



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

June 3, 2012

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

BITTER OR BETTER

You didn't deserve being treated that way, did you? You should retaliate. You have every right to get mad and lash out on your offender. Who cares that the wrongdoer is family, a friend, or God? Or anyone else that is near you. Do you really want to get bitter? My guess is, probably not. Bitterness is harbored hurt hidden in the heart. It can become an emotional cancer that left unchecked will eat you from the inside out. The poison or bitterness has the potential to, in time, lead you down a painful path on which you and your relationships are ruined.

It's possible, no likely, that someone reading this article is a slave in bondage to bitterness. A spouse left you for another; an employer fired you without just cause; you lost a bundle in a business deal gone bad; a bad experience at church; a tragedy touched your family and you are bitter toward God; an unsettled, unresolved argument or disagreement of decades past. Bitter. Bitter. Bitter.

The Bible addresses bitterness. *"Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you"* (**Ephesians 4:31-32**). The Hebrew letter refers to the root of bitterness: *"See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many"* (**Hebrews 12:15**). A root is beneath the surface, concealed, invisible to the eye, very difficult to dig up. Like a root, once planted, bitterness is extremely difficult to unearth and dispose of.

Someone said, "When life gives you trouble, you can get bitter or better. You can go under or you can go on." The best way to "go on" is to give your life to Jesus and live daily knowing that, just as in Christ God forgave you, you must forgive your offender. If not, your bitterness will ultimately turn your healthy body into a cold corpse.

Coy Hathcock

LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED

When our Lord was on this earth identifying with us in an earthly body, He was very sensitive to the pain people were experiencing. He had time to go to the home of Jarius because his little twelve-year-old girl had died. **Jesus cared.** He came to the tomb of Lazarus and stood in the midst of sorrow. **Jesus wept.** He paused on His journey for the triumphant entry into Jerusalem because a blind man was beseeching the Lord to give him his eyesight. **Jesus restored.** In anticipation of His imminent trial, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, and coronation as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus reached out to His apostles in loving reassurance. He was so aware of the impending sorrow that they would experience and He wanted to prepare them for the occasion. So **He loving said** to them “*Let not your heart be troubled...*” (**John 14:1**).

Has your heart ever been troubled? Physical illness may trouble your heart. The illness of a dear loved one may trouble your heart. Problems of life; financial, marital, personal, employment, and various relationships, may bring us disappointment, discouragement, and possibly despondency. Does anyone ever live very long on earth and escape pain, sorrow and disappointment?

How does the Lord, who still cares (**I Peter 5:7**), tell us how to deal with trouble? Does He recommend denial, a type of dishonest pretension that “*all is well*”? Does He urge escapism in drugs, alcohol, pleasure, food, work, lust or suicide? Does He tell us to become pessimistic, even cynical, about life and to become bitter, critical, caustic and blaming?

Our loving Lord gives the power to cope with trouble: **Faith!** “*Believe in God, believe also in me*” (**John 14:1**). When we follow our Savior’s direction then we believe in a God who is our Father (**John 14:2**). A Father who knows and loves His people. A Father who cares and is involved in the lives of His children. A loving Father who can take the trouble His children experience in the world (**John 16:33**) and providentially work everything for the good of His people (**Romans 8:28**). If God could take all of the trouble a young man named Joseph experienced and turn it all into a blessing for Joseph and his family and if God could take all the shame and suffering of Golgotha and turn the death of His Son into potential salvation of mankind, don’t you think He can effectively handle the trouble of His beloved people today? No wonder an inspired man would instruct God’s people to “*cast all of your care upon Him, for He careth for you*” (**I Peter 5:7**).

Tom Holland