



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

December 4, 2011

P.O. Box 416
129 S. Chamberlain Ave.
Rockwood, TN 37854
865-354-0855

Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Bobby Bear
Kendall Bear
Larry Brackett
Roger Carter
Steve McCreary
Don Wicks

Minister:

Kirby Hinds

Secretary:

Susan Chandler

Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

Monday

Ladies Class 10 am

Email:

rockwdcc@earthlink.net

Website:

Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

YOU NEVER STUMP YOUR TOE WHILE STANDING STILL

A boastful voice may say, "I could have told you...if you care about people, you risk being hurt and disappointed...if you teach someone the Bible, you will risk being misunderstood, misquoted, or even embarrassed at times...if you share your prosperity with others in need, you will risk being taken, thought a fool, and you may even go broke...if you take the lead in some good work, you risk making mistakes in judgment and taking the blame for the failures."

The voice comes to taunt, "I could have told you..." But brethren it is not the voice of God that says "sit and do nothing out of fear!" He did not give us "*a spirit of fear*" (**II Timothy 1:7**). The Lord's business is risky business in the eyes of the materialist. But to those who love and trust God, there is no risk, only reward. We see our goal ahead and not the pebbles of the roadway!

The apostle Paul not only stumped his toes traveling with the gospel, he was stoned, beaten with rods, shipwrecked (**II Corinthians 11:25**), despised (**I Corinthians 4:10**), forsaken by those he helped (**II Timothy 4:16**), and considered by many to be foolish (**I Corinthians 4:10**). Someone in his generation probably said, "I could have told you..." But Paul knew all the risks, and still chose to be active in the Lord's work.

James 4:17 still reads, "*Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*" When we know to do good, but fail because of lack of effort, it shows our lack of faith in God. Those who do nothing may brag that they never stumped their toes, but they also never got anywhere in the Lord's work.

Study carefully the scene in **Matthew 25** regarding those who did nothing and hear the voice of the Lord say, "*Depart from Me, you cursed into the everlasting fire*" (**vs. 41**). Now I ask, dear reader: Who really is foolish and who really runs greater risks – those who bury their talents and stand still doing nothing, or those who, like Paul, "*press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*" (**Philippians 3:14**).

Edward Thomason

IS THE BIBLE THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD?

During a Question and Answer session at a recent speaking engagement, a university student asked me, “Why do you believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God?” Now this is a very interesting question and probably one of the most important questions any Christian could ask themselves. What is so special, so unique about the Bible that Christians believe it is literally the inspired word of God?

In answering this student’s question, I encouraged him to consider the following facts about the Bible:

First, the Bible is not just one single book. This is a more common misconception than many people realize, especially with people who do not come from a Judeo-Christian background. Rather than being a single book, the Bible is actually a collection of 66 books, which is called the canon of scriptures. These 66 books contain a variety of genres: history, poetry, prophecy, wisdom, literature, letters, and apocalyptic just to name a few.

Second, these 66 books were written by 40 different authors. These authors came from a variety of backgrounds: shepherds, fishermen, doctors, kings, prophets and others. And most of these authors never knew another personally.

Third, these 66 books were written over a period of 1500 years. Yet again, this is another reminder that many of these authors never knew or collaborated with one another in writing these books.

Fourth, the 66 books of the Bible were written in 3 different languages. In the Bible we have books that were written in the ancient languages of Hebrews, Greek, and Aramaic; a reflection of the historical and cultural circumstances in which each of these books were written.

And finally, these 66 books were written on 3 different continents: Africa, Asia and Europe. Once again, this is a testament to the varied historical and cultural circumstances of God’s people.

Think about the above realities: 66 books, written by 40 different authors, over 1500 years, in 3 different languages, on 3 different continents. What’s more, this collection of books shares this common storyline – the creation, fall, and redemption of God’s people: a common theme – God’s universal love for all of humanity; and a common message – salvation is available to all who repent of their sins and commit to following God with all of their heart, soul, mind and strength. In addition to sharing these commonalities, these 66 books contain no historical errors or contradictions. God’s word truly is an amazing collection of writings!

After I had shared the above facts with this student, I offered him the following challenge: I said to him, “If you do not believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God, if you do not believe that the Bible is of supernatural origin, then I challenge you to a test.” I said to the student, “I challenge you to go to any library in the world, you can choose any library you like, and find 66 books which match the characteristics of the 66 books, written by 40 different authors, over 1500 years, in 3 different languages, written on 3 different continents. However, they must share a common storyline, a common theme, with a common message, with no historical errors or contradictions.” I went on to say, “If you can produce such a collection of books, I will admit that the Bible is not the inspired word of God.” The student’s reply was almost instantaneous, he emphatically stated, “But that’s impossible!” It truly is impossible, for any collection of human writings. However, the Bible passes this test. The Bible contains 66 books, written by 40 different authors, over 1500 years, in 3 languages, on 3 different continents, with no historical errors or contradictions. The entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, bears the mark of Divine inspiration.

The next time you encounter someone who asks you why you believe the Bible is the inspired word of God, try sharing this challenge with them. Better yet, don’t wait until you’re asked, just go ahead and share this challenge with a friend today... You don’t even have to mention the Bible up front, just ask them if they think it would be realistic to assemble such a collection of books. After they say, “But that’s impossible!” you’ve got a ready-made opportunity for sharing the truth of God’s Word with somebody!

By Jason & Ron Carlson