



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

April 19, 2015

P.O. Box 416
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Rockwood, TN 37854
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Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

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 10:00 a.m.

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GOD LISTENS

By Jamie Cox

Have you ever stopped in the middle of a sentence or in the middle of telling a story because you thought the person you were talking to was not listening? It is quite a joy when the person notices and encourages you to continue. You feel rather down and worthless when the person does not notice. While there are many reasons that a person might not be listening we can take assurance in one very important thing. God listens always.

God listens and internalizes what we say to Him. He does not simply let us ramble on without our words sinking in affecting Him in a personal manner. What we tell God is important to Him. He wants to know what we have to say. He wants us to talk to Him. He even commands that we talk to Him (**I Thessalonians 5:17**). God listened when Abraham pleaded with Him not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah if ten souls could be found (**Genesis 18:16-33**). God listened to Moses when God was ready to wipe all of the Israelites off the face of the earth for their continued refusal to obey and trust Him (**Exodus 32:10-14**). God listened to Gideon when he asked that the fleece be wet and the ground around it dry and again when Gideon asked that the ground be wet and the fleece dry (**Judges 6:36-40**). God listened to Samson when he asked for strength one last time (**Judges 16:28-30**). God listened to David as he pled for protection and revenge against his enemies and as he expressed thanksgiving for the blessings God had provided him. God listened to Elijah and held the rains from falling (**I Kings 17:1-7**). God listened to Daniel as he prayed when the law of the land forbade it (**Daniel 6:1-23**). God listened to His only Son in the garden prior to His being nailed on the cross (**Matthew 26:26-46**). God listened to His Son's cry from the cross (**Luke 23:46**).

God listened to each one. He cared for each one, and He cares for each of us. He does not always answer in ways we see or use the timetable we construct or provide the outcome that we deem best, but **God** listens. While others might turn us off or never even begin to listen, God always listens. For our own good, we need to allow Him that opportunity every day.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

One of the essential characteristics of a servant is “humility.” Without this trait the Christian cannot be successful in his attempt to serve. Peter says, “*Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another; for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble*” (**I Peter 5:5**). Of interest here is the apostle’s use of “gird” (meaning “to clothe” or “put on”). The word denotes a “knot” or “to tie with a knot.” The term was used at the beginning of the Christian era of the white scarf or apron which slaves wore tightly fastened around their waist to distinguish them from freemen. Used figuratively here, the meaning is to “tie on humility like a slave’s apron.” The Christian is to gird himself with humility in order to equip himself to serve others.

Although a different Greek word is used for Jesus girding Himself with a towel in order to wash the disciples feet (**John 13:4**), Peter could have very well had this vivid mental picture of what the Lord had done when he wrote these words concerning humility and service to one another. Peter was there in the upper room that night and witnessed his Lord lay aside His outer garment in order to gird Himself with a towel. What Peter must have been thinking when he saw the Lord do this we can only imagine. We can be assured, however, that it probably was something he never forgot as long as he lived. We should all be encouraged as Christians to clothe ourselves with the towel of humility as we strive to serve others.

Humility is a trait that every Christian should cultivate. Humility is free from arrogance and self-sufficiency. Humility is a trait which grows out of the recognition that all we possess comes from God, whether it is physical life or spiritual redemption. Humility leads us to rely upon God for strength and spiritual sustenance. It is recognition that without God we are worthless. Yet, in another sense, because we are created in God’s image and have access to all “spiritual blessings” in Christ, we have infinite worth and dignity. True humility does not produce pride, but gratitude. Humble people focus more on God and others than on themselves. Humility of heart will never lead one to consider themselves better than their fellowman or above doing the lowliest tasks on behalf of others. God rejects the arrogant and self-sufficient person. But He exalts the humble of heart.

Stephen Wiggins