



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

October 14, 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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THE ROAD TO HELL

Where I grew up, when you tried to excuse yourself for something that you failed to do by saying, "Well, I intended to get that done," they always came back with, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions!" It was years before I learned to fully appreciate the truth in that retort, even though it bears strong language. People who have good intentions are praiseworthy, because no good can be accomplished in this world without them. There are people who have no intention of doing anything for anyone but themselves. But it is not the intentions that produce the results, intentions merely inspire us to do the good works.

In His parable of **Matthew 25:31-46**, Jesus pointed to the path that enters heaven and ushered those in who "*Gave me meat and drink...clothed me...ministered unto me.*" But those who indicated their intentions to do these things for Him, if they had an opportunity to help Him, were told to depart on the road that enters Hell.

God wants us to prove our good intentions. "*When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools; pay that which thou vowed.*" (**Ecclesiastes 5:4**). The wise writer reminds us that God is no fool; that He knows the sincerity of our purpose. He also exhorts us not to be foolish enough to think we can fool God. Fool men? Yes. Ananias and Sapphira did! Fool God? No. "*thou hast lied unto God.*"

We must learn to examine our "good intentions." Are they, like Ananias and Sapphira's, just men pleasers? Are they, like King Saul's, just conscience appeasers? Are they like Peter's vow not to deny Jesus, the product of an impulsive response? Are they, like Pharaoh's to Moses, made under pressure of fear or frustrations? Or, are they the product of an appreciative heart, full of love and devotion to the Lord, and seeking to find ways to express that love and appreciation?

May God help us to have our good intentions to labor and sacrifice for His Cause! And may He help us to understand that we must be willing to carry them out, with His help, if we desire to stay on "the strait and narrow way that leads to eternal life."

Bill E. Smith

THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN

Don't expect sin to tell you the truth. It promises pleasure and happiness, but hides the small print. The Hebrew writer said, "*Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*" (**Hebrews 3:12-13**).

Someone once defined sin in these words: "Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, and takes off the relish of spiritual things."

1. Sin weakens our reason. How else can we explain why otherwise intelligent people get hooked on alcohol and drugs? They often learn too late the difference between momentary pleasure and permanent misery. "*Do you not know this of old, since man was placed on earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is short, And the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment?*" (**Job 20:4-5**).

2. Sin impairs the tenderness of your conscience. Leprosy patients, because of lost sensation in their extremities, often will lose their fingers and toes when they are damaged. The same danger afflicts the conscience, "*...speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron*" (**I Timothy 4:2**). A guilty conscience hurts, but it's for our own good.

3. Sin obscures your sense of God. We don't see sin in its true light until we see it as rebellion against God. Sin breaks His law, ridicules His Authority. Though King David sinned against Bathsheba, her husband Uriah, his family, his nation, and himself, he confessed to the Lord, "*Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight...*" (**Psalms 51:4**). The pain David inflicted on others did not compare with what He had done to God.

4. Sin takes off the relish of spiritual things. Sheep often go astray because they nibble on one clump of grass after another without regard to their location. Most people, like sheep, nibble their way from one activity to another, never noticing how far from home they have strayed, then "*when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*" (**James 1:15**).

Rick Duggin, adapted