



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

February 3, 2013

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

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:

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Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

BE THE BEST

Douglas Malloch (1877-1938) was an American poet, short story writer and associate editor of American Lumberman, a Chicago trade paper. He loved his beloved Michigan and was commissioned to write her state song. Having grown up in the midst of the forests, logging camps and saw mills of Michigan, Malloch became known as the "Lumberman's Poet." He is probably best known for his wonderful poem,

"Be A Bush If You Can't Be A Tree"

If you can't be a pine on the top of the hill,

Be a scrub in the valley –

But be the best little scrub by the side of the rill;

Be a bush if you can't be a tree.

If you can't be a bush, be a bit of grass,

Doing something for somebody's sake.

If you can't be a muskie, then just be a bass –

But the liveliest bass in the lake.

We can't all be captains, some have to be crew,

There's something for all of us here,

There's a big work, and little for people to do,

And the task we must do is the near.

If you can't be the highway, then just be a trail,

If you can't be the sun, be a star;

It isn't by size that you win or you fail

- be the best of whatever you are!

Those who have one talent fret that they do not have two. Those who have two talents fret that they do not have five. In the parable that Jesus told (**Matthew 25:14-30**) the focus was not on the number of talents a person has, but on the use of the talents one has. Those who used their talent, whether five or two, received the same approval and reward (**verses 21, 23**). The one talent man was not condemned because he only had one talent, but because he did not use the talent he had. He was a "wicked and lazy" servant (**verse 26**).

What is the moral of the story? You can sit and mope because you do not have the talent of others or you can use the talent you do have in the service of the King! In other words, "Be a Bush If You Can't Be A Tree." Be the best shrub, bass, crewmember, trail, star and servant of Christ that you can be! "Be the best of whatever you are!"

Dwight Fuqua

MUST JESUS BEAR THE CROSS ALONE?

In 1693 Thomas Shepherd wrote the song entitled, “**Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone.**” Two of the verses of that song read as follows:

*Must Jesus bear the cross alone, And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for everyone, And there's a cross for me.
The consecrated cross I'll bear, Till he shall set me free,
And then go home my crown to wear, For there's a crown for me.*

I like that song for several reasons, but one is the Biblical truth that so concisely expresses that one's cross comes before his crown. That fundamental truth seems to have been lost to many people, for how often do you hear of people giving up, quitting when difficulty arises?

How often have you heard of preachers who quit preaching, elders who quit shepherding, deacons who quit serving, Bible teachers who quit teaching, and Christians who quit following Jesus because of some difficult circumstance? It happens far more frequently than it should. Let someone hurt one's feelings, and he quits. Let someone criticize one's work, and he quits. Let someone forget to thank one for his work, and he quits. Let someone overtly mistreat one because of his faith, and he quits. The common thread that runs through all of these situations is that someone has forgotten that one must bear a cross before he is privileged to wear a crown! Don't lose sight of this truth. Work comes before rest. Sacrifice comes before reward. Struggle comes before victory. And humility comes before exaltation.

Friends, we need thicker skin. We cannot allow hurtful words or actions to keep us from doing the work of God. Too much is at stake for ourselves and others. Remember the apostle Paul and let him be a source of encouragement and strength to you. After all that he endured for Jesus – the beatings, stoning, weariness, and countless life-threatening situations, he said, “*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*” (**II Corinthians 4:17**). Again, even in this passage, you have the same truth expressed: A cross before a crown.

So what about you? Are you bearing your cross in this life, or are you spending your time kicked back, daydreaming about how your crown is going to fit? Let's get to work. There's much to do. We have a cross to bear. Or, must Jesus bear the cross alone, and all the world go free? No, there's a cross for everyone, and there's a cross for me. **Steve Higginbotham**