



THE MESSENGER

MAY 8, 2022

NEWS AND NOTES

Congregational Meeting
TBA

Weekly Bible Studies
Tuesdays on Zoom, 10
Friday, 12:30, Fayette Mall
food court

Saturday, 10, Panera
(Georgetown)

Times of Service

Sunday

Bible study: 9:45 AM
Worship: 10:45 AM; 6 PM

Wednesday

Bible study: 7:30 PM
(Immediately followed by a
short worship service)

First Friday of Month

Singing

March 4, 7:30

Address and Contact

University Heights Church of
Christ
445 Columbia Ave., Lexington,
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THE CHALLENGE OF FORGIVENESS, TRUST, AND PATIENCE

Forgiveness can be so hard. Our hearts warm as Jesus, looking upon those who just finished driving nails through his body, says, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Or Stephen, body broken by stones, falls to his knees and petitions for his murderers, *Lord, do not hold this sin against them.* Now imagine yourself in their position and ask if you would have it in you to do the same? Be honest.

We all know that pride, selfishness, and lack of love are hindrances to forgiveness. These are usually talked about in connection with this topic and for good reason. It is always wise to examine the heart for any sign of them when finding forgiveness especially difficult.

Let's approach it from a different angle. As we consider who our God is a number of traits come to mind. For Bible students it won't be long before landing on justice. That God cares deeply about it is beyond question as passage after passage says so. Isaiah 30:18, 61:8, Deuteronomy 10:18, and Psalm 146:7-9 are representative.

It is not surprising that those made in the image of God would care deeply about justice, even if we can't always agree on what it ought to look like. When one has truly been wronged by another person or group of people, the desire for justice activates. When justice is not happening the senses of the wronged person are deeply offended. It cannot be helped. Justice should be done and it is not. There is a wrongness to withheld justice that the injured party cannot just "get over." Something *should* be done! Why isn't it? I am convinced that this is as much a challenge to forgiveness as the unfortunate attitudes mentioned two paragraphs ago.

It is this inherent desire for justice that tempts one to seek their own vengeance, especially when justice isn't being served. Knowing this, the inspired apostle Paul says, *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."* (Romans 12:19) Easier said than done. Yet notice the

Members Needing Our Prayers

Joyce Bolton, Julie Patton, Pat Seabolt, Rick Small, John Thompson, Benny Poynter, Janet Brundige, Karen Spivey, Rhonda Boyd, Cindy Bradbury, Paul Atkisson

Others Needing Prayers

Ernestine Byers, Glen Perkins, Allison Walker, Dwight Antle, Randy Cates, Larry McTeer, Charlene Michael, Ann Little, Mary Jean Snyder, Mark Nickles, Adam Fusco Duane Harrod, Grace Meyer, Meredith Nicholson, Alice and Lonnie Anderson, Glen Perkins, Ethan Shelton, Terry Daniels, Leroy Weatherholt, Robert Brundige, John Blessing, William Roberts, Paul and Marrian Lyda, Dana and her children, Shane (a relative of Cindi), Ron Harmon

To Our Guests

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promise here. "I *will* repay, says the Lord." Justice *will* be served. If it doesn't happen in this life it will happen in the next.

But let's consider this from God's perspective. While our hearts cry out for justice against wicked people, God, who *made* them, loves them deeply. He does not wish that any perish but that all reach repentance. (2 Peter 3:9) Jonah looked upon wicked Nineveh and wanted God to destroy the lot of them. God looked upon a city of people made in His image and compassionately longed for their repentance. (Jonah 3-4)

What if repentance *does* occur? What if that person who hurt me so deeply becomes a Christian and is forgiven? They *still* hurt me. Is justice *never* to be done? Justice *was* done in the body of Jesus Christ. He bore that sin. (1 Peter 2:24) He was slapped, spat upon, whipped, and nailed to a cross. That sin, however painful, has been atoned for. Justice has been served. If repentance never occurs, and even if that person or group goes from bad to worse, justice *will* be served. We have God's promise on that. (2 Thessalonians 1:5-10)

In the end, I suppose the willingness to forgive has a great deal to do with our willingness to patiently trust the God who sees so much more than we see, knows so much more than we know, and loves so much deeper than we love. May God help us in this. Adam Litmer

Elders	Deacons	Evangelist
Troy Antle	Richard Brundige	Adam Litmer
David Collins	Adam Daniels	
	Adam Litmer	
	Frank Patton	
	Jamie Powell	
	Pat Seabolt	
	Matt Thompson	
	James Weatherholt	

