

University Heights Church  
of Christ  
445 Columbia Ave.,  
Lexington, KY 40508  
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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**

The Osborne family, Pat Halsey, Jim Parsons, Rachel Thompson, Jill Harrison, Larry Billator, Karen Spivey, Jeff Howerton (also his aunt), Janet Brundige, Rhonda Boyd (and her sister, Dorothy), Paul Atkisson, Lois Weatherholt, Cassie Neel, Keia Burton, Robert Brundige, Valerie and Barry Boyd, Erlene Young, Larry Sells, Evelyn Damron, John Blessing, William Roberts, Paul Lyda, Sandra Queen, Annie Allen, Elijah Ossege, Chassey Seabolt, Edwina Cowherd, Karen Litmer

# University Heights Messenger

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## **Did Paul declare that homosexuals should be executed?**

Adam Litmer

*I wrote this article in June of 2016 in response to a specific New York Times article and the social media reaction it sparked. I believe it remains relevant for today.*

Though I did not see the article myself, I have been informed that recently the New York Times declared that the apostle Paul taught that homosexuals should be executed in Romans 1:32. I suspect that article is the reason that I have been seeing posts and comments on the subject all over social media. There has long been an effort by militant unbelievers to throw any number of things against the Bible and Christians to see what will stick. For instance, whenever a terrorist shouting "Allahu Akbar" (which means "God is greater" or "God is the greatest") kills a number of people in the name of his religion and the Quran, a certain segment of people immediately begin speaking out against Christians claiming that they have done the same things; citing the Crusades, Inquisition, and organizations such as the KKK as examples.

Their constant problem, however, has been that none of the cites examples acted with the authority or by the direction of the New Testament, a point easily demonstrated simply by reading it. It is just as demonstrable through a simple reading of the Quran that it not only forgives violence in certain cases but encourages it, Sura 9:1-5 being but one example. Apparently, some are now claiming that the New Testament does indeed encourage execution of homosexuals. Is such the case? Let's consider the passage in question, Romans 1:26-32.

*For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty of their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.*

Obviously, Paul is not dealing with the single sin of homosexuality in this passage. Also, if verse 32 *is* a call to round up those engaged in sin and execute them then those scheduled for execution extends far beyond homosexuals. In

fact, Paul's purpose through Romans 3:23 is to show that all men have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. There is not one of us who falls outside that blanket statement. Thus, if Paul wants sinners rounded up and executed than Paul has killed off the entire human race, including himself.

And yet, death *is* the just wage for sin. (Romans 6:23a) It is my belief that Paul is speaking primarily of spiritual death in Romans 1, which reminds us that sin separates us from God and spiritual death is what that decisions earns. Yet God does not want to punish, He wants to forgive and bless. The entirety of Romans 5 is specifically about God's desire to forgive sinners and how He acted to make it possible. Indeed, after Romans 3:20 much of the book is about what God has done so that sinful man does not have to receive what he deserves.

Those who are claiming that Paul calls for the execution of homosexuals need to set aside their agenda, open their hearts and minds to God's truth, and read the entire book objectively. If they do they will thrill to see the greatest treatise on salvation by grace through faith ever written. They will recognize that their sins have earned them death, but God's grace has taken steps so that they can receive what they need rather than what they've earned. I pray that the truth will touch their hearts.





