



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

August 14, 2016

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Sunday
Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday
Bible Study 7:30 pm

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FINDING MY WORTH IN GOD

"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself" (Philippians 2:3 NKJV).

One of the greatest struggles for humanity is the discovery of our own value and self-worth. People often feel so very empty and insignificant. The cares of life tend to batter down our self-image and leave us with a sense of meaninglessness and even self-loathing. This is part of the reason why so many people turn to so many vices – alcohol, drugs, sexuality – in an attempt to “fill the void.”

The world is quick to offer solutions. The self-appointed therapists of afternoon talk shows and the mega-rich attitude coaches of late-night infomercials tell us that we need to practice “self love,” and engage in more positive “self-talk.” They tell us that we have to love ourselves first before we can ever learn to love anyone else. Yet, however quaint their advice may be, it is as far from truth as the east is from the west.

The Bible tells us that positive self-image does not come through believing we are wonderful, but through the knowledge that God loves us. We don’t need better “self-esteem,” but need a better understanding of God’s estimation of us! In fact, the Bible tells us that the first step to wholeness is understanding and accepting our own wretchedness and turning in utter dependence to God’s awesome grace. Perhaps the old children’s song has more practical advice on developing self-esteem than all of today’s pop-psychology: “Jesus first, yourself LAST, and others in-between.”

Kerry Williams

THE WIND

When I drove into the office this morning, the wind was not blowing very much. We can't see the wind, but we can see the results of it. The reason I knew the wind was not blowing much, was the flag was moving only a little. The wind is spoken of in the Bible some times in a destructive way.

Job's ten children were in the elder brother's house and a wind came and blew it away killing all of them (**Job 1:18-19**). Many people today can understand because they also have experienced the destruction of a great wind. I think the blowing of the wind is useful for us. I have noticed the wind blows the clouds from place to place so we can have moisture. It seems that if the air did not move, the water vapor which brings the rain would not move.

I remind you of the storms on the sea during Jonah's time. This storm was the results of God's wrath, because Jonah was not obeying Him. There were the storms also on the Sea of Galilee when Jesus was in the boat with His disciples. *"And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern asleep on a pillow. And they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm"* (**Mark 4:37-39**). The disciples were amazed when Jesus stilled the storm. They questioned among themselves, "Who can this be?" Jesus looked like any ordinary man, but we know by faith that He was the Son of God. He was with God in the beginning and they created the world together. So the wind was His and He could command it as He chose. We are His creation and He has given us the Bible. This is His word and His commands to us! He will save those who obey His commands. Those who do not obey His commands, He will not save, but cast into hell with the devil and his angels.

I remind you also of the storm when the disciples were in the boat and Jesus came walking on the water to them during the storm (**Matthew 14:24-32**). Jesus gave Peter permission to walk on the water. He is the one who saved him from sinking. For Jesus to save you today, you must obey Him. Read these verses which contain His plan for salvation for all people: **Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:6; Acts 17:30; Acts 8:37; and Acts 2:38**.

The Spirit of God is like the wind. The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. *"So is everyone who is born of the Spirit"* (**John 3:8**). We see the work of the Holy Spirit in the fruit of Christians. *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law."* (**Galatians 5:22-23**). When these are not in a person, that person is not a faithful Christian. Some people desire to heal or speak in tongues as evidence they have the Holy Spirit. Miracles have ceased on earth (**I Corinthians 13:10**), but the fruit of the spirit will never end as long as the earth stands. Examine yourself. Are you showing forth the fruit of the spirit? These are not something you look for an opportunity to perform – these are you! You, everyday, in and out. Practice these before God.

The Family of God

By Todd Houston

Having endured the dissolution of my family as a six year old child, the health of my family is among the greatest concerns in my life today. When families face turmoil and strife, their loyalty and dedication will be put to the test. When that loyalty and dedication is destroyed through sin, everyone suffers. The implications of this are seen in the vast body of evidence that demonstrates the unique challenges of growing up in a broken home. This does not mean the problem cannot be overcome (1 Cor. 10:13). God knows our needs before we even ask (Mt. 6:8), and as always He prepared the solution before the problem even arose.

It should come as no surprise that the health of the nuclear family is so intimately connected to the health of every other social construct. After all, the God who designed us and "...knows all things" (1 Jn. 3:20b) established the family unit before any other institution (i.e. government and even the church). As no one understands the inner workings of a computer better than the programmer of it, so no one understands the inner workings of humanity better than the God who created us.

Is it any wonder that He chose the family as one of the most common metaphors for His relationship to His people? Upon accepting and obeying the gospel plan of salvation, we become His sons and daughters (2 Cor. 6:18). The significance of this cannot be overstated. Though one's earthly family may not be as God desires, they can still have a family. Best of all God's family will be together for eternity.

However, for this to be our reality, we must keep the family of God healthy and vibrant during our time here on earth. The damage of seeing the "household of God" (Eph. 2:19) in turmoil can be overwhelming for any child of God, especially those who are babes in Christ still not ready to stand on their own. God has placed the responsibility on all of His children to care for one another and keep His family safe in His household (1 Tim. 3:14-15). In describing the judgment scene in Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus made it clear that how we treat one another is how we treat Him (Mt. 25:37-40, 44-45).

Our soul's salvation depends on our regard for the household of God. This being true, let us "Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful" (Col. 3:12-15).