



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

August 27, 2017

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Deacons:

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Larry Brackett
Roger Carter
Steve McCreary

Minister:

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Service Times:

Sunday

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

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

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HOW CAN WE HELP THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING?

By Allen Jones

“Why is there so much pain and suffering in the world? I’m afraid God is going to ask me the same question.” - Brandon Edwards

We all have burdens and deal with suffering. **Matthew 5:45** says, *“that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”* Being treated equally is first introduced in Scripture. Regardless of the demographic we represent, everyone deals with challenges. God shows grace and care for all His creatures; as Jesus’ disciples, we are to imitate God. We are to love those who are challenged with health, social, emotional, and financial challenges. Christians are to love the sick, the well, their neighbor and their enemy.

Christians are not immune to suffering. **James 1:2-4** says, *“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience, but let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”* We sometimes think our obedience to Christ will prevent pain from coming our way. Trials will test Christians. Our response to affliction will make us steadfast and encourage others.

Distress should not create distance. **Romans 12:15** says, *“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”* When People are confronted with bad news and battles, Christians should respond with time and tenderness.

Helping those who suffer will require Christians to apply Scripture with a period and not a question mark.

ATTEND IT UP

Absenteeism will kill an organization. It will kill any congregation. It has been said that the most effective way to build up the church is to “attend it up.” Therefore, the members of a congregation must decide for themselves: “Do we really want this congregation to grow or do we wish it to die?” By one’s choice not to be faithful in attendance he or she is casting their vote for the local church to die. Is this really what you want – for the church to die?

Every member must feel a definite personal responsibility to the local congregation where they live. Ask yourself this question: If everyone was as faithful in attendance as I am would there be anyone in attendance this coming Sunday for Bible class, for evening worship, or for Wednesday night Bible class. Do we not realize that it is this congregation that provides one’s family all the blessings of church membership – fellowship, edification, public worship, comfort, strength, encouragement, spiritual blessings, and etc.?

It is not so much a matter of attending “somewhere” as it is attending here. The congregation “somewhere” cannot minister to you when you are sick and bereaved, or assist you in difficult and trying times. The congregation “somewhere” cannot rejoice with you and weep with you. And the congregation here cannot minister by your absence and the absence of others who feel no responsibility to the church who weaken it. This congregation will be as strong in your life as you make it. Your attendance shows how much you really care about your brethren. Beloved, that is a fact that cannot be truthfully disputed.

Jesus said, “*Seek ye first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*” (**Matthew 6:33**). Are you truly seeking God’s kingdom first if you are not faithfully attending worship services and Bible class? The answer is no.

The Hebrew writer gave a very clear and undeniable command that we are not to forsake “*our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh*” (**Hebrews 10:25**). Friends, forsaking the assembly is sin – it is the violation of an inspired command. Remember, “*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law*” (**I John 3:4, KJV**). Sin separates us from God (**Isaiah 59:1-2**), thus bringing spiritual death.

May we all have the attitude of the Psalmist, “*I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of Jehovah*” (**Psalms 122:1**). Let’s build up the church here at Rockwood first by “attending it up!”

Tom Moore, revised