



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

August 2, 2015

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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 HATES SHORTS!

You may be thinking that the title is presumptuous, opinionated, and even out of line. Let me disclaim what follows by asserting that God does not hate all shorts. He does, however, hate the following type of shorts.

GOD HATES SHORTCUTS. At least, He hates humanly devised shortcuts for which He has given no authorization. Man has devised shortcuts to salvation that cuts out divine commands. He has made shortcuts in ethics and morality to justify and rationalize behavior God condemns. We should examine such "shortcuts" carefully to make sure they are not detours off of the narrow way.

GOD HATES SHORTCHANGES. In **Malachi 3:8-10**, God condemns His people for "robbing Him" in their giving. They did not give with appropriate gratitude and generosity. Those who fail to put Him first (cf. **Matthew 6:33**) are shortchanging God of the time, talents, resources, and service He deserves.

GOD HATES SHORTSIGHTEDNESS. When we make decisions based on instant gratification or immediate benefits without giving thought to long-term implications, we often make a mess of our lives. This is true of church plans, the person we choose to marry, unbiblical changes to the church and teaching to attract the unchurched, and the like. Certainly, one can be too deliberate and methodical to the point of lethargy and apathy. Yet, neither is it proper to leap before adequately looking.

GOD HATES SHORTCOMINGS. God's hatred for sin is so great that He sent Christ to the cross as payment for it. Sin is falling short of God's mark. The sobering thing is that all come short of God's glory as the result of our sin (**Romans 3:23**). The great news is that while God hates shortcomings, He deeply loves shortcomers. That's also why He sent Jesus to die for us.

God hates these shorts, but He has provided an alternative regarding all of them. By full and trusting obedience, we avoid shortcuts. By recognizing our debt and feeling heartfelt gratitude to God for paying it, we avoid shortchanging Him. By growing in wisdom and Christlikeness, we avoid shortsightedness. By walking in the light as children of God, we avoid the eternal ramifications of our shortcomings. That's because God loves us!

Neal Pollard

HOW DO YOU FEEL?

God gave us feelings. We feel joy and sadness, anger and fear. These emotions test us. They can help or hinder us in our choice between right and wrong. Who we are and where we spend eternity depends on how we handle them.

It feels good to be happy. God wants us to be happy and He tells us how to have real joy in this life and in the next. He gives us richly all things to enjoy (**I Timothy 6:17**). The promise of heaven causes us to “leap for joy” even in hard times (**Luke 6:23**). But there are limits to our pursuit of a happy life. Some pleasures are sinful (**Hebrews 11:25**), and even enjoyments that are right must be kept in their place. Otherwise, we become selfish. God’s people sometimes let the thrills and joys of life keep them from caring about others and serving Him (**Amos 6:1-6; Luke 8:14**). True joy comes when we give, not when we get (**Acts 20:35**). Life is not a giant theme park where we get off one exciting ride and start looking for the next one.

Just as there is a time to laugh there is also a time to weep (**Ecclesiastes 3:4**). Sadness is a part of life. Jesus Himself was “*a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*” (**Isaiah 53:3**). It is natural to cry when pains and heartaches afflict us. But sadness is not just part of being human; it is necessary to our salvation. Godly sorrow produces repentance (**II Corinthians 7:10**). In the same passage, however, Paul shows that some sadness is not good. “*The sorrow of the world worketh death.*” All the tears in the world will not help a man to be saved if he refuses to repent. People also abuse this feeling when they wallow in self pity or try to justify those in sin because they feel sorry for them.

Fear is natural. It is good to be afraid when an oncoming car swerves into your lane or when you see a Black Widow spider crawling up your arm. It is good to fear what sin is and what it will do to a person “*A wise man feareth, and depareth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident*” (**Proverbs 14:16**). Jesus said it is good to be afraid of hell (**Matthew 10:28**). But fear can also keep a man from doing what is right. The “fearful” will have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (**Revelation 21:8**). Some people fear man more than God. They are afraid to do right because of the sacrifices they must make or the persecution they must endure. They are confident when they should be afraid and they are afraid when they could be confident.

Anger is a strong but a volatile feeling. Some anger is right. God is angry with the wicked every day (**Psalms 7:11**). Jesus was angry with the calloused Jews (**Mark 3:5**). We need more righteous indignation in this evil age. But we must be angry over the right things and for the right reason. It is wrong to be angry with a brother “without a cause” (**Matthew 5:22**). We must keep our anger in check or it will destroy us like it did Cain (**Genesis 4:1-10**). “*Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath*” (**Ephesians 4:26**). How many times do we say or do the wrong thing because we are mad? How many lives are ruined and how many souls are lost because anger has burned out of control?

Feelings are part of you, but you decide what to do with them.