



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

January 8, 2012

P.O. Box 416
129 S. Chamberlain Ave.
Rockwood, TN 37854
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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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GRACE AND PEACE

In Romans through Philemon, Paul uses the words “grace” and “peace” together in his greetings (**Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:3; II Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:2; I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; Phile. 3**). Peter and John also used it in the letters they wrote (**I Pet. 1:2; II Pet. 1:2; John 3; Rev. 1:4**).

It’s interesting to note that before Christianity came onto the scene, it was not common to combine these words in a greeting. The typical greeting for the Greeks was “grace.” The standard greeting for the Jews was “peace.” Followers of Jesus took these two greetings and combined them to make the “Christian greeting” of the first century. This is indeed the perfect greeting that represents a follower of Christ, for it, as Christ intended, brings together Jew and Gentile. Christianity is all about bringing together people of different races, cultures, backgrounds, social statuses, etc.

Jesus Christ died to bring all people together under the cross (**Eph. 2:11-16**). Paul emphasizes this in discussing those who have been baptized into Christ. “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus*” (**Gal. 3:27-28**). Truly the gospel is for all (**Mark 16:15**), and only the gospel can bring all together in unison (**Phil 1:5**).

The greeting of “grace and peace” covers the highest level of spiritual and temporal blessings. To have God’s grace means salvation in heaven forevermore and to have peace in every earthly avenue is wonderful, indeed. Or look at it this way, through Jesus we can have the grace that God offers and that brings peace to our souls and lives.

Grace and peace. It is the greatest greeting possible. It has “hi” or “howdy” beat by a long run. Grace and peace. It is what we should strive for in our lives. It is what we should desire for everyone.

Edd Sterchi

“FOUND NOT GUILTY BY REASON OF FAITH...”

A defendant was on trial for murder in Oklahoma. There was strong evidence indicating guilt, but there was no corpse. In the defense’s closing statement the lawyer, knowing that his client would probably be convicted, resorted to a trick. “Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I have a surprise for you all,” the lawyer said as he looked at his watch. “Within one minute, the person presumed dead in this case will walk into this courtroom.” He looked toward the courtroom door. The jurors, somewhat stunned, all looked on eagerly. A minute passed. Nothing happened. Finally the lawyer said, “Actually, I made up the previous statement. But you all looked on with anticipation. I, therefore, put it to you that there is reasonable doubt in this case as to whether anyone was killed and insist that you return a verdict of not guilty.” The jury, clearly confused, retired to deliberate. A few minutes later, the jury returned and pronounced a verdict of guilty. “But how?” inquired the lawyer. “You must have had some doubt; I saw all of you stare at the door.” Answered the jury foreman: “Oh, we did look...but your client didn’t.”

Within popular culture today we find many who are seeking religion without rules, relationships without responsibility and life without the true presence of a changing faith. While this may constitute normalcy to a majority, I shudder at the thought of how this apathetic attitude can weaken the influence of the Lord’s Church. While “Christian” religious groups struggle to find broad acceptance, we must not give place to mimicking the religious fads of our day. Whether it’s the “prosperity gospel,” “faith healing,” or even as dramatic as today’s “concert style worship,” eventually the truth will overshadow the antics.

The “jury” of this world is still out! Greater than any antic, we must possess a life altering faith that will distinguish us from the rest of the world! It was “by faith” that Abel was distinguished from his brother Cain and it was God’s testimony that removed all doubt of his righteousness. **(Hebrews 11:4)**. “By faith” we may never find broad acceptance, yet the “jury” we wish to compel consists of the individuals who are sincerely seeking the Truth. At this moment we are gathered as clients in the courtroom of life – the “jury” looks on – will our faith be so influential that we might convince them we are truly looking and longing for our Savior? Will our verdict be read – not guilty?

Jonathan Sanford