArthur and Randy Alcorn may be just the ticket. Of course, who can forget that great sage, C.S. Lewis, who has a pithy quote or two appropriate for every circumstance in life. A recent conversation with a young man who had "rededicated his life to Jesus" emphasizes this point. He spoke of a number of books that were opening his eyes to spiritual truths he had not previously considered. He recommended several spiritual "self-help" books by today's most popular writers. Upon asking for any recommendations I might have for him, he seemed quite taken aback when I commented that while such books do indeed offer helpful advice from time to time, the most beneficial thing he could do for his soul was to put them down and pick up God's Word. Such had clearly not occurred to him and he appeared to have little desire to heed my recommendation.

It takes only a few moments of conversation with today's "evangelical Christian", or a skimming of one of their articles, to note how different their language is from that of God's Word. Obviously, it isn't Holy Scripture that leads to such Ashdodic language (Nehemiah 13:23-24). In Acts 17:11 we are told about the Jews of Berea and the way they reacted to Paul's teaching. *Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.* They did not rush to the writings of a popular rabbi, but to Scripture itself. If America's Christianity ever comes close to resembling Christ's Christianity, returning to the Scriptures will be the first step.

Much has changed since the days of Frederick Douglass. Sadly, the most *important* thing has not. I am optimistic, though. While the world at large will never come to Christ, I have not seen evidence to suggest that everyone who will come already has. There are still hearts to be won to the Lord. Let us dedicate ourselves to planting the seed wherever we can and rejoice as our blessed Father causes the growth in the good soil of honest hearts.

