



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

January 22, 2012

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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

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HATRED, LOVE & EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

Hate is a strong word. The words, "I hate you" should never come out of the mouth of Christians. Children ought to associate the use of that phrase with a mouth full of soap or a swat on the rear-end. How can a Christian possibly fulfill the great commission of Christ with hate for another human dwelling in their heart? The natural opposite of hate is love. One simply cannot uphold these opposites and still follow Christ.

It is with this in mind that Solomon wrote: *"Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses. On the lips of him who has understanding, wisdom is found, but a rod is for the back of him who lacks sense. The wise lay up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool brings ruin near. A rich man's wealth is his strong city; the poverty of the poor is their ruin. The wage of the righteous leads to life, the gain of the wicked to sin. Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life, but he who rejects reproof leads others astray. The one who conceals hatred has lying lips, and whoever utters slander is a fool"* (**Proverbs 10:12-18**).

Hatred infects the heart like a cancer. The only thing in this world we ought to hate is sin. No matter what evil someone has done against another, Christians are called to love instead of hate. Jesus even said, *"You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."* (**Matthew 5:43-45**). The ironic thing about this statement from His Sermon on the Mount is that nowhere in the Scripture is the command to "hate your enemy." **Leviticus 19:18** commands us to love our neighbors, but the concept of hating enemies was fashioned only in the minds of people, never from the mouth of God.

Peter quotes this Proverb when he too emphasizes the importance of love, *"Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins"* (**I Peter 4:8**). Much more can be said for the wisdom between this inclination of hatred, but the bottom line is love (**I Corinthians 13:13**).

Casey McDonald

“RUNNING WITH HORSES”

In **Proverbs 14:10**, the writer tells us “*The heart knows its own bitterness, and a stranger does not share its joy.*” Without a doubt, each of us has burdens we carry in this life that seem to be difficult and may cause feelings of unsettlement within us. Whatever the struggle and the feelings generated by it, many sometimes feel as if they just cannot go on. Many want to give up.

In the **12th** chapter of **Jeremiah**, we are made privy to a conversation Jeremiah has with God. Essentially, Jeremiah is saying to God, “*Why is it so difficult for the righteous in life? The unrighteous seem to have it so good, and yet, we your children, are having so much difficulty and turmoil in life.*” In **verse 5**, God responds by saying, “*If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan*”?

God tells Jeremiah that there are difficulties in life. If in a safe and secure environment (racing with men in a peaceful country) many begin to feel sorry for themselves and become discouraged, how are we ever going to handle the more difficult things in life (contending with or racing with horses)? It was dangerous to wander around in these thickets because one could be attacked and harmed by a lion. However, there were times when it was necessary to do so. If we become discouraged in a “peaceful land,” then how will we deal with the “thickets of life” when we find ourselves there? Yet, some of us become discouraged in our “safe country” and allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the trials and tribulations faced in our daily lives. Few of us will ever suffer the way those that paved the way for us have suffered!

God also tells Jeremiah that there are more difficulties ahead. Why? Because it is through adversity that we grow (**James 1:2-4**). In **I Peter 1:6-9**, God tells us that how we deal with the trials of life is a demonstration of our faith and love for Him. We are assured God will not let us face anything we cannot effectively deal with at the moment (**I Corinthians 10:13**). He will provide a “*way of escape.*” He has promised to “*never leave or forsake us*” (**Hebrews 13:5-6**). These things should be of great assurance to us!

Additionally, we can be assured we can “*run with the horses*” and not become weary. We can be victorious over life, but only in Christ (**I John 5:4**). “*But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run, and not grow weary, they shall walk, and not faint*” (**Isaiah 40:31**).

Dick Millwee